SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT

Morals on the Book of Job

Moralia

SABBATISMUS

Saint Gregory the Great (540–604)
Moralia · Morals on the Book of Job

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[MORALIA.]

PREFACE TO THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS.

I. We begin the new care and printing of the works of Gregory with the Morals on Job, because of the antiquity of the work (for it is the first of all those which the holy Doctor elaborated), and of the sacred author explained in this commentary; since the book of Job has either Moses, as most feel, or a parent older than Moses. Our Gregory attacked this exposition when he was performing the duty of apocrisiary or legate of the apostolic see at Constantinople, as he explains more fully in the letter to Leander immediately following; but afterwards, having obtained greater leisure, he recalled it to the anvil and revised it; and thus the work, having been recognized a second and third time with greater diligence by the most holy and learned Father (which can be asserted of no other of his elaborations), as most perfect in all its parts, by right also obtained the first place in order of dignity.

In that exposition, equally copious and elegant, he so far excels the other writers who have tried to illustrate the book of Job with commentaries, as he was far superior in the knowledge and contemplation of divine mysteries, in the science of Christian ethics joined with experience, and in the skill of all sacred things. So that in these books we have at the same time a most full armory for building and confirming ecclesiastical dogmas, and a most copious storehouse for instructing and forming morals.

II. As soon as those books were published, how greedily they were received, even with the bishops commanding that they be read at the sacred vigils, and how reluctantly he, a man most outstanding in humility, bore it, he himself teaches us in the letter to John the subdeacon of Ravenna, in these words: "But that which has been brought to me by the report of some, that my most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Marinianus has the commentaries of blessed Job read publicly at the vigils, I have not received gratefully, because that work is not popular; and to unpolished hearers it would generate impediment rather than progress. But tell him to have the commentaries of the Psalms read at the vigils" (Book XII, epist. 24).

III. Our ancestors also left us a witnessed preconceived opinion of the Morals of Saint Gregory propagated to posterity, especially since they made so many epitomes of them under various names, so that they could always be kept at hand. We shall commemorate here the more distinguished ones found by us in libraries. In the Corbie Codex, now in the library of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, which contains a collection of certain letters of Saint Gregory sent by Paul the Deacon to Saint Adhalard, abbot of Corbie, there exists also a small work given this title: In the name of God the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Here begins the Eclogue which Lateen son of Haith wrote from the Morals on Job which Gregory made. It seems to be at least 800 years old. Some leaves have perished. After the

thirtieth book, nothing is read from the remaining five.

In the library of Saint Ouen of Rouen we have written by hand, the Mirror of Adalbert the Levite to Hairmann the priest, or the Morals of blessed Gregory abbreviated. The Codex is 600 years old. A copy of the same collection had already occurred to our most learned Jean Mabillon while shaking out the Premonstratensian library (Vol. I vet. Anal., p. 317).

In the ms. Codex of the Jumièges library are abbreviations of the Morals under the title of the Reclining-place of the Soul.

The same are said to have been collected by Simon, a monk of Affligem, in ten small books, and by Garner, canon and subprior of Saint-Victor of Paris, in sixteen books. The work of Garner called Gregorian exists in the library of Navarre. But of all who composed compendiums of this kind, the more distinguished was Saint Odo, from a canon of Saint Martin of Tours, made a monk and afterwards abbot of Cluny, whose thirty-five books collected from the Gregorian Morals D. Martin Marrier, a monk of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, published in Paris in the year 1617. They exist in the library of the Fathers of Lyon, vol. XVII. Odo gave effort to this writing when he was still a junior soldiering in the fellowship of Saint Martin. Following the example of Odo, John his disciple, who embraced his life in three books, composed a small work deflowered from the Morals of Gregory, which the same Mabillon

testifies was found by him in the library of Monte Cassino (Mus. Ital. vol. I, p. 123).

In the library of the Church of Laon there is a distinguished Codex written by hand exhibiting the same books of the Morals reduced into a compendium, which two canons of the same, Adalelm the Treasurer, afterwards, by the witness of Flodoard, created bishop of the same Church in the year 921, and Bernard, contributed as a gift to this Church (Gall. Christ., in the bishops of Laon). The work begins thus: In the name of the Lord. Prologue of blessed Job. Among many it is often asked, who should be held as the writer of the book of blessed Job. Some indeed Moses, etc. Thus the prologue is finished: he narrated the deeds of his victory. After the prologue is read: Here begin the Morals of Saint Gregory the pope on the book of Job. There was a man in the land of Uz named Job. Therefore it is said where the holy man dwelt, that his merit of virtue may be expressed. For as it is of a heavier fault, etc. The first book ends in these words: because without ceasing he demonstrates to the Father his incarnation for us. Thirty-three books follow in order. For the thirty-fifth is missing. Who, however, may be the author of this collection, is not yet discovered by us.

IV. From these things it is clear how assiduous the ancients were in reading and collecting, as if into bundles, the books of the Gregorian Morals; which is a most clear argument of the estimation held concerning them. Moreover, so that the unskilfulness of the Latin language might

not hinder them from being read, many translations of them into the vernacular languages were made. For Notker is said to have turned them into German; and Grimoald, a monk of the monastery of San Millán, turned them into Spanish about the end of the XI century, to say nothing of the others (Bibl. vet. Hisp., vol. II, book VII, c. 1, num. 13). No less does the almost innumerable multitude of Codices described by hand, which represent those books, prove the greed for reading the books of the Morals. We have thought it worth the effort to review here the principal ones read and unfolded by us.

Outstanding in antiquity is the Codex of the illustrious man Etienne Baluze, which is believed almost to reach the age of Gregory. But would that it embraced more than five books, namely from the twenty-third to the twenty-seventh!

The second place due to antiquity is owed to the Reims one of more than nine hundred years, which was given as a gift to the Church of Reims by Archbishop Hincmar. This we call the old Reims, or 1st Reims, that it may be distinguished from another Codex of the same Church, but of an inferior age.

The library of the arch-monastery of Saint Remigius of Reims has supplied us with three Codices. The first of the larger form will be called by us Remig. 1; the following, 2 and 3.

We had the use of a distinguished Codex of the Church of Beauvais, by the effort of the illustrious man D. Foy, a canon of the same Church of Saint Hilary, who as long as he lived showed himself

most studious of letters and of all learned men. The Codex, which shows an age of 700 years, embraces the twenty prior books of the Morals. In some places it was corrected by a more recent hand, or rather corrupted; but we have taken account of the prior reading, which is easily distinguished. To the eleventh book is prefixed an index of chapters, whose distinction is repeated from the texts of the book of Job explained. Certain arguments are added, concerning eternal fire, concerning happiness, concerning the fear of God, etc. The Remigianus Codex 1 also exhibits some summaries written in the place of titles. The Beauvais Codex will be signified by these first letters Bellov., or Belvac.

We excerpted variant readings of the ten prior books of the Morals from two Corbie Codices, which since they almost never differ from each other, will both be noted thus, Corb. Mention will often occur of another Corbie one, which since it is now preserved in Paris in the library of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, will be called Corb. Germ. The same library of Saint-Germain provided us with a Codex of the best mark, to be indicated below by the title Germanensis.

Of the Monastery of Saint-Denis near Paris there was formerly a Codex described about 800 years ago, which we name Colbertine, because it is now preserved in the most celebrated Colbertine library.

From the Church of Laon we received for use two Codices in which the books of the Morals are contained from the seventeenth inclusive to the

last, to be indicated below thus: Laud. first, Laud. second.

The six prior books and as many subsequent ones with the twentieth, twenty-first and twenty-second, we drew out from the library of the monastery of Val-Clair, of the Cistercian order in the diocese of Laon, with the assent of the most reverend abbot, and favored by the most learned as well as most humane man domno de Noyville, the most vigilant provost of the same monastery, by whose help and labor we obtained many other things for adorning our Edition. To this Codex we assign this mark: Val. Clar.

The ten prior books of the Morals, and the eleven most recent ones we found in the parchments of the monastery of Longpont of the same Cistercian order, of the best mark, showing an antiquity of about six hundred years; which by this halved name Longipont. will easily be separated from the others.

We used two Codices of Saint-Corneille of Compiègne, one of 700 years, the other of an inferior age. The older we shall call Compend. 1, the other Compend. 2.

We consulted the Codices of the Royal library at Paris, commended more by elegance and beauty than by antiquity, and for the most part unfolded them. One contains all the books of the Morals, another eighteen, a third only five; a fourth, of a much larger form and written with most elegant characters, only seventeen.

From a Codex of the Church of Chartres, written in the 10th century, we tasted a few things,

because it did not differ from others already read by us.

In the monastery of Saint Peter in the valley of Chartres exists a Codex of the Morals written 800 years ago, which Ardeus, dean of the Church of Chartres, afterwards a monk in the monastery of Fleury, and from there sent to Chartres for restoring the monastery of Saint Peter, is said to have brought with him. This we consulted in only certain more distinguished places, because for the most part it is mutilated.

The library of the monastery of Fleury, formerly most well-instructed with a great store of Mss., preserves three copies of the Morals written by hand, from which we excerpted not a few variant readings.

From the Library of Saint Martin of Tours we obtained an old copy of the same Morals to be unfolded, with the illustrious man D. de Galiczon, doctor and fellow of the Sorbonne, canon and precentor of the same Church, to whom letters owe very much, standing as surety for us.

From a Codex of Saint Albin of Angers we received many variant readings of the Morals, and inserted them into the new Edition.

In the library of the monastery of Vendôme we obtained three very old Codices of the Morals written by hand. The one which excels in antiquity exhibits the thirteen last books; another the twelve prior ones, the third twenty-two. In it, certain indices of arguments or titles and as if chapters, into which the books are cut, are prefixed to individual books. It also often exhibits a

double reading, which we also observed in the Ouche, Lyre and Bigotian ones to be commemorated below.

But Normandy, in which province this new Edition was especially adorned, supplied us with a greater store of mss. Codices, and a harvest of variant readings.

We received the fifteen prior books from the library of the Church of Bayeux, favored especially by the most illustrious and most reverend bishop Henri de Nesmond; who since he is most studious of repairing ecclesiastical discipline from the doctrine of Saint Gregory, thought it should be cared for that the works of the same holy Doctor might go forth emended.

We read all the books of the Morals in the Codices of the Church of Evreux lent to us especially by the benefit of the most illustrious men D. Bitaut, dean, Petit, precentor, and Aubery, canon and prefect of the library.

The same books we compared to various Mss. of Saint-Michel-au-Péril-de-la-Mer, Saint-Martin of Séez, Saint-Evroult in the district of Ouche, Blessed Mary of Lyre, Blessed Peter of Conches, the monastery of Bec, of Préaux, of Jumièges. These Codices almost all seem to attain an age of 700 years, and are of the best mark, especially the Préaux and Jumièges ones which excel in antiquity. The Codices of Saint-Evroult we shall sometimes call Ouche ones from the district of Ouche in which that monastery is situated. The Conches one is now preserved in the most celebrated Bigotian library at Rouen, from which

we received it with very many others, by the humanity of the most illustrious man D. Bigot de Monville, a most upright senator in the supreme court of Normandy; wherefore we shall call it not the Conches but the Bigotian one.

Thomas James supplied us with variant readings of eight English Mss. in the Gregorian Vindications, but very few; from which however it can be understood that the Codices of England written by hand do not differ from ours.

Finally, D. Claude Estiennot sent to us diverse readings of the Roman and Vatican Codices, whom we mourn as having died in this labor and very many others undertaken for the good of the literary republic.

V. The studiousness of Christians towards the books of the Morals of Saint Gregory is no less proved by the frequent Editions of them, from which the typographic art relieved the labors of amanuenses, than by the store of Codices written by hand. It will suffice to review here only those which we have used, whether the praised books were printed separately, or together with other works of the holy Doctor; for to enumerate all would be a task of immense labor and superfluous.

The older read by us is the Parisian one of the year 1495, which came forth by the care of master Ulrich Gering of Constance, and Berthold Rembolt of Strasburg, associates staying in the Golden Sun of the Sorbonne street.

This was followed by very many Parisian ones, namely in the year 1518, with all the works of

Saint Gregory by the study of the same Rembolt or another of the same name in the house of Jean Petit. In the years 1533, 1542, 1551, 1562, 1571, 1575 (which two praised in the last place came forth by the work of Jean Gilot of Champagne, a most learned man), 1586, 1605, 1619, 1640 and 1675, adorned by Goussaunville. The first Basel one is of the year 1496, which very soon followed printed in the workshop of Nicolaus Kessler in the year 1503. To this succeeded that which was made public property in the same city, at the cost and expense of Ludwig Horneken, bookseller and citizen of great Cologne, yet by the labor and care of Adam Petri of Lagendorf, master printer, on the day before the Kalends of February, in the year 1514, from noble Basel, in the reign of our Savior clothed in flesh. This Edition does not seem to differ from the superior Basel one, either in the text, or in the partition of chapters. A fourth was made public property in the year 1551, and again came forth in the year 1564, from the Frobenian workshop, by the care of Buldrich Coccius.

The Roman edition of 1475 excels all the praised Editions in age, with Sixtus IV sitting at Rome, to which is prefixed a brief preface by Dominic, bishop of Brescia. Concerning another Roman one to which the bishop of Venosa applied effort, we have already spoken in the general preface.

We have not rarely applied the Venetian edition of the year 1494, designated below by the halved name Barthol. because of Bartholomew of Cremona, a regular canon, who presided over

the accuracy of this one. A prior Venetian one of the year 1480 had preceded it, which did not occur to us. Concerning other Editions made at Lyon, Rouen, Douai, Antwerp, or elsewhere, we refrain from speaking, so that it may be allowed to explain more fully what has been provided by us in this newest one.

VI. First indeed, from various Mss. collected with great labor and no less faith, we restored the pure text of Saint Gregory, as much as was in us. Receive here a specimen of the places emended by us in the first and second book; for the narrowness of the preface does not allow us to examine all the books of the Morals.

In Book I, num. 17, it was previously read concerning Christ, he took a humble death (mortem) for him; whereas it should be read mind (mentem), etc. Num. 18, which (the jubilee year) with a monad added, the sum of our uniting is filled, where sum (summa) is redundant, and changes the sense; as is to be read in the note to this place. Num. 20, we receive the weaker minds of the faithful, holding the faith of the Trinity; which last three words we struck out, added against the will of the Mss., as altogether superfluous; which is immediately clear to one reading what follows. Num. 21, previously read, the sons and daughters mentioned; although in this place mention should be held of daughters only. Likewise erroneously previously, all the viciousness of the Gentiles (gentilium), for twisted (torta), etc., which reading is built up from the following of the ms. Codices: in the twisted and vicious

conversations of the old life; where corruptly the superior editors read in one word, intortis. Num. 22, for in all that they do (a mode of speaking familiar to Gregory) formerly read, that all (id omne).

In the number immediately following, in other Editions you have: for what is it to come to Jerusalem by sitting (sedendo) an ass. Where against the mind of the holy Doctor Goussaunville reads: sitting a she-ass (asinam). Num. 31, in the same it occurs: through them the grace of preaching (praedicationis) is derived, for of purging (purgationis). Likewise by a heavier error it is read of Christ: for knowing all things, but in himself taking up our ignorance, etc. These things indeed completely abhor from the doctrine of Saint Gregory, as we observed in emending this place. Therefore following the ms. Codices, we restored: But in his speaking taking up our ignorance. Num. 37, previously written: which, by fear (metu) is left, for which by mind (mente) is left, which we replaced from the Mss.

In Book II, num. 9, formerly corruptly: it is said to those who were present (aderant), whereas it should be read, both from Mss. and from the series of the speech: it is said to those who adhere (adhaerent). No less viciously, num. 11, there had crept in, it expresses so much greater a voice into the ears of the circumscribed (circumscripti) spirit, for uncircumscribed (incircumscripti) spirit, namely God. Likewise, how they are said to desire (desiderare) vengeance, for, how they are said to seek (petere). Num. 13,

where it is read, we say that God lost in his proposition, victory was added freely by other Editors. Num. 15, the same changed addicat, which means condemns (condemnet), into addiscat. Num. 19, in other Editions against the faith of the Mss., and the mind of the holy Doctor, after these words, he gives some for tempting, there was added, others for afflicting. Num. 28, for the stroke of stripes (verberum), in the Editions of Goussaunville, the stroke of words (verborum). Num. 35, the printed ones have, he speaks of temporal published (editis) things, with de cautiously added, which particle changes the sense. Num. 49, it is read to savor (sapere) high things, for to take (capere). Num. 56, after these words, he lost the unity of concord, in the Editions follows this long assumption rejected by the Mss., and neither cohering with the preceding nor the following: since even after his resurrection he hid himself from certain ones who would not believe. Num. 59, where it is simply to be read, there will be therefore when he may appear conspicuous even to the Synagogue, thus changed by the Editors, there will be therefore sometimes conspicuous, so that he may appear even to the Synagogue. Num. 60, in the printed ones you read, he receives all things, for, he receives among all things; and num. 61, in persecution (persecutione), for in percussion (percussione). Num. 76, this genuine reading, the house is rescued (eruitur), had been changed into, the house is overwhelmed (obruitur). Finally num. 92, a little before the end of the book, this sentence concerning the Holy

Spirit: differently therefore the spirit remains in him, from whom by nature he never departs, thus interpolated was read: remains in him, to whom he substantially exhibits himself at his wish, and from whom, etc.

Moreover, concerning these restitutions and emendations made by us, we have always subjoined the reason in brief notes more often sought from the consensus of the Mss. But when the old copies dissent, it was enough for us to indicate certain variant readings which seemed of some moment.

VII. Secondly, we have followed the division of this work into six parts instituted by the holy Doctor, observed in our Mss., but neglected in the printed ones, and perhaps unknown by most Editors. Concerning that partition Saint Gregory speaks thus in the epist. to Leander soon to be subjoined: This work, extended through thirty-five volumes, I have completed in six Codices. At the beginning of Book XI: In the letter, he says, prefixed to the books, I have given the cause why I have by no means brought the third part of this work, through emending, even to the likeness of the others. Finally at the end of Book XVI: these things as I remember having promised at the beginning of this third part, I have run through under brevity. It is not worth the effort to confirm this by more things either sought from Gregory himself, or from other writers. Therefore the first part, as will easily be understood from the inspection of the Mss., contains the five prior books. The second part another five up to the

eleventh. From the eleventh begins the third part. The fourth starts from the seventeenth, not from the eighteenth, as is mendaciously held in the Paris Edition 1518. The fifth from the twenty-third, and ends in the twenty-seventh. To the sixth part the twenty-eighth book belongs with the remaining ones.

VIII. Thirdly, although it was in our mind to retain the division of chapters instituted by those Editors who preceded us, we were nevertheless compelled to change it for most grave reasons. It is confessed among all that Saint Gregory did not care about distinguishing the books of the Morals by chapters. Concerning the first author of the division made by chapters, these things are read in the Colbertine Cod. marked 62, after the letter to Leander, and the preface to the books of the Morals.

In the name of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. Here begins the prologue over the chapters of the Morals of the most venerable blessed Gregory the pope. Gregory, the servant of Christ Jesus and most venerable pope of the city of Rome, composed and pretitled many volumes of books. He also prefixed a series of chapters through the books. He also made an exposition on the words of Job, but did not add an ordering of chapters to its sentences. Therefore in the time of the emperor Henry II, Rainerius, a priest and canon of the Church of Arezzo, by vigilant study and thought, placed chapters under almost all the sentences of the aforesaid exposition, not for the favor of

vain glory, but led by the zeal of divine love and for the utility of readers, or even of those hearing readers; so that whatever useful thing one might seek for the time in those sentences, he might find it quickly and as if without labor.

In the prior Parisian Editions, and in others either older or almost equal, the books of the Morals were distinguished into various very brief sections, with no mention made of chapters. The Basel one of the year 1503 exhibits a partition of chapters, which the following Editors retained up to Coccius. For he, as he himself prefaces, having followed another method of division, instituted new chapters; which division persisted in all other posterior Editions. But that we should depart from this and from that way of dividing which had preceded, we were persuaded because we observed that the same chapter often embraced things thoroughly diverse: or that the same argument, to which a single chapter should be owed, was distributed into many. For example in the old Editions before Coccius chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the first book, and in the posterior Cocciana and the others which followed, chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the same book, in which the historical and literal explanation of the text of Job is finished, and with the style changed the allegorical exposition is begun at these words: There was a man in the land of Uz, etc., these things we believe were done through history, etc.

Since therefore neither mode of assigning chapters pleased us, we embraced that which the verses of the book of Job, either whole or

halved, seemed to offer, while they are proposed to be explained singly by the holy Doctor; so that the beginning of the chapter and of the paraphrase or explanation is almost always the same. Nevertheless, however, we cared to part the text into smaller sections distinguished by numerical marks. We have also assigned the chapters of the prior Editions between brackets, so that those which are praised here and there in books according to those Editions, can be found with no trouble. We call the older ones before the Cocciana, Vet.; but this one and the following, Rec.

IX. Fourthly, we have changed the arguments of the chapters almost everywhere, because they by no means responded to the text. Immediately occurs the example of the argument of chapter 1 of the preface. In the Paris Edition of the year 1518, it is read: concerning what stock, or at what time Job was; which in the following Editions even in the Goussaunville one of the year 1675, persisted. Nevertheless it by no means represents the scope of Saint Gregory; for he discusses in this place concerning the writer of the book of Job; he asks whether it was Moses or another of the prophets, and at length teaches that the Holy Spirit is the only author of this sacred book, having used however the pen of Job himself, which we thought should be signified in the argument.

Since the arguments in the superior Editions have up to this point been annotated in a preposterous order before the inscription of the chapters, we preferred to follow the custom usu-

ally observed in publishing other books; and first indeed we judged that the chapter should be inscribed; then what is treated in the assigned chapter, to be opened by a brief argument. Moreover, whatever occurred to us in the text worthy of observation, we described summarily in the margin. By brief notes also rejected to the bottom of the columns, we have illustrated certain obscure places and those minimally clear to unpolished readers. Furthermore, how ancient the use is of ascribing in the outer margin summaries of those things which are contained more fully in the context, is clear from Jerome's epist. 101, to Pammachius, who, asked by Eusebius of Cremona to turn a certain Letter of Epiphanius into Latin, writes thus concerning this work: I did what he wanted, and having called a notary I dictated hurriedly and swiftly from the side on the page, briefly annotating what inward sense the individual chapters contained.

Fifthly, we have cut back as useless the long texts of the book of Job containing entire chapters, which we found in no Mss. books.

Sixthly, we have prefixed the testimonies and eulogies of ancient writers concerning the books of the Morals already published, with some things either added or taken away.

X. From this edition we did not want to strike out the history of the Morals found by Tajone, bishop of Zaragoza, although not in every part certain; which we read not only in all the older Editions, but also in the Codex written by hand

of the monastery of Longpont. The reasons for doubting the truth of this narration are many.

First, it is said here that Saint Leander brought Job as explained by Saint Gregory into Spain to the see of Seville. It is constant however that at the request of Leander it was sent by the holy Doctor through Probinus the priest, as is read in book V, epist. 49. Otherwise indeed, how could it be proved that Saint Leander came to Rome while Saint Gregory was sitting?

Secondly, the Roman pontiff in this relation is called simply pope and lord pope, as if he already then enjoyed this title singularly; whether this smells of this age and antiquity we do not sufficiently know.

Thirdly, there exists a letter of Tajone himself to Eugenius of Toledo published by the illustrious man Etienne Baluze, in the Miscellanies vol. IV, from the Colbertine Cod., in which no mention is made of the miracle concerning the invention of the Morals, even if Tajone had found an occasion for commemorating this. Nay, he denies that Gregory was ever seen by him: We have seen, he says, our Gregory placed at Rome, not by sights of the body, but by gazes of the mind. We have seen him not only in his notaries, but also in his familiars, etc. Therefore those things which are held concerning Gregory seen by Tajone in the history of the invention of the Morals, are to be rejected.

Fourthly, that which is read in this relation, that Augustine is contained in a higher place than any of the successors of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, among whom very many martyrs are

numbered, does not seem worthy of faith. Concerning Tajone and the Morals found by him one can read Mariana, book VI of the History, c. 8, and Mabillon, vol. II Analect., p. 78.

Concerning the kind of writing observed by Saint Gregory in the books of the Morals there is nothing else to be warned, than what we said above in the general preface. He speaks indeed especially of these books, when he says at the end of the letter to Leander: I do not flee the collision of metacism; I do not avoid the confusion of barbarism, etc. Where by metacism we conjectured that the frequent hyperbata or transpositions of words, which occur both in the Morals and in other works of Saint Gregory, can be understood. Perhaps however by metacism is to be understood rather, according to the mind of grammarians, the frequent repetition of the letter m, which generates an unpleasant collision in speech, although we have not caught repetitions of this kind in the Morals.

Col. 767, in a note is read with the punctuation changed, and there is added: by this voice, punctuation (punctuatio), although less used or even recently forged, necessity will sometimes compel use, lest place be given to circumlocutions. Nevertheless from this voice which occurred to us in the notes of Angelo Rocca to the book of Sacraments, and in similar writers, we thereafter abstained, and interpunction (interpunctio) pleased more.

CONCERNING THE INVENTION OF THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF SAINT GREGORY. (C,S)*

Blessed Gregory the pope explained the book of blessed Job, at the request of Saint Leander, bishop of Seville, as can be clearly seen in the prologue of the Morals, and delivered it explained to him; and he brought it, explained, into Spain to the see of Seville. Moreover, the city of Seville is called Seville in the vernacular name, and is the metropolis of Spain. Therefore, on the death of blessed Leander, Saint Isidore his brother, a distinguished doctor, was made archbishop in his place. After his death, the books of the Morals, which blessed Leander had brought, were so lost through negligence that they were not found in all Spain. After some years, therefore, Chindasuinth, king of Spain, assembled a council of thirty bishops in the city of Toledo: where a complaint having been made concerning the loss of the Morals, by the unanimous counsel of the bishops, the aforesaid king sent Tajone, bishop of Zaragoza, to Rome with letters to the pope, for seeking the same books. For Bishop Tajone was a most fervent lover of divine Scripture. He came therefore to Rome, and having presented the royal letters and gifts, when from day to day he saw his petition deferred by the pope, as if because of the multitude of other books, those which he sought could not be found in the archive of the apostolic see, at last he asked that at least license might be given to him, to keep vigil and pray for one whole night in the

church of blessed Peter. Having obtained it, when he more earnestly besought God, that now at last the effect of his journey might be prospered, behold about midnight, persisting in that very fervor of prayer, he saw the whole Church be filled with an immense light. Then he looks upon a great multitude of venerable men clothed in snowy garments, entering the door of the church, and tending in decent order two and two to the altar of Saint Peter. And when, thoroughly terrified by too much fear, he did not dare to move himself from the place in which he stood, behold he saw two of them, having gone out from their assembly, coming to him. Of whom one sweetly saluting him, inquired who he was, from where and why he had come, and why he kept vigil there at that hour. The bishop indeed responding to the individual things, and relating the whole cause of his journey and prayer, he who had come, extending a finger: in that chest, he said, which you discern, are contained the books which you seek. Then indeed the bishop, having assumed confidence, I beseech, he said, my lord, that you may deign to open to me your servant what that is which I discern, so distinguished a procession of men. Forthwith he responding, those two, he said, whom you see preceding, and embracing each other with hand inserted in turn, are the blessed apostles Peter and Paul. Moreover the rest, whom you discern standing after them, are the successors of them, the pontiffs of this apostolic see. And in the same order in which they followed them in the episcopate,

they also now follow them. And as they loved this Church in their life, so also now after death they love it, and frequently come to visit it. Then the bishop, I pray, he said, my lord, that you may tell me who you yourself are. He responded: I am Gregory, for whose books you have sustained the labor of so great a journey. And therefore I have now come that I might satisfy your petition. Then the bishop said, I beseech, my lord, if he is here, tell me which of those is the blessed Father Augustine, whose books I have loved no less than yours. He responded: A higher place than us contains the most excellent man Augustine, concerning whom you inquire. He said these things, and immediately with the companion who had come with him, he returned to the assembly of the others. Afterwards, with the bishop seeing, all together bowing their heads reverently to the altar of blessed Peter, in the same order in which they had come, they sought again the door of the Church, and with the light which he had seen before they withdrew. Moreover, when morning was made, the aforesaid bishop related to the lord Pope all things which he had seen. And thus he brought the books of the Morals, received and described, back into Spain. And he instituted that this vision should be prenoted and prescribed to them thereafter.

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT, ROMAN PONTIFF, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB. (C,S)

Letter In which he explains the time, occasion, division, purpose and mode of speaking and interpreting of his work.

CHAPTER ONE. When the following work was begun, on what occasion, by which encouragers, and what they requested.

1. To the most reverend and holy brother Leander, fellow bishop, Gregory, servant of the servants of God.

Knowing you, most blessed brother, for a long time in the city of Constantinople, when the responses of the Apostolic See constrained me there, and the embassy enjoined upon you for the causes of the faith of the Visigoths had brought you there, I exposed in your ears everything that displeased me about myself: because for a long time and from afar I deferred the grace of conversion, and after I was inspired by heavenly desire, I thought it better to be covered in a secular habit. For it was already being opened to me by the love of eternity what I should seek, but ingrained custom had bound me, lest I change my outward attire. And while my mind still compelled me to serve the present world as if only in appearance, many things began to grow against me from the care of that same world, so that in it I was now retained not only in appearance, but, what is more grave, in mind. Finally, fleeing all these things with solicitude, I sought the haven of the monastery, and having left those things which are of the world, as I then vainly believed, I escaped naked from the shipwreck of this life. For as the wave often drives out a ship carelessly moored, even from the bosom of the

safest shore, when a storm grows, I suddenly found myself, under the pretext of ecclesiastical order, in the sea of secular causes; and the quiet of the monastery, because I did not hold it strongly by having it, I recognized by losing it how strictly it ought to have been held. For when the virtue of obedience was opposed to me for receiving the ministry of the sacred altar, this was undertaken under the color of the Church, so that if it were permitted with impunity, it might again be turned aside by fleeing. And after this, to me unwilling and resisting, since the ministry of the altar was grave, the weight of pastoral care was also enjoined. Which I now tolerate so much more hardly, as feeling myself unequal to it, I breathe in no consolation of confidence. For since the times of the world, with evils becoming frequent as the end approaches, are disturbed; we ourselves, who are believed to serve internal mysteries, are involved in external cares: just as at that time also, in which I approached the ministry of the altar, this was done concerning me, without my knowing it, that I should receive the weight of the sacred order, so that I might keep watch more freely in the earthly palace; where indeed many of my brothers from the monastery, bound by twin charity, followed me. Which I see was done by divine dispensation, so that I might always be restrained by their example to the placid shore of prayer, as if by the rope of an anchor, while I was tossed by the incessant impulse of secular causes. To their company, as if to the bosom of the safest port, I fled from the volumes

and waves of earthly acts; and although that ministry, having withdrawn me from the monastery, had extinguished the life of my former quiet by the sword of its occupation; yet among them, through the conversation of studious reading, the aspiration of daily compunction animated me. Then it pleased the same brothers, you also compelling, as you yourself remember, that they should compel me by importunate petition to explain the book of blessed Job; and as truth would infuse strength, I should open to them mysteries of such great depth. They also added this to me in the burden of their petition, that I should not only examine the words of the history through the senses of allegories, but immediately turn the senses of the allegories into the exercise of morality; adding something still more grave, that I should gird each thing understood with testimonies; and the testimonies brought forward, if they perhaps seemed involved, I should unravel by the interposition of an added exposition.

CHAPTER TWO. WITH WHAT LOWLINESS OF MIND, WITH WHAT CONFIDENCE IN GOD. BY WHAT REASON THE SAME WORK WAS RETRACTED, FINISHED, AND DIVIDED. WHAT SENSES IT SEARCHES OUT.

But soon, as I recognized that I was being drawn to such great and such things in this obscure work, and hitherto unexamined before us, overcome by the weight of hearing alone, I confess, and being weary, I succumbed. But suddenly caught between fear and devotion, when I

raised the eyes of my mind to the Giver of gifts, hesitation having been put aside, I immediately attended with certainty, because it could not be impossible, what charity was commanding me from fraternal hearts. Indeed, I despaired of being fit for these things: but more robust by that very despair of mine, I immediately raised my hope to Him through whom the tongue of the mute is opened, who makes the tongues of infants eloquent; who distinguished the immense and brute brayings of the ass into the sensible modes of human conversation. What wonder is it, then, if He provides understanding to a foolish man, who tells His truth, when He wills, even through the mouths of beasts of burden? Girded by the strength of this consideration, I excited my aridity to track down the fountain of such great depth. And although the life of those to whom I was compelled to explain far transcended me, yet I did not believe it to be injurious if a leaden pipe should administer the streams for the uses of men. Hence soon, with the same brothers placed before me, I spoke the prior parts of the book under their eyes; and because I found a somewhat more vacant time, I dictated the latter parts while treating them. And when wider spaces were supplied to me, increasing many things, subtracting a few, and thus leaving some as they were found, I composed those things which had been taken down under their eyes while I was speaking, by emending them through books, because even when I dictated the last parts, I carefully attended to what style I had spoken the first. I acted, there-

fore, so that by running through those things which I spoke with studious emendation, I might raise them as if to the likeness of a dictated work; and those things which I had dictated should not differ far from the speech of one conversing; so that while this is stretched and that is drawn back, a thing not dissimilar might be formed from a dissimilar mode of publication; although I left the third part of this work almost as I delivered it by conversing, because as the brothers drew me to other things, they did not want this to be more subtly emended. To whom indeed, as they commanded many things, while I wanted to obey now through the ministry of exposition, now through the ascent of contemplation, now through the instrument of morality, I completed this work extended through thirty-five volumes, in six codices. Whence also in it I am often found to postpone, as it were, the order of exposition, and I labor a little longer in the breadth of contemplation and morality. But nevertheless, whoever speaks of God must take care that he searches out whatever instructs the morals of the hearers; and he should repute this the right order of speaking, if when the opportunity of edification requires, he usefully derives himself from that which he had begun to speak. For the treater of sacred eloquence ought to imitate the custom of a river. For a river, while it flows down through its bed, if it touches concave valleys on the side, it immediately diverts the course of its impetus into them; and when it has sufficiently filled them, it suddenly pours itself back into its

bed. So indeed, so ought the treater of the divine word to be, so that when he discusses any matter, if perhaps he finds an occasion of suitable edification placed near, he may twist the waves of his tongue as if to a neighboring valley; and when he has sufficiently infused the field of the subjoined instruction, he may return to the bed of the proposed speech.

CHAPTER THREE.

In what order he explains the individual senses. Sometimes it is necessary to adhere to the allegorical.

It is to be known, indeed, that we run through some things with a historical exposition, and we search out some things with a typical investigation through allegory; we discuss some things through the instruments of allegorical morality alone; but some things, searching for all together more solicitously, we investigate in a threefold way. For first indeed we lay the foundations of history; then through typical significance we erect the fabric of the mind into the citadel of faith; at the end also through the grace of morality, we clothe the building as if with an added color. Or certainly, what are the words of truth to be believed, if not as nourishments for refreshing the mind? Which by discussing in many ways with alternating modes, we offer a dish to the mouth; so that we may repel the fastidiousness of the invited reader as if our guest, who while he considers many things offered to him, may take what he decides is more elegant. But sometimes

we neglect to explain the open words of history, lest we come more slowly to the obscure: but sometimes they cannot be understood according to the letter; because accepted on the surface, they by no means produce instruction for readers, but error. For behold, it is said: "Under whom they are bent who carry the world" (Job IX, 13). And concerning such a great man, who does not know that he by no means follows the vain fables of the poets, so that he should suspect the mass of the world to be carried under giant sweat? He who again, pressed by strokes, says: "My soul has chosen hanging, and my bones death" (Job VII, 15). And who rightly wise would believe that a man of such great praise, whom it is evident receives rewards for the virtue of patience from the internal judge, had decided to finish his life by hanging among the lashes? Sometimes also, lest perhaps they ought to be understood according to the letter, the very words of the letter oppose themselves. For he says: "Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said: A man is conceived" (Job III, 2). And a little after he subjoins: "Let darkness occupy it, and let it be involved in bitterness" (Ibid., 5). And in the curse of the same night he subjoins: "Let that night be solitary" (Ib., 7). Which indeed day of birth, having passed away by the very impulse of time, could not stand. For in what way did he wish this to be involved in darkness? Having slipped away, it already was not; and yet if it subsisted in the nature of things, it could by no means feel bitterness. It is evident, therefore, that

it is by no means said of an insensible day, which is wished to be struck by the sense of bitterness. And if the night of conception, joined to the rest of the nights, had departed, in what way does he wish this to become solitary? Which as it could not be fixed from the lapse of time, so also it could not be separated from the conjunction of the remaining nights. He who again says: "How long do you not spare me, nor let me alone, that I may swallow my saliva" (Job VII, 19)? And yet a little above he had said: "The things which my soul before would not touch, now through anguish are my meats" (Job VI, 7). But who does not know that saliva can be swallowed more easily than food? He therefore who announces that he takes food, it is very incredible in what order he denies that he can swallow saliva. And again he says: "I have sinned, what shall I do to you, O guardian of men" (Job VII, 20)? or certainly: "You wish to consume me with the sins of my youth" (Job XIII, 26)? And yet in another response he subjoins: "For neither has my heart reprehended me in all my life" (Job XXVII, 6). In what way therefore is he minutely reprehended by his heart in all his life, who testifies by public voice that he has sinned? For never do the fault of the work and the irreprehensibility of the heart meet together at once. But indeed the words of the letter, while they cannot agree when compared to themselves, show something else in themselves which should be sought, as if they say with certain voices: While you behold us destroyed on our surface, seek this in us, which ordained and congruent

with itself among us may prevail to be found within.

CHAPTER FOUR.

Sometimes it is necessary to adhere to the literal sense.

But sometimes he who neglects to accept the words of history according to the letter, hides the light of truth offered to him; and while he laboriously desires to find another thing within them from within, he loses this which he was able to attain without difficulty from without. For the holy man says: "If I have denied what the poor wanted, and have made the eyes of the widow wait; if I have eaten my morsel alone, and the pupil has not eaten from it; if I have despised him that passed by, because he had no garment, and the poor man without a covering; if his sides have not blessed me, and he was not warmed from the fleeces of my sheep" (Job XXXI, 16 et seq.). Which indeed if we violently inflect to the sense of allegory, we empty all the facts of his mercy. For the divine word, as it exercises the prudent with mysteries, so for the most part it refreshes the simple with the surface. It has in public whence it may nourish the little ones, it keeps in secret whence it may suspend the minds of the sublime in admiration. For it is as it were a certain river, so to speak, shallow and deep, in which both a lamb may walk and an elephant may swim. As therefore the opportunity of each place demands, so the order of the exposition changes itself through study; so that it may find the sense of the divine speech

so much more truly, as it alternates through the species of causes, as each matter shall require.

CHAPTER FIVE.

Gregory, laboring under sickness, finished the following work. He neglected the art of speaking. What versions of Scripture he uses.

Which exposition indeed I have transmitted to your blessedness to be reviewed, not as if I ought it as worthy, but because I remember having promised it at your request. In which whatever your holiness shall find lukewarm and uncultivated, let it indulge me so much more quickly, as it does not ignore that I, a sick man, say this. For while the body is worn down by molestation, even the studies of speaking languish with an affected mind. For many courses of years already roll away, that I am tortured by frequent pains of the bowels, at every hour and moment I grow weary from the broken strength of my stomach, I pant with slow indeed, but yet continuous fevers. And among these things while I solicitously weigh because, as Scripture witnesses, "Every son who is received by God is scourged" (Hebr. XII, 6), by how much more hardly I am depressed by present evils, by so much more certainly I breathe in from eternal presumption. And perhaps this was the counsel of divine providence, that I, being smitten, should explain the smitten Job, and should better feel the mind of the scourged through scourges. But nevertheless to those rightly considering it is clear, because

corporal molestation opposes the studies of my labor in this no small adversity, that when the strength of the flesh is scarcely sufficient to exhibit the ministry of speech, the mind cannot worthily intimate what it feels. For what is the office of the body, unless the organ of the heart? And however skilled the artist of singing may be, he is not able to fulfill his art, unless the external ministries also concord with him for this: because indeed the song, which the learned hand commands, the shattered organs do not properly resound; nor does the blast express the art, if the pipe hissing with cracks strident. By how much therefore more gravely is the quality of my exposition pressed, in which the fracture of the organ so dissipates the grace of speaking, that no art of skill may compose it? But I ask that by running through the sayings of this work, you do not seek in these the leaves of words, because through the sacred eloquence the levity of unfruitful loquacity is studiously restrained by their treaters, while a grove is prohibited to be planted in the temple of God (Deut. XVI, 21). And we all without doubt know, that as often as the stalks of the harvest profit evilly joyful in leaves, the grains swell with less fullness of the ears. Whence also I have despised to keep the very art of speaking, which the masteries of external discipline insinuate. For as the tenor of this epistle also enunciates, I do not flee the collision of metacism, I do not avoid the confusion of barbarism, I contemn to keep the sites and motions and cases of prepositions, because I vehemently judge it unworthy to

restrict the words of the heavenly oracle under the rules of Donatus. For neither have these been kept by any interpreters in the authority of the sacred Scripture. From which indeed because our exposition arises, it is truly worthy that the offspring brought forth as it were should imitate the appearance of its mother. But I discuss the new translation; but when the cause of proof requires, I assume now the new, now the old through testimonies; so that because the Apostolic See, which I preside over by God's authority, uses both, the labor of my study may also be supported from both.

PREFACE IN WHICH HE TOUCHES IN A FEW WORDS UPON THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE TO BE EXPLAINED IN THE WHOLE WORK.

CHAPTER ONE.

1. Who is the writer of the book of Job. --- It is often asked among many who is to be held as the writer of the book of the blessed Job. And some indeed suspect that Moses, others that some one of the prophets was the writer of this work. For because in the book of Genesis (Gen. 36:33) Jobab is described to have descended from the stock of Esau, and to have succeeded Bela the son of Beor in the kingdom, they believed that this blessed Job existed long before the times of Moses, being ignorant indeed of the custom of sacred eloquence, because in its prior parts it is accustomed to touch briefly upon those things that are to follow long after, when it strives to

hasten to other things to be enumerated more subtilely. Whence also Jobab is mentioned there to have been before the kings existed in Israel. By no means therefore is he known to have existed before the law, who is signaled to have been in the time of the Israelitish judges. While some consider this less cautiously, they think Moses to be the writer of his deeds as if set long before; so that indeed he who was able to put forth the precepts of the law for our erudition, the same may be believed to have also committed to us examples of virtue from the history of a Gentile man. Some truly, as has been said, think some one of the prophets to be the writer of this work: asserting that no one could know such mystical words of God, unless one whose mind the spirit of prophecy raised to things above.

2. The Holy Spirit is the author. ---But it is very superfluously asked who wrote these things, since nevertheless the Holy Spirit is faithfully believed to be the author of the book. He therefore wrote these things, who dictated them to be written. He wrote them, who both existed as the inspirer in his work, and transmitted his deeds to be imitated by us through the voice of the writer. If we should read the words of some great man in received letters, but should ask with what pen they were written, it would truly be ridiculous to know the author of the letters and to understand the sense, but to track down with what kind of pen their words were impressed. When therefore we know the matter, and we hold the Holy Spirit to be the author of that matter, because we seek

the writer, what else do we do, except while reading the letters, we inquire about the pen?

[Old 2.] 3. By whose inspiration Job described his struggles. ---We can nevertheless more truly think that the same blessed Job, who sustained the struggles of the spiritual fight, also narrated the deeds of his consummated victory. Nor ought it to move us that it is said in the same book, "Job said"; or, "Job bore these and those things." For it is the custom of sacred Scripture that they who write, so speak of themselves in it as if of others. Hence it is that Moses says: "Moses was a man most mild above all men who dwelt on the earth" (Num. 12:3). Hence John says: "That disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 19:26). Hence Luke says: "That two of the disciples walked in the way, Cleopas and another" (Luke 24:13); which other indeed, while he was so studiously silent, as some say, he showed to have been himself. The writers therefore of the sacred eloquence, because they are moved by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, so bring forth testimony about themselves in it as if about others. Therefore the Holy Spirit spoke about Moses through Moses; the Holy Spirit spoke about John through John. Paul also, because he would not speak from himself, insinuates saying: "Do you seek a proof of Christ who speaks in me?" (2 Cor. 13:3). Hence it is that the angel who is described to have appeared to Moses is mentioned now as an angel, now as the Lord: an angel indeed, on account of this, that he served by speaking outwardly; but he is called the Lord, because presiding inwardly he ministered the ef-

ficacy of speaking. When therefore the speaker is ruled from the interior, he is named both an angel through obedience, and the Lord through inspiration. Hence David says: "Attend, my people, to my law; incline your ear to the words of my mouth" (Psal. 77:1 [78:1]). For it is not the law of David, or the people of David, but assuming the person of Him from whom he spoke, he speaks by His authority, by whose inspiration he was filled. We see this daily done in the Church, if we look vigilantly. For the lector standing in the midst of the people cries out: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exod. 3:6). And that he himself is God, he truly does not say; nor yet through this that he says it, does he desert the rule of truth; because to Him to whom he exhibits ministry by reading, his dominion he pretends by voice. Therefore the writers of the sacred eloquence, because being filled with the Holy Spirit they are drawn above themselves, they become as if outside themselves; and so they bring forth sentences about themselves, as if about others. Whence also the blessed Job, breathed upon by the Holy Spirit, could write his own deeds, which were indeed the gifts of supernal aspiration, as if not his own: because those things which he spoke were of another, in that a man spoke the things which are of God; and in that he spoke as another the things which were his, in that the Holy Spirit spoke the things which are of man.

CHAPTER TWO [OLD 3].

4. Precepts given to man. ---But we ought now to postpone those things, and to hasten to consider the deeds of the sacred history. Every man by the very fact that he is a man, ought to understand his Creator; to whose will he should serve so much the more, as he weighs that he is nothing of himself; but behold, we have neglected to consider the God of our creation. Precepts have been applied, and we have also been unwilling to obey the precepts. Examples are added, and we also decline to imitate the examples, which we see to have been put forth for us by those set under the law. For because God spoke openly to certain ones set under the law, we look upon ourselves as if alien from those same precepts, to whom He did not speak these things specially. Whence for the confounding of our impudence, a Gentile man is brought forward for an example; so that because man, being set under the law, despises to obey the law, he may at least wake up by the comparison of him who lived legally without the law. Therefore the law was given to erring man; but to the erring man even under the law, the testimony of those who are outside the law is brought in, so that because we were unwilling to keep the order of our condition, we might be admonished by precepts; and because we contemned to obey the precepts, we might be confounded by examples; nor, as has been said, by the examples of those whom the law would bind, but whom no law would restrain from sin.

5. To the one contemning the precepts are added the examples of Job, a Gentile man. ---

Divine providence has circumscribed us, it has circumvented our excuse; the access of human tergiversation is closed on every side. A Gentile man, a man without the law, is brought to the midst, so that the depravity of those who are under the law may be confounded. Which is well and briefly shown by the prophet saying: "Be ashamed, O Sidon, says the sea" (Isa. 23:4). For in Sidon is figured the stability of those set in the law - but in the sea, the life of the Gentiles. Be ashamed therefore, Sidon, says the sea, because by the life of the Gentiles the life of those set under the law is reproved, and from the action of seculars the action of the religious is confounded: while those do not keep even by promising what they hear in the precepts; and these by living keep those things in which they are by no means bound by legal mandates [Old 4]. By what authority truly this book is endowed, the very solidity of the sacred pages witnesses, while it is said through Ezekiel the prophet (Ezek. 14:14), that three men only are delivered, Noah namely, Daniel and Job. Nor is it without merit that among the lives of the Hebrews, the life of a just Gentile is brought into the reverence of authority, because our Redeemer, just as He came for the redemption of Jews and Gentiles, so He willed to be prophesied by the voices of Jews and Gentiles; so that by both peoples He might be spoken of, who would suffer at some time for both peoples.

6. His virtue, that it might fragrance the more, was worn down by scourges. ---This man therefore, supported by the highest strengths, was

known to himself and to God: who if he were not scourged, would by no means be recognized by us. For virtue indeed exercised itself through rest, but the opinion of virtue, being moved through scourges, fragranced. And he who being quiet in himself contained what he was, being moved, scattered the odor of his fortitude to the notice of all. For just as ointments do not know how to smell more widely unless moved, and just as spices do not expand their fragrance except when they are burned; so holy men in tribulations become known for all that they fragrance with virtues. Whence also it is rightly said in the Gospel: "If you shall have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain: Pass hence, and it shall pass" (Matth. 17:19 [17:20]). For unless a grain of mustard seed be ground, by no means is the force of its virtue recognized. For unground it is mild: but if it be ground, it grows hot, and what was lying hid most sharp in itself, it shows. So every holy man, when he is not beaten, is seen as despicable and mild: but if any grinding of persecution should oppress him, soon he shows everything that tastes hot; and whatever before seemed despicable and weak in him is turned into the fervor of virtue; and what he had willingly covered in himself through times of tranquility, being agitated by tribulations, he is forced to become known. Whence it is well said by the prophet: "In the day the Lord commanded His mercy, and in the night He declared it" (Ps. 41:9 [42:8]). For the mercy of the Lord is commanded in the day, because in a tranquil

time it is perceived by knowing; but in the night it is declared, because the gift which is taken in tranquility is manifested in tribulations.

CHAPTER THREE

[Old 5].

7. The virtues of Job are recounted. ---But it is to be more subtilely scrutinized why he bore so many scourges, who kept so great a custody of virtues without reproach. For he had humility, because he himself witnesses: "If I contemned to undergo judgment with my servant, and my handmaid, when they disputed against me" (Job 31:13). He exhibited hospitality, as he himself offers, saying: "The stranger did not remain without, my door was open to the traveler" (Job 31:32). He held the vigor of discipline, as he himself indicates saying: "The princes ceased to speak, and they put their finger upon their mouth" (Job 29:9). He kept gentleness in vigor, as he himself confesses, saying: "And when I sat as a king, with the army standing around, I was nevertheless the consoler of the mournful" (Ibid., 25). He embraced the largess of alms, as he himself insinuates saying: "If I ate my morsel alone, and the orphan did not eat of it" (Job 31:17). Since therefore he perfected all the mandates of virtues, one thing was lacking to him, that even being scourged he might know how to give thanks. It was known that he knew how to serve God among gifts: but it had been worthy that the strictness of severity should inquire

whether he would remain devout to God even among scourges. For pain interrogates, if any one truly loves being quiet. Whom the enemy indeed sought that he might fail, but received that he might profit. The Lord benignly permitted to be done what the devil iniquitously asked. For when the enemy had sought him for this reason, that he might consume him, by tempting he acted so that he might increase his merits. For it is written: "In all these things Job did not sin with his lips" (Job 1:22). And indeed certain words of his responses resound harsh to unskilled readers, because they are ignorant of how to piously understand the sayings of the saints, as they are said; and because they do not know how to assume the mind of a suffering and just man in themselves, therefore they cannot well interpret the words of pain. For the condescension of passion knows well how to weigh the mind of the sufferer.

8. He is absolved from the criminations of the unskilled by the judgment of God. ---They believe therefore that the blessed Job failed in his speeches, looking less cautiously, because if the responses of the blessed Job are reproved, they witness that the sentence of the Lord about him was also false. For it is said to the devil by the Lord: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth: a man simple and upright and fearing God, and departing from evil?" (Ver. 8). To whom it is soon responded by the devil: "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not hedged him and all his family? But put forth thy hand, and touch him, if he will not bless

thee to thy face" (Ver. 10). The enemy therefore exercised his strengths in the blessed Job, but nevertheless assumed the struggle against God. Between God therefore and the devil the blessed Job was in the middle as the matter of the struggle [Old 6]. Whoever therefore asserts that the holy man, set among scourges, sinned in his sayings, what else does he do, than reprove God, who had proposed for him, as having lost? He himself indeed willed to take the cause of the tempted in himself, who both preferred him before the scourges, and preferring him permitted him to be tempted through scourges. If therefore Job is said to have exceeded, his praiser is reported to have succumbed, although his gifts also witness that he by no means failed. For who knows not that not rewards, but punishments are due to faults? He therefore who deserved to receive double what he had lost, taught by the remuneration that all that he said was by no means vice but virtue. To this assertion is also added, that he himself intercedes for his delinquent friends. For anyone placed in grave sins (Cause 3, q. 7, c. In gravibus), while he is pressed by his own, does not dilute those of another. He is shown therefore to be clean of himself, who could obtain emendation for others. But if this displeases certain ones, that he himself narrated his good things, it is to be known that among so many losses of things, among so many wounds of the body, among so many funerals of children, to the friends coming for consolation, and breaking forth into increpation, he was compelled to despair of his life; and

him whom so many detriments had afflicted, the contumelious words of the increpers struck besides. For these, who had come to console, while they as it were reproached his injustice, compelled him to despair of himself fundamentally. That he therefore recalls his good things to mind, he does not lift himself up through boasting; but as if collapsed among words and wounds, he reforms his mind to hope. For the mind is struck by a grave weapon of despair, when it is pressed by the tribulations of supernal wrath, and is urged from without by the reproaches of tongues. The blessed Job therefore, pierced by the javelin of so many pains, while he feared to be made to fail through reproaches, recalled himself to a state of confidence by confirming himself from his past life. By no means therefore did he fall into the vice of arrogance, because he fought against the internal impulse of despair through the external words of his praises; so that while he said the good things which he had done, he might by no means despair of the good which he had sought.

CHAPTER FOUR

[Old 7].

9. All the machinations of Satan erected against Job. ---But let us now follow the very order of his temptation. The raging enemy, and contending to subdue the most valiant breast of the holy man, erected all the machines of temptations against him; he took away his substance, he killed his sons, he struck his body, he instigated

his wife, he brought friends for consolation; but he excited them into the sharpness of increpation: he also kept another friend more harshly increping, for the final and sharper invective, so that at least by striking more frequently he might touch the heart, which he would always reiterate with a new wound. For because he saw him powerful in the world, he believed him to be moved by the losses of substance, whom he beat not shaken from the death of his sons. But seeing that even from the wound of bereavement he grew to the increase of divine praise, he sought the health of the body to be struck. Looking also because through the pain of the body he could not arrive at the passion of the mind, he instigated the wife. For he saw the city, which he desired to storm, too much fortified; and therefore bringing in so many blows outwardly, he as it were moved the army without; but inflaming the mind of the wife in words of bad persuasion, he as it were corrupted the hearts of the citizens within. For from external wars we learn what we should feel about internal ones. For the raging enemy, and walling the city with circumfused armies, if he shall have seen its fortifications invincible, turns himself to other arguments of fighting, that he may also corrupt the hearts of certain citizens within; so that when he has moved the attackers from without, he may also have internal helpers, and with the struggle of war increasing without, the city destitute of their perfidy, in whose faith it is confided within, may be taken.

10. War without, he applied virulent counsels within. Therefore having as it were set up a ram without, he beat the wall of this city with as many strokes as the times he announced adverse things. Within truly he as it were corrupted the hearts of the citizens, while he studied to destroy the strong fortifications of this city by the persuasion of the spouse. Without therefore he moved the impetus of war, within the poisons of counsel: so that he might take the city so much more quickly, as he would disturb it outwardly and inwardly. [Old 8.] Because however words sometimes disturb more than wounds, he armed himself, as has been said, with the tongues of friends. Who indeed because they were seniors, it could perhaps be grieved less from their words. Elihu the younger is substituted, that he might strike the holy breast with so much more sharp a wound, as he would excite the strokes of a viler arm against it. Behold, for the striking of the most invincible strength the raging enemy, how many javelins of temptations he found; behold, how many machinations of sieges he placed around; behold, how many weapons of percussions he transmitted: but in all these the mind remained unterrified, the city stood unshaken.

CHAPTER FIVE.

11. The patience of Job in adverse things. --- Enemies, when they come against the face, study to transmit others from a hidden place, who might strike the side of the one fighting so much more licentiously, as he who fights looks more

intently at the enemies coming against his face. [Rec. 5.] Therefore Job, caught in the war of this struggle, received losses, as if enemies against the face; he sustained the words of the consolers, as if enemies from the side: but in all these with the shield of his gravity turned around, he stood fortified everywhere, he vigilantly met the swords coming from every side: he silently despises the lost substance, he with equanimity grieves the flesh dead in his sons, he patiently tolerates the flesh struck in himself, he wisely teaches the flesh suggesting evil in his spouse. Above these things the friends leap forth into sharp correction; and coming for the sake of sedating the pain, they add the force of pain. All the machinations therefore of temptations are turned for the holy man into increases of virtues. For through wounds his patience is proved; but through words his wisdom is exercised. Everywhere he meets strongly, because he overcame both the scourges by strength, and the words by reason. His friends truly, who indeed come for consolation, but exceed even to words of increpation, are to be believed to have failed from ignorance rather than from malice. For it is not to be believed that so great a man had iniquitous friends: but while they are unable to discern the cause of the scourges, they slide into fault.

[Old 9.] 12. Various kinds of percussions. --- For there are diverse kinds of percussions. For there is one percussion by which the sinner is struck, that he may be punished without retractation; another, by which the sinner is struck,

that he may be corrected; another, by which sometimes anyone is struck, not that he may correct past things, but lest he commit things to come; another by which one is mostly struck, through which neither past fault is corrected, nor future prohibited; but that, while unhoped-for health follows the percussion, the virtue of the savior being known may be more ardently loved; and when the innocent is worn down by the scourge, the sum of merits may be heaped up for him through patience. For sometimes the sinner is struck, that he may be punished without retractation, just as it is said to Judaea which is to perish: "I have struck thee with the blow of an enemy, with a cruel chastisement" (Jer. 30:14). And again: "Why criest thou to me over thy contrition? Thy pain is incurable" (Ibid., 15). Sometimes the sinner is struck, that he may be corrected, just as it is said to someone in the Gospel: "Behold thou art made whole, now sin no more, lest something worse happen to thee" (John 5:14). For the words of the savior indicate that preceding sins required the force of the pain had. Sometimes anyone is struck not for the diluting of a past fault, but for the avoiding of a future one; which the apostle Paul openly witnesses of himself, saying: "Lest the magnitude of revelations should extol me, there was given to me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me" (2 Cor. 12:7). For he who says not that it extolled, but lest it extol, openly indicates that by that percussion he is restricted from sin happening, but not that a fault which happened is

purged. But sometimes anyone is struck neither for past nor for future iniquity; but that the potency of divine virtue alone may be shown from the amputated percussion. Whence when it was said to the Lord in the Gospel concerning the man born blind: "Did this man sin, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" (John 9:2); the Lord responded saying: "Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God may be manifested" (Ibid. 3). In which manifestation what is done, unless that from the scourge the virtue of merits may be increased; and when no past iniquity is wiped away, great fortitude may be generated from patience. Whence the same blessed Job is preferred first by the voice of the judge, and afterwards is committed to the hand of the tempter: whom after the scourge while God remunerating addresses more familiarly, it is openly indicated how much he grew from the blow. The friends therefore of the blessed Job, while they know not how to distinguish the kinds of percussions, believed him struck for fault: and while they endeavor to assert God just in his percussion, they were compelled to reprobate the blessed Job for injustice; being ignorant indeed that he had been scourged for this reason, that for his scourge the praise of divine glory might grow, but not that he should emend through scourges sins which he had by no means committed. Whence also they return more quickly to pardon, because they sinned from ignorance rather than malice. Whose pride divine justice vehemently humiliates in this, that it by no means reforms

them to its grace, except through him whom they had despised. For the very elated mind is beaten back, if it be subjected to him above whom it extolled itself.

CHAPTER SIX [OLD 10].

13. All the saints, as it were stars, illuminate the night of the present life. ---But it is pleasing among these to see the wonderful works of divine dispensation, how for the illuminating of the night of the present life each of the stars comes in its turns to the face of heaven, until in the end of the night the Redeemer of the human race, as the true morning star, arises. For the nocturnal space, while it is illustrated by the courses of departing and succeeding stars, is passed through with great beauty of heaven. That therefore the ray of the stars, brought forth in its time and changed in turn, might touch the darkness of our night, for the showing of innocence, came Abel; for the teaching of purity of action, came Enoch; for the insinuating of longanimity of hope and work, came Noah; for the manifesting of obedience, came Abraham; for the demonstrating of the chastity of conjugal life, came Isaac; for the insinuating of the tolerance of labor, came Jacob; for the repaying of the grace of good retribution for evil, came Joseph; for the showing of gentleness, came Moses; for the informing of confidence against adverse things, came Joshua; for the showing of patience among scourges, came Job. Behold how shining stars we see in heaven, that we may walk the journey of our night with

unoffended foot of work. For as many just men as the divine dispensation exhibited to the notice of men, so many stars as it were it sent from heaven upon the darkness of sinners, until the true morning star should arise, who announcing to us the eternal morning, should radiate from divinity more clearly than the other stars.

14. All foretold Christ, especially Job. ---Whom all the elect while they go before by living well, promised both by things and by voices prophesying. For there was no just man, who existed not as His messenger through figure. For it was worthy that all should show in themselves the good, from whom also all should be good, and which they should know to profit all. Whence also without cessation that ought to have been promised which was both given to be perceived without estimation, and to be retained without end; so that all ages together might say what the end of the ages would exhibit in the common redemption. Whence also it was necessary that even the blessed Job, who brought forth so many mysteries of His incarnation, should signal by conversation Him whom he said by voice; and through those things which he bore, should show what He would suffer; and so much more truly should predict the sacraments of that passion, as he would prophesy these things not only by speaking, but also by suffering. [Old 11.] But because our Redeemer exhibited himself as one person with the holy Church, which He assumed; for of Him it is said, "Who is the head of us all" (Eph. 4:15); and of His Church it is written: "The

body of Christ, which is the Church" (Colos. 1:24); whoever signifies Him in himself, now designates Him from the head, now from the body, so that he may hold not only the voice of the head, but also of the body. Whence also Isaiah the prophet expressing the words of the same Lord, says: "As a bridegroom he has set a miter upon me, and as a bride he has adorned me with ornament" (Isa. 61:10). Because therefore He himself is the bridegroom in the head, He himself is the bride in the body, it is necessary that when sometimes something is said of the head, gradually and suddenly it be also derived to the voice of the body; and again when something is said of the body, suddenly it be ascended to the voice of the head. [Old 12.] The blessed Job therefore insinuates a type of the Redeemer to come with His body; but his wife, who provokes him to cursing, designates the life of the carnal; who set within the holy Church with uncorrected manners, by how much through faith they are near to the good, by so much through life they press more hardly; because while as if faithful they cannot be avoided, they are tolerated by the faithful so much the worse, as also more inwardly.

15. Job's friends foreshadow heretics. ---But his friends, who while they counsel also rail, express the figure of heretics, who under the guise of counseling act the business of seducing. Whence also they speak to the blessed Job as if for the Lord, but yet are not approved by the Lord; because evidently all heretics, while they strive to defend God, offend Him. Whence it is openly said

to them also by the same holy man: "I desire to dispute with God: first showing you to be fabricators of lies, and cultivators of perverse dogmas" (Job 13:3-4). It is clear therefore that they bear the type of heretics by erring, whom the holy man rebukes for serving the cult of perverse dogmas. [Rec. VII.] But every heretic, in that which he is seen to defend God, is opposed to His truth, as the Psalmist witnesses, who says: "That thou mayest destroy the enemy and the defender" (Psalm 8:3). For he is an enemy and a defender, who impugns God by that which he preaches.

CHAPTER VII.

16. By their names Job signifies Christ, his friends signify heretics. ---For because the blessed Job holds the species of the Redeemer to come, he demonstrates it even by his name. For Job is interpreted as "grieving." By which grief, doubtless, either the passion of the Mediator, or the labor of the holy Church is expressed, which is tortured by the manifold fatigue of the present life. His friends also by the word of their name indicate the merit of their action. For Eliphaz in the Latin language is called "contempt of the Lord." And what else do heretics do, except that, while they feel false things concerning God, they contemptuously despise Him by being proud? Bildad is interpreted as "old age alone." But well are all heretics, in those things which they speak concerning God, while they desire to be seen as preachers not with a right intention, but by the appetite for temporal glory, named "old age

alone." For they are incited to speaking not by the zeal of the new man, but by the depravity of the old life. Zophar also in the Latin speech is called "dissipation of the watchtower," or "dissipating speculation." For the minds of the faithful raise themselves to contemplate supernal things; but while heretics desire to pervert those contemplating right things by their words, they strive to dissipate the watchtower. [Vet. XIII.] Thus in the three names of the friends of Job, three cases of perdition of heretical minds are expressed. For unless they contemned God, they would by no means feel perverse things concerning Him; and unless they drew the heart of old age, they would not err in the intelligence of the new life; and unless they destroyed the speculation of the good, supernal judgments would by no means reprove them with such a strict examination for the fault of their words. By contemning God, therefore, they retain themselves in old age: but by retaining themselves in old age, they harm the speculation of the right by their depraved speeches.

CHAPTER VIII.

17. In the reconciliation of Job's friends the conversion of heretics is figured. ---Because truly sometimes heretics, poured over with the largess of divine grace, return to the unity of the holy Church, this is well signaled by the reconciliation of the friends themselves. For whom nevertheless the blessed Job is commanded to pray, because the sacrifices of heretics cannot be

accepted by God, unless they be offered for them by the hands of the universal Church; so that by its merits they may find the remedy of salvation, which they were striking by impugning with the darts of words. Whence also seven sacrifices are mentioned offered for them; because while they receive the Spirit of sevenfold grace by confessing, they are expiated as if by seven oblations. Hence it is that in the Apocalypse of John the universal Church is designated by the number of seven churches (Apoc. 1:11). Hence through Solomon it is said concerning Wisdom: "Wisdom has built herself a house, she has hewn out seven pillars" (Prov. 9:1). By that very number of sacrifices therefore the reconciled heretics express what they were before, who are not joined to the perfection of sevenfold grace except by returning.

18. Their pride is to be slain, so that they may be restored to the Church by this sacrifice. ---But well are they described as having offered bulls and rams for themselves. For in the bull the neck of pride is designated, but in the ram the leadership of following flocks. What is it therefore to slay bulls and rams for them, but to kill their proud leadership; so that they may feel humble things concerning themselves, and not seduce the hearts of the innocent after them? For with a swelling neck they had recoiled from the unity of the Church, and were drawing weak peoples after them as if following flocks. Let them come therefore to the blessed Job, that is, let them return to the Church, and by a sevenfold sacrifice offer bulls and rams to be slain; who, so that they may

be joined to the universal Church, by intervening humility may kill whatever they before tasted as tumid concerning proud leadership.

CHAPTER IX.

19. The proud man, though feeling rightly, is to be rebuked. For which reason he does not need a sacrifice. ---But through Elihu, who speaks indeed with right senses, but is derived to foolish words of elation, the person of every arrogant man is expressed. For many set within the holy Church despise to bring forth rightly the right things which they taste. Whence also he is argued by the words of divine rebuke, yet a sacrifice is not offered for him; because he is indeed faithful, but yet arrogant: through the truth of belief he is within, but through the obstacle of his tumor he is not acceptable. Hence therefore rebuke refutes him, but sacrifice does not bring him back; because he is indeed in that faith in which he ought to be, but supernal justice rebuking him repels him for superfluous things. Whence also well is Elihu called in the Latin speech, "That one is my God," or "God the Lord." For arrogant men within the holy Church, although they flee God by living elatedly, nevertheless confess Him by truly believing. For what is it to say "That one is my God" by name, but to show Him in whom he has believed by an open profession? Or what is it to say "God the Lord," but to believe Him both God through divinity, and to hold Him Lord from the incarnation?

CHAPTER X.

[Vet. XIV.]

20. What Job receiving double things presignifies. Of the saints before the resurrection one beatitude; after, double. ---Well moreover after the losses of things, after the funerals of pledges, after the tortures of wounds, after the contests and battles of words, he is lifted up by a double remuneration; because doubtless the holy Church, while yet set in this life, for the labors which she sustains, receives double gifts; when, the Gentiles having been fully received, at the end of the world she also converts the hearts of the Jews to herself. For hence it is written: "Until the fullness of the Gentiles should enter in, and so all Israel should be saved" (Rom. 11:25). She will also receive double things afterwards: because the labor of the present time being finished, she ascends not only to the joy of souls, but also to the beatitude of bodies. Whence well is it said by the prophet: "In their own land they shall possess double things" (Isa. 61:7). For the saints in the land of the living possess double things, because doubtless they rejoice in the beatitude of mind and body together. Whence John in the Apocalypse, because before the resurrection of bodies he saw the souls of the saints crying out, beheld them to have received single robes, saying: "And single white robes were given to them, and it was said to them, that they should rest yet a little time, until the number of their fellow-servants and of their brethren should be fulfilled" (Apoc. 6:11).

For before the resurrection they are said to have received single robes, because they as yet enjoy only the beatitude of the mind. They are therefore to receive two, when with the perfect joy of souls, they shall also be clothed with the incorruption of bodies.

21. Affliction here is certain; how long it is to last, is uncertain. ---Rightly moreover a certain affliction of the blessed Job is spoken of, but the quantity of time in his affliction is kept silent; because the tribulation of the holy Church is seen in this life, but for how much time she is here to be worn down and deferred, is not known. Whence also by the mouth of Truth it is said: "It is not for you to know the times or the moments, which the Father has placed in his own power" (Acts 1:7). By this therefore, that the passion of the blessed Job is spoken of, we are taught what we have known by experiencing. But by this, that the quantity of time in the passion is kept silent, we are taught what we ought not to know.

We have protracted the words of the preface at length, so that we might speak as if briefly touching upon the whole. But because we have arrived at the beginning of speaking, by speaking for a long time, we ought first to fix the root of history, so that we may be able afterwards to satisfy the mind from the fruit of allegories.

The first part, COMPRISING FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK THE FIRST.

He explains the first verses of the first chapter of the book of Job, first in a historical, then in an allegorical, and lastly in a moral sense.

CHAPTER ONE.

VERSE 1.---There was a man in the land of Uz, by name Job. HISTORICAL SENSE.---1. Job is said to be good among the bad, which is the highest praise. ---For this reason it is said where the holy man dwelt, so that the merit of his virtue might be expressed. For who knows not that Uz is the land of the Gentiles? But Gentility stood bound by vices by so much as it was ignorant of the knowledge of its Creator. Let it be said therefore where he dwelt, so that this may profit to his praises, that he was good among the bad. For it is not greatly praiseworthy to be good with the good, but to be good with the bad. For as it is of heavier fault not to be good among the good; so it is of immense heraldry to have existed as good even among the bad. Hence it is that the same blessed Job witnesses to himself, saying: "I was a brother of dragons, and a companion of ostriches" (Job 30:29). Hence Peter extolled Lot

with great praises, because he found him good among the reprobate, saying: "And he rescued the just Lot oppressed by the unjust conversation of the wicked. For by sight and by hearing he was just, dwelling among those who from day to day tortured the soul of the just man with iniquitous works" (2 Pet. 2:7-8). Who doubtless could not have been tortured, unless he both heard and saw the depraved works of his neighbors. And yet by sight and by hearing he is called just, because the life of the iniquitous touched the ears and eyes of the just man not by delighting, but by striking. Hence Paul says to his disciples: "In the midst of a depraved and perverse nation, among whom you shine like luminaries in the world" (Philip. 2:15). Hence it is said to the angel of the church of Pergamum: "I know where thou dwellest, where the seat of Satan is; and thou holdest my name, and hast not denied my faith" (Apoc. 2:13). Hence the holy Church is praised by the voice of the Bridegroom, when it is said to her in the Canticle of love: "As a lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters" (Cant. 2:2). Well therefore is the blessed Job, the Gentile land being mentioned, described as having lived among the iniquitous; so that, according to the heraldry of the Bridegroom, a lily might be shown to have grown among thorns. Whence rightly it is soon added:

CHAPTER II.

SAME VERSE.---Simple and upright.

2. The simplicity and uprightness of Job. Both are necessary. ---For some are so simple, that they are ignorant of what is upright. But they desert the innocence of true simplicity by so much as they do not rise to the virtue of uprightness; because while they know not how to be cautious through uprightness, they can by no means persist as innocent through simplicity. Hence it is that Paul admonishes his disciples saying: "I will that you be wise in good, but simple in evil" (Rom. 16:19). Hence again he says: "Be not children in senses, but in malice be babes" (1 Cor. 14:20). Hence through Itself the Truth commands the disciples, saying: "Be prudent as serpents, and simple as doves" (Matt. 10:16). For He joined both necessarily in the admonition; so that both the cunning of the serpent might instruct the simplicity of the dove, and again the simplicity of the dove might temper the cunning of the serpent. Hence it is that the Holy Spirit manifested His presence to men, not in a dove only, but also in fire (Matt. 3:11, 16). For by the dove simplicity, but by the fire zeal is indicated. In the dove therefore, and in the fire it is shown (Acts 2:3): because whoever are full of Him, so serve the mildness of simplicity, that they are also kindled against the faults of delinquents by the zeal of uprightness. It follows:

CHAPTER III.

SAME VERSE.---Fearing God, and departing from evil.

3. What it is to fear God. Good things mixed with evil are reproved. ---To fear God is to pass over no good things which are to be done. Whence through Solomon it is said: "He who fears God, neglects nothing" (Eccles. 7:19). But because some so do certain good things, that nevertheless they are by no means suspended from certain evils, well after it is said "fearing God," he is also presented as "departing from evil." For it is written: "Decline from evil, and do good" (Psalm 36:27). For neither are good things acceptable to God, which before His eyes are stained by the admixture of evils. For hence it is said by Solomon: "He who shall have offended in one, shall lose many good things" (Eccles. 9:18). Hence James witnesses, saying: "Whoever shall have kept the whole law, but offends in one, is made guilty of all" (James 2:10). Hence Paul says: "A little leaven corrupts the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6). [Vet. III.] The blessed Job therefore, that it might be shown how clean he existed in good things, is skillfully indicated how alien he was from evil things.

4. Why the virtues of Job are described from the beginning. ---But the custom of narrators is wont to be, that when they suggest a contest of the gymnasium, they first describe the members of the wrestlers, how broad and strong the breast is, how healthy, how full the arms swell, how the belly placed beneath neither burdens with mass, nor debilitates with extenuation; so that when they have first shown limbs fit for the contest, then at last they may tell of the strokes of great fortitude. Because therefore our athlete was

about to contend against the devil, as if before the spectacle of the arena, the writer of the sacred history, enumerating the spiritual virtues in this athlete, describes the members of the mind, saying: "That man was simple, and upright, and fearing God, and departing from evil," so that, while the position of the members is known to be great, from this very strong position the following victory also may be foreknown. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 2.---And there were born to him seven sons and three daughters.

5. The multitude of children did not entice him to avarice. ---Often the fecundity of offspring entices the heart of a parent to avarice. For he is kindled to the ambition of gathering an inheritance, by as much as he is made fruitful with many heirs. Therefore, that it might be shown how holy was the mind of blessed Job, he is both called just, and is presented as having been the father of much offspring. He who in the beginning of his book is asserted as devoted to offering sacrifices, is also remembered by himself afterwards as prompt in largesses. Let us consider therefore with how great fortitude he stood endowed, whom not even the affection for so many heirs inclined to the tenacity of an inheritance. It follows:

CAPITAL V [VET. IV].

VERSE 3.---And his possession was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels; and

five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household.

6. He possessed wealth without love. ---We know that greater losses move the mind to greater grief. Therefore, that it might be shown of how great virtue he stood, that which he patiently lost is said to have been much. For it is never lost without grief, unless it is possessed without love. Therefore, while a great substance is described, and yet a little after is presented as patiently lost; it is certain that what he lost without grief, he possessed without love. It is also to be noted, that first the riches of the heart, and afterwards, the wealth of the body are described. For abundance of things is wont to loosen the mind from divine fear by so much the more, by how much more it requires the mind to think of diverse things. For while it is scattered through many things, it is prohibited from standing fixed in the innermost parts. Which Truth itself, when it explained the parable of the sower, indicated saying: "He who was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, chokes the word, and it is made without fruit" (Matth. 13:22; Luke 8:7, 8; Mark 4:7). Behold, blessed Job is both said to possess many things, and a little after is presented as instantly serving divine sacrifices.

7. He had already left all in his heart. ---Let us consider therefore of what holiness this man was, who for such sedulous obsequies to God, even thus occupied, found leisure. Not yet had the virtue of the precept shone forth, which should

command all things to be left; but yet blessed Job already kept in his heart the force of the same precept; because doubtless he had left in his mind his substance, which he possessed without delight.

CHAPTER VI.

SAME VERSE.---And that man was great among all the people of the East.

8. With how great riches he abounded. --- Who is ignorant that the men of the East are very wealthy? Therefore he stood great among the people of the East, as if it were openly said: because he was even richer than the rich.

CHAPTER VII.

VERSE 4.---And his sons went and made a feast by houses, every one in his day: and sending they called their three sisters, to eat and drink with them.

9. The substance to be divided among the sons did not divide their hearts. ---Among brothers a greater substance is wont to be a cause of heavier discord. O inestimable praise of fatherly instruction! Both the father is said to be rich, and the sons are asserted as concordant. And while the substance to be divided among them was present, yet undivided charity filled the hearts of all.

CHAPTER VIII

[Vet. V, Rec. IV].

VERSE 5.---And when the days of their feasting were gone about, Job sent to them, and sanctified them, and rising up early offered holocausts for every one.

10. Scarcely any banquets are without fault, on account of pleasure and loquacity. ---When it is said, "he sent and sanctified them," it is openly demonstrated what strictness he used towards them when present, to whom when absent he was not wanting in solicitude. But this is to be carefully considered by us, that the days of the feast being finished, a purgation of holocaust is applied for each one. For the holy man knew that banquets could scarcely be celebrated without fault. He knew that the feasts of banquets are to be diluted with a great purgation of sacrifices; and whatever the feasting sons had defiled in themselves, the father wiped away by immolating a sacrifice. For there are some vices which can either scarcely be separated from banquets, or certainly by no means can. For pleasure almost always accompanies feasts. For while the body is dissolved in the delight of refreshment, the heart is relaxed to empty joy. Whence it is written: "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (Exod. 32:6).

11. Loquacity almost always follows feasts; and when the belly is refreshed, the tongue is unbridled. Whence rightly the rich man among the infernals is described as desiring water, saying: "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send

Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:24). First he is said to have feasted sumptuously every day; and afterwards he is remembered to seek water for his tongue. For because, as we have said, loquacity is wont to overflow greatly during feasts, from the punishment He indicates the fault, since Him whom Truth had said had feasted sumptuously every day, He presented as burning more in his tongue. Those who tune the harmony of strings, dispense this with such great art, that for the most part, when one is touched, another string placed far away and with many lying between is shaken: and when that one renders a sound, the other, which is tuned in the same song, trembles, others being unstruck. So therefore in sacred Scripture for the most part it is dealt concerning virtues, so concerning vices; that while by speaking it suggests one thing, by being silent another thing may become known. [Vet. VI.] For nothing is mentioned against the rich man concerning loquacity; but while the punishment is said to be in the tongue, it is shown what was a heavier fault among others in the banquet.

12. Job offering sacrifice on the eighth day, honors the mystery of the resurrection. ---But when the seven brothers are described as making feasts through every day, and the days of the feast being finished, Job is presented as offering seven sacrifices; the history openly indicates that blessed Job, offering sacrifice on the eighth day, honors the mystery of the resurrection. For the

day which is now called the Lord's day, is the third from the death of the Redeemer, but in the order of creation the eighth, which is also the first in creation. But because having revolved it follows the seventh, it is rightly numbered the eighth. Because therefore on the eighth day he is said to offer seven sacrifices, he is presented as having served the Lord for the hope of resurrection, being full of the Spirit of sevenfold grace. Whence also a psalm is prescribed for the octave, in which joy concerning the resurrection is announced [Vet. VII]. But because the sons of blessed Job had been girded with such great discipline of good instruction, that they failed neither by deeds in the banquets, nor by words, is openly shown, when it is added:

CHAPTER IX

[Rec. V].

SAME VERSE.---For he said: Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts.

13. We must not judge rashly concerning the heart of another. Against the rectors of the faithful who are ignorant of their works. ---For he had taught them to be perfect in work and word, for whom the father feared concerning thought alone. But because we ought not to judge rashly concerning the hearts of others, we recognize in the words of this holy man, who says not: "Because they have blessed in their hearts:" but, "Lest perhaps they have blessed God in their

hearts." Whence it is well said by Paul: "Judge not before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5). [Vet. VIII]. For whoever in thought turns aside from rectitude, sins in darkness. We therefore ought so much the less boldly to reprehend the hearts of others, by how much we know, that by our sight we cannot illuminate the darkness of another's thought. But here it is to be skillfully considered, with what great severity the father was able to correct the works of his sons, who with such great solicitude studied to cleanse their hearts. What do the rectors of the faithful say to these things, who are ignorant of even the open works of their disciples? What do they think in their own excuse, who in those committed to them care not even for the wounds of their actions? But that the perseverance also of this holy work might be demonstrated, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER X.

SAME VERSE.---Thus did Job all the days.

14. Job's perseverance. ---For it is written: "He who shall have persevered unto the end, he shall be saved" (Matth. 10:22; 24:13). In the sacrifice therefore holy action is shown, but in all the days of the sacrifice, the constancy of the holy action. These things we have briefly run through by following the history; now the order of the exposition requires that, repeating the beginning, we should now unfold the secrets of the allegories.

CHAPTER XI

[Vet. IX].

VERSE 1.---There was a man in the land of Uz, named Job.

15. ALLEGORICAL SENSE.---Christ designated by the name of Job. ---These things we believe were done through history, but let us now see how they are fulfilled through allegory. For Job, as we have said, is interpreted as "grieving": but Uz as "counselor." Whom therefore else does blessed Job express by his name, but Him of whom the prophet speaks saying: "He Himself hath borne our griefs" (Isaiah 53:4)? Who inhabits the land of Uz, because He reigns in the hearts of a counseling people. For Paul says that Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24). And this Wisdom itself says through Solomon: "I wisdom dwell in counsel, and am present in learned thoughts" (Proverbs 8:12). Therefore Job inhabits the land of Uz, because Wisdom, which for us sustained the grief of the passion, made for itself a habitation in hearts devoted to the counsels of life.

CHAPTER XII

[Vet. X].

SAME VERSE.---And that man was simple and upright.

16. He held simplicity and uprightness. ---In uprightness justice is signified, but in simplicity, meekness. For the most part we, when we follow

the uprightness of justice, leave behind meekness; and when we desire to keep meekness, we turn aside from the uprightness of justice. But the incarnate Lord held simplicity with uprightness: because neither in meekness did He lose the strictness of justice, nor again in the strictness of justice the virtue of meekness. Whence when certain ones, an adulteress having been brought, wished to tempt Him, that He might fall into the fault either of unmeekness or of injustice, He responded to both saying: "He of you who is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7). He gives the simplicity of meekness in "He of you who is without sin"; He gives the zeal of justice in "let him first cast a stone at her." Whence also the prophet says to Him: "Bend thy bow, proceed prosperously, and reign on account of truth and meekness and justice" (Psalm 44:5). For following truth, He preserved meekness with justice; so that He might neither lose the zeal of uprightness in the weight of meekness, nor again disturb the weight of meekness by the zeal of uprightness. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

SAME VERSE.---Fearing God, and departing from evil.

17. How He feared God. ---It is written concerning Him: "And the spirit of the fear of the Lord filled Him" (Isaiah 11:3). For the incarnate Lord showed in Himself all that He inspired in us; that what He said by precept, He might persuade by example. According therefore to the nature of

humanity our Redeemer feared God; because that He might redeem proud man He assumed for him a humble mind. Of whom well through this, that Job is said to depart from evil, the action also is designated. For He Himself departed from evil, not that He touched it by doing, but that He reproved it by finding: because the old life of human conversation, which He found when born, He deserted; and the new, which He brought with Him, He impressed upon the manners of His followers.

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. VI].

Vers. 2.---And there were born to him seven sons, and three daughters.

18. The number seven is perfect. ---What is understood by the number seven if not the sum of perfection? For, to say nothing of the reasons of human reason concerning the number seven, which assert that it is perfect because it consists of the first even and the first odd; of the first that can be divided and the first that cannot be divided; we know most certainly that holy Scripture is accustomed to put the number seven for perfection (Gen. 2:3). Whence also it asserts that on the seventh day the Lord rested from His works. Hence it is also that the seventh day was given for rest to men, that is, for the sabbath. Hence it is that the jubilee year, in which plenary rest is expressed, is consummated by seven weeks, which, with the monad added, is filled for our union.

[Vet. XII.] 19. Job's sons signify the apostles. ---There were born to him therefore seven sons. Namely, the apostles going forth manfully to preach. Who, while they fulfill the precepts of perfection, held, as it were, the fortitude of the superior sex in their conversation. For hence it is, that twelve were chosen to be filled with the Spirit of the perfection of sevenfold grace. For from the number seven one rises to the number twelve. For seven, multiplied by its own parts into itself, is extended to twelve. For whether four be led by three, or three by four, seven are turned into twelve. Whence the holy apostles, because they were sent to preach the holy Trinity in the four parts of the world, twelve were chosen; that they might show even by number the perfection which they preached by life and voice.

20. The daughters are the multitudes of the faithful. Three orders of the faithful. ---And there were born also three daughters. What do we understand by the daughters, if not the weaker multitudes of the faithful, who, although they by no means remain with strong virtue for the perfection of work, nevertheless constantly hold the known faith of the Trinity? In the seven sons therefore the order of preachers is signified, but in the three daughters the multitude of hearers. The three orders of the faithful can also be designated by the three daughters. For after the sons the daughters are named, because after the fortitude of the apostles was seen, three distinctions of the faithful followed in the conversation of the Church: namely, of pastors, and of the continent,

and of the married. [Vet. XIII.] Whence also the prophet Ezekiel asserts that he heard of three delivered men, namely, Noah, and Daniel, and Job (Ezek. 14). For what is signified by Noah, who guided the ark in the waves, if not the order of those in authority; who, while they preside over the peoples as a form of life, guide the holy Church in the floods of temptations? What is figured by the life of the continent by Daniel, whose wondrous abstinence is written, if not those who, while they desert all things that are of the world, rule with a high mind over despised Babylonia? What is signified by Job if not the life of good spouses; who, while they do pious works from the things of the world which they possess, tend as it were through the way of the earth to the heavenly country? Because therefore after the holy apostles these three distinctions of the faithful followed, rightly after the sons, three daughters are mentioned as born. It follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 3.---And his possession was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels.

21. The innocent are shaded by the sheep, the vitious Gentiles and Samaritans by the camels. ---Because the faithful hearers are collected from various ways of life, that which is first said universally, by mentioning the daughters, is afterwards subjoined distinctly by the naming of the animals. For what does he express in the seven thousand sheep, if not the perfect innocence of some, which comes to the perfection of

grace from the pastures of the law? But what is designated in the three thousand camels, if not the twisted viciousness of the Gentiles coming to the fullness of faith? [Vet. XIV.] In holy Scripture, moreover, sometimes the Lord Himself is expressed by the name of the camel, and sometimes the Gentile people. For by the name of the camel the Lord is designated, as is said by the same Lord to the opposing Jews: "Straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel" (Matth. 23:24). For the gnat wounds by whispering, but the camel of its own accord inclines itself to receive burdens. The Jews strained at the gnat, because they asked for the seditious robber to be released; but they swallowed the camel, because they strove by crying out to extinguish Him who had of His own accord descended to receive the burdens of our mortality. Again, by the name of the camel Gentility is designated. Whence also Rebecca, coming to Isaac (Gen. 24:61), is led on the back of a camel; because the Church, hastening to Christ from Gentility, is found in the twisted and vitious conversations of the old life. Who, seeing Isaac, descended; because the Gentiles, having known the Lord, deserted their vices, and from the elation of loftiness sought the depths of humility. Who also, having been ashamed, is veiled with a mantle, because she is confounded before Him for her past life. Whence also it is said by the Apostle to the same nations: "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" (Rom. 6:21.) Because therefore by the sheep we understand the Hebrews coming

to the faith from the pastures of the law, nothing hinders us from sensing by the camels the peoples of the Gentiles, twisted in manners, and burdened with the worship of idols. For because from themselves they found for themselves gods whom they might worship, as if from themselves a burden had grown on their back, which they might carry.

[Vet. XV.] 22. It can also be signified by the camels, because they are common animals, the life of the Samaritans. For camels chew the cud, but by no means divide the hoof. The Samaritans also as it were chew the cud, because they receive the words from a part of the law; and as it were do not divide the hoof, because they despise it in part. Who also tolerate a heavy burden on the back of the mind, because in everything they do, they labor without hope of eternity. For they know not the faith of the resurrection. And what can be heavier and more burdensome than to endure the affliction of the passing world, and by no means to hope for the joys of remuneration for the relief of the mind? But because the Lord, appearing in the flesh, both filled the peoples of the Hebrews with the grace of perfection, and led some of the Samaritans to the knowledge of the faith by showing wondrous works; let it be said rightly of the shadow which would express the truth, that he possessed both seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

IBID.---Five hundred yokes of oxen, and five hundred she-asses.

23. What is designated by the name of oxen. What by the name of asses. ---It has already been said above, that in the number fifty, which is filled by seven weeks and a monad added, rest is designated; but by the number ten the sum of perfection is expressed. Because, moreover, perfection of rest is promised to the faithful, as it were by the number fifty led ten times, one arrives at five hundred. [Vet. XVI.] In holy Scripture, moreover, by the name of oxen sometimes the dullness of fools, sometimes the life of those who work well is signified. For because by the name of the ox the madness of the foolish is figured, it is rightly said by Solomon: "And straightway he followeth her as an ox led to the slaughter" (Prov. 7:22). Again, because by the name of oxen the life of each worker is expressed, the precepts of the law bear witness, which He commanded by Moses, saying: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (Deut. 25:4). Which is openly said again: "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7). By the name of asses also sometimes the sluggishness of fools, sometimes the immoderate luxury of the petulant, sometimes the simplicity of the Gentiles is designated. The sluggishness of fools is figured by the appellation of asses, as is said by Moses: "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together" (Deut. 22:10). As if he were to say: Do not associate the foolish with the wise in preaching, lest by him who is not able to fulfill the thing, thou shouldst

hinder him who is able. The immoderate luxury of the petulant is also expressed by the appellation of asses, as the prophet witnesses, who says: "Whose flesh is as the flesh of asses" (Ezek. 23:20). Again, by the name of asses, the simplicity of Gentility is shown. Whence the Lord, hastening to Jerusalem, is related to have sat upon a young ass (Matth. 21:5). For what is it to come to Jerusalem by sitting upon an ass, if not, by possessing the simple hearts of Gentility, to lead them to the vision of peace by ruling and presiding? Which is shown by one and easy testimony: because both by the oxen the workers of Judea, and by the ass the Gentile peoples are designated, when it is said by the prophet: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib" (Isai. 1:3). For who was the ox, if not the Jewish people, whose neck the yoke of the law wore away? And who was the ass, if not Gentility, whom any seducer found like a brute animal, and resisting by no reason, prostrated in whatever error he willed? The ox therefore knew his owner, and the ass his master's crib, because both the Hebrew people found God, whom they worshipped but knew not; and Gentility received the food of the law, which it had not. That therefore which is said of the sheep and camels named above, this is repeated below in the oxen and asses.

24. The preachers of the Jews were oxen pressed by the yoke of the law. ---Judea had indeed even before the advent of the Redeemer oxen, because it sent forth workers to preach, to whom the voice of Truth says: "Woe unto you,

hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matth. 23:15). Whom the heavy yoke of the law had pressed, because they tolerated the exterior mandates of the letter. To whom the voice of Truth says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matth. 11:28, 29). That therefore in the Gospel rest is promised to those who labor well, this is what is mentioned here by the five hundred yokes of oxen: because they who subject their necks to the dominion of the Redeemer, whither do they tend, if not to rest? [Vet. XVII.] Whence also five hundred she-asses are mentioned; because the called multitudes of the Gentiles, while they desire to arrive at rest, willingly carry all the burdens of the mandates. Whence well, that the Gentile people would seek this rest, Jacob, addressing his sons, strove to signify this by a prophetic voice, saying: "Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between the borders; and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was excellent; and he bowed his shoulder to bear" (Gen. 49:14, 15). For to couch down between the borders is to rest waiting for the end of the world, and to seek nothing of these things which now pass in the midst, but to desire the last things. And the strong ass sees the rest and the excellent land, when simple Gentility for this reason raises itself to the strength of good work, because it tends to the country of eternal

life. Which bows its shoulder to bear; because having seen the supernal rest, it subjects itself in operation even to heavy precepts, and whatever pusillanimity asserts to be intolerable, the hope of remuneration shows this to be light and easy to it. Because therefore for the part of the elect Judea and Gentility are collected to eternal rest, rightly five hundred yokes of oxen and five hundred she-asses are mentioned as being possessed. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Vet. XVIII].

IBID.---And a very great household.

25. The fools of the world were called before the wise. ---What is it, that the multitude of animals is described first, and the household is mentioned at the end: if not that the foolish things of the world were first collected to the knowledge of the faith, that afterwards its astute things also might be called, as Paul witnesses, who says: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (1 Cor. 1:26, 27)? For the very beginnings of the holy Church are related to have been ignorant of letters, that namely, the Redeemer might show in all His preachers that not speech, but the cause, would persuade the believing peoples to life. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Vet. XIX].

IBID.---This man was great among all the men of the East.

26. Christ similar to others in humanity, singular in divinity.

---That our Redeemer is called the East (Oriens), is related by the prophet witnessing, who says: "Behold the man whose name is the East" (Zech. 6:12). All therefore, who consist in faith in this East, are rightly called men of the East (Orientales). But because all men are only men, but the East Himself is God and man, it is rightly said: "He was great among all the men of the East." As if it were openly said: He surpasses all who are born to God in faith; because not adoption, as in the others, but nature exalts Him in divinity, who although He appeared similar to the others in humanity, yet in divinity He remained singular above all things.

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. VII, Vet. XX].

Vers. 4.---And his sons went, and made feasts in their houses.

27. In the sons of Job celebrating feasts preachers are to be understood. ---The sons went to make feasts in their houses, when the apostle preachers, in diverse regions of the world, ministered the banquets of virtues to the hearers, as if to those who eat. Whence also it is said to the

same sons concerning the hungry multitudes: "Give ye them to eat" (Matth. 14:17; 15:32; Mark 6:37; Luke 9:13). And again: "I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." That is, in your preaching let them receive the word of consolation, lest, remaining fasting from the food of truth, they succumb in the labor of this life. Hence again it is said to the same sons: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life" (John 6:27). How these feasts were exhibited, is added, when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

IBID.---Every one in his day.

28. The hearers are to be fed according to the measure of intelligence. ---If the obscurity of ignorance is without doubt the night of the heart, understanding is not undeservedly called day. Whence also it is said by Paul: "One man judgeth one day above another, another judgeth every day alike" (Rom. 14:5). As if he should say openly: One understands some things while others are omitted, but another knows all things possible to be understood just as they are to be seen. Every son therefore exhibits a feast in his day, because every holy preacher, according to the measure of illuminated intelligence, feeds the minds of the hearers with the banquets of truth. In his day Paul had made a feast, when he said: "They will be happier if they so remain according to my counsel" (1 Cor. 7:40). He admonished each one to think concerning his own day, when he said:

"Let every man abound in his own sense" (Rom. 14:5). It follows:

CHAPTER XXI.

IBID.---And sending they called their three sisters, that they might eat and drink with them.

29. These are signified by the daughters of Job. Holy Scripture is sometimes food, sometimes drink. ---The sons call the sisters to the feast: because the holy apostles preach the joys of supernal refreshment to the weak hearers, and feed their minds with the banquets of divine speech, because they see them fasting from the food of truth. [Vet. XXI.] Moreover it is well said: "That they might eat and drink with them." For holy Scripture is sometimes food to us, sometimes drink. It is food in the more obscure places, because it is as it were broken by exposition, and swallowed by chewing. But it is drink in the more open places, because it is so absorbed just as it is found. The prophet saw holy Scripture as food, which would be broken by exposition, when he said: "The young children asked for bread, and there was no man who would break it for them" (Lam. 4:4): that is, all the weak asked for the stronger sentences of holy Scripture to be diminished by exposition; but he who ought to expose it is not able to be found. The prophet saw holy Scripture as drink, when he said: "Everyone that thirsteth come ye to the waters" (Isai. 55:1). If the open mandates were not drink, Truth would not cry out by Himself: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37). The

prophet saw that food and drink had been lacking to Judea, when he said: "Her nobles have perished with hunger, and her multitude was dried up with thirst" (Isai. 5:13). For it is of a few to know strong and hidden things; but of many, to sense the open things of history. And therefore he asserts that the nobles of Judea perished not with thirst, but with hunger; because they who seemed to preside, while they had given themselves totally to exterior intelligence, had not that which they might eat by discussing from the internal things. Because moreover by the more sublime falling from the internal understanding, the intelligence of the little ones is dried up even in the exterior things, it is rightly added there: "Her multitude was dried up with thirst." As if he should say openly: while the common people desert the study of their life, now they seek not even the floods of history. And they witness that they have understood both the hidden and open mandates of the sacred speech, who, complaining to the reproving judge, say: "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence" (Luke 13:26). Which they subjoin openly by exposing: "And thou hast taught in our streets" (Ibid.). Because therefore the sacred speeches are broken in more obscure places by exposing, but in more open places are drunk just as they were found, let it be said rightly: "Sending they called their three sisters, that they might eat and drink with them." As if it were openly said: they led each of the weak by mild persuasion to themselves, in order that they might both feed their minds by discussing

great things through contemplation, and nourish them by delivering small things through history. It follows:

CHAPTER XXII

[Vet. XXII].

VERS. 5.---And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them: and rising up early in the morning, he offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all.

30. Christ cleanses the hearts of His preachers. ---The days of feasting go about, when the ministries of preachings are performed. And the feasts being performed, Job offered a burnt offering (holocaustum) for his sons; because for the apostles returning from preaching, the Redeemer prayed to the Father. Moreover he is well said to sanctify by sending; because while He gives the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Himself, to the hearts of the disciples, He cleansed whatever of fault could be in them. And he is rightly related to rise early in the morning (diluculo) to offer burnt offerings; because through this, that He offered for us the petition of His intercession, the night of error being discussed, He illuminated the darkness of the human mind; lest by any contagion of sin, from the grace of preaching itself, the mind be polluted in secret; lest it attribute to itself what it does; lest by attributing to itself what it was doing, it should lose it. Whence it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII

JOB 1:5. --- For he said: Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts.

31. How the stains contracted by preachers are to be washed away. ---To bless God, that is, to curse Him, is to take glory to oneself from His gift. Whence rightly, after the preaching, the Lord washed the feet of the holy Apostles (John 13:5); that He might plainly show, namely, that for the most part, even in a good work, the dust of sin is contracted, and hence the tracks of the speakers are defiled, from which the hearts of the hearers are cleansed. For often many, while they speak words of exhortation, however slightly, extol themselves inwardly, because through them the grace of purification is derived; and while they wash away the works of others by the word, they take up as it were the dust of evil thought from a good journey. What then was it to wash the feet of the disciples after preaching, but to wipe away the dust of thoughts after the glory of preaching, and to cleanse the steps of the heart from internal elation? Nor does that which is said, "Lest perhaps," stand in the way of the Mediator's absolute knowledge. For knowing all things, but in His speech taking upon Him our ignorance, and while He takes it teaching us, He sometimes speaks as if from our doubt, as He says: "When the Son of man comes, think you, shall He find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8). The feasts therefore being finished, Job offering sacrifice for his sons

said: "Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts"; because our Redeemer, after He has washed His preachers from the evils assailing them, also defends them from temptations even among the good things they had done. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIV

JOB 1:5. --- Thus did Job all days.

32. The burnt offering continually offered by Christ for us. All days Job ceases not to offer sacrifice; because without intermission the Redeemer immolates a burnt offering (holocaustum) for us, who without ceasing demonstrates His incarnation to the Father for us. For His very incarnation is the offering of our cleansing; and when He shows Himself as man, He washes away the sins of man by intervening. And by the mystery of His humanity He immolates a perennial sacrifice, because these also are eternal things which He cleanses.

33. What has been treated so far concerning the historical and allegorical sense, and what is to be followed next concerning the moral sense. ---Therefore, because in the very beginning of the exposition we said that the person of blessed Job announced the Lord in such a way, that we said the head and the body, that is, Christ and the Church, were designated by him; after we have shown how our head is believed to have been designated, let us now indicate how His body, which we are, is expressed; so that because we have heard from the history what we may won-

der at, and have known from the head what we may believe; let us now consider from the body what we may hold by living. For in ourselves we ought to transform what we read; so that when the mind excites itself by hearing, the life may concur to work what it shall have heard.

CHAPTER XXV

JOB 1:1. --- There was a man in the land of Uz (Hus), whose name was Job.

34. THE MORAL SENSE. --- Job signifies the elect. What is their affection concerning earthly and eternal things. ---If Job is called grieving (dolens), and Hus a counselor (consiliator), not undeservedly by both names is each of the elect figured; because undoubtedly he inhabits a counselor mind, who, grieving for present things, hastens to eternal ones. For there are some who neglect their life; and while they seek transitory things, while they either do not understand eternal things, or despise those understood, they neither feel grief, nor know how to have counsel. And since they do not consider the heavenly things which they have lost, they think themselves, alas, wretches! to be in good things. For they by no means lift up the eyes of their mind to the light of truth, for which they were created; they by no means stretch the edge of their desire to the contemplation of the eternal homeland: but deserting themselves in these things to which they are cast out, they love the exile which they suffer instead of the homeland, and in the blindness which they tolerate, they exult as if in

the clarity of light. But on the contrary, the minds of the elect, while they see that all transitory things are nothing, inquire for what they were created; and since nothing outside of God suffices for their satisfaction, their thought, fatigued by the very exercise of inquiry, rests in the hope and contemplation of its Creator, and desires to be interspread among the heavenly citizens; and each of them, still placed in the body in the world, already rises in mind outside the world, deplores the misery of exile which he tolerates, and excites himself by incessant stings of love to the sublime homeland. When therefore, grieving, he sees how eternal is that which he lost, he finds the wholesome counsel to despise this temporal thing through which he runs; and the more the science of counsel grows, so as to desert things that will perish, the more grief is increased, because he does not yet reach those that remain. Whence it is well said by Solomon: "He that adds science, adds grief" (Eccles. 1:18). For he who already knows the highest things which he does not yet have, grieves more for the lowest things in which he is retained.

35. They dwell in the land of Uz, that is, in counsel. ---Rightly therefore Job is said to dwell in the land of Uz, because the grieving mind of each one of the elect is held in the counsel of science. It is also to be observed how no grief of mind is in an action of precipitation. For they who live without counsels, who desert themselves headlong to the events of things, are in the meantime fatigued by no grief of thoughts.

For he who skillfully fixes his mind in the counsel of life, cautiously considers himself by looking around in every action; and lest a sudden and adverse end should steal upon him from the thing which is done, he first feels this with the foot of thought softly placed; he weighs lest fear should hinder from these things which are to be done; lest precipitation should impel in those which are to be deferred; lest evil things should overcome through concupiscence in open war; lest right things should supplant by lying in wait through vain glory. Job therefore dwells in the land of Uz, while the mind of the elect, the more it strives to live by counsel, the more it is fatigued by the grief of the narrow way. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

JOB 1:1. --- Simple and upright, fearing God, and departing from evil.

36. The simplicity and uprightness of the just. Whoever desires the eternal homeland, lives without doubt simple and upright: simple, namely, in work, upright in faith; simple in the good things which he performs below, upright in the highest things which he feels in his inmost heart. For there are some who in the good things which they do are not simple, while they seek in these not retribution within, but favor without. Whence it is well said by a certain wise man: "Woe to the sinner that enters the earth by two ways" (Ecclus. 2:14). For a sinner enters the earth by two ways, when both that which he exhibits in

work is God's, and that which he seeks through thought is the world's.

37. It begins from fear, it is consummated in charity. Moreover it is well said: "Fearing God, and departing from evil"; because the holy Church of the elect begins the ways of her simplicity and uprightness by fear, but consummates them by charity. To whom it is then fundamentally to depart from evil, when from the love of God she has already begun to be unwilling to sin. But when she still does good things from fear, she has not entirely departed from evil; because by that very thing she sins, by which she would wish to sin, if she could have done so with impunity. Rightly therefore when Job is said to fear God, he is also related to depart from evil; because while charity follows fear, those things which are left in the mind, the fault is also trodden down by the purpose of thought. And because from fear every vice is pressed down, but from charity virtues arise, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII

JOB 1:2. --- And there were born to him seven sons and three daughters.

38. The seven sons of Job signify as many gifts of the Holy Spirit; the three daughters, hope, faith, and charity. Seven sons are indeed born to us, when through the conception of good thought, the seven virtues of the Holy Spirit arise in us. For the prophet enumerates this internal offspring, when the Spirit makes the mind fruitful, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon

him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of science and piety, and the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him" (Isa. 11:2). When therefore, through the coming of the Holy Spirit, wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, science, piety, and the fear of the Lord are born to each of us, a remaining posterity as it were is propagated in the mind, which preserves the genus of our heavenly nobility so much longer unto life, by how much it associates it with the love of eternity. But the seven sons have in us three sisters without doubt, because whatever manly thing these senses of the virtues do, they join to hope, faith, and charity. Nor do the seven sons reach to the perfection of the denary number (ten), unless all that they do be in faith, hope, and charity. But because a manifold thought of good works follows this abundance of preceding virtues, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII

JOB 1:3. --- And his possession was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels.

39. He possesses sheep, who feeds an innocent mind within with truth. The truth of the history being preserved, we can spiritually imitate what we hear carnally. For we possess seven thousand sheep, when we feed innocent thoughts, with perfect purity of heart, within ourselves, with the food of truth sought out.

40. He possesses camels, who subjects what is high and crooked in himself either to faith,

or bends it for charity. ---And there will be in our possession also three thousand camels, if all that is high and crooked in us is subjected to the reason of faith, and under the knowledge of the Trinity, is spontaneously inclined in the desire of humility. For we possess camels, if we humbly lay down what we think high. We undoubtedly possess camels, when we bend our thoughts to the compassion of fraternal infirmity, so that, bearing our burdens in turn, we may know how to sympathize with another's infirmity by condescending. By camels also, which by no means divide the hoof, but yet chew the cud, the good dispensations of earthly things can be understood: which, because they have something of the world, and something of God, must necessarily be designated by a common animal. For an earthly dispensation, although it may serve eternal utility, cannot be exhibited without perturbation of mind. Because therefore through this the mind is both confounded for the present, and a reward is prepared for eternity, as it were a common animal, it has both something from the law, and something it has not. For it does not divide the hoof, because the soul does not entirely disjoin itself from every earthly work; but yet it chews the cud, because by well-dispensing temporal things, through the confidence of certainty it hopes for heavenly things. Earthly dispensations, therefore, after the manner of camels, agree with the law in the head, and disagree in the foot; because both those things are of heaven which those living justly desire, and those things are of

this world in which they are occupied in work. We, therefore, when we subject the same earthly dispensations to the knowledge of the Trinity, possess as it were camels by faith. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIX

JOB 1:3. --- Five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses.

41. Yoke of oxen are concordant virtues. She-asses are wanton motions or simple thoughts. Yoke of oxen are for the use of our possession, when concordant virtues plow the hardness of the mind. We also possess five hundred she-asses, when we restrain wanton motions; and whatever of carnal desires to arise in us, we bridle by the spiritual dominion of the heart. Or certainly to possess she-asses, is to rule simple thoughts within us: which while they are not able to run in a more subtle understanding, by how much they walk as it were more slowly, by so much they carry fraternal burdens more mildly. For there are some who, while they do not understand high things, press themselves more humbly to the exterior works of conversation. Well therefore by she-asses, a slow animal indeed, but yet given to carrying burdens, do we receive simple thoughts; because while we for the most part acknowledge our ignorance, we more lightly tolerate another's burdens. And since the height of singular wisdom does not elevate us, as it were, to the perishing of another's heart's inertness, our mind inclines itself equanimously. Moreover, whether yoke of oxen or five hundred

she-asses are related; because either in this, that we wisely know, or in this, that we humbly are ignorant, while we seek the rest of eternal peace, we are held as it were within the number of the jubilee. It follows:

CHAPTER XXX

JOB 1:3. --- And a very great household.

42. A great household is a multitude of thoughts to be restrained. We possess a very great household, when we restrain innumerable thoughts under the dominion of the mind; lest by their very multitude they should overcome the soul, lest by a perverse order they should trample upon the principality of our discretion. And well is the crowd of thoughts signified by the appellation of a great household. For we know that, the mistress being absent, the tongues of the maidservants make a noise, they desert silence, they neglect the duties of the assigned work, and they confound for themselves the whole order of living. But if the mistress suddenly comes, soon the noisy tongues are silent, they return to the duties of each work; and so they revert to their own work as if they had not departed. If therefore reason departs from the house of the mind to a monument (memorial/distraction), as it were the mistress being absent, the clamor of thoughts multiplies itself like a garrulous crowd of maidservants. But when reason has returned to the mind, soon the tumultuous confusion restrains itself; and as it were the maidservants silently repress themselves to the enjoined work,

while thoughts immediately subject themselves to their own causes for utility. We possess therefore a great household, when by right law we dominate innumerable thoughts by the discretion of reason. Which undoubtedly when we do skillfully, we endeavor to be joined through the same discretion to the angels. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXI

JOB 1:3. --- And this man was great among all the Orientals.

43. By the refraining of these we are made great. For then we are made great among all the Orientals, when, the cloud of carnal corruption being pressed down, we are associated, as far as possibility allows, by the rays of our discretion, with those spirits who adhere to the rising (orienti) light. Whence also it is said by Paul: "Our conversation is in heaven" (Philip. 3:20). Whoever follows temporal and defective things, seeks the setting (occasum); but whoever desires heavenly things, demonstrates that he dwells in the East (Oriente). He therefore is made great, not among the Occidentals, but among the Orientals, who strives to profit, not among the actions of the evil seeking lowest and fugitive things, but among the choirs of the heavenly citizens. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII

JOB 1:4. --- And his sons went, and made a feast by houses, every one in his day.

44. Individual virtues make a feast in their own day. The sons make a feast by houses, while individual virtues feed the mind according to their own mode. And it is well said: "Every one in his day." For the day of each son is the illumination of each virtue. For that I may briefly repeat these same gifts of sevenfold grace, wisdom has one day, understanding another, counsel another, fortitude another, science another, piety another, fear another. For it is not the same to have wisdom (sapere) as to understand (intelligere); because many indeed have wisdom concerning eternal things, but these they can by no means understand. Wisdom, therefore, in its own day makes a feast, because it refreshes the mind from the hope and certainty of eternal things. Understanding prepares a feast in its own day; because in that which it penetrates things heard, by refreshing the heart, it illuminates its darkness. Counsel exhibits a feast in its own day; because while it prohibits being headlong, it fills the soul with reason. Fortitude makes a feast in its own day; because while it does not fear adverse things, it places the foods of confidence before the trembling mind. Science prepares a feast in its own day, because in the belly of the mind it overcomes the fast of ignorance. Piety exhibits a feast in its own day, because it fills the bowels of the heart with works of mercy. Fear makes a feast in its own day; because while it presses down the mind, lest it should be proud

of present things, it comforts it with the food of hope concerning future ones.

45. If they are separated from each other, they fail. But I see that in this feast of the sons it is to be scrutinized, that they feed each other in turn. For very much is each individual virtue destitute, if one virtue does not support the other. For wisdom is less, if it lacks understanding; and understanding is very useless, if it does not subsist from wisdom; because when it penetrates higher things without the weight of wisdom, its own levity lifts it up to fall more heavily. Vile is the counsel to which the strength of fortitude is wanting; because what it finds by treating, lacking strength, it does not lead through to the perfection of the work: and fortitude is very much destroyed, unless it be supported by counsel; because the more it sees itself to be able, the more virtue without the moderation of reason rushes headlong more miserably. Science is nothing, if it has not the utility of piety; because while it neglects to follow out the good things known, it binds itself more tightly to judgment. And piety is very useless, if it lacks the discretion of science; because while no science illuminates it, it is ignorant how it should have mercy. Fear also itself, unless it shall have had these virtues also, rises undoubtedly to no work of good action; because while it trembles at all things, it is vacant and torpid from all good things by its very dread. Because therefore by an alternate ministry virtue is refreshed by virtue, it is rightly said that the sons feast together in turn. And when one by

supporting supports another, as it were through their days a numerous offspring prepares a feast to be fed. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII

IBID. --- And sending they called their three sisters, to eat and to drink with them.

46. To the feast of the virtues, hope, faith, and charity are to be invited. When our virtues in all that they do, stir up hope, faith, and charity, as it were the worker sons call the three sisters to the feast, so that faith, hope, and charity may rejoice in the good work which each individual virtue administers. Which receive strength as it were from food, while they become more confident by good works; and while after food they desire to be watered by the dew of contemplation, they are inebriated as it were from the cup.

47. By the very good things which we do, we draw near to the worse. But what is it that in this life is performed without the pollution of any most thin contagion? For sometimes by the very good things which we do, we draw near to the worse; because while they bring forth joy to the mind, they also beget a certain security; and while the mind is rendered secure, it is relaxed into torpor. But sometimes they pollute us with a little elation; and they make us so much the more dejected before God, as they render us more swollen before ourselves. Whence it is well subjoined.

CHAPTER XXXIV

VERS. 5. And when the days of the feast had gone in a circuit, Job sent, and sanctified them.

47. The intention in good works is to be purified. For having completed the circuit of the days of the feast, to send to the sons, and to sanctify them, is after the sense of the virtues, to direct the intention of the heart, and to cleanse all that is done by a strict discussion of retractation; lest those things be estimated good which are evil; lest at least those things truly thought good be thought sufficient, when they are not perfect. For thus the mind is often deceived, so that it is deceived either by the quality of the evil, or by the quantity of the good. But prayers find these senses of the virtues better than discussions; for those things which we strive more fully to scrutinize in ourselves, we often more truly penetrate by praying than by investigating. For when the mind is lifted up to high things by a certain engine of compunction, it contemplates more certainly all that occurred to it concerning itself, by judging it beneath itself. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXV

IBID. --- And rising early he offered holocausts for each one.

48. The holocaust of prayer is to be offered for the cleansing of individual virtues. For we rise early, when being infused with the light of compunction we leave the night of our humanity, and open the eyes of the mind to the rays of the true light. And we offer a holocaust for each of the

sons, when we immolate the host of our prayer to the Lord for each virtue: lest wisdom should elevate; lest understanding, while it runs subtly, should err; lest counsel, while it multiplies itself, should confound; lest fortitude, while it affords confidence, should cast headlong; lest science, while it knows and does not love, should puff up; lest piety, while it inclines itself outside of rectitude, should distort; lest fear, while it trembles more than is right, should sink into the pit of despair. When therefore we pour out prayers to the Lord for each virtue, that it ought to be pure, what else do we do than exhibit a holocaust for each one according to the number of the sons? For a holocaust is said to be a whole burnt offering. To give a holocaust, therefore, is to set the whole mind on fire with the fire of compunction, so that the heart may burn on the altar of love, and as it were burn up the sins of its own offspring, the defilements of thought.

49. He does not offer this who does not bridle internal motions. But they know not how to do these things, except those who, before thoughts go forth to work, bridle their internal motions by anxiously looking around; they know not how to do these things, except those who have known how to fortify the mind with manly custody. Whence Ishbosheth is rightly said to have been extinguished by an unexpected death, whom also the holy Scripture testifies to have had not a male doorkeeper in his house, but a female doorkeeper, saying: The sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, coming, entered

the house of Ishbosheth in the heat of the day, who was sleeping upon his bed at noon. And they entered the house; and the female doorkeeper of the house, cleansing wheat, fell asleep. Taking ears of wheat, they entered secretly, and struck him in the groin. (2 Sam. 4:5.) The female doorkeeper cleanses the wheat, when the custody of the mind separates virtues from vices by discerning. Which if she shall have fallen asleep, she admits waylayers to the death of her own Lord; because when the anxiety of discretion has ceased, it opens the way for evil spirits to kill the soul. Who entering take the ears, because they soon take away the seeds of good thoughts. And they strike in the groin, because they kill the virtue of the heart by the delight of the flesh. For to strike in the groin is to pierce the life of the mind by the delight of the flesh. But this Ishbosheth would by no means succumb to this death, if he had not deputed at the entrance of the house a woman, that is, a soft custody at the approach of the mind. For a strong and manly sense ought to be placed before the doors of the heart, which neither the sleep of negligence should oppress, nor the error of ignorance deceive. Whence also he was well called Ishbosheth, who with a female guardian is stripped by hostile swords. For Ishbosheth is called a man of confusion. But he is a man of confusion who is not fortified by a strong custody of the mind; because while he estimates that he acts virtues, the subentering vices kill him unawares. Therefore the approach of the mind is to be fortified with all virtue, lest

at any time waylaying enemies penetrate it by the hole of a neglected thought. Hence Solomon says: Keep thy heart with all custody, for out of it life proceedeth. (Prov. 4:23.) It is worthy therefore that we should with the greatest effort weigh the virtues which we act from the origin of intention, lest they should proceed from an evil birth, even if those things which they show are right. Whence here also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVI

IBID. --- For he said: Lest perchance my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts.

50. Various ambushes of the enemy; so that he may vitiate good works, in the beginning of the work, in the progress, in the end. The sons curse in their hearts, when our right works proceed from not right thoughts; when they show forth good things in the open, but in secret they plot harmful things. For they curse God, when our minds estimate that they have from themselves what they are. They curse God, when they understand that they have received strengths from Him, but yet they seek their own praise from His gifts. But it is to be known, that our good things the ancient enemy follows in three ways, that forsooth this which is acted right before men, may be vitiated in the sight of the internal judge. For sometimes in a good work he pollutes the intention, so that all that follows in action may not go forth pure and clean, in that he perturbs this from the origin. But sometimes he does not

prevail to vitiate the intention of a good work, but in the action itself he opposes himself as it were in the way; so that while each one goes forth more secure by the purpose of the mind, a vice being secretly subjoined, he may be slain as it were from ambushes. But sometimes he neither vitiates the intention, nor supplants in the way, but ensnares the good work in the end of the action; and by how much more he simulates that he has receded far either from the house of the heart, or from the way of the work, by so much more astutely he expects the end of the good action for deceiving; and by what he shall have rendered each one incautious as it were by receding, by that he sometimes transfixes him more harshly and incurably with a sudden wound.

For he pollutes the intention in a good work, because when he beholds the hearts of men easy for deceiving, he applies to their desires the breeze of transitory favor; so that in those things which they do right, they may be inclined by the fortitude of intention to seek the lowest things. Whence rightly under the species of Judea, concerning each soul taken in the snare of a miserable intention, it is said by the prophet: Her enemies are made in the head. (Lam. 1:5.) As if it were openly said: When a good work is taken up with a not good intention, the spirits opposing this have dominion from the very beginning of the thought; and they possess it so much the more fully, as they also hold dominion through the beginning.

But when they do not prevail to vitiate the intention, they hide snares placed in the way, so that in that which is acted well the heart exalting itself may be derived from the side to vice; so far as what beginning it had otherwise proposed, in action it may run through far otherwise than it began. For often while human praise meets a good work, it changes the mind of the worker: which although it had not been sought, yet being offered it delights. By the delight of which when the mind of the one working well is resolved, it is dissipated from all vigor of intimate intention. Often to our well-begun justice, anger subjoins itself from the side; and while it perturbs the mind more immoderately by zeal of rectitude, it wounds all health of intimate quiet. Often a sadness subjoined as it were from the side follows the gravity of the heart; and all the work which the mind begins with a good intention, this overshadows with a veil of sorrow. Which also is sometimes the more slowly repelled, by how much more it serves the pressed mind as if later. Often immoderate joy subjoins itself to a good work; and when it exacts that the mind should be cheerful more than is becoming, it repels all weight of gravity from the good action. Because therefore the Psalmist had seen that snares were beneath in the way even for those beginning well, rightly being full of the prophetic spirit he said: In this way, in which I was walking, they hid a snare for me. (Psalm 142:3.) Which well and subtly Jeremiah insinuates, who while he studied to refer deeds without, indicated those things

which were being done within among ourselves, saying: There came eighty men from Shechem, and from Shiloh, and from Samaria, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves (squalentes); they had offerings and incense in their hand, to offer in the house of the Lord. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went. And when he had met them, he said to them: Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. Who when they were come to the midst of the city, he slew them. (Jerem. 41:5.) For they shave the beard, who subtract from themselves the confidence of their own strengths. They rend their clothes, who do not spare themselves in the laceration of exterior beauty. They come to offer incense and offerings in the house of the Lord, who promise that they will exhibit themselves in the sacrifice of God, prayer with works. But yet if they know not how to look around themselves cautiously in the very way of holy devotion, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah comes to meet them; because forsooth any evil spirit, generated in the error of pride by the example of his predecessor, namely Satan, opposes himself for the snare of deception. Of whom also it is well said: Weeping as he went; because that he may prevail to kill devoted minds by striking, he hides himself as it were under the veil of virtue; and while he simulates that he agrees with those truly mourning, being more securely admitted to the inmost parts of the heart, he kills this which lies hid within of virtue. Who often promises that he will promote

to higher things. Whence also he is related to have said: Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam; and while he promises greater things, he subtracts even the least. Whence also it was rightly said: Who when they were come to the midst of the city, he slew them. Men therefore coming to offer gifts to God, he kills in the midst of the city; because minds devoted to divine works, unless they keep themselves with great circumspection, the enemy stealing on, while they carry the host of devotion, they lose life in the way itself. From the hand of which enemy there is no escape, unless one should recur more quickly to penitence. Whence there it is aptly subjoined: But ten men were found among them who said to Ishmael: Slay us not, for we have treasures in the field of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey; and he slew them not. (Jer. 41:8.) For a treasure in the field is hope in penitence, which because it is not seen, is contained as it were dug up in the earth of the heart. They therefore who had treasures in the field were saved; because they who after the vice of their incautiousness return to the lament of penitence, are not killed even though captured.

But when the ancient enemy neither strikes in the beginning of the intention, nor intercepts in the way of action, he tends harsher snares in the end. Whom he besieges so much the more wickedly, by how much more he sees it alone remaining to him for deceiving. These snares placed at his end the Prophet beheld, when he said: They shall observe my heel. (Psalm 56:6.) Because since the end of the body is in the heel,

what is signified by this but the term of action? Whether therefore evil spirits, or any wicked men, followers of their pride, observe the heel, when they desire to vitiate the end of a good action. Whence also it is said to the same serpent: She shall observe thy head, and thou her heel. (Gen. 3:15, according to LXX.) For to observe the head of the serpent is to look at the beginnings of his suggestion, and to extirpate them from the approach of the heart with a hand of solicitous consideration. Who yet when he is detected from the beginning, strives to strike the heel, because even if he does not strike the intention by the first suggestion, he tends to deceive in the end. But if once the heart is corrupted in intention, the middle and the end of the following action are securely possessed by the crafty enemy; since he beholds that tree to bear all fruits for him, which he vitiated with the tooth of poison in the root. Because therefore we must watch with the greatest care, lest the mind serving good works should be polluted by a reprobate intention, it is rightly said: Lest perchance my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts. As if it were openly said: There is no good which is acted without, if for it a victim of innocence is not immolated within before the eyes of God on the altar of the heart.

Therefore the river of work is to be seen with all virtue, if it flows pure from the fountain of thought. With all care the eye of the heart is to be kept from the dust of malice; lest this which

it shows right to men in action, it should distort within itself by the vice of a perverse intention.

Therefore care is to be taken, lest our good works should be few, or unscrutinized. Therefore care is to be taken lest our good things be few; care lest they be unscrutinized; lest either acting few, we be found sterile; or leaving them unscrutinized, we be found foolish. For neither is each thing truly a virtue, if it is not mixed with other virtues. Whence it is rightly said to Moses: Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum of good odor, and most lucid frankincense; of equal weight shall they all be, and thou shalt make a perfume composed by the work of the apothecary, diligently mixed and pure. (Exod. 30:34.) For we make a perfume composed of spices, when on the altar of good work, we are fragrant with the multiplicity of virtues. Which becomes mixed and pure; because by how much virtue is joined to virtue, by so much the incense of good work is exhibited more sincerely. Whence also it is well subjoined: And when thou shalt have beaten all into most thin dust, thou shalt place of it before the tabernacle of the testimony. (Ibid., 36.) Into most thin dust we beat all the spices, when our good things we beat as if in the mortar of the heart by secret discussion; and if they be truly good, we subtly retract them. To reduce spices therefore into dust, is to rub virtues by reconsidering, and to recall them even to the subtlety of secret examination. And it is to be noted, that of the same dust it is said: Thou shalt place of it before the tabernacle of the testimony;

because then forsooth our good things truly please in the sight of the judge, when the mind beats these by more subtly reconsidering, and as it were renders dust from spices; lest the good which is acted should be gross and hard; lest if the strait hand of retractation does not comminute this, it should not more subtly sprinkle its odor. Hence it is forsooth that the virtue of the spouse is praised by the voice of the bridegroom, when it is said: Who is she that ascendeth through the desert, like a little rod of smoke from the spices of myrrh and frankincense, and of all the powder of the perfumer? (Cant. 3:6.) For the holy Church ascends like a little rod of smoke from spices; because from the virtues of her life she profits daily into the rectitude of internal incense, nor flows away scattered through thoughts, but constrains herself within the secrets of the heart in a rod of rigor. Which while she does not cease always to reconsider and retract those things which she acts, has indeed myrrh and frankincense in work, but dust in thought. Hence it is, that concerning the offerers of the host it is said again to Moses: The skin of the host being drawn off, let them cut the limbs into pieces. (Levit. 1:6.) For we subtract the skin of the host, when we remove the surface of virtue from the eyes of our mind. Whose limbs we cut into pieces, when distinguishing subtly its inmost parts, we think of them member by member. Care therefore is to be taken, lest when we overcome evil things, we be supplanted by wanton good things; lest perchance they proceed fluid, lest they be taken uncircumspectly, lest

through error they desert the way, lest being broken through weariness, they lose the merit of former labor. For in all things the mind ought vigilantly to look around itself, and to persevere in the very providence of its circumspection. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVII

IBID. --- Thus Job did all the days.

55. Perseverance necessary. For good is acted in vain, if it be deserted before the term of life; because also he runs swiftly in vain, who fails before he comes to the goals. Hence it is forsooth that it is said of the reprobate: Woe to them that have lost patience. (Ecclus. 2:16.) Hence Truth says to His elect: Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. (Luke 22:28.) Hence Joseph, who is described to have persevered just among his brethren even to the end, is related alone to have had a coat reaching to the ankles (talaris). (Gen. 37:24, according to LXX.) For what is a coat reaching to the ankles, but a consummate action? For as it were a protended coat covers the ankle of the body, when a good action before the eyes of God covers us even to the term of life. Hence it is that by Moses it is commanded to offer the tail of the host on the altar (Exod. 29:22; Levit. 3:9); that forsooth every good which we begin, we may also complete with a persevering end. Well therefore things begun are to be acted all the days; so that when evil is repelled by fighting, the victory of good may be held by the hand of constancy.

These things therefore we have said under a triple understanding, so that proposing various foods to a fastidious soul, we may offer something which it may take by choosing. This yet we greatly ask, that he who lifts up the mind to spiritual understanding, should not recede from the veneration of the history.

SECOND BOOK.

It pursues the narration of the first chapter from the sixth verse even to the end, according to a triple sense.

CHAPTER I

1. Holy Scripture is a Mirror. Holy Scripture is placed before the eyes of the mind like a certain mirror (Vid. August. in Psal. CIII, ser. 1, n. 4), so that our internal face may be seen in it. For there we know our foul, there our beautiful things. There we feel how much we profit, there how far we are distant from progress. But it narrates the deeds of the saints, and provokes the hearts of the infirm to imitation. And while it commemorates their victorious facts, against the battles of vices, it confirms our weak things; and it happens by its words, that the mind trembles less during the contests, the more it sees placed before itself the triumphs of so many strong men. But sometimes it not only asserts to us their virtues, but also makes known their falls; so that both in the victory of the strong what to take by imitating, and again we may see in the slips what we ought to fear. For behold Job is described increased by temptation, but David prostrated by temptation; so that both the virtue of the greater may cherish

our hope, and the fall of the greater may gird us to the caution of humility; in so far as while those things rejoicing lift up, these things fearing press down; and the soul of the hearer being instructed from thence with the confidence of hope, from hence with the humility of fear, neither may be proud with temerity, because it is pressed by dread, nor being pressed by fear may despair, because it is strengthened to the confidence of hope by the example of virtue.

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 6.---Now there was a day when the sons of God came to stand before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

2. HISTORICAL SENSE. How accurately Holy Scripture describes events. It is pleasing to observe how the sacred utterances express qualities and the boundaries of causes in the beginnings of narratives. For sometimes they signify what they subjoin concerning a future action from the position of the place, sometimes from the position of the body, sometimes from the quality of the air, sometimes from the quality of the time. Indeed, from the position of places, divine Scripture expresses the merits of subsequent things and the ends of causes, just as it says of Israel that it could not hear the words of God on the mountain, but received the precepts in the plains: doubtless indicating the subsequent infirmity of the people, who were not able to ascend to the highest things, but loosened themselves in the lowest by living neglectfully. From the position of

the body it announces future things, as in the Acts of the Apostles Stephen manifests that he saw Jesus, who sits at the right hand of the power of God, standing (Acts 7:55, 56). For to stand is the part of one who helps. And He is rightly seen to stand, who assists in the war of the contest. From the quality of the air the subsequent matter is demonstrated, as the evangelist, when he would say that none from Judea would then believe while the Lord was preaching, premised saying: 'And it was winter' (John 10:22). For it is written: 'Because iniquity shall abound, the charity of many shall grow cold' (Matt. 24:12). Therefore he took care to express the time of winter, so that he might indicate the cold of malice to be in the hearts of the hearers. Hence it is that concerning Peter who was to deny it is premised: 'Because it was cold, and he stood at the coals and warmed himself' (John 18:18). For he had already grown torpid within from the heat of charity, and he was warming himself again at the love of the present life, as at the coals of the persecutors, with his infirmity seething. From the quality of time also the end of an action is expressed, as Judas is related to have gone out at night (John 13:30) to the treachery of betrayal, as one not to return to pardon, when at his departure it is said by the evangelist: 'And it was night.' For hence also it is said to the unjust rich man: 'This night they shall require thy soul of thee' (Luke 12:20). For the soul, which is led to darkness, is recorded to be required not in the day, but in the night. Hence it is that Solomon, who received wisdom as one

not to persevere, is described to have received this in dreams and at night (1 Kings 3:11). Hence it is that the angels come to Abraham at midday; but about to punish Sodom, they are recorded to have come to it in the evening (Gen. 18:1, 2; 19:1). Because therefore the temptation of blessed Job is led to victory, it is related to have begun from a day, when it is said:

CAPUT III.

IBID.---Now there was a day, when the sons of God came to stand before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

3. How the Angels are present to God, even when sent on ministry. How great is the subtlety of angels. But who are called the sons of God, except the elect angels? Concerning whom since it is established that they serve the sights of majesty, it is greatly to be asked whence they come, that they may stand before the Lord. For concerning these it is said by the voice of Truth: 'Their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father, who is in heaven' (Matt. 18:10). Concerning these the prophet says: 'Thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him' (Dan. 7:10). If therefore they always see, and always stand by, it is to be asked with vigilant care whence they come, who never depart. But since it is said of them through Paul: 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent for ministry, for those who receive the inheritance of salvation' (Heb. 1:14)? By this, that we know them to be sent,

we find whence they come. But behold we join question to question, and as if while we strive to loosen a handle, we tie a knot. For how can they either always stand by, or always see the face of the Father, if they are sent to external ministry for our salvation? Which however we solve more quickly, if we weigh of how great subtlety is the angelic nature. For neither do they go out from the divine vision in such a way that they are deprived of the joys of internal contemplation; because if they lost the sight of the Creator in going out, they could neither raise those lying down, nor announce true things to the ignorant; and the fountain of light, which they themselves would lose in going out, they would by no means offer to the blind. In this therefore is the angelic nature now distinct from the condition of our nature, that we are both circumscribed by place, and narrowed by the ignorance of blindness: but the spirits of angels are indeed circumscribed by place, yet their knowledges are dilated far incomparably above us. For they are distended by knowing internally and externally, because they contemplate the fountain of knowledge itself. For what of those things which are to be known do they not know, who know Him who knows all things? Therefore their knowledge is greatly dilated in comparison of ours, but yet narrow in comparison of divine knowledge: just as also those spirits of theirs in comparison indeed of our bodies, are spirits, but in comparison of the highest and uncircumscribed Spirit, a body. And therefore they are sent, and they stand by:

because both by this, that they are circumscribed, they go out; and by this, that they are also present within, they never depart. And therefore they always see the face of the Father, and yet they come to us; because they go out to us by spiritual presence, and yet they keep themselves there, whence they had departed, through internal contemplation. Let it be said therefore: 'The sons of God came to stand before the Lord,' because they return thither by conversion of spirit, whence they depart by no aversion of mind.

CAPUT IV.

IBID.---And Satan came also among them.

4. Satan among the angels, because he did not lose his nature. It is greatly to be asked how Satan could be present among the elect angels, who had long since gone out from their lot, pride demanding it, as a condemned one. But he is rightly described to have been present among them, because although he lost blessedness, yet he did not lose a nature similar to theirs; and if he is weighed down by merits, he is raised up by the condition of his subtle nature. Therefore he is said to have been present among the sons of God before the Lord; because by that look by which Almighty God beholds all spiritual things, He sees also Satan in the order of the more subtle nature, as Scripture attests, which says: 'The eyes of the Lord behold the evil and the good' (Prov. 15:3). But this, that Satan is said to have been present before the Lord, is turned into a heavy question for us. For it is written: 'Blessed are the

pure in heart, for they shall see God' (Matt. 5:8). But Satan, who cannot be of a pure heart, how could he have been present to see the Lord?

5. He is present to God, because he is seen by Him. But it is to be observed that he is related to have been present before the Lord, but not however to have seen the Lord. For he came that he might be seen, not that he might see. He was in the sight of the Lord, but however the Lord was not in his sight: just as a blind man when he stands in the sun, he indeed is bathed in the rays of the sun, but yet he does not see the light by which he is illuminated. So therefore also among the angels Satan was present in the sight of the Lord; because the divine power, which by beholding penetrates all things, saw the unclean spirit not seeing it. For because even those things which flee from God cannot be hidden, while all things are naked to the supernal sight, Satan was present, absent from the one present. It follows:

CAPUT V.

VERSE 7.---To whom the Lord said, Whence comest thou?

6. For God to not know is to reprobate. What is it, that to the elect angels who come it is by no means said, Whence come ye? But it is asked of Satan whence he comes? for we do not inquire, except for those things which we do not know. But for God to not know, is to reprobate. Whence He is about to say to some in the end: 'I know you not whence ye are, depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity' (Luke 13:27). Just as a

truthful man is said to not know how to lie, who disdains to fall by a lie; not that if he wished to lie, he would not know how, but that he contemns speaking false things by love of truth. What is it therefore to say to Satan, 'Whence comest thou,' except to reprobate his ways as if unknown? Therefore the light of Truth is ignorant of the darkness which it reprobates; and it is worthy that it should inquire of the journeys of Satan, because it condemns them by judging, as if not knowing. Hence it is that it is said by the voice of the Creator to Adam when he sinned, 'Adam, where art thou?' (Gen. 3:9.) For neither did divine power not know, after the fault, to what hiding places the servant had fled; but because it saw him fallen in fault, already hidden under sin as if from the eyes of truth, because it does not approve the darkness of his error, it is as if ignorant where the sinner is; and it both calls him, and requires him, saying, 'Adam, where art thou?' By this that it calls, it gives a sign because it recalls to penitence. By this that it requires, it openly insinuates, because it is ignorant of sinners who are justly to be condemned. Therefore the Lord does not call Satan, but however He requires him, saying: 'Whence comest thou?' because doubtless God by no means recalls the apostate spirit to penitence; but being ignorant of the ways of his pride, He condemns them. Therefore while Satan is discussed concerning his journey, the elect angels are not to be asked whence they come: because their ways are so far known to God, as they are also performed by Him as their author; and

while they serve His will alone, they cannot be unknown thither, whence they are always done before Him by the eye of approbation. It follows:

CAPUT VI.

IBID.---Satan answering, said: I have circled the earth, and walked through it.

7. Satan's circling, a proof of his anxiety. It is customary for the anxiety of labor to be designated by a circling in a round. Satan therefore circling the earth, was laboring, because he contemned to stand quiet in the height of heaven. And when he insinuates that he has not flown, but has walked through, he demonstrates by how great a weight of sin he is pressed in the lowest parts. Therefore walking through he circled the earth; because falling from that flight of spiritual power, pressed by the gravity of his malice, he came out to the round of labor. For hence it is that it is said of his members through the Psalmist: 'The wicked walk in a circuit' (Ps. 12:8); because while they do not seek internal things, they are fatigued in the labor of external things. It follows:

CAPUT VII.

VERSE 8.---Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and departing from evil?

8. Various locutions of God and of spirits. This that by the divine voice blessed Job is called simple and upright, and fearing God, and departing

from evil, because we have subtly and limb by limb explained it above, we avoid repeating what we have said; lest while we repeat discussed things, we should come later to undiscussed things. This therefore is to be observed by us with skill, what it is, that either the Lord is said to speak to Satan, or that Satan is related to answer the Lord. For it is to be discussed what kind of locution that is. For neither from the Lord, who is the highest and uncircumscribed Spirit, nor from Satan, who is clothed with no carnal nature, is an airy breath drawn by a bellows of the belly in a human manner, so that it may be rendered by the expression of the voice through the organ of the throat. But while the incomprehensible nature speaks to the invisible nature, it is worthy that our mind, exceeding the quality of corporeal locution, should be suspended to the sublime and unknown modes of internal locution. For we, that we may express those things which we feel inwardly to those without, eject these through the organ of the throat, by the sound of the voice. For we stand behind the wall of the body to alien eyes within the secret of the mind; but when we desire to manifest ourselves, we go out as if through the door of the tongue, so that we may show of what sort we are inwardly. But spiritual nature is not so, which being composed of mind and body is not twofold. But again it is to be known that even that incorporeal nature when it is said to speak, its locution is by no means formed by one and the same quality. For God speaks in one way to the angels, in another way

the angels to God; in one way God to the souls of the saints, in another way the souls of the saints to God; in one way God to the devil, in another way the devil to God.

9. God speaks in one way to the angels. For because nothing stands in the way of spiritual nature from corporeal opposition, God speaks to the holy angels by that very thing by which He shows His invisible secrets to their hearts: so that whatever they ought to do, they may read in the contemplation of truth itself, and the joys of contemplation themselves may be as it were certain precepts of a voice. For it is said as if to those hearing, what is inspired to those seeing. Whence when God would infuse into their hearts the animadversion of vengeance against human pride, He said: 'Come, let us go down, and let us there confound their tongue' (Gen. 11:7). It is said to those who adhere, 'Come'; because doubtless this very thing is to never decrease from divine contemplation, and always to increase in divine contemplation; and to never depart in heart, is as it were by a certain stable motion to be always coming. To whom also He says: 'Let us go down and let us confound their tongue.' The angels ascend, in that they behold the Creator. The angels descend, in that they press down the creature raising itself in illicit things with the examination of strictness. Therefore to say of God is: 'Let us go down and let us confound their tongue,' to show them in Himself that which is rightly to be done, and through the force of internal vision, to inspire

into their minds the judgments to be exhibited by occult motions.

10. In another way the angels to God. In another way the angels speak to God, as also through the Apocalypse of John they say: 'Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom' (Apoc. 5:12). For the voice of the angels is in the praise of the Creator, the very admiration of internal contemplation. To have been stunned at the miracles of divine power, is to have spoken, because the motion of the heart excited with reverence, is a great cry of the voice to the ears of the uncircumscribed Spirit. Which voice explains itself as if through distinct words, while it forms itself through innumerable modes of admiration. God therefore speaks to the angels, when His internal will is manifested to be seen by them. But the angels speak to the Lord, when through this, that they look back above themselves, they rise into the motion of admiration.

11. In another way God to the souls of the saints, and they to God. In another way God speaks to the souls of the saints, in another way the souls of the saints speak to God. Whence also in the Apocalypse of John it is again said: 'I saw under the altar the souls of those slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they had; and they cried with a loud voice saying: How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood of those who dwell on the earth?' Where there is immediately subjoined: 'White robes were given to each of them, and it

was said to them, that they should rest yet a little while, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers should be fulfilled.' For what is it for the souls to say a petition for vengeance, except to desire the day of the last judgment, and the resurrection of their extinguished bodies? For their great cry is their great desire.

For each one cries so much the less, as he desires less; and he expresses so much the greater voice into the ears of the uncircumscribed Spirit, as he pours himself more fully into His desire.

Therefore the words of the souls are their desires. For if desire were not speech, the Prophet would not say: 'Thine ear hath heard the desire of their heart' (Ps. 10:17). But since the mind which asks is accustomed to be moved in one way, and that which is asked in another, and the souls of the saints so adhere to God in the bosom of the internal secret, that in adhering they rest; how are they said to ask, whom it is certain depart in no way from the internal will? how are they said to ask, whom it is certain both know the will of God, and those things which are to come? But being placed in Him, they are said to ask something of Him, not because they desire anything which is at variance with His will, whom they behold: but because the more ardently they adhere by the mind, they also receive from Him, so that they ask of Him what they have known Him to wish to do. Therefore they drink from Him what they thirst for from Him; and in a way as yet incomprehensible to us, in this, that by asking they hunger, by foreknowing they are satiated.

For they would be at variance from the will of the Creator, if they did not ask those things which they see Him to wish; and they would adhere to Him less, if they knocked with a slower desire at Him who wishes to give. To whom it is said divinely in response: 'Rest yet a little while, until the number of your fellow servants and brothers be fulfilled.' To say to the desiring souls, 'Rest yet a little while,' is to inspire the solace of consolation from foreknowledge itself between the ardor of desire; so that both the voice of the souls may be this, which loving they desire; and the word of responding God may be this, which confirms them between their desires by the certainty of retribution. Therefore to respond is, that they ought to wait for the assembly of their brothers, to instill into their minds the delays of waiting willingly; so that when they seek the resurrection of the flesh, they may also congratulate from the increase of the brothers to be gathered.

12. In another way God to the devil, and he to God. In another way God speaks to the devil, in another way the devil to God. For for God to speak to the devil is to rebuke his ways and business by the animadversion of hidden strictness, as it is said here: 'Whence comest thou?' But for the devil to respond to Him, is to be able to hide nothing from His almighty majesty. Whence here he says: 'I have circled the earth, and walked through it.' For it is as if for him to say what he has done, to know that he cannot hide his acts from His eyes. But it is to be known, that as we learn in this place, God speaks to the devil in four ways; the

devil to God in three ways. God speaks to the devil in four ways: because He both argues his unjust ways, and proposes the justice of His elect against him, and permits their innocence to be tempted by granting it to him, and sometimes He prohibits him, lest he should dare to tempt. For He redargues his unjust ways, as has already been said: 'Whence comest thou?' He proposes the justice of His elect against him, as He says: 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth?' He permits their innocence to be tempted by granting it, as He says: 'Behold all things which he hath are in thy hand.' And again He prohibits him from temptation, when He says: 'Only upon himself extend not thy hand.' But the devil speaks to God in three ways, when he either insinuates his ways, or accuses the innocence of the elect with feigned crimes, or asks for that same innocence to be tempted. Indeed he insinuates his ways, who says: 'I have circled the earth, and walked through it.' He accuses the innocence of the elect, who says: 'Doth Job fear God in vain? Hast thou not hedged him in, and his house, and all his substance round about?' He asks for that same innocence to be tempted, when he says: 'Extend thy hand, and touch all things which he possesses, unless he bless thee to thy face.' But for God to say, 'Whence comest thou?' is, as we also insinuated above, to rebuke the journeys of his malice by the force of His justice. For God to say, 'Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth?' is to make such elect of His by justifying

them, as the apostate angel may doubtless envy. For God to say, 'Behold all things which he hath are in thy hand,' is to relax that incursion of his malice against them by a hidden force, for the probation of the faithful. For God to say, 'Only upon himself extend not thy hand,' is to restrain him even by permitting from the impetus of immoderate temptation. but for the devil to say, 'I have circled the earth, and walked through it,' is to be unable to hide the sagacity of his malice from His invisible eyes. For the devil to say, 'Doth Job fear God in vain?' is to complain against the good within the hiding places of his thoughts; and to envy their advancements, and by envying to seek out the rifts of reprobation. For the devil to say, 'Extend thy hand a little, and touch all things which he possesses,' is to pant with the seethings of malice for the affliction of the good. For in that he envying seeks their temptation, in that he asks it as if deprecating their probation. Because therefore we have succinctly said the modes of internal locutions, let us return to the order of exposition which was a little interrupted.

CAPUT VIII.

VERSE 8.---Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him upon the earth, a man simple and upright, and fearing God, and departing from evil?

13. The fight of God and the devil, whose matter was Job. It has already been treated in the preceding discourse, that the devil proposed a contest not against Job, but against God; but

blessed Job was in the middle as the matter of the contest. And if we say in his speeches that Job failed between the scourges, which it is a nefas to feel, we say that God lost in His proposition. For behold even in this place it is to be observed, that the devil did not first ask for blessed Job from the Lord, but the Lord praised him in the contempt of the devil. And unless He knew that he would remain in his justice, He would by no means have proposed for him. Nor would He grant him to perish in temptation, concerning whom before the temptation, from the praises of God, the torches of envy had been excited in the mind of the tempter.

14. How astutely the devil seeks whence he may accuse us. But the ancient adversary when he does not find evils which he may accuse, seeks to twist the good things themselves to evil. And when he is conquered concerning works, he scrutinizes our words for accusing. When he find no accusation even in words, he contends to cloud the intention of the heart; as if good deeds were not done with a good mind, and therefore ought not to be weighed as good by the judge. For because he beholds the fruits of the tree to be green even in the heat, he seeks as it were to place a worm at the root. For he says:

CAPUT IX.

VERSES 9, 10.---Doth Job fear God in vain? Hast thou not hedged him in and his house, and all his substance round about? Thou hast blessed

the works of his hands, and his possession hath increased in the earth.

15. He tempts from prosperous and from adverse things. As if he should say openly: He who has received so many good things on earth, what wonder is it, if he conducts himself innocently for them? He would be truly innocent, if he persisted good among adverse things. But why is he called great, whom the reward of each of his works accompanies with so great a multiplicity of things? For the astute adversary, when he considers that the holy man has done well among prosperous things, hastens to reprobate him before the judge through adverse things. Whence it is rightly said in the Apocalypse by an angelic voice: 'The accuser of our brothers is cast out, who accused them before the sight of our God day and night' (Apoc. 12:10). But sacred Scripture is often accustomed to put day for prosperous things, and night for adverse things. Therefore in day and night he does not cease to accuse, because he contends to show us accusable now in prosperous things, now in adverse things. He accuses in the day, when he insinuates that we use prosperous things badly. He accuses in the night, when he demonstrates that we do not have patience in adverse things. Because therefore scourges had not yet touched blessed Job, he had as it were not yet whence he could accuse in the night. But because he had flourished with great sanctity in prosperous things, he feigned that he had done good for those same prosperous things: lying with a crafty assertion that he did not possess

substance for the use of the Lord, but worshipped the Lord for the use of substance. For there are some who, that they may enjoy God, use this world dispensatively. And there are some who, that they may enjoy this world, wish to use God transitorily. When therefore he relates the good things of the divine gift, he thinks that he lightens the deeds of the strong worker; so that whose life he is unable to reprehend concerning works, he may adjudge his mind as if from thoughts; lying that all that he lived innocuously externally, he served not for the love of the Lord, but for the desire of temporal prosperity. Therefore being ignorant of the strengths of blessed Job, but yet knowing more truly that each one is proved by adverse things, he seeks for him to be tempted; so that he who had walked with an unoffended step through the day of prosperity, might at least stumble in the night of adversity, and might lie prostrate before the eyes of his praiser with the offense of impatience. Whence he subjoins:

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 11.---But extend thy hand a little, and touch all things which he possesses, unless he bless thee to thy face.

16. The devil can do nothing except by God's permission. When Satan desires to tempt the holy man, and yet says to the Lord that He ought to extend His hand; it is greatly to be noted that he does not attribute the strength of striking even to himself, who is singularly proud against the author of all. For the devil knows, that he is

not sufficient to do anything of himself, because neither does he exist of himself in that which he is a spirit. Hence it is that in the Gospel the legion to be expelled from the man said: 'If thou cast us out, send us into the herd of swine' (Matt. 8:31). For he who could not go into the swine of himself, what wonder if without the hand of the author, he was not able to touch the house of the holy man?

17. The devil's will is evil, but his power is just. But it is to be known that the will of Satan is always iniquitous, but his power is never unjust: because he has his will from himself, but his power from the Lord. For what he himself desires to do iniquitously, God permits to be done only justly. Whence it is well said in the books of Kings: 'An evil spirit of the Lord rushed into Saul' (1 Sam. 18:10). Behold one and the same spirit is both called of the Lord, and evil: of the Lord namely by the license of just power, but evil by the desire of an iniquitous will. Therefore he ought not to be dreaded, who can do nothing except permitted. Therefore only that power is to be feared, which when it has permitted the enemy to rage, his iniquitous will also serves it for the use of a just judgment. But he asks for the hand to be extended a little; because they are external things which he seeks to be bruised. For neither does Satan think that he does anything much, except when he wounds in the soul, so that by striking he may recall from that fatherland, from which he himself lies prostrate far away by the weapon of his pride.

18. The face of God is the regard of grace. But what is it that he says: 'Unless he bless thee to thy face'? For we indeed look upon that which we love; but from that which we wish to turn away, we decline our face. What therefore is to be understood by the face of God, but the regard of His grace? He says therefore: 'Extend thy hand a little, and touch all things which he possesses, unless he bless thee to thy face.' As if he should say openly: Withdraw those things which thou hast given; for if he lose the things received, he will not seek the regard of thy grace, when temporal things are taken away. For if he have not those things in which he delights, he will contemn thy favor even by cursing. By whose crafty petition Truth, being by no means provoked, is not overcome, but that which may support the faithful servant for the increase of his reward is granted to the enemy for his own deception. Whence it is soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XI.

VERSE 12.--- Behold, all that he has is in thy hand: only upon himself extend not thy hand.

19. God permits some things to the tempter, and denies others. The dispensation of holy piety in the words of the Lord is to be considered, how He permits and restrains our enemy; He releases and refrains him. He gives some things for tempting, but from others He binds him. 'All that he has is in thy hand, only upon himself extend not thy hand.' He gives up his substance, but yet He protects his body, which indeed He is afterward

to deliver to the tempter; but yet He does not release the enemy to all things at once, lest by striking on every side He should break the citizen. For when many evils happen to the elect, they are dispensed in time by the wonderful grace of the Creator; so that those which, being heaped together, would destroy, may, being divided, be tolerated. Hence Paul says: 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make also with the temptation an issue, that you may be able to bear it' (1 Cor. 10:13). Hence David says: 'Prove me, O Lord, and try me' (Psalm 26:2). As if he should say openly: First inspect my strengths, and then as I am able to bear, permit me to be tempted. This however which is said: 'Behold, all that he has is in thy hand, only upon himself extend not thy hand,' can also be understood otherwise, because the Lord indeed knew His strong fighter, but yet He wished to divide his contests against the enemy; so that although victory in all things might be available to the robust warrior, yet first the enemy might return conquered to the Lord from one contest: and then He might again grant him another thing to conquer, in order that the faithful servant might exist as a more wonderful victor, in that the conquered enemy should again repair himself against him for new wars. It follows:

CHAPTER XII.

SAME VERSE.---And Satan went out from the face of the Lord.

20. God is within and without all things, above and below all things. What is it that Satan is said to have gone out from the face of the Lord? For where is there a going out from Him who is everywhere? For hence He says: 'I fill heaven and earth' (Jer. 23:24). Hence it is that His Wisdom says: 'I alone have compassed the circuit of heaven' (Eccli. 24:8). Hence of His Spirit it is written: 'The Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole world' (Wisd. 1:7). Hence it is that the Lord says again: 'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool' (Isa. 66:1). And again of Him it is written: 'He measures the heaven with a span, and concludes all the earth in a fist' (Isa. 40:12). For He remains internal and external to the throne over which He presides. Measuring the heaven with a span, and concluding the earth in a fist, He is shown to be on every side external to all things which He has created. For that which is concluded within, is contained externally by that which concludes it. By the throne therefore, over which He presides, He is understood to be within and above; by the fist, with which He contains, He is signified to be without and below. For because He Himself remains within all things, He Himself without all things, He Himself above all things, He Himself below all things; He is both superior by power, and inferior by sustentation; external by magnitude, and internal by subtlety: ruling above, containing below; surrounding without, penetrating within; nor does He remain superior in one part, and inferior in another, or external in one part, and internal in another: but one and

the same whole everywhere sustaining by presiding, presiding by sustaining, penetrating by surrounding, surrounding by penetrating; whence presiding above, thence sustaining below; and whence encompassing without, thence filling within: ruling above without restlessness, sustaining below without labor; penetrating within without extenuation, surrounding without without extension. He is therefore inferior and superior without place; He is wider without latitude, He is more subtle without extenuation.

21. Satan goes out from the face of the Lord, when he comes to the effect of his desire. Where then is there a going out from Him, who while He is nowhere by the mass of a body, yet by His uncircumscribed substance is nowhere absent? But as long as Satan, pressed by the power of majesty, was unable to exercise the appetite of his malice, he stood as if before the face of the Lord. But he went out from the face of the Lord; because being released divinely from the narrowness of internal retention, he came to the effect of his desire. He went out from the face of the Lord, because a noxious will, long bound by the chains of discipline, at length proceeded to work. For when, as has been said, he was unable to fulfill that which he wished, he stood as if before the face of the Lord; because the celestial dispensation restrained him from the effect of malice. But he went out from His face, because receiving the power of temptation, he arrived at the desires of his malice. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERSES 13, 14, 15.---And it came to pass on a certain day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, there came a messenger unto Job, and said: The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

22. The devil chooses the times for tempting. It is to be noted what times are congruous for temptations. For then indeed the devil chose the time for tempting, when he found the sons of blessed Job at a feast. For neither does the enemy only behold what he may do, but also when he may do it. For although he had received power, yet he sought out a time apt for subversion; so that namely it might be shown to us by the dispensation of God, that the joy of satiety is the forerunner of tribulation. But it is to be observed how craftily the losses themselves, which were inflicted, are announced. For it is not said, 'the oxen were taken away by the Sabeans': but those which were taken away, 'the oxen were plowing'; so that namely by the mention of the fruit of the work, the cause of grief might increase. Whence also among the Greeks not only asses, but 'foaling asses' are reported to have been seized; so that while the small animals should strike the mind of the hearer less from their quality, they might wound more from their fecundity. And because

adverse things strike the mind so much the more, when they are many, and are also announced suddenly, the measure of groans was increased, even by the articles of the messengers. For it follows:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERSE 16.---And while he was yet speaking, there came another, and said: The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and has burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

23. He endeavors to overset the constancy of Job by sudden casualties. Lest he should move less grief in the hearer for the lost things, he instigates his mind to exceed even by the words of the messengers themselves. For it is to be observed how craftily it is said: 'The fire of God', as if it were said: Thou sustainest the animadversion of Him, whom thou hast wished to appease with so many victims; thou toleratest the wrath of Him, whom daily serving thou didst labor. For while he indicates that God, whom he had served, had brought the adverse things, he commemorates the injured one, in whom he might exceed; so that he might reduce former obsequies to mind, and thinking that he had served in vain, might be proud against the injury of the author. For a pious mind, when it beholds itself suffering adverse things from men, rests in the consolation of divine grace; and when it has seen the storms of temptations increasing from without, desiring the retreat of the Lord's hope, it flies within the port of con-

science. But that the crafty enemy might at one and the same time shake the most robust breast of the holy man both by human adversities and by divine desperation, he both brought in that the Sabeans had rushed in, and soon announced that the fire of God had fallen from heaven; so as if to exclude every avenue of consolation, while he showed Him also adverse, who could have consoled the mind among adverse things: so that while the tempted one considers himself destitute on every side and pressed on every side, he might break out into contumely so much the more boldly, as also more desperately. It follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERSE 17.---And while he was yet speaking, there came another, and said: The Chaldeans made three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

24. He redoubles the wounds. Behold again, lest he should have grieved anything less for human adversity, he announces that bands of Chaldeans have rushed in; and lest the adversity coming from above should strike him less, he demonstrates repeated wrath in the air. For it follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSES 18, 19.---While he was yet speaking, behold there came also another, and said: Thy

sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

25. He endeavors to provoke to hatred of God. He who is not prostrated by one wound, is therefore struck twice and thrice, that at length he may be wounded even to the innermost parts. Therefore adversity had been announced concerning the Sabeans, divine animadversion had been announced by fire from heaven, the seizure of the camels and the slaughter of the servants is announced again by men, and the wrath of divine indignation is repeated, while the rushing wind is indicated to have smitten the corners of the house, and to have extinguished the children. For because it is known, that the elements cannot be moved without the supernal nod, it is latently inferred that He Himself moved the elements against him, who permitted them to be moved; although Satan, once having received power from the Lord, prevails to shake even the elements for the use of his wickedness. Nor ought it to move wonder, if a spirit projected from the heights was able to disturb the air into winds; since it is certainly known that even to those condemned to the mine, water and fire serve for use. It was sought therefore that evils should be announced, sought that they should be many, sought that they should be sudden. But when he first announced adverse things, he inflicted

a wound upon a heart still tranquil, as if upon sound members; but when he repeated the smiting of the stricken heart, so as to compel to words of impatience, he inflicted wound upon wounds.

26. The plagues of Job were sudden and manifold. But it is to be observed how craftily the ancient enemy took care, not so much to break the patience of the holy man by the loss of things, as by the very order of the messengers. Who studying to announce first small things, and afterwards greater, in the end brought in the death of the sons, lest the father of the family should lead the losses of things as vile, if he heard them already being bereaved; and the loss of things should strike less, with the death of the sons being foreknown, because namely there would be no inheritance, if he first withdrew those who were kept as heirs. But beginning from the least, he announced more grave things at the last; so that while he gradually learned worse things, every wound might find a place of grief in his heart. It is to be noted how craftily the weights of so many evils are announced both divided and sudden, so that both suddenly and growing bit by bit, grief itself might not contain itself in the heart of the hearer; and might enkindle him so much more ardently into blasphemy, as he should seethe more narrowly in himself by sudden and manifold messengers.

27. When those set over others serve pleasure, the reins are loosed to the subjects. In even moderate feasts the devil finds a place. But neither do I think this is to be passed over neglectfully, that

the sons were feasting in the house of the eldest brother, when they perish. For it was said above, that feasts can scarcely be performed without fault. That we may therefore speak of ours, not of theirs, it is to be known by us that what is done voluptuously by the less, is restrained by the discipline of the greater; but when the greater themselves serve pleasure, surely the reins of wantonness are loosed to the less. For who may retain himself under the constriction of discipline, when even they, who receive the right of constriction, relax themselves to pleasures? While therefore they are feasting in the house of the eldest brother, they perish, because then the enemy receives strength more vehemently against us, when he knows that even those who are set over for the custody of discipline serve joy. For he occupies himself so much more licitiously for smiting, as also these who could have interceded for faults are vacant for pleasure. But far be it from us to suspect that the sons of so great a man, through the studies of feasts, had been vacant for engorging the belly; but yet we know truly that even if each one through the custody of discipline does not pass the limits of necessity in eating, yet the enkindled intention of the mind grows torpid among feasts; and considers less in how great a war of temptations it may be, which relaxes itself through security. In the day therefore of the first brother he overwhelmed the sons, because the ancient enemy seeks an avenue of subversion in the death of the less through the negligence of the greater. But because we have

recognized with how many darts of messengers he was struck; let us hear our strong man, of what sort he may stand among the wounds. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 20.---Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped.

28. It is a vice either not to feel the scourges of God, or to feel them too much. Some think it a philosophy of great constancy, if being corrected by the asperity of discipline, they do not feel the blows of the stripes and the pains. But some feel the scourges of smitings so excessively, that being moved by immoderate grief, they even fall into an excess of the tongue. But whoever endeavors to hold true philosophy, it is necessary that he walk between both. For insensibility of heart is not the weight of true virtue: because those members are also very insane through stupor, which even being cut cannot feel pain. Again, he deserts the custody of virtue, who feels the pain of the stripes beyond what is necessary; because while the heart is touched by excessive affliction, it is excited even to the contumelies of impatience, and he who ought to have corrected evil deeds through scourges, acts so that wickedness may increase through the scourge. For against the insensibility of those smitten it is said by the prophet: 'Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive discipline' (Jer. 5:3). Against the pusillanimity of those smitten it

is said by the Psalmist: 'They shall not subsist in miseries' (Psalm 140:11). For they would subsist in miseries, if they tolerated adverse things with equanimity. But after they fall in mind among the scourges, they lose as it were the constancy of subsisting among the inflicted miseries.

32. The devil, in attacking us, is transfixed by our humility and patience. But since we have heard how the brave orator alleged the assertion of his part against the adversary, let us now hear how, at the end of his speech, he praises the Judge by blessing Him. It follows: Blessed be the name of the Lord. Behold, all that he felt to be right, he concluded with a blessing of the Lord; so that from this the adversary may look on, and, being conquered, blush to his own punishment, because he himself stood out as contumacious to the Lord even when created in beatitude, to whom man sings a hymn of glory even when smitten. [Vet. XIX.] It is to be observed, indeed, that our enemy strikes us with as many darts as he afflicts us with temptations. For daily we stand in the line of battle, daily we receive the missiles of his temptations. But we also send darts against him, if, being transfixed by tribulations, we answer humbly. Therefore, blessed Job, smitten by the loss of his possessions, smitten by the death of his children, because he turned the force of his grief into the praise of the Creator, saying: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done; blessed be the name of the Lord; struck the proud enemy with humility, and laid low the cruel one

with patience. Nor let us believe that our warrior received wounds and did not inflict them. For as many voices of patience as he rendered in the praise of God when smitten, so many darts, as it were, did he hurl into the breast of the adversary, and fixed them much more sharply than those he himself sustained. For being afflicted, he lost earthly things, but by sustaining the affliction humbly, he multiplied heavenly things. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 22.---In all these things Job sinned not: neither did he speak any foolish thing against God.

33. Job abstained from murmuring of the mouth and of the heart.---Because when we are overtaken by the tribulations of temptations, we can sin by a silent motion of thoughts even without speaking, testimony is given to blessed Job both of his mouth and of his heart. For first it is said: He sinned not; and then finally it is added: Neither did he speak any foolish thing against God. For he who has not spoken foolishly has restrained guilt from his tongue; but when it is premised, He sinned not, it is evident that he restrained the vice of murmuring even from his thought. Therefore he neither sinned, nor spoke foolishly, because he neither swelled silently in his conscience, nor relaxed his tongue into contumacy. For he speaks foolishly against God,

who, being placed among the scourges of divine animadversion, endeavors to justify himself. For if he should proudly dare to assert himself innocent, what else does he do but accuse the justice of the Smiter? Let it suffice that we have thus far run through the words of the history: now let the discourse turn itself to investigating the mysteries of allegory in the exposition. But in this which is written:

CHAPTER XX

[Vet. XX, Rec. XV].

VERSE 6.---Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

34. God disposes times without time.---It must first be discussed why something is said to have happened 'on a certain day' before the Lord, since with Him the course of time is by no means varied by the change of day and night. For into that light, which without approach illustrates those things which it chooses, and without retreat deserts those which it rejects, no defect of mutability comes; because remaining immutable in itself, it disposes all mutable things; and it so created things passing away in itself, that they can by no means pass away with it; nor does time flow within in His sight, which runs down without among us. Whence it comes to pass that in His eternity those things remain fixed which, not fixed, emanate in the outward volumes of ages. Why, therefore, is it said with Him, 'On a certain

day,' to whom surely one day is His own eternity? which day the Psalmist saw was neither closed by an end nor opened by a beginning, when he says: One day in thy courts is better than a thousand (Psalm 84:10).

35. He leads those accustomed to temporal things by degrees to eternal things.---But when Sacred Scripture speaks to those brought forth in time, it is fitting that it should use temporal words, so that by condescending it may lift up; and while it narrates something about eternity temporally, it may by degrees transfer those accustomed to temporal things to eternal things; and so that the unknown eternity may well infuse itself into our minds while it fawns upon them with known words. And what wonder is it if in the sacred oracle God does not hastily open His immutability to the human mind; since even after the solemnity of His resurrection was celebrated, He became known by certain accesses of advancement to be the incorruption of the body which He resumed? For by the testimony of Luke (Luke 24:4) we have learned that to some seeking Him in the monument He first sent angels; and again to the disciples speaking of Him in the way He Himself indeed appeared, but not to be recognized (Ibid., 15), who after the delays of exhortation, showed Himself to be recognized in the breaking of bread; and finally, entering suddenly, He presented Himself not only recognizable, but even palpable. For because the disciples still bore weak hearts, they were to be nourished in the knowledge of so great a mystery by this dispen-

sation, that seeking for a little while they might find; and finding they might grow, and growing they might hold more robustly what they had known. Because, therefore, we are led not suddenly, but by increments of causes and words, as it were by certain steps toward eternity, something is said to have happened within with Him 'on a certain day,' who also beholds times themselves without time.

[Vet. XXI.] 36. He sees darkness in the light.--- Or was it because Satan also was present, while this is said to have been done 'on a certain day,' that Holy Scripture studied to indicate that God saw darkness in the light? For we surely cannot behold light and darkness with one and the same gaze: because when the eye is fixed on darkness, light is put to flight; and when it has turned itself to the flashing of light, the shadow of darkness departs. But that power, which sees all mutable things immutably, Satan was present to Him as if in the day, because He comprehends the darkness of the apostate angel without obscurity. We, as has been said, cannot contemplate with one and the same intuition both those things which we choose by approving, and those which we condemn by reproving: because when the mind is turned to the latter, it is separated from the thought of the former; but when it is brought back to the former, it is removed from the latter to which it had cleaved.

But God, because He respects all things at once without mutability, comprehends them without distension, namely both the good which He

helps, and the evil which He judges, and the things which, being helped, He remunerates, and those which, judging, He condemns; in these things which He disposes in diverse order, He is not diverse. In the day, therefore, Satan is described as having been present to Him, because the light of His eternity is touched by no darkening of mutability; and in this, that darkness becomes present to Him, he is said to have been present among the sons of God: because by that power of justice the unclean spirit is penetrated, by which namely the hearts of the clean spirits are filled; and by that ray of light he is transfixed, by which they are bathed so that they may shine.

38. Good angels serve God for help, evil ones for probation.---He was present among the sons of God, because although they serve God for the help of the elect, he serves for their probation. He was present among the sons of God, because although by them, laboring in this life, the help of piety is bestowed, he, by unknowingly serving His hidden justice, endeavors to execute the ministry of reprobation. [Rec. XVI.] Whence it is well said in the books of Kings by the prophet: I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and the army of heaven on His right hand and on His left, and it was said: In what shall I deceive Ahab, that he may go up and fall in Ramoth Gilead? And one said thus, and another otherwise. And there came forth one, and said: I will deceive Ahab. And it was said: In what wilt thou deceive? Who answered, saying: I will go forth, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets (1 Kings 22:19 seq.).

For what do we understand by the throne of the Lord, but the angelic powers, presiding more highly over whose minds, He disposes all things below? And what is the army of heaven, but the multitude of ministering angels described? What is it, therefore, that the army of heaven is said to stand on His right and on His left? For God, who is so within all things that He is also without all things, is concluded by neither right nor left. But by the right hand of God, the elect part of the angels is designated; but by the left hand of God, the reprobate part of the angels. For not only do the good serve God, who help; but also the evil, who prove; not only those who lift up those returning from fault, but also those who weigh down those unwilling to return. Nor is it prohibited that the reprobate part of the angels can be understood in that which is called the army of heaven. For those which we know to be suspended in the air, we call birds of heaven. And of the same spirits Paul says: Against the spiritual things of wickedness in heavenly places (Ephes. 6:12). Announcing whose head, he says: According to the prince of the power of his air (Ephes. 2:2). Therefore, on the right hand of God and on the left the army of the angels stands: because both the will of the elect spirits agrees with divine piety; and the sense of the reprobate, serving its own malice, obeys the judgment of His strictness. Whence also presently the deceitful spirit is described as having leaped forth into the midst, through whom King Ahab, his merits demanding it, might be deceived. For it is not lawful to believe that

a good spirit would have wished to serve deceit, so as to say: I will go forth, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. But because King Ahab by preceding sins was worthy that he should have been damned by such a deception: so that he who often had willingly fallen into fault, might sometime against his will be taken to punishment, license is given to the malignant spirits by hidden justice, so that those whom they strangle willingly in the snare of sin, they may draw even against their will into the punishment of sin. That, therefore, which is there described as the army of heaven having stood at the right and left of God, is here related as Satan having been present among the sons of God. Behold, on the right hand of God stood the angels, because they are named sons of God; behold, on the left stand angels, because Satan was also present among them.

[Vet. XXII.] 39. But since we have decreed to investigate the mysteries of allegory, we not inconveniently understand that the Lord saw Satan in the day, because He corrected his ways in the incarnation of His Wisdom; as if He had not seen him so long as He tolerated his depravity in the perdition of the human race. Whence also it is presently said to him by the divine voice:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 7. Whence comest thou?

40. God has detected the snares of the devil by the light of incarnate wisdom.---On the day Satan is questioned about his ways, because in

the light of manifested wisdom the snares of the hidden enemy are detected. Because, therefore, when the Lord was incarnate the devil is rebuked, and is corrected from his pestiferous unbridledness, it is rightly added: To whom the Lord said: Whence comest thou? For then He argued by inquiring into the ways of Satan, when by the coming of the Mediator, repressing the iniquities of his persuasion, He rebuked him. Nor undeservedly in this day are the sons of God related to have stood before the Lord; because namely all the elect have been gathered to the vocation of the eternal fatherland, while the light of wisdom illustrates them. Whom although the incarnate Wisdom had come to aggregate by the effect of the work, yet to His divinity they already assisted within through His foreknowledge. But since the ancient enemy is discussed about his ways when the Redeemer comes, let us hear what he may say.

CHAPTER XXII.

[Rec. XVII.]

IBID.---I have circled the earth, and walked through it.

41. The devil circled the earth, because he circumvented and possessed all men.---For from Adam, before the coming of the Lord, he drew after him all the nations of the Gentiles. I have circled the earth and walked through it, because he impressed the vestiges of his iniquity through the hearts of the Gentiles. For falling from high places, he rightly possessed human minds, be-

cause he bound them willingly in the chain of his fault; and he wandered through the world so much the more widely, as no one was found free through all things from his guilt. To whom to have circled the world as if from power, was to have found no man who fully resisted him. But now let Satan return, that is, let the divine power constrain him from the effect of his malice, because He has now appeared in the flesh who had nothing of the contagion of sin from the infirmity of the flesh. He came humble, whom even the proud enemy might admire; so that he who had despised the strong things of His divinity, might also fear the weak things of His humanity. Whence also presently by a wonderful significance, that very infirmity of humanity is proposed to be wondered at against him, so that it is said:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERSE 8.---Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth?

42. Until Christ should come, of whom the things said of Job are again explained. He assumed the humility of the flesh, without injury to His majesty. By His virtues He repressed the pride of the devil.---That Job is interpreted 'sorrowing,' we have already said a little before. He is truly called sorrowing by figure, who is related, by the testimony of the Prophet, to bear our sorrows. There is none like him in the earth, because every man is only man, but He is God and man. There is none like him in the earth, because although

every adopted son advances to perceive divinity, yet he by no means receives to be God by nature. Who is well also called a servant, because He did not disdain to take the form of a servant. Nor did the assumed humility of the flesh bring injury to His majesty; because both so as to take those things which were to be saved, and yet not to change those things which were held, He neither diminished divine things by humanity, nor consumed human things by divinity; because although it is said by Paul: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant (Philip. 2:6), for Him to have emptied Himself, is to have shown Himself visible from the magnitude of His invisibility, so that the form of a servant might cover that which uncircumscribed penetrated all things from His divinity. But for God to say to Satan by figure: Hast thou considered my servant Job? is to demonstrate His only-begotten Son as admirable against him in the form of a servant. For by that, in which He made Him known to be of such great virtue in the flesh, He indicated to the proud adversary, as it were, what he should sorrowfully consider. But because He had brought in a good thing for him to wonder at, it remains that He should still add His virtues by enumerating them to repress his pride. It follows.

CHAPTER XXIV.

[Vet. XXIII].

IBID.---A man simple and upright, and fearing God, and departing from evil.

43. In what way Christ is simple, upright, etc. He made His divinity doubtful to the devil because of the things which He suffered.---For there came among men the mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, to provide an example of life to men, simple; for not sparing malignant spirits, upright; for vanquishing pride, fearing God; but for cleansing the uncleanness of life in His elect, departing from evil. For of Him it is principally said by Isaiah: And the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him (Isaiah 11:3). And He singularly departed from evil: because He would not imitate the deeds which He found in men, since, as Peter testifies: He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth (1 Peter 2:22). It follows: And Satan answering said: Doth Job fear God in vain? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all his substance round about? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his possession hath increased in the land. The ancient enemy knew that the Redeemer of the human race, his own vanquisher, had come into the world: whence also it is said by a possessed man in the Gospel: What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? (Matt. 8:29). Who nevertheless, when at first he perceived Him to be passible, when he saw that he could endure mortal things of humanity, all that he suspected of His divinity came into doubt for him by the haughtiness of his pride. For knowing nothing but pride, while

he beholds Him to be humble, he doubted that He was God. Whence also he turned himself to the arguments of temptations, saying: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread (Matt. 4:3). Because therefore he saw Him passible, he believed Him not to be God born, but one guarded by the grace of God. Whence also he is now related to infer:

CHAPTER XXV.

VERSES 9, 10.---Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all his substance round about? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his possession hath increased in the land.

44. The proud devil, seeing Him humble, doubted that He was God.---For he says that He and His house were hedged about by God; because by tempting He could not penetrate His conscience. He asserts His substance was hedged about, because he does not presume to invade His elect. He complains that God had blessed the works of His hands, and that His possession had increased in the land: because namely, pining away, he sees that His faith is multiplied in the knowledge of men, through the apostles preaching. For His possession is said to increase, while, the preachers laboring, the number of the faithful is daily increased. These things therefore Satan is to have said to God, to have felt such things by envying. These things Satan is to have said to God, to have grieved at these things by pining away. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Vet. XXIV].

VERSE 11.---But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

45. He explored His divinity by temptations.---For Him whom in the time of tranquillity he believed to be guarded by the grace of God, he thought could sin through passion. As if he should say openly: Man, being questioned by afflictions, is recognized as a sinner, who in miracles is thought to be God. Therefore the Lord said to Satan:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERSE 12.---Behold, all that he hath is in thy power [hand]; only upon himself put not forth thine hand.

46. The hand of Satan must be understood not as power, but as temptation. ---When we discuss the sacred history under a figurative understanding, the hand of Satan must be understood not as power, but as temptation. All things, therefore, which he has, are given into the hand of the tempter, and the hand of temptation is forbidden to be extended upon him; which, however, is allowed to be done when his substance is lost: because, forsooth, first Judea, which had been his possession, was taken away in infidelity, and afterwards His flesh was fastened to the gibbet of the cross. He, therefore, who first bore with Judea

in opposition, and afterwards came even to the cross, lost as it were what he previously held, and afterwards in Himself bore the wickedness of the adversary.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IBID.---And Satan went forth from the presence [face] of the Lord.

47. The devil, having obtained his wish, goes out from the presence of the Lord. ---As has been said above, Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, because he attained to the objects of his desire. For he was as it were before Him, so long as on His account he could not fulfill what he wickedly thirsted for.

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERSE 13.---And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house.

48. The elder son of the Lord is the Jewish people. ---We have said that the sons and daughters of blessed Job designated either the order of the Apostles, or the multitude of all the faithful. But the incarnate Lord first chose a few from Judea to the faith, and afterwards gathered to Himself a multitude of the Gentile people. But who should be understood as the elder son of the Lord, if not the Jewish people, who had long ago been generated by the teaching of the Law given to them: and the younger the Gentile people, who was gathered even at the end of the world? There-

fore, because while Satan unknowingly served the utility of men, and through the corrupted hearts of persecutors sought license for the Lord's Passion, the holy Apostles did not yet know that the Gentiles were to be gathered to God, and preached the secrets of the faith to Judea alone; when Satan is said to have gone out from the Lord, the sons and daughters are related to be feasting in the house of the first-born brother. For it had been said to them: Go not into the way of the Gentiles (Matth. X, 5). For after the death and resurrection of the Lord they were turned to the preaching to the Gentiles. Whence also they say in their Acts: It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts XIII, 46). These sons of the bridegroom, therefore, of whom it is said by the voice of the same bridegroom: Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, as long as the bridegroom is with them? (Matth. IX, 15), feast in the house of the first-born brother, because forsooth the Apostles were still feeding on the delicacies of Holy Scripture in the gathering of the Jewish people alone.

CHAPTER XXX

[Vet. XXV, Rec. XVIII].

VERSES 14, 15.---And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans

fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

49. The simple, adhering to the more perfect, are fed by their understanding. ---What else do we understand by the figure of the oxen than those who work well; what else by the asses than certain ones living simply? Who are related to be feeding well beside the oxen; because the minds of the simple, even when they cannot grasp high things, are the more near, as they believe the goods of their brethren to be their own through charity; and since they know not how to envy the senses of others, they are least divided in their pasture. Therefore the asses refresh themselves together with the oxen, because the slower being joined to the prudent, are fed by their intelligence. Now Sabeans are interpreted as 'captivators'. And who else are designated by the name of captivators, if not the unclean spirits, who lead all whom they subject to themselves captive into infidelity? Who also strike the young men with the sword, because they grievously wound with the darts of their temptation those whom a youthful constancy does not yet keep free or robust. Who indeed begin good things well, but in the very tenderness of their beginning are laid prostrate by the captivating unclean spirits. These the enemy strikes with the sword, because he transfixes them with the despair of eternity.

[REC. XIX.] 50. Prophecy, while others perish, remains for ever. ---But what is this, that a messenger came, saying, I only am escaped alone?

Who is this messenger, who, while others perish, alone escapes, if not the prophetic word, which, while all the evils which it predicted come to pass, returns alone as it were sound to the Lord? For while it is known to have spoken the truth concerning the fall of the lost, it is shown to have lived as it were among the dead. Hence it is, that a servant is sent to lead Rebecca into marriage with Isaac (Gen. XXIV, 9), because forsooth prophecy being interposed serves to betroth the Church to the Lord. Therefore, when the Sabeans rushed in, the servant alone escaped to tell it, because while malignant spirits were leading the minds of the weak into captivity, the sentence of prophecy grew strong; which, foretelling that same captivity, says: Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge (Isai. V, 13). Prophecy, therefore, is as it were saved, while the captivity which it predicted is shown. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Vet. XXVI, Rec. XX].

VERSE 16.---While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

51. The fire consuming Job's sheep and servants signifies the envy of the priests against Christ. The fire torments the wicked now through envy, afterwards through vengeance. ---All who

held the office of preaching in the synagogue were rightly called heaven, because forsooth they were believed to have wisdom in heavenly things. Whence also Moses, when he excited the priests and the people to the words of his admonition, said: Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth (Deut. XXXII, 1, sec. LXX); by heaven, namely, signifying the order of those in authority, but by earth the subject people. In this place, therefore, we not unsuitably understand by heaven the priests, or Pharisees, or doctors of the law, who, while they served in heavenly offices before the eyes of men, seemed as it were to shine from above. But because they were exceedingly moved in opposition to our Redeemer, it was as if fire fell from heaven, while for the purpose of deceiving the ignorant people, the flame of envy blazed forth even from those who were thought to teach the truth. For we know by the testimony of the Gospel, that envying the doctrine of truth, they sought an opportunity for the betrayal of the Lord; but fearing the people, they dared not make known what they were plotting. Hence also it is written therein, that they say to dissuade the people: Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed (John VII, 48). But what do we understand by the sheep and the servants, if not all the innocent, but yet still weak? who while they feared to endure the opposition of the Pharisees and rulers, were consumed by the burning of infidelity. Let it be said therefore: The fire of

God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; that is, the flame of envy fell from the hearts of those in authority, and set on fire whatever good was arising in the common people; because while evil rulers demand their own honor against the truth, they subvert the hearts of their followers from all rectitude. Where also it is well added: And I only am escaped alone to tell thee; because while the predicted cause of malice is fulfilled, the word of prophecy escapes the destruction of fallacy, which says: Yea, the fire shall devour thine adversaries (Isai. XXVI, 11). As if he should say openly: Fire not only torments the wicked afterwards by vengeance, but now also it burns them by envy, because they who are afterwards to be punished by the suffering of retribution, now affect themselves with the torment of envy. The servant therefore returns escaping alone, and announces that the sheep and servants have perished by fire, while prophecy, forsaking the Jewish people, manifests that it spoke the truth when it said: Jealousy hath taken hold of an untaught people. As if he should say openly: While the people would not discuss the words of the prophets, but gave their credulity to the words of the envious, they perished by the fire of jealousy, because they burned themselves in the flame of another's envy. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Vet. XXVII].

VERSE 17.---While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

52. The Chaldeans making three bands are the Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees. The camels are the Samaritans, or the Jews who adhere to the mere letter of the Law. ---Since we know that Chaldeans are interpreted as 'fierce', who else are designated by the name of the Chaldeans, but the authors of persecution breaking forth even into open cries of malice, when they say, Crucify Him, crucify Him (Luke XXIII, 21; Mark XV, 13)? Who made out of themselves three bands, when the Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees divided themselves to propose questions to the Lord. Who indeed were vanquished by the mouth of Wisdom: but because it must be believed that they drew certain foolish ones after them, having formed bands, they carried away the camels. For each of their orders corrupted the hearts of the unwise in the evil things which it savored; and while by persuasion it drew them on to destruction, it led as it were the crooked minds of the weak into captivity. For while the Lord was preaching in Samaria, many of the Samaritans were received into the possession of our same Redeemer. But did not they who, on account of the seven husbands of one woman being dead, tempt the Lord concerning the despair of the resurrection (Matth. XXII, 25), by no means

endeavor to lead back the believing Samaritans from the faith, whom it is certain are ignorant of the hope of the resurrection? Who, while they receive some things from the Law and despise others, after the manner of camels, chew the cud as it were like a clean animal, but by no means divide the hoof like an unclean one. Although those camels chewing the cud, but yet not dividing the hoof, also indicate those who in Judea had heard the history according to the letter, but knew not how to discern its virtue spiritually. These the Chaldeans seize in three bands; while the Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees pervert them from all rectitude of sense by their iniquitous persuasion. And at the same time they strike the servants with the sword, because even if there were any in the people who could already use reason, they opposed them not by the virtue of reason, but by the authority of power; and while they wish themselves as it were to be imitated as rulers by their subjects, even if those who follow can understand something, yet from the authority of the government they have taken up, they draw them to destruction. From whom well does the servant alone escape to tell it: because while the Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees were committing iniquities, the prophetic word, deserting them, grows strong, which says: And they that handle the law knew me not (Jer. II, 8). It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII

[Vet. XXVIII, Rec. XXI].

VERSES 18, 19.---While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead.

53. The Jewish people figured in the first-born of Job. ---We have already said a little before that we understand by the sons and daughters the preaching Apostles and the subject common people: who are related to be feasting in the house of the first-born brother, because they were feeding on the delicacies of sacred preaching in the habitation as yet of the Jewish people. But suddenly a great wind rushed in from the region of the wilderness. The region of the wilderness is the heart of the unbelieving, which while the Creator deserts it, no inhabitant cultivates. But what else is understood by a great wind but a strong temptation? A great wind therefore rushed in from the region of the wilderness; because in the Passion of our Redeemer a strong temptation came from the hearts of the Jews against His faithful ones. The region of the wilderness may also not unsuitably be understood as the abandoned multitude of unclean spirits. From which the wind came, and shook the house, because from them temptation proceeded, and moved the hearts of the persecutors.

54. His house overthrown is the synagogue, destroyed by the shaking of its four corners, that is, the four orders. Whence also the children

were overwhelmed. ---But this house, in which the children were feasting, stood on four corners. For we have known three orders of rulers in the synagogue, namely, of the priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people. To whom if we join also the Pharisees, we find four corners in this house. From the region of the wilderness, therefore, the wind came, and shook the four corners of the house, because temptation rushed in from the unclean spirits, and excited the minds of the four orders into the malice of persecution. Which house falling, overwhelmed the children, because while Judea fell into the cruelty of the Lord's persecution, it overthrew the faith of the Apostles with the dread of despair. For they saw their Master only held, and already denying Him they were fleeing in different directions. And although an internal hand held their spirit to life in foreknowledge, yet for a time carnal fear extinguished them from the life of faith. They, therefore, who left their Author while Judea was raging, were slain as it were by the house being overthrown, its corners being shaken. But what do we believe was done at that time with the flock of the faithful, when we know that even the rams themselves fled? But in the midst of these things one escapes to tell it, because the prophetic word, which had announced these things, showed that it had grown strong, saying of the persecuting people: What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many? (Jer. XI, 15); saying of the good preachers, who yet fled in the Passion: My neighbors stood

afar off (Psalm XXXVII, 12); saying of all who were greatly terrified: I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad (Zech. XIII, 7; Matth. XXVI, 31). It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Vet. XXIX, Rec. XXII].

VERSE 20.---Then Job arose, and rent his mantle.

55. Job arising and rending his mantle foreshadows Christ. ---When the house fell and his children were extinguished, Job arose, because Judea being lost in infidelity, and the preachers falling into the death of fear, the Redeemer of the human race raised Himself from the death of His flesh: and demonstrated with how great judgment He deserted His persecutors. For His arising is to show with what strictness He abandons sinners, for His lying down as it were is to tolerate evils patiently. He arises, therefore, when He exerts the judgment of justice against the reprobate. Whence also He is rightly said to have rent His garments. For what was the garment of the Lord but the Synagogue, which adhered to the expectation of His incarnation while the prophets were preaching? For as He is now clothed by those by whom He is loved, as Paul attests who says: That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle (Eph. V, 27). For that which is said to have no spot or wrinkle, is truly shown to be a rational garment, both clean by action and stretched out

by hope. Thus when Judea believed He was to be incarnate, by adhering she was nonetheless a garment.

56. The Synagogue was His rent garment, some believing, others not. ---But because He came as the one expected, and coming taught new things, and teaching performed wonders, and performing wonders tolerated evils; He rent the garment with which He had been clothed, while in Judea He took some away from infidelity, and left others in infidelity. What therefore is the rent garment, but Judea divided in contrary opinions? For if His garment had not been rent, the Evangelist would not have said that while the Lord was preaching, there arose a division among the people, so that some said, He is a good man; but others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people (John VII, 12). His garment was as it were rent, which being divided by opinions lost the unity of concord. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXV.

IBID.---And shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped.

57. He fell as it were upon the ground with his head shaved, while the Jewish priesthood being rejected, He descended to the Gentiles. ---What is signified by the hair being cut off, but the subtlety of the sacraments; what by the head, but the highest point of the priesthood? Whence also it is said to the prophet Ezekiel: Thou son of man, take thee a sharp knife, a razor that shaveth hair, and take it and cause it to pass upon

thine head and upon thy beard (Ezek. V, 1), that forsooth by the prophet's act might be expressed the judgment of the Redeemer, who appearing in the flesh shaved His head, because He took away the sacraments of His precepts from the Jewish priesthood; He shaved His beard, because deserting the Israelitish kingdom, He cut off the beauty of its virtue. [Vet. XXX.] But what in this place is expressed by the ground, if not man the sinner? For to the first sinning man it was said: Dust [earth] thou art, and unto dust [earth] shalt thou return (Gen. III, 19). By the name of the ground, therefore, the sinful Gentile world is designated. For while Judea believed itself to be just, it is certain how reprobate it thought of the Gentiles, Paul attesting, who says: We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles (Gal. II, 15). Our Mediator, therefore, fell upon the ground as it were with his head shorn, because deserting Judea, while He took away His sacraments from its priesthood, He came to the knowledge of the Gentiles. For He shaved the hair from His head, because He took away the sacraments of the Law from that His first priesthood; and He fell upon the ground, because He gave Himself to sinners to be saved; and while He deserted those who seemed to themselves just, He assumed those who both knew and confessed themselves to be unjust. Hence He Himself also says in the Gospel: For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind (John IX, 39). Hence also the pillar of the cloud, which went before the people

in the wilderness (Exod. XIII, 21), radiated with the splendor of fire not by day, but by night, because forsooth our Redeemer, by the example of His conversation, providing leadership to those who follow, shone with no light to those who were confident in their own justice; but to those who acknowledged the darkness of their own sins, He shone with the fire of His love. Nor let the mind think it unworthy that Job is said to fall down, in this signification of the Redeemer. For it is written: The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon [fallen in] Israel (Isai. IX, 8). For Jacob is interpreted as 'supplanter', but Israel as 'one seeing God'. And what is designated by Jacob but the Jewish people; what by Israel but the Gentile people? Because Him whom Jacob studied to supplant by the death of the flesh, this same One the Gentile world saw as God through the eyes of faith. Therefore the word sent to Jacob fell in Israel, because Him whom at His coming the Jewish people rejected, Him the confessing Gentile people suddenly found. For of the Holy Spirit it is written: The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word (Acts X, 44).

58. Why the Word of God or the Holy Spirit is said to fall. ---For this reason, moreover, either the Word of God or the Holy Spirit is said in Holy Scripture to fall, that His unexpected advent may be expressed. For what rushes down or falls, comes suddenly to the bottom. For the Mediator therefore to have fallen as it were upon the ground, is to have come unexpectedly to the Gentiles with no preceding signs. But it is well said

that falling down He worshipped, because while He Himself took up the humility of the flesh, He infused the vows of humility into those who believe in Him. For He did it, because He taught it to be done; as it is said also of His Spirit: The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (Rom. VIII, 26). For He does not ask, who is equal, but is said to intercede; because forsooth whomsoever He has filled, He makes them intercede: although our Redeemer also showed this in Himself, who prayed to the Father also when He was approaching His Passion. For what wonder is it, if in the form of a servant by praying He subjected Himself to the Father, in which also He tolerated the hands of sinners even to the extremes of death? It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Vet. XXXI, Rec. XXIII].

VERSE 21.---Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.

59. Christ is to return at the end of the world to the Jews from whom He went forth. ---The mother of the Redeemer according to the flesh was the Synagogue, from which He came forth to us visible through the body. But she held Him covered within herself by the veil of the letter, while she neglected to open the eyes of the mind to His spiritual intelligence. Because she would not see Him as God latent in the flesh of a human body, she despised considering Him as naked in His divinity. But He went out naked from His

mother's womb: because proceeding from the flesh of the Synagogue, He came conspicuous to the Gentiles. Which was well signified by Joseph fleeing and leaving his mantle behind (Gen. XXXIX, 12). For when the adulterous woman would have used him ill, leaving his mantle he fled out of doors, because while the Synagogue, believing the Lord to be a mere man, wished to constrain Him as it were in an adulterous embrace, He Himself left the covering of the letter to her eyes, and presented Himself conspicuous to the Gentiles for the knowledge of the power of His divinity. Whence also Paul said: Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart (2 Cor. III, 15), because forsooth the adulterous woman retained the mantle with herself, and lost him whom she held ill, naked. He therefore who, coming from the Synagogue, appeared conspicuous to the faith of the Gentiles, went out naked from his mother's womb. But does He desert her altogether? And where is that which is said by the prophet: Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved (Isai. X, 22; Rom. IX, 27)? Where that which is written: Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved (Rom. XI, 25, 26)? There will be a time, therefore, when He shall appear conspicuous even to the Synagogue. It will be in the end of the world without doubt, when to the remnants of His nation He shall make Himself known as He is, God. Whence also it is well said here: Naked shall I return thither. For He returns naked to His

mother's womb, when at the end of this world He, who being made man in time is despised, is declared God before all ages to the eyes of His Synagogue. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVII

[Rec. XXIV].

IBID.---The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord.

60. God gave Judaea to Christ and took it away. ---Our Redeemer, in that He is God, gives all things with the Father; but in that He is man, He receives all things from the Father among all things. Let Him say therefore of Judaea, when she believed the coming mystery of His incarnation: The Lord gave. Let Him say of Judaea, when she had despised the expected presence of His incarnation: The Lord hath taken away. For she was given, when she believed in future things through some; but she was taken away, as the merit of her own blindness required, when she despised to venerate the things believed through some.

61. Christ taught by example to bless God in scourges. ---But let Him teach those believing in Him, so that being placed in scourges they may know how to bless the Lord, when it is added: As it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done; blessed be the name of the Lord. Whence also, by the witness of the Gospel (Matth. XXVI, 26), when He is said to draw near to His passion, having taken bread He is recorded to have given thanks. He

therefore gives thanks, who receives the scourges of another's iniquity. And He who showed nothing worthy of smiting, humbly blesses in the smiting; that from this he might clearly show what each one ought to do in the scourge of his own fault, if He Himself calmly bears the scourges of another's fault; that from this he might show what the subject should do in correction, if He being equal, placed in the scourge, gives thanks to the Father. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VERSE 22.---In all these things Job sinned not, nor spoke any foolish thing against God.

62. Guile among men is wisdom, with God it is foolishness. ---Because it is asserted that he neither sinned, nor spoke any foolish thing against God; of Him Peter, as we have already said, openly testifies, saying: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth (1 Pet. II, 22). For guile in the mouth, the more prudently it is practiced among men, the more foolishly it lacks sense with God, as Paul attests, who says: The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (1 Cor. III, 19). Therefore, because guile was not in His mouth, He undoubtedly said nothing foolish. The priests and elders foolishly believed that He spoke against God, when being questioned at the time of His passion, He testified that He was the Son of God. Whence also they say, inquiring: What need we any further witnesses? behold, now we have heard the blasphemy (Matth. XXVI, 65). But He said nothing foolish against God:

because speaking the truth, He brought this upon the infidels even by dying, which a little later He showed by rising again for the redemption of all.

[Vet. XXXII.] 63. MORAL SENSE.---Satan assists God with the holy angels, interposing evil thoughts with good ones. ---We have briefly touched upon these things treated as a signification of our Head: now let us unfold them to be treated morally for the edification of His body, so that what is narrated as done outwardly in work, we may know how it is done inwardly in the mind. For when the sons of God assist before God, among them also assists Satan, because very often into our good thoughts, which are sown in our heart by the operation of the coming of the Holy Spirit, that ancient enemy craftily interposes and joins himself, so that he may perturb the well-thought things, and tear asunder those badly perturbed. But He who created us by no means deserts us in temptation. For He makes our enemy, who covers himself against us in snares, detectable to us by the illustration of His light; on which account He soon says to him:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VERSE 7.---From whence comest thou?

64. To whom must it be said, "from whence comest thou?" ---For to inquire of the crafty enemy is to declare his snares to us, so that where we perceive him entering the heart, we may watch against him with strong circumspection.

CHAPTER XL.

IBID.---Who answering said: I have circled the earth, and walked through it.

65. May God detect his snares for us. ---For Satan to circle the earth is to search carnal hearts, and to seek from whence he may find an occasion for accusation. He circles the earth, because he circumvents human hearts, so that he may take away good things, that he may insert evil things into minds, that he may heap up those inserted, that he may perfect those heaped up, so that he may acquire as companions for punishment those perfected in iniquities. And it is to be noted that he asserts that he did not fly over, but walked through, because forsooth he by no means quickly deserts him whom he tempts; but where he finds a soft heart, there he fixes the foot of wretched persuasion, so that by lingering he may imprint the vestiges of a depraved action, and from the likeness of his own iniquity, render reprobate those whom he can. But against this one blessed Job is praised, and it is said:

CHAPTER XLI.

VERSE 8.---Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and departing from evil?

66. To praise is God's to give good things, and to guard those given. ---Whom divine inspiration strengthens against the enemy, him as it were in the ears of Satan God praises. For to praise is His, both first to grant good things, and after they are granted to guard them. But the ancient enemy

rages against the good the more severely, as he perceives them to be walled by the gift of divine protection. Whence also subjoining he says:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERSE 9.---Does Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not walled him, and his house, and all his substance round about? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his possession has increased on the earth.

67. Man does not stand by his own strength. ---As if he should say openly: Why do you praise him whom you strengthen by protecting? For if I were despised, he would be a man worthy of your praises if he stood against me by his own strength. Whence soon he maliciously asks about the man, what nevertheless the protector of man kindly grants. For it is added:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 11. But stretch out thy hand a little, and touch all things which he possesses, unless he shall bless thee to thy face.

68. The elect profit in temptation. ---For very often, while we fecundly return the fruits of virtues, while we are powerful in continual prosperity, the mind is somewhat lifted up, so that it thinks those good things which it has exist from itself. Which good things, forsooth, the ancient enemy maliciously desires to touch; but God does

not permit these to be tempted except kindly, so that while the mind, when temptation strikes, is shaken in the good things in which it was rejoicing, the weakness of its imbecility being known, it may be more robustly solidified in the hope of divine aid. And it happens by a wonderful dispensation of piety, that from whence the malignant enemy tempts the heart, so that he may kill it, from thence the merciful Creator instructs it, so that it may live. Whence also it is well added:

CHAPTER XLIV.

VERSE 12.---Behold, all things which he has are in thy hand, only stretch not forth thy hand against him.

69. God bestowing perseverance. ---As if he should say openly: I so grant the goods of each elect one to be tempted by you outwardly, that you nevertheless may know, that I preserve him for myself persevering in the root of the mind. Where it is well added:

CHAPTER XLV.

IBID.---And Satan went out from the face of the Lord:

70. By whose moderation the devil does not wound the hearts of the good unto destruction. ---Because by this, that he is by no means permitted to prevail even to the failure of the heart, being excluded from the innermost parts, he wanders outside. Who even if he very often disturbs the virtues of the mind, by that very fact

he is outside, because God resisting, he does not wound the hearts of the good unto destruction. For he is permitted to rage against them only so far as it is necessary so that being instructed by temptations they may be solidified; lest they should attribute those good things which they do to their own strength, lest they should desert themselves in the torpor of security, and be dissolved from the girding of fear: but that they may watch the more skillfully for the custody of their progress, as they see themselves always standing in the line of battle of temptations against the adversary.

CHAPTER XLVI

[Vet. XXXIII].

VERSES 13, 14, 15.---And on a certain day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, there came a messenger unto Job, to say: The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them, and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took all away, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

71. Faith the first of all virtues. ---In the heart of the elect, the wisdom of following good things is born first, and this is brought forth as it were the firstborn offspring through the gift of the Spirit. Which wisdom, in truth, is our faith, as the prophet attests, who says: Except ye believe, ye shall not understand (Isai. VII, 9. sec. LXX). For then we truly have wisdom for understanding,

when we present the faith of our belief to all things which the Creator says. In the house therefore of the firstborn brother the children feast, when the rest of the virtues banquet in faith. Which if it is not first begotten in our heart, whatever other things there are cannot be good, even if they seem good. In the house of the firstborn brother the children banquet, while our virtues are satiated with the food of the sacred word in the habitation of faith. For it is written: Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebr. XI, 6). Then therefore our virtues take the true banquets of life, when they begin to be nourished by the sacraments of faith. In the house of the firstborn brother the children banquet, because unless the rest of the virtues, filled with the banquets of wisdom, do prudently those things which they desire, they can by no means be virtues.

72. How variously the devil lies in wait for our virtues. ---But behold, while the good things which we do are fed by the banquets of wisdom and faith, our enemy takes away the ploughing oxen and the feeding asses, and kills the servants with the sword. What do we take for the ploughing oxen, except our more serious thoughts? which while they prepare the heart with studious exercise, return rich fruits of progress. What do we understand by the feeding asses, except the simple motions of the heart? which while we studiously restrain from the error of duplicity, we nourish as it were in a field of free purity. But very often the crafty enemy, when he perceives serious thoughts in the heart, corrupts them un-

der an introduced delight of pleasure; and while he sees simple motions of the heart, he shows subtle points of inventions; so that while praise for subtlety is sought, the simplicity of purity is lost; and if he is not able to draw it even to a depraved work, nevertheless by tempting he harms by stealing from the thoughts of the good; so that while he is known to perturb the good things of the mind, he may seem to have taken them away as if from the foundation. The thoughts of charity can also be understood by the ploughing oxen; by which we endeavor to profit others, when we desire to cut the hardness of a brotherly heart by preaching. The meekness of patience can also be signified by the asses, which forsooth resist with no madness of ferocity those who burden them. And often the ancient enemy, when he perceives us willing to profit others by speaking, merges the mind into a certain torpor of leisure; so that it is not pleasing to profit others, even when it is free from its own affairs. Therefore he takes away the ploughing oxen, when he breaks the thoughts of the mind devoted to the fruits of brotherly utility, through an instilled torpor of negligence. And although the hearts of the elect watch within the secrets of their own thought, and weigh what they sustain from the tempter, overcoming it, nevertheless by that very fact the malignant enemy rejoices that he has snatched something, by which he prevails over the thoughts of the good even for a moment.

73. With what vigilance his attempts must be met. The office of discretion in temptation. Often,

when he sees a mind prepared for endurance, he searches out what is most loved by it, and there he inserts the snares of scandal, so that the more a thing is loved, the more easily patience may be disturbed through it. And indeed, the hearts of the elect always solicitously return to themselves, and afflict themselves gravely even for a slight movement of transgression; and while, being moved, they learn how they ought to have stood, sometimes they are better solidified by being shaken. But the ancient enemy, while he disturbs thoughts of endurance even for a moment, exults as if he had carried away the she-asses from the field of the heart. Moreover, in those things which we dispose ourselves to do, we solicitously weigh with rational custody what is suitable for which things. But for the most part, the enemy, while he rushes upon us with a sudden perturbation of temptation, unexpectedly forestalling the circumspections of the heart, kills as it were the very guardians, the young men, with the sword. Yet one escapes to report that the others have perished, because in that which the mind suffers from the enemy, the discretion of reason always returns to the soul; and it indicates that it alone has escaped, as it bravely weighs within itself whatever it has endured. Therefore, while the others perish, one returns to the house, when, the motions being disturbed in temptation, discretion recurs to the conscience; so that what the preoccupied mind thinks it has lost by sudden incursions, it may receive back when afflicted by the study of compunction.

CHAPTER XLVII.

VERSE 16.---And while he was still speaking, another came and said: The fire of God fell from heaven, and having touched the sheep and the young men, consumed them; and I alone escaped to tell you.

74. The devil attempts to corrupt chaste thoughts. But discretion escapes the danger. What is designated by the sheep, if not innocence of thoughts? What by the sheep, if not the purity of good hearts? Now we have said a little before that heaven is called the air; whence also we name the birds of heaven. And we know that the unclean spirits, who fell from the ethereal heaven, wander in this space between heaven and earth; they envy the hearts of men ascending to heavenly things as much as they see themselves cast down from heavenly things through the uncleanness of their own pride. Because, therefore, a flame of envy rushes from the powers of the air against the purity of our thoughts, the fire comes from heaven upon the sheep. For often they inflame the clean thoughts of our mind with the heat of lust; and they consume the sheep as if with fire, while they perturb the chaste motions of the soul with the temptation of luxury. This is called the fire of God, because although God does not cause it, nevertheless it is produced by His permission. And because by a sudden impulse they sometimes overwhelm the very circumspections of the mind, they kill as it were the guardians, the young men, with the sword. Yet

one escapes unharmed, while persevering discretion subtly regards all that the mind suffers, and alone escapes the danger of death; because even with the thoughts perturbed, discretion does not succumb, so that it may report its losses to the soul, and recall as it were the master to lamentation.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERSE 17.---But while he was yet speaking, another came and said: The Chaldeans made three troops, and fell upon the camels, and took them, and moreover they have smitten the young men with the sword; and I only have escaped to tell you.

75. To what great dangers the stewardship of earthly things is subject. By the camels, which have something clean, in that they chew the cud, and something unclean, in that they by no means divide the hoof, we have already said above that the good stewardships of temporal things are understood, in which the more extended the care is, the more manifoldly the enemy lies in wait for us. For everyone who presides over the stewardship of earthly things lies more widely open to the darts of the hidden enemy. For he strives to act with foresight in some things, and often while he subtly foresees future things with caution, being incautious he by no means sees present losses; often while he watches over present things, he slumbers as to foreseeing things at hand; often while he acts sluggishly in some things, he neglects those which are to be done

vigilantly; often while he shows himself more vigilant than is right in action, he harms the things subject to him worse by the very restlessness of his action. But sometimes he strives to set a limit to his tongue, but the burden of stewardship demanding it, he is forbidden to be silent. Sometimes while he restrains himself with excessive censure, he is silent even as to those things which he ought to have spoken. Sometimes while he relaxes himself more widely to bring in necessary things, he says even what he ought not to have spoken. But for the most part he is involved in such volumes of thoughts that he can scarcely bear those which he providently turns over within himself; and though he does nothing in work, he sweats vehemently under the great weight of his heart. For because the things which he suffers within himself are hard, he is fatigued though quiet and at leisure without. For for the most part the mind beholds things as if they were coming, and proposes its whole intention against them; and a great heat of contention inserts itself, sleep flees, night is turned into day; and while the bed holds the limbs quiet without, within there is litigation with great clamors in the forum of the heart. And it often happens that none of those things which are foreseen come to pass: and all that thought, which had long prepared itself with full intention, suddenly rests empty. But the mind ceases from necessary things so much the more as it thinks upon vain things more widely. Because, therefore, the malignant spirits strike the cares of stewardship

sometimes with a torpid or a precipitated action, sometimes confound them with a sluggish or an immoderate speech, but almost always press them with excessive masses of thoughts, the Chaldeans seize the camels in three troops. For to make as it were three troops against the camels is to lay waste the studies of earthly stewardships sometimes by illicit work, sometimes by superfluous speech, sometimes by inordinate thought; so that while the mind strives to extend itself effectively to administer things without, it may be separated from the consideration of itself; and so it may not know the losses which it suffers concerning itself, in that it labors with a stronger study than is becoming towards the things of others. But the upright mind, when it undertakes the cares of stewardship, attends to what it owes to itself and what to its neighbors; and neither through the immoderation of care for others does it neglect its own studies, nor through the vigilance of its own utility does it postpone those of others. But nevertheless for the most part, while the mind watchfully attends to both, while it is at leisure with great circumspections towards itself and those things which are committed to it, being suddenly disturbed by the occurrence of any cause that arises, it is so hurried headlong that all its circumspections are suddenly overwhelmed by it. Whence also the Chaldeans strike the guardians of the camels, the young men, with the sword. Yet one returns; because among these things the reason of discretion meets the eyes of our mind, and the soul, being solicitous for itself,

understands what it loses within by a sudden impulse of temptation. It follows.

CHAPTER XLIX.

VERSES 18, 19.---He was still speaking, and behold another entered and said: Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their firstborn brother; suddenly a vehement wind rushed from the region of the desert, and shook the four corners of the house, which, falling, overwhelmed your children, and they are dead; and I alone escaped to tell you.

76. The spiritual building rests upon four virtues. Whence it is shaken. As we have already said above, the region of the desert is the forsaken multitude of unclean spirits, which, while it deserted the blessedness of its Creator, lost as it were the hand of the cultivator, from which the vehement wind comes and subverts the house; because a strong temptation steals upon us from the unclean spirits, and overturns the conscience from the state of its tranquility. Now this house consists in four corners, because surely the solid building of our mind is sustained by prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice. This house subsists in four corners, because in these four virtues the whole structure of a good work rises. Whence also the four rivers of paradise irrigate the earth, because while the heart is poured into by these four virtues, it is tempered from all the heat of carnal desires. But sometimes while laziness steals upon the mind, prudence grows cold; for when it is weary and torpid, it does not fore-

see the things to come. Sometimes while some delight steals upon the mind, our temperance withers; for in as much as we are led to the delight of present things, so much less do we temper ourselves from illicit things. Sometimes fear insinuates itself into the heart, and disturbs the strengths of our fortitude; and we are less against adverse things the more immoderately we dread to lose certain things we love. But sometimes love of self inserts itself into the mind, and diverts it by a hidden motion from the rectitude of justice; and in as much as it neglects to restore itself wholly to the Creator, so much does it contradict the right of justice in itself. Therefore, the vehement wind shakes the four corners of the house, while a strong temptation by hidden motions shakes the four virtues; and the house is overthrown as it were with shaken corners, while the conscience is disturbed by the buffeting of the virtues.

77. From there the other virtues, as if offspring of the heart, feed one another. Moreover, within these four corners of the house the sons feast together, because within the secrets of the mind, which is principally raised to the summit of the highest rectitude by these four virtues, the other virtues, as if certain offspring of the heart, feed one another. For the gift of the Spirit, which in the subject mind forms prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice before other things, tempers that same mind so as to instruct it against each individual temptation in seven subsequent virtues: so that against folly He may give wisdom; against dullness, understanding; against precip-

itation, counsel; against fear, fortitude; against ignorance, knowledge; against hardness, piety; against pride, fear.

78. From those who are endowed with virtues, grace sometimes usefully withdraws itself. But sometimes, while our mind is supported by the plenitude and abundance of such a great gift, if it enjoys a continuous security in these, it forgets from whom it has them; and it thinks it has from itself what it considers never to be absent from itself. Whence it happens that sometimes this same grace usefully withdraws itself, and shows to the presuming mind how much it is weakened in itself. For then we truly know from where our good things are, when by losing them as it were, we feel that they cannot be preserved by us. For this mastery of intimating humility, it happens for the most part that upon the incursion of an article of temptation, such great folly strikes our wisdom that the disturbed mind is ignorant of how it should meet imminent evils, or how it should prepare itself against temptation. But by this very folly the heart is prudently instructed, because from that where it is foolish for a moment, it afterwards has wisdom more truly, as more humbly; and wisdom is possessed more certainly from that where it is as it were lost. Sometimes while the soul raises itself in pride by understanding sublime things, it grows sluggish with heavy dullness in low and base things, so that it suddenly sees even the lowest things closed to it, though it had nimbly penetrated the highest. But this same dullness preserves under-

standing for us while it withdraws it, because while it humbles the heart for a moment, it confirms it more truly for the understanding of sublime things. Sometimes while we rejoice that we act in all things with gravity of counsel, when an article of an emerging cause strikes us, we are hurried by a sudden precipitation; and we who believed ourselves always to have lived in an orderly manner, are suddenly laid waste by inward confusion. But nevertheless, by the instruction of that same confusion we learn not to attribute our counsels to our own strengths; and we are restrained to gravity so much more maturely as we return to it as if it had been lost. Sometimes while the mind bravely despises adverse things, upon the arising of events of adversity, a vehement fear strikes it. But being shaken by this, it learns to whom it should attribute the fact that it stood bravely in some things; and it retains fortitude more strongly afterwards, as much as it sees it already as if slipped away by the suddenly rushing dread. Sometimes while we rejoice to know great things, we grow torpid with the blindness of sudden ignorance. But in as much as the eye of the mind is closed to knowledge for a moment, it is afterwards opened more truly to knowledge, so that surely being instructed by the scourge of its own blindness, it may know from whom it has the very power of knowing. Sometimes while we religiously dispose all things, while we congratulate ourselves that we fully possess the bowels of piety, we are struck by a certain hardness of mind that rushes in. But as if hardened, we recognize to

whom we should attribute the goods of the piety we possessed; and piety is received back more truly as if extinguished, while as if lost it is loved more fully. Sometimes while the soul rejoices that it is subject to divine fear, it suddenly grows rigid with the temptation of pride. But nevertheless, fearing greatly soon because it does not fear, it hastily turns itself back again to humility; and it receives it so much more solidly as it weighed the weight of that virtue by as it were losing it.

79. Humility and vigilance are acquired through temptations. Therefore, the house being overturned, the sons die, because the conscience being disturbed in temptation, the virtues generated in the heart are overwhelmed for the utility of one's own cognition, rapidly and in a moment of time. Which sons indeed live within through the spirit, while they die without in the flesh, because namely our virtues in the time of temptation, even if for a moment they fail from the safety of their state being disturbed, nevertheless through the perseverance of intention they subsist whole in the root of the mind. Along with them also the three sisters fall, because in the heart sometimes through scourges charity is disturbed, through dread hope is shaken, through questions faith is buffeted. For often we grow torpid as it were from the love of the Creator, while we are fatigued by the scourge beyond what we believe to be suitable for us. Often while the mind dreads more than is necessary, it weakens for itself the confidence of hope. Often while the soul is stretched by immense questions,

perturbed faith is fatigued as if about to fail. But nevertheless the daughters live, who die when the house is shaken, because although within the conscience, the perturbation itself reports that hope, faith, and charity almost fall, nevertheless the perseverance of an upright intention keeps these alive before the eyes of God. Whence also the young man who reports these things alone escapes, because the discretion of the mind remains unharmed even among temptations. And the young man acts so that Job may receive back his sons by weeping, while, with discretion reporting, the grieving soul preserves by repenting the strengths which it had begun as it were to lose. Moreover, this is done with us by a wonderful dispensation, so that our mind may sometimes be struck by the buffeting of guilt. For a man would believe himself to be of great strengths, if he never felt any defect of those same strengths within the secrets of his mind. But while he is shaken by an inrushing temptation, and fatigued as it were beyond what he can bear, the defense of humility is shown to him against the snares of his enemy, and from where he fears himself to fall weakly, from there he receives the power to stand bravely. Now he who is tempted not only learns from whom he should receive strength, but understands with what great vigilance he should preserve it. For often him whom the contest of temptation was not able to overcome, his own security has worse overthrown. For while each one relaxes himself when weary in leisure, he prostitutes his dissolved mind to the

corrupter; but if the temptation from the dispensation of heavenly piety strikes him, not suddenly and vehemently inrushing, but instructing him with a tempered access, surely he wakes up to provide against the snares, so that he may cautiously gird himself for the contest against the enemy. Whence also it is well added:

CHAPTER L.

VERSE 20.---Then Job arose.

80. Discretion profits by temptations. For to sit is for one who is resting; to rise up is for one who is contending. Therefore, to rise after hearing of adversities is to prepare the mind more robustly for contests once temptations have been experienced. In which temptations discretion also profits, because it learns to distinguish virtues from vices more subtly. Whence also it is well added:

CHAPTER LI.

IN THE SAME PLACE.---He rent his garments.

81. Those struck by temptations should fly to the mourning of penitence and to humility so that they may be healed. We rent our garments when we retract our works by discerning them. For if our works did not cover us before God like garments, the angelic voice would by no means say: Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his filthiness (Apoc. XVI, 15). For our filthiness is then seen, when a reprehensible life is by no

means veiled by the covering of a subsequent good work before the eyes of the just in judgment. But because when we are tempted with guilt, we are enkindled to lamentations; and being excited by these very lamentations, we open the eyes of the mind more subtly to perceive the light of justice, we rent as it were our garments in grief, because from weeping, discretion increasing, we judge all that we do more strictly with an angry hand. Then all our pride falls, then all superfluity of thoughts falls from the soul. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER LII.

IN THE SAME PLACE.---And having shaved his head, falling upon the earth, he worshipped.

82. Pride and the vanity of thoughts, how they are cut off. For what do we receive morally by the hair, if not the flowing thoughts of the soul? Whence also it is said elsewhere to the Church: Thy lips are like a scarlet ribbon, O spouse, and thy speech is sweet (Cant. IV, 3). For a ribbon binds the hair of the head. Therefore the lips of the spouse are like a ribbon, because by the exhortation of Holy Church, all the thoughts diffused in the minds of the hearers are bound together; lest, being let loose, they should flow away, lest they should scatter themselves through illicit things, lest being scattered they should weigh down the eyes of the heart; but that they may collect themselves as it were to one intention, while the ribbon of holy preaching binds them. How rightly also he asserts it to be

scarlet; because the preaching of the saints burns with the fire of charity alone. Now what is signified by the head, if not the mind itself, which is the principal of each action? Whence also it is said elsewhere: And let not oil be wanting from thy head (Eccles. IX, 8). For oil in the head is charity in the mind; and oil is wanting from the head when charity departs from the mind. Therefore, to shave the head is to cut off superfluous thoughts from the mind. And having shaved the head, he falls upon the earth, who, having repressed the thoughts of his own presumption, humbly acknowledges how weak he is in himself.

83. It is difficult to do great things and not to have confidence in what has been done. For it is difficult to do great things, and for anyone not to have confidence in his thoughts concerning his great acts. For by the very fact that one lives bravely against vices, presumption of thoughts is generated in the heart; and when the mind valiantly crushes faults without, for the most part it swells within secretly; and already it esteems itself to be of some great merit, nor does it think that it sins in the thought of its own estimation. But before the eyes of the strict Judge, it is sinned so much more grievously as the fault is perpetrated more secretly and almost incorrigibly: and the pit lies open so much more widely for devouring, as the life glories more loftily concerning itself. Whence, as we have often said, it is done by the pious dispensation of the Creator, that the soul confident in itself should be struck by a dispensatory temptation, so that being

weakened, it may find what it is, and lay aside the pride of its own presumption. For as soon as temptation has struck the mind, all presumption and tumult of our thoughts rests.

84. The proud mind breaks forth into tyranny; its satellites are put to flight by temptation. For the mind, when it raises itself in pride, breaks forth as it were into tyranny. Now it has the satellites of its tyranny, its thoughts favoring itself. But if the enemy rushes upon the tyrant, the favor of the satellites soon ceases. For when the adversary enters, the satellites flee, and they decline in terror, who, being placed in peace, praised him with cunning flattery. But the satellites being withdrawn, he remains alone before the enemy, because the proud thoughts receding, the perturbed soul sees only itself and the temptation. Therefore, when the adversities are heard, the head is shaved, when, temptations vehemently inrushing, the mind is stripped of the thoughts of its presumption. For what is it that the Nazarenes nourish their hair (Num. VI, 5), if not that through a life of great continence the thoughts of presumptions grow? But what is it that, the devotion being completed, the Nazarene is commanded to shave his head and to place the hair in the fire of the sacrifice, if not that then we reach the summit of perfection, when we so overcome external vices that we also cut off superfluous thoughts from the mind? Which indeed to burn with the fire of the sacrifice is to enkindle them with the flame of divine love, so that the whole heart may burn in the love

of God, and burning up superfluous thoughts, it may consume them as the hair of the Nazarene in the perfection of devotion. And it is to be noted that falling upon the earth he worshipped. For he exhibits true worship to God who humbly sees himself as being dust, who attributes nothing of virtue to himself, who acknowledges that the good things he does are from the mercy of the Creator. Whence also he says competently:

CHAPTER LIII.

VERSE 21.---Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.

85. He who thinks himself naked of virtues, is the better clothed by humility itself. As if the tempted soul, being caught in the poverty of its own infirmity, should say: First grace brought me forth naked in the faith, the same grace shall save me naked in my taking up. For it is a great solace to a troubled mind, that when buffeted by vices, and seeing itself as it were stripped of virtues, it should fly back to the hope of mercy alone; and not allow itself to be stripped, in that it humbly thinks itself naked of virtues: who, although perhaps he is uncovered of some virtue in temptation, yet acknowledging his own infirmity, is the better clothed by humility itself; and he lies much more robustly than he had stood, when he ceases to attribute to himself what he has without divine aid. Whence also he soon humbly acknowledges the hand of the Giver and the Judge, saying:

CHAPTER LIV.

ON THE SAME.---The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.

86. We grow by being instructed through temptation.---Behold, he has grown by being instructed through temptations, who recognizes both the bounty of the Giver in the virtue possessed, and the power of the Taker-away in the perturbation of his strength. Which strength, however, is not taken away, but being disturbed is weary; to the end that the shaken mind, while it fears that it is even now about to lose it, being ever made humble, may never lose it.

CHAPTER LV.

ON THE SAME.---As it pleased the Lord, so is it come to pass; blessed be the name of the Lord.

87. What the tempted man should do.---In this, that we are shaken by internal perturbation, it is right that we should have recourse to the judgment of our Creator; that our heart may yield greater praises to its Helper from the very source whence, being buffeted, it more truly weighs the imbecility of its own infirmity. Moreover, it is well said:

CHAPTER LVI.

VERSE 22.---In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

88. He must not murmur at temptation.---Because the grieving soul ought to guard with skill-

ful care, lest when temptation pricks it within, it should break out into words of unlawful speech without, lest it should murmur at its trial, and the fire which consumes it as gold, should by the excess of unlawful speech turn it into the ashes of straw.

[Vet. XLI, Rec. XXVIII.] 89. The gifts of God are sometimes profitably withdrawn. The Spirit of prophecy is not always present with the prophets.---Nothing indeed hinders but that what we have said of the virtues, we should feel also of those gifts of the Holy Spirit which are given in the manifestation of virtue. For to some are given prophecy, to others kinds of tongues, to others the virtues of healings. But because these very gifts are not always in the mind in the same manner, it is clearly shown that, lest the mind should lift itself up in presumption, they are sometimes profitably withdrawn. For if the spirit of prophecy were always present with the prophets, surely Elisha the prophet would not say; "Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me" (2 Kings 4:27). If the spirit of prophecy were always present with the prophets, Amos the prophet, being questioned, would not say: "I am no prophet," where also he added: "Neither am I a prophet's son; but I am an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit" (Amos 7:14). How then was he not a prophet, who predicted so many true things concerning the future? Or how was he a prophet, if he denied what was true of himself in the present? But because in the same hour in which he

was questioned he felt that the spirit of prophecy was wanting to him, he bore true testimony concerning himself, saying: "I am no prophet." Who yet following added: "Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord." Thus saith the Lord: Thy wife shall be an harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die in a polluted land" (Amos 7:16, 17). By which words of the prophet it is openly shown that while he was speaking those things of himself, he was filled; and soon deserved to have the spirit of prophesying, because he humbly acknowledged that he was not a prophet. And if the spirit of prophecy were always present with the prophets, Nathan the prophet would by no means have granted to King David, when consulting him about the building of the temple, what he denied a little after (2 Sam 7:3, 5).

90. To have the Spirit permanently is the privilege of Christ. How He is said to be about to abide also in the disciples.---Whence also it is well written in the Gospel: "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth" (John 1:33). For the Spirit comes into all the faithful, but remains in a singular manner in the Mediator alone, because He never deserted His humanity, from whose divinity He proceeds. In Him, therefore, He abides, who alone is able to do all things and always. For the faithful, who receive Him, since they cannot always have the gifts of signs, as they wish, testify that they have received Him

as it were in a manifestation of passage. But when again it is said of the same Spirit to the disciples by the mouth of the Truth, "He shall dwell with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17), why is this same abiding of the Holy Spirit declared by the divine voice to be the sign of the Mediator, when it is said: "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him"? If therefore, according to the Master's voice, He abides also in the disciples, how will it now be a singular sign that He remains in the Mediator? Which, however, we sooner learn, if we distinguish the gifts of the same Spirit.

BOOK THIRD.

The whole second chapter of the book of Job, in the manner of the former books, he explains historically, allegorically, and morally.

CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORICAL SENSE.---1. Blessed Job, sought for unto death in temptation, grew unto life from the stripe; and the old enemy, from the very source whence he thought to extinguish his goods, grieved that he had multiplied them. But because in the first contest he considers himself to have succumbed, he restores himself to other wars of temptations, and still shamelessly hopes for evil from the holy man; because the evil man cannot believe in good things, even those experienced. Moreover, those things which were premised in his first percussion are again subjoined, when it is said:

VERSES 1, 2, 3.---Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan,

Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

The infirmity of the devil's pride is rebuked.---Because we have discussed these things more at large above, we better pass them over in silence: lest, while we repeat things often discussed, we come more slowly to things undiscussed. Although this, which is said by the voice of the Lord to Satan, "From whence comest thou?" I by no means think is said to him as before. For when he returns conquered from that contest in which he had been let loose; and it is asked from whence he comes, when it is known from whence he comes; what else is rebuked than the infirmity of his pride? as if the divine voice said to him openly: Behold, thou art conquered by one man placed even in infirm flesh, thou who endeavourest to raise thyself against Me, the Author of all things. Whence soon the Lord, as He would say the good things of blessed Job as before, enumerating these with the triumphs of victory, subjoins:

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SAME.---And still he holdeth fast his integrity.

2. Job preserved his integrity more gloriously under the stripe.---As if He should say openly: Thou indeed hast exercised thy malice, but he has not lost his integrity; and from the very source whence thou thoughtest to diminish his advancement, thou hast been compelled to serve

his advancement, because the integrity of mind, which he gloriously held in tranquility, he more gloriously preserved under the stripe. It follows:

CHAPTER III.

ON THE SAME.---Although thou movedst Me against him, to destroy him without cause.

3. God afflicted Job in vain, because in him He did not punish sin; and not in vain, because He increased his merit.---Since God is just and true, it is much to be questioned how He indicates that He has afflicted blessed Job in vain. For because He is just, He could not afflict in vain; but again because He is true, He could not have said otherwise than He did. That therefore both may agree with the Just and True One, so that He may both speak true things and not do unjust things; let us know that blessed Job was smitten in one respect in vain, and again in another respect not in vain. For because the Just and True One asserts these things of Himself, let us show both that what He said was true, and that what He did was right. For it was necessary that the holy man, known to God alone and to himself, should be made known to all for imitation, in how great virtue he excelled. For he would not openly give examples of virtue to others, if he himself remained without temptation. It was so done, therefore, that both the very force of the percussion should show his strengths to be imitated by all, and the scourges should bring forth what had been hidden in tranquility. But by the same scourges the virtue of patience grew, and from the pain of the stripe the glory of

reward was increased. That therefore truth may be held in the word of the Lord, and righteousness in the deed, blessed Job is both not smitten in vain, because merit is increased; and yet he is smitten in vain, because no transgression is punished. For he was smitten in vain, to whom no fault is imputed; and he was not smitten in vain, on whom the merit of virtue is heaped up.

[Vet. II.] 4. How God is understood to be moved.---But what is it that is said: "Thou movedst Me against him"? Is the Truth kindled by the words of Satan, that He should be instigated to the tortures of His subjects? Who would think these things of God, which he considers unworthy even of a right man? But because we know not how to strike unless moved, the divine percussion itself is called a moving; and the divine voice descends to our words, that His deed may be in some way grasped by man. For that power which created all things without necessity, and presides over all without contempt, and sustains all without labor, and rules all without occupation, also corrects without moving, and so forms human minds by scourges to those things which He wills, that it may not pass from the light of its own immutability into the shadow of diversity. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERSES 4, 5.---And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth Thine hand

now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.

5. God allows the devil to renew the war against the saints, that being often conquered he may be put to silence.---The old enemy gathers from external things what he inflicts as a crime of mind upon the blessed man. For he asserts that skin is given for skin, because often when we see a blow coming against our face, we oppose our hand to our eyelids, that we may defend our eyes from the blow; and we object our body to the wound, lest we be wounded in a more tender part of the body. Satan therefore, knowing these things to be commonly done, says: "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." As if he should say openly: Therefore Job endures so many scourges outside himself with equanimity, because he fears lest he himself should be struck. It is care for his flesh, then, that he is not moved by the loss of carnal affections, because while he fears for himself, he feels less the percussions of his own. Whence also he soon demands that his flesh be struck, saying: "Put forth Thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face" (Job 2:5). He had said above: "Touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face" (Job 1:11). Now as if forgetful of his former proposition, being broken he demands one thing after another. Which however is rightly permitted by divine dispensation, to the end that the impudent disputant, being often conquered, may be put to silence. It follows:

CHAPTER V.

VERSE 6.---And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

6. Job is so delivered into the hand of his adversary, that he is always retained in the hand of his Helper.---Behold again the permission of the stripe is accompanied by the guard of protection, and divine dispensation by guarding deserts its elect, and by deserting guards him; it betrays some things of his, and protects others. For if He should desert Job entirely in the hand of so great an adversary, what would man be? In the very justice of the permission, therefore, is mixed a certain balance of piety, to the end that in one and the same contest both the humble servant may profit from oppression, and the proud enemy may succumb from permission. The holy man is therefore delivered into the hand of the adversary, but yet in his inmost parts he is retained in the hand of his Helper. For he was of those sheep of which the Truth Itself says in the Gospel: "No man shall pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28); and yet it is said to the demanding enemy: "Behold, he is in thine hand." The same man, therefore, is in the hand of God, and the same is in the hand of the devil. For in saying: "He is in thine hand," when He immediately adds: "But save his life," the pious Helper was plainly made known, because He held him whom He granted, and in giving He gave him not, whom He hid while casting him out to the darts of his adversary.

[Vet. III.] Satan is said to "save" that into which he is not allowed to break.---But what is this that is said to Satan: "Save his life"? For in what way does he guard, who always desires to break into what is guarded? But Satan is said to "save," in that he dares not break in, as on the contrary we petition the Father in prayer, saying: "Lead us not into temptation" (Matt 6:13). For neither does the Lord lead into temptation, who always mercifully protects His subjects from temptation: but yet His "leading into temptation," as it were, is His not fortifying us against the allurements of temptation. And then He does not lead us into the snare of temptation, when He does not permit us to be tempted beyond what we are able. As therefore God is said to lead us into temptation, if He allows us to be led in by the adversary; so the adversary is said to save the life when he is prohibited from overcoming it by tempting.

VERSE 7.---So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord.

In what manner Satan goes forth from the presence of the Lord, those things which were said above already manifest. It follows:

VERSE 7.---And he smote Job with a very sore ulcer, from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

7. That the same Job, who lost so many things and so many pledges, was not yet struck in his flesh by the snares of the enemy, is said by the part of the devil to be already conquered in this very thing, because he is preserved in the integrity of the flesh: for the enemy evidently

thinks he overcomes his flesh in every part then, when he not only plucks it in the losses of the pledges, but already penetrates to the wounds of the limbs. Now therefore, when Job is smitten in the flesh, it is to be weighed again what kind of contest this is which the Lord proposes for Himself. For first He delivered all things of his to the devil, but He did not deliver the flesh of Job. But now He delivers the whole of Job to the devil, but He did not deliver the soul of Job. Behold, hence already in order the devil is conquered, when he is not permitted to reach that point of Job where alone there could be danger from the snares of the enemy.

CHAPTER VII.

VERSE 8.---Who took him a potsherd to scrape the filth withal, sitting on a dunghill.

9. Job scraping the filth of the body with a potsherd, teaches us that the earthen vessel which we carry is quickly to be broken.---From what is a potsherd made, unless from clay? What indeed is the filth of the body, but clay? Therefore he is said to scrape the filth with a potsherd, as if it were plainly said: With clay he wiped away clay. For the holy man weighed whence that was taken which he carried, and with a fragment of an earthen vessel he scraped the broken earthen vessel. By which act it is plainly shown how he subdued his body to himself when sound, which he also thus despising cared for when smitten; what softness he allowed to his sound flesh, who applied not a garment, nor his fingers, but

even a potsherd to his wounds. Therefore with a potsherd he scraped the filth, that considering himself even in a fragment, he might also from the wiping of the wound take care for his mind.

[Vet. IV.] 10. Lying on a dunghill he thinks the body is soon to be dung. Because indeed the mind is often puffed up by those things which are about the body, and by that which is done towards us the frailty of our body is removed from the eyes of the heart (as some worldly people, when they are supported by temporal dignities, while they preside in higher places, while they see the obsequious services of many available to them at their wish, neglect to look at their own frailty, and the earthen vessel which they carry, how quickly it is to be broken, forgetting it they do not at all attend to it), blessed Job, that he might draw a consideration of his frailty even from the surrounding things, and might increase the force of his contempt before his eyes, is described to have sat not anywhere on the earth, which is found clean almost everywhere, but on a dunghill. He placed his body on a dunghill, that the mind, profiting well, might weigh what was the substance of the flesh taken from the earth. He placed his body on a dunghill, that also from the stench of the place he might understand that the body would quickly return to stench.

[Rec. V]. 11. From the scourges of the saints it is to be understood what reward is reserved for them, and what punishment for the wicked.--- But behold, while blessed Job sustains the losses of so many things, is grieved being struck by so

many deaths of his pledges, endures so many wounds; while he scrapes the running filth with a potsherd, while flowing down through rottenness he resides on a dunghill; it is pleasant to behold what it is, that Almighty God afflicts those whom He beholds as so dear to Himself for ever, so vehemently as if despising them. But behold, while I consider the wounds and tortures of blessed Job, suddenly I bring back the eyes of my mind to John, and not without the deepest admiration I weigh, that he who was filled with the spirit of prophecy within his mother's womb, and, so to speak, was reborn before he was born: that friend of the bridegroom, he than whom among those born of women none greater has arisen; he so much a prophet, as to be even more than a prophet (Matt. 11:9), is cast into prison by the wicked, and for the dancing of a girl is beheaded, and a man of such severity dies for the laughter of the vile. Do we believe there was anything that such a despised death should wipe away in that life of his? But when did he sin even in food, who ate only locusts and wild honey? What did he offend God even as to the quality of his covering, who covered his body with camels' hair? What could he offend from his conversation, who did not depart from the desert? What guilt of loquacity polluted him, who was far separated from men? When did the fault of silence even touch him, who so vehemently rebuked those coming to him, saying: "Ye offspring of vipers, who has shown you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt 3:7; Luke 3:7; Mark 1:4.) What is

it, therefore, that Job is preferred by God's testimony, and yet is prostrated by stripes even to the dunghill? What is it, that John is praised by God's voice, and yet dies for the words of a drunkard as a reward for dancing? What is it, that Almighty God so vehemently despises in this world those whom He chose so sublimely before the worlds: unless this, which is open to the piety of the faithful, because for this reason He so presses them in the lowest things, because He sees how He may reward them in the highest; and He casts them out even to despised things, because He leads them within even to incomprehensible things. Hence, therefore, let everyone gather what they shall suffer there whom He reprobates, if here He so tortures those whom He loves; or in what way they shall be struck who are to be rebuked in judgment, if the life of those is so pressed who are praised by the Judge's own testimony. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 9.---Then said his wife unto him: Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Bless God, and die.

12. The devil tempts those standing either to break them with tribulations, or to soften them with persuasions. He seeks a woman as a ladder, by which he may ascend into the heart of Job: but in vain.---The old enemy is accustomed to tempt the human race in two ways; that is to say, so that he may either break the hearts of those standing with tribulations, or soften them with persuasions. In both ways, therefore, he vehe-

mently exercised himself against blessed Job. For first he brought losses of things to the master of the house, he bereaved the father by the death of his children, he struck him while sound with the rottenness of wounds. But because he beheld him rotting without, but still standing sound within; and he envied him whom he rendered naked without, becoming richer within through the exhibited praise of the Creator; cunningly thinking he weighs that the athlete of God is raised up from that whence he is pressed against him, and being conquered he turns himself to subtle arguments of tempting. [Vet. V.] For he repeats the snares of his old art; and because he knows how Adam is wont to be deceived, he recurs to Eve. For he saw blessed Job among so many losses of things, among so many wounds of strokes, standing unconquered as in a certain citadel of virtues. For he had fixed his mind on high; and for that reason hostile snares were not able to break into it. It is sought therefore by the adversary by what steps this most fortified citadel may be ascended. Now a woman is near to a man and joined to him. He held therefore the heart of the woman, and found her as a ladder by which he might have been able to ascend to the heart of the man. He occupied the mind of the wife, the ladder of the husband. But he prevailed nothing by this art, because the holy man attended to the woman subjected to him, and not set over him; and speaking right things he taught her, whom the serpent instigated to speak perverse things. For it was worthy that manly censure should re-

strain the flowing mind, since indeed even from that first lapse of the human race he knew that a woman knew not how to teach right things. Whence it is well said also through Paul: "But I suffer not a woman to teach" (1 Tim 2:12); because doubtless sometimes when she taught, she separated from the eternity of wisdom. The old enemy therefore lost from Adam on the dunghill, he who overcame Adam in paradise; and while he kindles his helper the woman to words of evil persuasion, he sent her to the doctrine of holy erudition; and she who had been excited that she might destroy, was instructed lest she should perish. So, so by our strong men is the enemy struck, that even his own weapons are snatched from him. For whence he thinks to exaggerate the pain of the wound, thence he suggests to them against himself the arms of virtue.

13. The devil tempts us through those who adhere to us.---But from the words of the evilly persuading spouse we ought vigilantly to behold that the old adversary busies himself to incline the state of our mind not only through himself, but also through those who adhere to us. For when he does not subvert our heart by his own persuasion, he creeps to it doubtless through the tongues of those adhering to us. For hence it is written: "Beware of thy sons, and take heed to thy domestics" (Ecclus. 32:26). Hence it is said through the prophet: "Let everyone take heed of his neighbor, and in every brother of his let him not have confidence" (Jer. 9:4). Hence again it is written: "A man's enemies are they of his own

household" (Matt 10:36). For the cunning adversary, when he beholds himself repelled from the hearts of the good, searches for those who are greatly loved by them; and through their words he speaks flatteringly, who are loved more than the others; that while the force of love pierces the heart, the sword of his persuasion may easily break into the fortifications of inmost rectitude. After the losses of things, therefore, after the deaths of the pledges, after the wounds and rendings of the limbs, the old enemy moved the tongue of the wife.

14. In the series of temptations of Job, what are the arts of the enemy.---And it is to be noted at what time he studied to corrupt the mind of the man with virulent speech. For he introduced words after wounds, that doubtless when the force of pain increased, the perverse suggestion of persuasion might easily prevail. [Vet. VI.] But if we carefully weigh the order of his temptation itself, we find with what cunning he rages. For he first moved the losses of substance, which indeed were both outside nature and outside the body. He took away the sons, which indeed was no longer outside nature, but yet still to some extent outside his own body. At last he struck also the body. But because he was not able to reach the wound of the mind by the wounds of the flesh, he sought also the tongue of the joined woman. For because he grieved that he was overcome in open contest, he hurled a dart from the mouth of the spouse as if from an ambush, who indeed should say: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity?

Bless God, and die." Behold, by tempting he took away all things, behold, by tempting he left the woman, and cunningly he snatched away all things from the holy man; but much more cunningly he reserved the woman his helper, that she might say: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity?" Eve repeats her words. For what is it to say: "Desert integrity," unless: "Despise obedience by eating the forbidden thing"? And what is it to say: "Bless God, and die," unless: "By transcending the precept, live beyond what thou art created"? But our strong Adam lay on the dunghill, he who once stood weak in paradise. For he immediately replied to the words of the evilly persuading one, saying:

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 10.---Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

15. Job empty of external things, full of God within. How far scourges may be called evil.---Behold the enemy is broken everywhere, everywhere he is overcome, through all arguments of temptation he has succumbed, because he has also lost that familiar solace of his even from the woman. Among these things, therefore, it is pleasant to behold the holy man, empty of things without, full of God within. Paul, when he beheld in himself the riches of internal wisdom, and saw himself to be an external corruptible body, said: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels"

(2 Cor 4:7). Behold in blessed Job the earthen vessel felt the rendings of ulcers without; but this treasure remained entire within. For without it cracked through wounds, but the treasure of wisdom, being born indefectibly within, flowed forth through the words of holy erudition, saying: "If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, why should we not sustain evil?" calling good things, namely, the gifts of God either temporal or eternal; but evil things, the present scourges, of which the Lord says through the prophet: "I am the Lord, and there is none else, forming the light, and creating darkness; making peace, and creating evil" (Isa 45:7). For neither are evil things, which subsist by no nature of their own, created by the Lord; but the Lord indicates that He creates evil things, when He forms things well created into a scourge for us acting evilly, so that those very things both through the pain with which they strike are evil to the delinquent; and through the nature by which they exist, they are good. Whence also poison is indeed death to a man, but yet life to a serpent. For by the love of present things we have departed from the love of our Creator; and the perverse mind, while it subjected itself to the love of the creature, separated from the society of the Creator. From these things, therefore, it was to be struck by the Creator, which the wandering one had preferred to the Creator, so that whence man was not afraid as a proud one to admit a fault, thence as one to be corrected he should find punishment; and he should recover his senses so

much the more quickly to those things which he lost, as he should behold those things to be full of pain which he sought. Whence also it is well said: "Forming the light, and creating darkness," because when through scourges the darkness of pain is created without, within through erudition the light of the mind is kindled. "Making peace, and creating evil," because then peace with God is restored to us, when these things which were well created, but not well desired, are turned into scourges in those things which are evil to us. For through fault we stood discordant with God; it is worthy therefore that we should return to His peace through scourges; so that when each thing well created is turned into pain for us, the corrected mind may be humbly reformed to the peace of the Creator. These scourges, therefore, blessed Job calls evil; because he weighs the good of salvation and tranquility, by what perturbation they strike.

16. The pain of the scourge is to be tempered by the memory of the gift, and the joy of the gift is to be tempered by the fear of the scourge. Fault is in the sense of the wicked, not in the sex.---But that is greatly to be considered in his words, with how great art of consideration he collects himself against the persuasion of his spouse, saying: "If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, why should we not sustain evil?" [Vet. VII.] For it is a great consolation of tribulation, if when we suffer adverse things, we recall the gifts of our Creator to memory. Nor does that which meets us from pain break us, if that which raises us

from the gift occurs more quickly to the mind. For hence it is written: "In the day of good things be not unmindful of evil things, and in the day of evil things be not unmindful of good things" (Ecclus. 11:27). For whoever perceives gifts, but in the time of the gifts by no means fears also the scourges, falls into elation through joy. But whoever is worn away by scourges, but in the time of the scourges by no means consoles himself from the gifts which it happened to him to have received, is destroyed from the state of his mind by all-mode desperation. Thus therefore both are to be joined, so that one may always be supported by the other; to the end that both the memory of the gift may temper the pain of the scourge, and the suspicion and dread of the scourge may bite the joy of the gift. The holy man therefore, that he may soothe his oppressed mind among his wounds, weighs the blandishments of the gifts in the pains of the scourges, saying: "If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, why should we not sustain evil?" Where also he well prefaces, "Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women." For because the sense of the perverse woman, but not the sex, is in fault, he by no means says: "Thou hast spoken as one of the women," but, "of the foolish women," that it may evidently be shown that what savors of perversity is of acceding folly, but not of created nature. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

IBID.---In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

17. Job did not sin with his lips, because he neither said unjust things, nor was silent as to just things.---We fail with our lips in two ways, when we either say unjust things, or are silent as to just things. For if sometimes even to be silent were not a fault, the prophet would not say: "Woe is me, because I have been silent" (Isa 6:5). Blessed Job therefore in all that he did, in no wise sinned with his lips, because he neither spoke proud things against Him that smote him, nor was silent as to right things against her that persuaded him. Therefore neither speaking nor being silent did he fail, who both returned thanks to his scourging Father, and ministered the wisdom of doctrine to his evilly persuading spouse. For because he knew what he owed to God, and what to his neighbor, namely, patience to his Creator, wisdom to his spouse, therefore he both taught her by refuting her, and praised Him by giving thanks. But who of us, if he received any one wound of so great a stroke as this, would not soon lie prostrate from his inmost parts? Behold, prostrate without with the wounds of the flesh, he remains erect within by the fortification of the mind; and he beholds every dart fly past under him, which the raging enemy with strict hand fixes in him externally, vigilantly he apprehends the darts, twisted against him now with wounds from the front, now with words as it were from the side. And our warrior, apprehended by the fervor of the surrounding contests, everywhere opposes the shield of his patience; he meets the shafts coming from every side, and through all

the sides of the virtues he rotates his circumspect mind against the rushing wounds.

[Vet. VIII.] 18. He is tempted through his friends.---But the old enemy, by how much more valiantly he is conquered, by so much the more ardently is he still instigated to snares. For because the wife, being rebuked, was silent, he immediately excited others who, by rebuking, should rise up to contumelies. For as he studied to strike the losses of things by announcing them more frequently; so now he busies himself to penetrate the robust breast by striking it more often with the contumelies of words. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

VERSE 11.---Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had happened unto him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to visit him and to comfort him.

19. The right intention of Job's friends is darkened by indiscretion.---They who come by appointment to the consolation of the afflicted, are demonstrated how great charity they had both among themselves and towards the smitten one. Although also by this, that Scripture testifies them to have been friends of so great a man, it is shown that they were of good study and of right intention; but yet this very intention of theirs, when they burst forth into words, is darkened before the eyes of the strict Judge by an arising indiscretion. It follows:

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 12.---And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, they knew him not; and they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

20. He who is about to comfort the afflicted ought to mourn. But let him set a limit to his grief.---Because the stroke had changed the appearance of the smitten one, the friends crying out wept, rent their garments, sprinkled their heads with dust; that when they saw him changed, to whom they had come, spontaneous grief might change even the appearance of the comforters themselves. For the order of consolation is, that when we wish to suspend any afflicted person from mourning, we should first study by mourning to agree with his grief. For he cannot comfort one grieving, who does not agree with his pain, because by that very thing by which he differs from the affliction of the mourner, he is the less received by him, from whom he is separated by the quality of the mind. The mind therefore ought first to be softened, that it may agree with the afflicted, agreeing it may adhere, adhering it may draw. For neither is iron joined to iron, unless both be liquefied by the burning of fire; and a hard thing does not adhere to a soft unless its hardness first being tempered it becomes soft, so that it may as it were become that very thing, which it is cared for that it may hold. So neither do we raise those lying, unless

we be inclined from the rigor of our state, because while the rectitude of the standing differs from the position of the lying, it by no means lifts him to whom it neglects to condescend. The friends of blessed Job therefore, that they might suspend the afflicted from pain, took care necessarily to grieve at the same time; and when they saw his wounded body, they themselves studied to rend their garments; and when they beheld him changed, they studied to defile their heads with dust; to the end that the afflicted man might receive their words so much the more easily, as he should have recognized in them something of his own affliction.

[Vet. IX.] 21. But among these things it is to be known that he who desires to comfort the afflicted, it is necessary that he set a measure to the grief which he takes up, lest he not only do not soothe the grieving one, but by grieving intemperately, he press the mind of the afflicted to the weight of desperation. For so is our grief to be joined to the grief of the mourners, that through temperament it may relieve, but not through increase burden. Whence perhaps it is to be gathered that the friends of blessed Job grieved more than had been necessary in consolation, who while they behold the stroke, but know not the mind of the smitten one, were so turned into immense grief, as if the smitten man of such great fortitude, in the stroke of the body, had fallen also from the heart. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 13.---So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great.

22. Whether the friends sat with Job for seven days and nights continuously or at intervals is uncertain.---Whether they sat with the afflicted Job for seven continuous days and seven nights, or indeed for as many days and nights they stayed close to him with frequent visitations, we do not know. For often we are said to do anything for so many days, although we do not occupy ourselves continuously with it during those same days. But often Sacred Scripture is accustomed to put the whole for the part, just as it puts the part for the whole. For it speaks of the part for the whole, as Jacob describing his family says: Jacob entered into Egypt with seventy souls (Gen. 46:27). Which surely, when it mentions souls, it is certain that it also includes the bodies of those entering. Again, it intimates the whole for the part, as Mary complains at the tomb, saying: They have taken away the Lord from the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him (John 20:2). For she had come to seek only the body of the Lord, and as it were she deplores the whole Lord together as taken away. Whether, therefore, in this place also the whole is said for the part is uncertain.

23. Let speech be neither headlong, nor indiscreet after due silence.---But yet this, that they were silent for a long time, and at some time were reproved for speaking, is not to be passed over neglectfully. For there are some who both begin

to speak precipitately, and more unrestrainedly carry out what was unrestrainedly begun. And there are some who indeed begin to speak late, but once beginning, they know not how to have a limit to their speech. The friends of blessed Job, therefore, seeing his grief, were silent for a long time; but beginning late, they spoke indiscreetly, because they would not spare the grieving one. They held their tongue, lest it should begin too hastily; but once beginning they by no means moderated it, lest it should unrestrain itself from consolation even to insults. And indeed they had come with a good intention to comfort; but this, which the pious mind offered pure to God, precipitated speech vitiated. For it is written: If thou offerest rightly, but dost not rightly divide, thou hast sinned (Gen. 4:7, according to LXX). For it is offered rightly, when anything is done with a right intention. But it is not divided rightly, if that which is done is not also subtly discerned. For to divide things offered rightly is to weigh any of our good studies by solicitously discerning them. Which surely he who disregards to do, even though offering rightly, sins.

[Vet. X.] 24. It must be provided that what we begin with a right study, we complete with a right end.---Often, therefore, even that which we carry on with a good study, while we neglect to discern it cautiously, we know not by what end it may be judged; and sometimes that becomes a guilt of crime which is thought to be a cause of virtue. Whoever considers the deeds of the friends of blessed Job, is not ignorant of with

how pious an intention they came to him. For let us weigh of what charity it was to have met together concordantly at the afflicted one; what a virtue of long-suffering it stood forth to have been silent with the afflicted for seven days and nights; what humility to have sat upon the ground for so many days and nights; what compassion to have sprinkled their heads with dust. But yet beginning to speak, whence they estimated themselves to acquire a prize of reward, thence it happened to them to find a guilt of reproof, because to the incautious that is often turned to an end of sin which is begun for the sole study of reward. Behold, by precipitate speech they lost the good which they had purchased with so much labor. And unless the grace of the Divine One had commanded them to offer a sacrifice for their guilt, they could have been justly punished by the Lord from that source whence they wonderfully estimated themselves to please the Lord. Thence they displease the Judge, whence they please themselves as if for the defense of the Judge through unrestraint. Therefore we say these things that we may recall them to the memory of the readers, to the end that each one may solicitously consider those things which are perpetrated with a bad vow, with how much animadversion the Lord punishes, if those things begun with a good study, but mixed with the negligence of indiscretion, He chastises with so much invective. Who would not believe that he had completed a cause of reward, if he should say anything against his neighbor in defense of

God, or indeed should be silent for seven days and nights for the grief of his neighbor? And yet the friends of blessed Job, doing these things, arrived at fault by laboring, because they knew indeed the good of consolation which they were doing, but with how great a balance of discretion it was to be done, they knew not. Whence it is necessary that we not only look at what we do, but also with how much discretion we complete it. First indeed, lest we do evil things in any way, but afterwards lest we do good things incautiously. To which good things indeed to be performed solicitously the prophet admonishes us, saying: Cursed is the man who does the work of the Lord negligently (Jer. 48:10). To this end let these things profit, that before the subtle and incomprehensible examination of the terrible Judge we may fear not only the evil things which we have committed, but also those very things, if any well-done things are in us, because often in His judgment that is found to be a fault which is thought to be a virtue before the judgment; and whence a pious reward of the work is expected, thence the punishment of just vengeance follows.

[Vet. XI. Rec. XI.] 25. ALLEGORICAL SENSUS.---How great is the union of Christ and the Church.---We have run through these things briefly treated according to the history, now let us turn our words to the mystery of allegories. But because in the beginning of this work, while we were treating of the unity of the head and the body, we set forth with solicitous intention

how great a compagination of charity is in them, because surely the Lord still suffers many things through the body, which we are, and already His body, that is the Church, glories in its head, namely the Lord, in heaven; so now the passions of the same head ought to be expressed, that it may be shown how many things He sustains even in His body. For if our torments did not touch our head, He would by no means cry out from heaven to His persecutor for the afflicted members: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (Acts 9:5.) If our tortures were not His pains, the converted and afflicted Paul would by no means say: I fill up those things which are wanting of the passions of Christ, in my flesh (Col. 1:24). And yet already exalted by the resurrection of his head he says: Who hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). Truly the torments of persecutions had constrained this man on earth; but pressed by the weights of his pains, behold already through the glory of the head he was residing in heaven. Because, therefore, we know the head and the body united in all things, so we begin from the smiting of the head, that subsequently we may come to the scourges of the body. But this, that on a certain day Satan is said to have stood before the Lord, that he is asked whence he comes, that blessed Job is preferred with great praises of the Creator, because we have often discussed these things already, we avoid repeating them. For if for a long time the mind is involved in things discussed, it is hindered from arriving at things undiscussed.

There, therefore, we now set the beginning of the allegory, where after words often repeated, we know something new is added. Therefore he says:

CHAPTER XIV.

Thou hast moved me against him, to afflict him without cause.

26. Christ afflicted without cause for Himself, but not without cause for us.---If blessed Job holds the type of our Redeemer placed in His passion, how is it said by the Lord to Satan: Thou hast moved me against him? Indeed the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, that He might extinguish the faults of our transgression, came to endure the scourges of our mortality; but because He is of one and the same nature with the Father, how does the Father assert that He was moved against Him by Satan, when it is certain that no inequality of power, no diversity of will, interrupts the concord of the Father and the Son? But yet the same, who is equal to the Father through His divinity, came for us to scourges through the flesh. Which scourges surely He would not receive, unless by redeeming He had taken the form of condemned man. And unless the first man had sinned, the second would by no means have come to the shames of the passion. When, therefore, the first man was moved by Satan against the Lord, then was the Lord moved in the second man. Satan, therefore, moved the Lord to his affliction then, when in paradise he cast down the first man from the height of justice by the fault of disobedience. For unless

he had drawn the first Adam through voluntary vice into the death of the soul, the second Adam without vice would not have come to the voluntary death of the flesh. Well, therefore, is it said to him also concerning our Redeemer: Thou hast moved me against him, to afflict him without cause. As if it were said more plainly: While this one dies not for His own cause, but for his, then thou didst move me to His affliction, when thou didst draw him from me by crafty persuasion. Concerning which it is also well added, without cause. For he was afflicted without cause, who was both pressed by the vengeance of fault, and was not stained by the contagion of fault. He was afflicted without cause, who being incarnate, had not His own committed sins, and yet He received the punishment of carnal men without fault. For hence it is that He speaks through the Prophet, saying: That which I took not away, I then paid back (Ps. 68:5). For another, created for paradise, proudly wished to snatch away the likeness of divine power, but yet the Mediator without fault paid back the guilt of this pride. Hence it is that a certain wise man says to the Father: Since thou art just, thou disposest all things justly, and also condemnest him who ought not to be punished (Wisd. 12:15).

27. How God afflicted the innocent Christ with punishments.---But it is to be weighed how He is just, and disposes all things justly, if He condemns him who ought not to be punished. For our Mediator ought not to have been punished for Himself, because He committed no contagion

of fault. But if He Himself had not taken up the undue, He would never have liberated us from the due death. The Father, therefore, since He is just, in punishing the Just One, disposes all things justly; because by this He justifies all things, in that He condemns Him who is without sin for sinners; that by this all the elect might rise to the height of justice; whereby He who is above all might sustain the losses of our injustice. Because, therefore, there he is said to be condemned when he ought not, here he is mentioned as afflicted without cause. Who yet according to Himself was afflicted without cause, but according to our acts not without cause. For the rust of vice could not be purged away except by the fire of torment. He came, therefore, without vice, who would subject Himself voluntarily to torment; that the punishments due to our iniquity might justly release their guilty ones, in that they had unjustly held this one free from themselves. Without cause, therefore, and not without cause, was He afflicted, who indeed had no committed sins in Himself, but by His own blood wiped away the stain of our guilt.

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 4, 5.---And Satan answered and said: Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and then thou shalt see that he will bless thee to thy face.

28. Whence Satan may know Christ, and whence he may doubt of Him. In estimating the

charity and patience of Christ, whence he may be deceived. The speech of Satan both through himself and through his own.---The malignant spirit when he beholds our Redeemer shine with miracles, cries out: We know who thou art, the Holy One of God (Luke 4:34). Who saying these things, by knowing the Son of God is sore afraid; but yet ignorant of the power of supernal piety, sometimes while he considers Him passible, he thinks Him a pure man. But he had learned of many placed in a pastoral location under the appearance of sanctity, who being very much alienated from the bowels of charity, weighed the losses of others as very little. Collecting this one therefore as if from others, because many things being taken away, he did not see Him overcome, he so flared up even to His flesh, through the touch of the passion, that he said: Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and then thou shalt see that he will bless thee to thy face. As if he said plainly: He neglects to be moved by those things which are outside himself; but then he is truly recognized who he is, if he experience in himself what he may grieve. These things Satan, when he desires them to be done, said through himself, not by words, but by desires. These things through his members he brought in both by words and by desires. For he himself speaks, when according to the voice of the prophet his followers say: Let us put wood into his bread, and let us erase him from the land of the living (Jer. 11:19). For to

put wood into bread is to apply the stake of the cross by fastening it to his body; and they think themselves able to erase his life from the land of the living, whom while they behold mortal, they suspect is finished by death.

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 6.---And the Lord said unto Satan: Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

29. The members of Satan are all those who live wickedly. The hand of Satan is his power. The Lord, delivering Himself to him, compels him to serve Him.---Who, even if foolish, would believe that the Creator of all things was delivered into the hand of Satan? But yet, taught by the truth, who does not know that all those who are joined to him by living perversely are the members of that same Satan? For Pilate stood forth as his member, who, even to the extremities of death, did not know the Lord coming for our redemption. The chief priests stood forth as his body, who attempted to repel the Redeemer of the world from the world, by pursuing Him even to the cross. When, therefore, for our redemption, the Lord delivered Himself into the hands of the members of Satan, what else did He do than permit the hand of that same Satan to rage against Himself; so that whence He Himself might outwardly succumb, thence He might deliver us both outwardly and inwardly? If, therefore, the hand of Satan is taken for his power, He endured his hand according to the flesh, whose power over the body He tolerated even to the spittings, the

buffets, the scourges, the cross, and the lance. Whence also He says to Pilate, namely to his body, when coming to His passion: Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above (John 19:11). But yet this power, which He had given him from without against Himself, He compelled to serve His own gains within. For Pilate, or Satan, who had stood forth as the head of that same Pilate, was held under the power of Him over whom he had received power; because also the Superior Himself had disposed this which, coming from below, He tolerated from the persecutor; so that while it arose from the evil mind of the unfaithful, yet that very cruelty might serve the utility of all the elect. Piously, therefore, He disposed within what He wickedly permitted Himself to suffer without. For hence it is said of Him at the supper: Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; he riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments (John 13:3). Behold, being about to go into the hands of persecutors, He knew that He had received even those very persecutors into His own hand. For He who knew that He had received all things, it is clear that He also held those by whom He was held; so that He Himself might turn to the use of piety whatever of their malice permitted might rage against Him. Let it be said to him, therefore: Behold, he is in thine hand; because he received license raging for the striking of the flesh, but unknowingly he served His power.

30. The devil is proved unable to overcome the soul of Christ.---But he is commanded to save his life (soul), not that he is prohibited from tempting this, but that he is proved unable to overcome this. For not as we, who are pure men, are often shaken by an rushing temptation, so was the soul of our Redeemer troubled by the necessity of temptation. For our enemy, even if permitted he took Him up into a high mountain, if he showed that he would give the kingdoms of the world, if he showed stones to be turned as if into bread (Matt. 4:8; Luke 4:4), yet he was not able to shake the mind of the Mediator of God and men by temptation. For He so deigned to receive all these things outwardly, that His mind, however, inwardly adhering to His divinity, remained unshaken. Who even if at any time He is said to have groaned being troubled in spirit (John 11:33, 38), He Himself divinely disposed how much He Himself should be troubled humanly, presiding immutably over all things, and showing Himself mutable in the satisfaction of infirmity. Remaining quiet, therefore, in Himself, He disposed whatever He did even being troubled, for the showing of the humanity which He had received.

31. The elect can be called the soul of Christ. These are exempted from the power of the devil.---But because when we love rightly, we love nothing in created things more dearly than our soul; and as we say that we love them as our soul, to whom we attempt to express the weight of our love, the life of the elect can be signified by His soul. And when Satan is permitted to strike

the flesh of the Redeemer, he is separated from the soul; because while he takes His body for the passion, he loses the elect of Him from the right of his power; and while the flesh of that One dies through the cross, the mind of these is solidified against temptations. Let it be said, therefore: Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life (soul). As if he should plainly hear: Receive license against His body, and lose the right of wicked domination from His elect, whom He possesses, foreknowing them with Himself before the ages.

CHAPTER XVII.

VERS. 7.---So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

32. Christ smitten in His own from the beginning of the world.---No one of the elect has come into this life, who has not sustained the adversities of this enemy. Moreover, they stood forth as the members of our Redeemer, even those who from the very beginning of the world, while living piously, have suffered cruel things. Or did not Abel show himself to be a member of Him, who signified His death—of whom it is written: He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer he shall be dumb, and shall not open his mouth (Isa. 53:7)—not only by pleasing in sacrifice, but also by being silent in dying? From the very beginning of the world, therefore, he has attempted to assault the body of our Redeemer. From the sole of the foot, therefore, even to the crown he has inflicted the

wound, because beginning from pure men, he arrived even to the very Head of the Church by raging. But it is well said:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERS. 8.---He scraped the filth with a potsherd.

33. With the potsherd, that is, with His flesh taken from the earth, He scraped away the filth of sin.---For what else is the potsherd in the hand of the Lord, except the flesh taken from the mud of our substance? For a potsherd is solidified by fire. Moreover, the flesh of the Lord stood forth the more robust from His passion, in that dying through infirmity, He rose from death without infirmity. Whence it is also rightly said by the Prophet: My strength is dried up like a potsherd (Psalm 22:15). For His strength dried up like a potsherd, who strengthened the infirmity of the assumed flesh by the fire of His passion. But what ought to be understood by the filth (sanies), except sin? For by flesh and blood the sins of the flesh are wont to be designated. Whence it is said by the Psalmist: Deliver me from bloodguiltiness (Psalm 51:14). Filth, therefore, is the putrefaction of blood. What then do we take as filth, except the sins of the flesh become worse from long antiquity? A wound, therefore, is turned into filth, when a neglected fault is weighed down more grievously by use. Therefore, the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5), delivering His body into the hands of persecutors, scraped the filth with a potsherd, because

He blotted out sin by His flesh. For He came, as it is written, in the likeness of sinful flesh, that He might condemn sin concerning sin (Rom. 8:3). And while He opposed the innocence of His flesh to the enemy, He wiped away the contagions of our flesh; and by that through which the enemy held us captive, through that He expiated us as free; because that which we made an instrument of fault, this was turned for us through the Mediator into arms of justice. The filth, therefore, is scraped with a potsherd, when fault is overcome by the flesh. But it is well added:

CHAPTER XIX.

IBID.---And he sat down among the ashes (on a dunghill).

34. He sat on a dunghill, because He chose the weak things of the world.---Not in the forum, in which the law resounds; not in the building, which lifts itself up with its summit on high; but He resides on a dunghill, because namely the Redeemer of the human race coming to the flesh, as Paul attests, chose the weak things of the world, that he might confound the strong (1 Cor. 1:27). Or does He not reside on a dunghill as if in falling buildings, who, having left the proud Jews, rests in that gentility which He had long ago cast off? He is found in a wound outside the habitation, who, in that He endured the opposing Judea, felt the pain of the passion, being despised by His own nation; as John attests, who says: He came unto his own, and his own received him not (John 1:11). But how He may rest sitting on a dunghill,

let this same Truth say of Himself: for He says: There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance (Luke 15:7). Behold, grieving He sits on a dunghill, who after faults have been perpetrated willingly possesses the hearts of the penitent. Or are not the hearts of the penitent as it were a certain dunghill, who while they consider their evils by weeping, heap them up as it were dung before themselves, by casting themselves down? Job, therefore, being smitten did not seek the mountain, but sat down on a dunghill, because the Redeemer coming to His passion, deserted the high hearts of the proud, and rested in the humility of the afflicted. Which however He indicated concerning Himself even before He was incarnate, when He said through the Prophet: To whom shall I look, but to him that is humble and quiet and trembles at my words? (Isa. 66:2, according to LXX).

35. Christ suffers many things in His own, both from infidels and from carnal-minded believers.---But who may consider, how many pious things He brought to men, as many perverse things as He tolerated from men? Who may consider, how great things He tolerates even now, even when He reigns from heaven over the hearts of the faithful? For He Himself daily suffers everything by which His elect are torn by the reprobate. And although the Head of this body, which namely we are, now exerts Himself free above all things, yet He still feels the wounds of the reprobate through His body, which He retains

below. But why do we say these things of infidels, when in the Church itself we see many of the carnal-minded fight with perverse manners against the life of the Redeemer? For there are some who pursue Him with perverse acts, because they cannot with swords; because while they see that what they covet is lacking to them in the Church, they become enemies of the good; and not only do they insert themselves into perverse action, but they also strive to bend the rectitude of the just to perverse things. For they neglect to look at eternal things, and they succumb to the appetite of temporal things by the pusillanimity of the mind; and they fall the more deeply from eternal things, as they suspect temporal goods to be as it were alone. To these the simplicity of the just is displeasing, and when they find an occasion of perturbation, they persuade them to seize their own duplicity. Whence this also fits aptly which is added:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 9.---Then said his wife unto him: Dost thou still retain thine integrity (simplicity)? Bless God, and die.

36. The wife of Job suggesting evil is a figure of the carnal-minded placed in the bosom of the Church.---For whose likeness did the woman suggesting evil hold, except that of any carnal-minded persons placed in the bosom of the Church, who, by the fact that they are within by words of professed faith, the more grievously press the good by their uncorrected manners?

For they would perhaps have done less harm, if the holy Church, admitting them within, did not receive them even to the bedchamber of faith; whom, while she receives through professed faith, she undoubtedly makes almost inevitable to herself. Hence it is that, with the crowd pressing, one woman touched our Redeemer; whence also that same Redeemer of ours immediately says: Who touched me? To whom when the disciples answered: The multitudes throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou: Who touched me? He straightway added: Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me (Luke 8:44-46).

37. These press Christ, they do not touch Him.---Many, therefore, press the Lord, and one touches Him, because all the carnal-minded in the Church press Him, from whom they are far off; and they alone touch Him who are joined to Him truly humble. The crowd, therefore, presses, because the multitude of the carnal-minded is the more heavily tolerated as they are admitted within. It presses, and does not touch, because it is both troublesome by presence, and absent by life. For sometimes they pursue us with perverse speeches, sometimes however with perverse manners alone. For sometimes they suggest what they hold; but sometimes even if they do not suggest, they do not cease to offer examples of iniquity. Those, therefore, who allure us to evils either by words or by examples, are surely our persecutors from whom we take up the contests

of temptations, which at least we may overcome in the heart.

38. They suggest perverse things sometimes from fear, sometimes from audacity.---But it must be known that the carnal-minded in the Church sometimes strive to suggest perverse things from fear, sometimes however from audacity; and when they themselves fail either from pusillanimity or from elation, they strive to infuse these into the hearts of the just as if from love. Namely Peter retained a carnal mind before the death and resurrection of the Redeemer; with a carnal mind the son of Zeruiah, joined to his leader David, had clung to him; but yet one sinned from dread, the other from elation. For that one, hearing of the death of the Master, said: Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee (Matt. 16:22); but this one, not bearing the injuries of the leader, said: Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord's anointed? (2 Sam. 19:21). But to the former it is soon said: Get thee behind me, Satan; and this one with his brother heard immediately: What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be as a Satan unto me? (2 Sam. 19:22). Those, therefore, suggesting evil are judged by the name of the apostate angel, who with bland words draw to unlawful things as if loving. But they are much worse, who succumb to this fault not from dread, but from elation: of whom especially the wife of blessed Job held the figure, who proudly attempted to suggest to her husband, saying: Dost thou still retain thine

integrity? Bless God, and die. She rebuked the simplicity (integrity) in her husband, because despising all transitory things, he desires eternal things alone with a pure heart. As if she should say: Why do you simply seek eternal things, and groan with equanimity under present evils? Transgressing, despise eternal things, and escape present evils even by dying. But how great a form of rectitude all the elect show when they tolerate perverse things within from the carnal-minded, let us learn from the words of the wounded and the whole, the sitting and the upright, who says:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 10.---Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

39. The saints oppose the shield of patience to those who smite them, and hurl the darts of doctrine at those who suggest evil.---Holy men, being caught in the war of tribulations, when they at one and the same time bear some smiting them and others suggesting evil, oppose the shield of patience to the former, and hurl the darts of doctrine at the latter; and they raise themselves to either mode of fighting with the wonderful art of virtue; so that they may both wisely teach perverse things within, and bravely despise adversities without; that they may correct these by teaching, and press those by tolerating. For they despise rising enemies by suffering, but they bring back weakening citizens

to health by compassionating: they resist those, lest they also draw away others; they fear for these, lest they utterly lose the life of rectitude.

40. This is proved by the example of Saint Paul.---Let us see the soldier of the camps of God fighting against both. He says: Without were fightings, within were fears. He enumerates the wars which he tolerates from without, saying: In perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren (2 Cor. 7:5; 11:26). But in this war, what darts he may hurl against the adversary, let him add: In labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness (Ibid.). But caught among so many contests, let him say with how great a defense of watchings he also guards the camps. For he straightway adds: Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Behold, he bravely takes up wars in himself, and mercifully spends himself in protecting his neighbors. He tells the evils which he suffers, he subjoins the goods which he imparts. Let us consider, therefore, of what labor it is, at one and the same time to tolerate adversities without, and to protect the weak within. Without he suffers fightings, because he is cut with scourges, bound with chains; within he tolerates fear, because he dreads that his passion may be a hindrance not to himself, but to his disciples. Whence also he writes to the same, saying: That

no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto (1 Thess. 3:3). For he feared the fall of others in his own passion, lest while the disciples recognized him afflicted with scourges for the faith, they should refuse to profess themselves faithful. O bowels of immense charity! he despises what he himself suffers, and takes care lest the disciples suffer anything of perverse persuasion in their heart. In himself he contemns the wounds of the body, and in others he heals the wounds of the heart. For the just have this proper to them, that being placed in the pain of their tribulation, they do not desert the care of the utility of others; and when they grieve for themselves suffering adversities, they provide necessary things for others by teaching, and as it were some great smitten physicians, they are sick. They themselves tolerate the rendings of the wound, and bring forth the medicaments of health to others. But it is of much less labor, either to teach when you tolerate nothing; or to tolerate, when you teach nothing. Whence holy men skillfully extend themselves to both; and when they are perhaps smitten with tribulations, they so take up external wars, that they solicitously think lest the internal things of their neighbors be torn. Thus holy men stand bravely in the line of battle; and from there they smite opposing breasts with darts, from here they protect the weak placed behind with a shield, and thus on both sides they watch with the velocity of circumspection; so that they both transfix the audacious before

them, and defend the trembling after them from a wound. Because, therefore, holy men know how so to tolerate adversities without, that they also know how to correct perverse things within, let it be said rightly: Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. For because it is said to the elect: Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart (Psalm 31:24), the minds of the carnal, which serve God with a flux intention, are not undeservedly called women.

41. He who tends toward eternal goods does not take temporal evils ill.---If we have received good things from the hand of the Lord, why should we not sustain evil things? As if he should say: If we tend toward eternal goods, what wonder is it if we suffer temporal evils? Moreover, Paul had solicitously inspected these goods, when he tolerably bore the evils brought upon him, saying: The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Rom. 8:18).

IBID.---In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

He is contumelious neither toward God, nor toward his adversaries.---Holy men, when they suffer persecution from without and from within, not only do not exceed in injuries toward God, but neither do they hurl contumelious words against their adversaries themselves. Which Peter, the leader of the good, rightly admonishes, saying: Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as a reviler (maledicus) (1 Peter 4:15). For he suffers as a reviler, who at the time of his passion is unbridled in injury of his persecutor

unto his own salvation. But because the body of the Redeemer, namely the holy Church, so bears the weight of sorrows that it does not pass the measure of humility through words, it is rightly said of this one grieving:

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID. AND VERS. 11.---In all this did not Job sin with his lips; neither did he speak anything foolishly against God. Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.

42. Heretics adumbrated in the friends of Job.---In the preface of this work we said that the friends of blessed Job, although they come together with a good intention toward him, yet hold the likeness of heretics for this reason, that they glide into fault by speaking indiscreetly. Whence also it is said to them by the same blessed Job: I desire to dispute with God, first showing you to be fabricators of a lie, and cultors of perverse dogmas (Job 13:3-4). Therefore the holy Church, being placed in affliction through all this time of her pilgrimage, while she sustains wounds, while she grieves at the falls of her members, moreover tolerates other enemies of Christ under the name of Christ. For unto the increase of her pain, even heretics come together in contention, and transfix her as if with certain darts, by irrational words.

43. The place whence they came is pride.---But it is well said: They came every one from his own place. For the place of heretics is pride itself; because unless they first swelled in the heart, they would not come to the contests of perverse assertion. For thus pride is the place of the evil, just as on the contrary humility is the place of the good. Concerning which it is said through Solomon: If the spirit of him that hath power rise up against thee, leave not thy place (Eccles. 10:4). As if he should say plainly: If you consider the spirit of the tempter to prevail against you in anything, do not relinquish the humility of penitence. That he called our place the humility of penitence, he shows by the following words, saying: For healing will cause the greatest sins to cease (Ibid.). For what else is the humility of lamentation, except the medicine of sin? Heretics, therefore, come from their own place, because they are moved against the holy Church from pride.

44. The names of Job's friends signify the action of heretics.---Whose perverse action is also gathered from the interpretation of their names themselves. For they are called Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar; and, as we said above, Eliphaz is said to be interpreted as "contempt of God." For unless they contemned God, they would by no means feel perverse things concerning Him. But Bildad is interpreted as "oldness alone." For while they truly shrink from being overcome, and seek to be victors by perverse study, they neglect the conversation of the new life; and it is from oldness

alone that they intend. But Zophar is "dissipating the watchtower" (speculam). For these, who are situated in the holy Church, humbly contemplate the mysteries of their Redeemer with true faith; but while heretics come with false allegations, they dissipate the watchtower, because they incline the minds of those whom they draw to themselves from the intention of right contemplation.

45. The curiosity, loquacity, and hypocrisy of heretics designated by the places of Job's friends.---But the places from which they come are well described as congruent with the acts of heretics. For it is said: the Temanite, the Shuhite, the Naamathite. For Teman (Thema) is interpreted as the South wind (Auster); Shuah (Suhi), as speaking; Naamah (Naama), as beauty (decor). But who does not know that the South is a hot wind? Heretics, therefore, because they desire to know (to taste) more ardently, as it were more than is necessary, study to be hot. For sloth corresponds to the numbness of cold, and again the restlessness of immoderate curiosity corresponds to intemperate heat. Because, therefore, they desire to perceive the heat of wisdom more than they ought, they are reported to come from the South wind. From this heat of immoderate wisdom Paul had taken care to temper the minds of the faithful, when he said: Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly (Rom. 12:3). Hence it is that David smote the valley of salt pits (2 Sam. 8:13), because namely our Redeemer, by the

examination of His strictness, extinguishes the folly of immoderate taste in those who feel perverse things concerning Him. But Shuah is called "speaking." For they desire to have heat not that they may live well, but that they may speak elately. From Teman, therefore, and Shuah, that is, from heat and loquacity, they are reported to come, because through the fact that they exhibit themselves as students of the Scriptures, they lack not the words of loquacity alone, but the bowels of charity. But Naamah is interpreted as "beauty." For because they desire not to be, but to seem learned, from the words of erudition they take the appearance of those living well; and through the heat of loquacity they show in themselves an image of beauty, so that through the beauty of the tongue they may easily persuade perverse things, in that they cunningly hide the foulness of life from the sense. But neither are the names of the places themselves distinct in an inordinate narration. For first Teman, afterwards Shuah, and then Naamah is placed; because first an inordinate heat inflames them, then the brightness of loquacity raises them up, and then at last hypocrisy shows them beautiful to men.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IBID.—For they had made an appointment together to come to visit him and comfort him. —46. Heretics agree together against the Church. They can be called friends. Heretics make an appointment together when they feel certain perverse things concordantly against the Church;

and in those things in which they disagree with the truth, they agree with one another in falsehood. But all who instruct us concerning eternity, what else do they do but comfort us in the affliction of our pilgrimage? But heretics, because they desire to teach holy Church their own things, approach her as if comforting her. Nor is it a wonder that those who express the form of adversaries are called friends, since it is said also to the traitor himself: Friend, whereto art thou come? (Matt. 26:50); and the rich man, who is burned in the fire of hell, is called son by Abraham (Luke 16:25); because even if through us the evil neglect to be corrected, it is nevertheless fitting that they be called friends by us, not from their wickedness, but from our benignity.

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 12.—And when they had lifted up their eyes afar off, they knew him not. 47. They do not know the Church. Why.—Heretics, whenever they consider the facts of holy Church, lift up their eyes, because namely they themselves are placed in the lowest part, and when they look back at her works, the things they discern are situated on high; but yet they do not know her when she is placed in sorrow. For she desires to receive evils here, so that, being purged, she may arrive at the prize of eternal remuneration. Often she fears prosperous things, and grows cheerful in the discipline of instruction. Heretics, therefore, because they desire present things as great, do not know her when she is placed in wounds. For

that which they discern in her, they do not read over again in the knowledge of their own hearts. When therefore she profits even by adversities, they stick to their own amazement; because by experience they are ignorant of the things they see.

CHAPTER XXV

[Old Edit. XIX].

IBID.—And they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. 48. They are rent into many parts.—As we receive all the faithful as the garments of the Church; whence also it is said by the prophet: Thou shalt be clothed with all these as with an ornament; so the garments of heretics are all those who, adhering concordantly to them, are involved in their errors. But heretics have this peculiar to them, that in that degree in which they go out from the Church, they cannot stand for long; but they rush daily to worse things, and by feeling worse things, they rend themselves into many parts, and are for the most part divided even from themselves by the altercation of their own confusion. Because, therefore, they still tear in much division those whom they join to their own perfidy, let it be rightly said that the friends who come rend their garments. But when the garments are rent, the body is shown, because often when their followers are rent, the malice of their thought is opened; so that discord may lay open the deceits which the heavy fault of concord

before closed up. 49. They taste earthly things from heavenly words.—But they sprinkle dust upon their heads toward heaven. What is signified by dust, but earthly understanding? what by the head, but that which is our principal part, namely the mind? What is expressed by heaven, but the precept of supernal locution? To sprinkle dust, therefore, upon the head toward heaven, is to corrupt the mind with a worldly intellect, and to feel earthly things concerning heavenly words. But for the most part they discuss divine words more than they receive them. They sprinkle dust, therefore, over their heads, because in the precepts of God, through an earthly understanding, they strive beyond the strength of their own minds.

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XV].

Verse 13.—So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights. 50. They try to persuade proud things through a feigned humility.—In the day we recognize what we see; but in the night, either by blindness we discern nothing, or by doubt we are in darkness. By the day, therefore, understanding is designated, but by the night, ignorance. Moreover, by the number seven the sum of universality is expressed. Whence also in no more than seven days is all this transitory time consumed. What is it, therefore, that the friends of blessed Job are reported to have sat with him seven days and

seven nights, but that heretics, whether in those things in which they understand the true light, or in those in which they suffer the darkness of ignorance, feign to condescend to holy Church as if weak, and prepare for her, under the appearance of blandishments, the deceits of deception? And although either in those things which they understand, or in those which they cannot understand, being swollen with the type of elation, they think themselves great among themselves, yet sometimes they incline toward holy Church as far as appearance goes; and while they soften their words, they infuse venom. To sit down on the ground, therefore, is to show something of the image of humility; so that while they exhibit humble things, they may persuade the proud things which they teach.

[Old Edit. XX.] 51. They sit with us on the earth when they agree with us concerning the Incarnation.—The incarnation itself of the Mediator can indeed be designated by the earth. Whence also it is said to Israel: An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me (Exod. 20:24). For to make an altar of earth to God is to hope in the incarnation of the Mediator. For then our gift is accepted by God, when our humility has placed whatever it works upon this altar, that is, upon the faith of the Lord's incarnation. In an altar of earth, therefore, we place the offered gift, if we solidify our acts with the faith of the Lord's incarnation. But there are some heretics who do not deny the incarnation of the Mediator which was made, but either they think otherwise concerning the

Divinity than it is, or they disagree with us in the quality of the incarnation itself. Those, therefore, who maintain with us the true incarnation of the Redeemer, sit as it were with Job on the earth. Moreover, they are described as sitting seven days and seven nights on the earth, because whether in this that they understand something of the fullness of the truth, or in this that they are blinded by the darkness of their own folly, they cannot deny the mystery of the incarnation. To sit on the earth with blessed Job, therefore, is to believe the true flesh of the Redeemer with holy Church.

52. They are friends to the silent, but become adversaries to those who contradict.—Sometimes indeed heretics rage against us even with punishments, sometimes they follow us with words alone, sometimes they provoke the quiet, but sometimes, if they see us silent, they are quiet; and they are friends to the silent, but they oppose the speaking. Whence because blessed Job had not yet said anything in discussion to them, it is rightly added: And none spake a word unto him. For we have adversaries when we are silent, if we neglect to beget sons of the true faith by preaching. But if we begin to speak right things, we soon feel heavy contumelies from their response; immediately they leap forth into adversity, and break out into a voice of grief against us, because namely they fear lest the right voice of the speaker should draw to the height the hearts which the weight of folly aggravates in the lowest things. Because therefore, as we have said,

the adversaries love us when silent, and hate us when speaking, it is rightly said while Job was silent:

CHAPTER XXVII.

IBID. None spake a word unto him. 53. Sometimes heretics are compelled to be silent. —Sometimes, however, when they consider the hearts of the faithful to be in the torpor of inertia, they do not cease from scattering the seeds of error by speaking. But when they see the minds of the good to savor high things, to seek the return to their country, to grieve strenuously for the misery of this exile, they curb their tongue with solicitous circumspection, because they see that speaking in vain against the hearts of those who grieve, they are more quickly struck dumb. Whence also rightly, when it was said: None spake a word unto him, soon the cause of the silence is subjoined, when it is said:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IBID.—For they saw that his grief was very great. 54. When the heart grieves from the love of God, the adversary fears to speak perverse things.—For when the vehement grief of the love of God transfixes our hearts, the adversary fears to speak perverse things at random, because he sees that by provoking an intent mind, he is not only unable to draw it to perversity, but perhaps, through its being excited, he will lose even those whom he had held.

[Old Edit. XXI. Rec. XVI.] 55. In Scripture, things well done sometimes signify things to be done ill; and vice versa.—Perhaps it moves some that we have said these things, that those things which were well done by the friends, signify things to be done ill by heretics. But thus for the most part any thing whatever is a virtue through history, and a fault through signification: just as sometimes a thing done, in fact, is a cause of condemnation; but in writing it is a prophecy of virtue. Which truth we shall show more quickly if we bring forward one testimony of holy Scripture to prove both. For who hearing it, not only of the faithful, but of the infidels also, would not in every way detest that David, walking on the roof, should lust after Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah? Whom nevertheless, returning from the battle, he admonishes to go to his house and wash his feet. Who immediately answered, saying: The ark of the Lord is under skins (tents), and shall I rest in my house? (2 Sam. 11:11). Whom David received at his own table, and delivered to him letters by which he should die. But of whom does David, walking on the roof, hold the type, except of Him of whom it is written: He hath set his tabernacle in the sun? (Psalm 19:4). And what is it to bring Bathsheba to himself, but to associate to Himself by a spiritual intellect the law of the letter, joined to a carnal people? For Bathsheba is called the "seventh well," because namely through the knowledge of the law, by the infusion of spiritual grace, perfect wisdom is ministered to us. But whom does Uriah signify, but the Jewish people?

Whose name interpreted is said to be "my light of God." But the Jewish people, because they are extolled concerning the knowledge of the law which they have received, glory as it were in the light of God. But from this Uriah David took his wife, and joined her to himself: because namely the "strong of hand," which David is called, the Redeemer appearing in the flesh, while He made known that the law spoke of Him spiritually, by this, that it was held according to the letter, He showed this to be a stranger from the Jewish people; and joined it to Himself, because He declared that Himself was preached through it. Nevertheless, David admonishes Uriah to go to his house and wash his feet, because the incarnate Lord coming commanded the Jewish people to return to their conscience, and to wipe away the filth of their works with tears; so that they might spiritually understand the mandates of the law, and after such great hardness of the precepts, finding the font of baptism, they might return to the water after labor. But Uriah, who remembered that the ark of the Lord was under skins, answered that he could not enter his house. As if the Jewish people should say: I see the mandates of God in carnal sacrifices, and I do not seek to return to conscience through spiritual understanding. For as it were he says that the ark is under skins, who understands the precepts of God only for exhibiting the ministry of carnal sacrifice. Nevertheless, David calls him even when unwilling to return to his house to the table; because although the Jewish people con-

temn returning to conscience, yet the Redeemer coming preaches to them spiritual mandates, saying: If ye had believed Moses, ye would perhaps have believed me also; for he wrote of me (John 5:46). The Jewish people, therefore, hold the law, which speaks of His divinity, which same people deign not to believe. Whence also Uriah is sent to Joab with letters from which he ought to be killed, because the very same Jewish people carry the law by which, it convicting them, they may die. For while retaining the mandates of the law they refuse to fulfill them, they themselves namely carry the judgment whence they may be condemned. What therefore can be said more wicked than this deed of David? what more pure than Uriah? But again, through the mystery, what is found more holy than David, what more unfaithful than Uriah, when both he, through the fault of his life, signs innocence in prophecy; and the other, through the innocence of his life, expresses fault in prophecy? Therefore it is not incongruously that through those things which were well done by the friends of Job, things to be done ill by heretics are signified, while the power of the sacred eloquence so relates past things as to express future things; so approves a thing in fact as to contradict it in mystery; so condemns deeds as to persuade that these things are to be done mystically.

MORAL SENSE.—[Old Edit. XXII]. 56. Why the devil sometimes rests from temptation.—Therefore, since we have fulfilled the mysteries of allegory by unfolding them limb by limb, let us

now proceed by touching briefly upon the understanding of morality. For the mind hastens to discuss more obscure things; and if it is involved for long in open things, it is hindered from knocking at closed things, as is fitting. Often the ancient enemy, after he has inflicted the contest of temptations on our mind, recedes from his contest for a time; not that he may provide an end to his malice, but that returning suddenly, he may more easily break in unawares upon the hearts which he has rendered secure through quiet. Hence it is that he returns again to tempt the blessed man, and seeks his tortures, whom nevertheless supernal piety grants to him while withholding him, saying:

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERSE 6.—Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life (soul). 57. Sometimes God deserts us that He may keep us. Temptation occurs with the soul safe, when consent is denied. The wound of delight, however, must be cured by penitence. —For He so deserts us that He may keep us; He so keeps us, that yet by the permitted article of temptation He may show us the state of our own infirmity. Who soon went out from the face of the Lord, and wounded him whom he had received by striking him from the sole of the foot even to the crown of the head, because namely when he perceives license, beginning from the least things, and arriving even to the greater, he as it were transfixes the whole body of the mind by tearing it with the temptations inflicted. But

yet he does not arrive at the soul by striking, because more interior than all thoughts, among the very wounds of delights which it receives, the intention of the secret purpose resists; so that although delight may bite the mind, yet it does not bend the deliberation of holy rectitude even to the softness of consent. We ought, however, through the asperity of penitence to wipe the very wounds of delights, and by the censure of rigid strictness, to cleanse if anything fluid emanates in thought. Whence well is it soon subjoined,

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 8.—And he took him a potsherd to scrape the filth (pus). 58. To scrape the filth with a potsherd is to purge sin by judging oneself and contemplating one's own fragility. —For what is received by the potsherd but the vigor of strictness; what by the filth but the flux of illicit thought? Stricken, therefore, we scrape the filth with a potsherd when, after the pollutions of illicit thought, we cleanse ourselves by harshly judging ourselves. A potsherd can also be understood as the fragility of mortality. To cleanse the filth with a potsherd, therefore, is to weigh the course and fragility of mortality, and to wipe away the putrefaction of miserable delight. For while each one considers how quickly the flesh returns to dust, he speedily overcomes that which within basely assails him concerning

the flesh. When, therefore, a perverse thought flows into the mind from temptation, filth as it were runs down from a wound. But the filth is more quickly wiped away if in our consideration fragility is held like a potsherd in the hand.

59. Perverse thoughts are not to be despised. —For neither are those things to be lightly esteemed which, although they do not draw out to the effect, yet are illicitly turned in the mind. Hence it is that our Redeemer had come as it were to scrape the filth from wounds, when He said: Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matt. 5:27-28). The filth, therefore, is wiped away when the fault is cut off not only from the work but also from the thought. Hence it is that Jerubbaal, when he was shaking out the corn from the chaff, saw an angel, at whose command he immediately cooked a kid, which he placed upon a rock, and poured the broth of the flesh over it; which things the angel touched with a rod, and a fire going out from the rock consumed them (Judg. 6:11, 12, 19). For what is it to beat the corn with a rod but, by the rectitude of judgment, to separate the grains of virtues from the chaff of vices? But the angel appears to those doing these things, because the more the Lord denounces interior things, the more zealously men purge themselves from exterior things. He who commands the kid to be killed, that is, every appetite of our flesh to

be immolated, and the flesh to be placed upon the rock, and the broth of the flesh to be poured over it. Whom else does the rock signify but Him of whom it is said by Paul: And that rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). We place the flesh upon the rock, therefore, when we torture our body in the imitation of Christ. He also pours the broth of the flesh over it, who in the conversation of Christ empties out even carnal thoughts from himself. For as it were broth is poured from liquid flesh upon the rock, when the mind is also emptied of the flux of carnal thoughts. Which nevertheless the angel soon touches with a rod, because the power of divine help by no means deserts our intention. But from the rock fire goes out and consumes the broth and the flesh, because the spirit breathed from the Redeemer burns our heart with such a flame of compunction that it consumes everything in it that is illicit both of work and of thought. That, therefore, which there is to pour the broth upon the rock, this is here to cleanse the filth with a potsherd. For the perfect mind alertly watches that it not only refuses to do perverse things, but also wipes away everything that basely melts in itself through thoughts. [Old Edit. XXIII.] But often from the victory itself a war arises, so that when an unclean thought is conquered, the mind of the victor is struck with elation. Thus, therefore, it is necessary for the mind to be raised up through purity, that yet it should solicitously be laid low in humility. [Rec. XXVIII.] Whence also when it was said of the holy

man, He scraped the filth with a potsherd, it is immediately aptly subjoined,

CHAPTER XXXI.

IBID.—Sitting in the dunghill.

60. The victor of temptation should preserve humility. The small elation of those who act, and those who think great things of themselves. The elation of the iniquitous, where others sin in things in which they themselves do not sin.—To sit in the dunghill, indeed, is for someone to feel vile and abject things about himself. For us to sit in the dunghill is to bring back the eyes of the mind to those things which we have done illicitly, by repenting; so that when we discern the filth of sins before us, we may incline everything that rises in the mind from elation. He sits in the dunghill who, solicitous, looks back at his own infirmity, and does not extol himself for the good things which he has perceived through grace. Had not Abraham sat in the dunghill within himself, who said: I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes (Gen. 18:27)? For we clearly discern in what place he had positioned himself within himself, who estimated himself as dust and ashes even while he was speaking with God. If, therefore, he so despises himself who has ascended even to the honor of divine conversation, it must be considered with solicitous intention by what punishment those are to be struck who neither profit toward the highest things and yet are extolled for the least. For there

are some who, when they do small things, think great things of themselves: they raise the mind on high, and think that they precede others in the merits of virtues. These surely desert the dunghill of humility within themselves, and ascend the heights of elation; imitating him, namely, who first extolled himself within himself, but by elevating he prostrated himself; imitating him who was not content with the received dignity of his condition, saying: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven (Isa. 14:13). Whence also Babylonia, that is, the confused multitude of sinners, evilly joined to him, says: I sit a queen, and am no widow (Isa. 47:8, according to LXX). Whoever, therefore, swells within, has placed himself on high within himself. But he depresses himself more heavily in the lowest things by as much as he contemns to feel truly low things of himself. But there are some who indeed study to do nothing of virtue, but yet when they behold others sinning, they suspect themselves to be just in comparison with them. For neither does one or a similar fault transfix the hearts of all. For pride ensnares this one, anger perhaps supplants that one, but avarice tortures this one, and luxury indeed inflames that one. And it often happens that he whom pride depresses looks at another to see how anger enkindles him; and because anger does not instigate him as quickly, he already reputes himself better than the angry man, and is extolled within himself as if from justice, because he neglects to weigh the vice by which he is more heavily held.

It often happens that he whom avarice wounds sees another submerged in the whirlpool of luxury; and because he sees himself alienated from carnal pollution, he does not attend to with what filth of spiritual vice he is internally polluted; and while he weighs in another the evil which he himself does not have, he neglects to consider in himself what he does have: and so it happens that while the mind is led to judging the things of others, it is deprived of the light of its own judgment; and it becomes proud against the things of others more harshly by as much as it more negligently ignores its own.

[Old Edit. XXIV.] 61. He who is perfect should not lose humility by the sight of another's fault. Temptation sometimes knocks without and within.—But on the contrary those who truly desire to rise to the heights of virtues, when they hear of others' faults, immediately bring back the heart to their own; and they judge those others more rightly by as much as they more truly deplore their own. Because, therefore, every chosen one restrains himself in the consideration of his own infirmity, let it be said rightly that the holy man sits grieving in the dunghill. For he who truly humbles himself, with the eye of continual consideration, weighs as he profits with what filth of sins he is hedged about. But it is to be known that often in prosperous things the mind is touched by importunate temptation; but yet sometimes we also suffer adverse things externally and are fatigued within by the impulse of temptation; so that both scourges torture the

flesh, and yet carnal suggestion floods to the mind. Whence also well after so many wounds of blessed Job, there were still subjoined also the words of the evilly persuading wife, who says:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERSE 9.—Dost thou still continue in thy simplicity? Bless God and die.

62. Job's wife, evilly persuading, is carnal thought.—The wife indeed evilly persuading is carnal thought harassing the mind. For often, as has been said, we are both worn down by scourges without and fatigued by carnal suggestion within. For hence it is that Jeremiah deplores, saying: Abroad the sword destroyeth, and at home there is death like unto it (Lam. 1:20). For abroad the sword destroyeth, when vengeance striking us externally pierces us. But at home there is death like unto it, because one indeed sustains scourges, and yet within the conscience is not clean from the filth of temptation. Hence David says: Let them be as dust before the face of the wind, and let the angel of the Lord afflict them (Ps. 35:5). For he who in his heart is carried away by the breeze of temptation is elevated like dust before the face of the wind. And when amidst these things divine strictness strikes, what else but the angel of the Lord afflicts?

63. The chosen receive temptation in one way, the reprobate in another.—But these things are done in one way by the reprobate, in another by the chosen. For the hearts of the former are

so tempted that they consent. But those of the latter indeed receive temptations, but they resist. The mind of the former is captured with delight; and if for a time that which is evilly suggested displeases, yet afterwards through deliberation it pleases. But these so receive the darts of temptations that they are always fatigued by resisting; and if at any time the tempted mind is carried away even to delight, they nevertheless are sooner ashamed of that very subreption of their delight, and with strong censure they redargue whatever they detect arising carnal within themselves. Whence also well it is soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIII [Rec. XIX]. VERSE 10.—Thou hast spoken like one of the foolish women. If we have received good things at the hand of the Lord, why should we not receive evil? 64. How one must resist things harsh or smooth.—It is indeed worthy that the holy mind should restrain by spiritual correction whatever carnally murmurs insolently within itself; lest the flesh, either speaking harsh things, should draw it to impatience, or speaking smooth things, should dissolve it to the fluxes of lust. Therefore let manly censure, redarguing the suggestion of illicit thought, repress the dissolved softness of turpitude, saying: Thou hast spoken like one of the foolish women. But whoever desires to subdue vices, and tends toward the eternal heights of internal retribution with the steps of true intention, the more he sees himself besieged on all sides by the war of vices, the more robustly he girds himself with the arms of virtues; and he

fears the darts by so much the less as he strongly fortifies his breast against these coming things.

65. Vices hide themselves under the appearance of virtues.—But often while we strive to be supported by great virtues against this war of temptations, certain vices hide themselves under the appearance of virtues to us, and come to us as if with a smooth face; but of what adversity they are is felt when they are discussed. Whence also the friends of blessed Job come as if for consolation, but they break out into contumelies; because ensnaring vices take the face of virtues, but they strike us with hostile invective. For often immoderate anger wishes to appear as justice; and often dissolved remission, as mercy. Often incautious fear appears as humility; often unbridled pride desires to appear as liberty. Therefore friends come to console, but they slide into words of reproof; because surely vices cloaked with the appearance of virtues begin indeed with a smooth surface, but they disturb us with harsh contrariety. Well, however, it is said:

And again let the consideration of gifts refrain the impatience of harsh thought, saying: If we have received good things at the hand of the Lord, why should we not receive evil?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

VERSE 11.—For they had made an appointment together, that they might come and visit him together.

66. They enter into a league against us.—Vices indeed make an appointment with one another

under the pretext of virtues, because there are certain ones which are joined together among themselves by a certain agreement against us, just as pride and anger, remissness and fear. For anger is close to pride, remissness to fear. Therefore they come by appointment, which are associated against us from a certain kinship of perversity. [Old Edit. XXV.] But if we recognize the misery of our captivity, if from the love of the eternal fatherland we grieve in our innermost parts, the vices, which steal upon the evilly joyful, cannot prevail over the well sorrowful. Whence also well it is added:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERSE 12.—And when they had lifted up their eyes afar off, they did not know him.

67. Affliction puts vices to flight.—For vices by no means know us when we are afflicted, because as soon as they have knocked at a sorrowful heart, being reprobated they leap back; and those things which had known us when joyful, because they penetrated us, are unable to know us when mourning, because they are broken by our very rigor. But the ancient enemy, by as much as he sees himself strongly detected in them, by so much the more deeply he hides them under the image of virtues. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER XXXVI. IBID.—And crying out they wept, and rending their garments they sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven, and they sat with him on the ground seven days and

seven nights. 68. Unless they should be mocked under the appearance of virtues.—For piety is signified by weeping, discretion by the rending of garments, the affection of works by the dust of heads, humility by sitting. For sometimes the ensnaring enemy simulates something pious, so that he may lead to the end of cruelty; as it is when he prohibits a fault from being punished through discipline, so that what is not repressed here may be struck by the fire of Gehenna. Sometimes he presents the image of discretion to the eyes, and leads to the snares of indiscretion; as it is when, by his impulse, we grant more of nourishment to ourselves as if discreetly for infirmity, but indiscreetly we excite the wars of the flesh against ourselves. Sometimes he simulates the affection of good works, but through this he inflicts the inquietude of labors; as it is when someone is not able to rest, and as if from leisure fears to be judged. Sometimes he ostentates the image of humility, so that he may subtract the affection of utility; as it is when he asserts some to be more infirm and useless to themselves than they are, so that while they consider themselves too unworthy, they may fear to minister the things in which they could profit their neighbors.

69. Compunction fortifies against vices.—But these vices which the ancient enemy hides under the appearance of virtues, the hand of compunction examines very subtly. For he who truly grieves within, strongly foresees what things are to be done without, and what are not to be done. For if the virtue of compunction affects us in our

innermost parts, all the noise of perverse suggestion falls silent. Whence also follows:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERSE 13.—And no one spoke a word to him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

70. Those who can make vices serve the use of virtue.—For if the heart truly grieves, vices have no tongue against us. For when the life of rectitude is fully sought, the superfluous suggestion of perversity is stopped. But often if we bind ourselves with strong study against the incentives of vices, we even change those very vices to the use of virtue. For anger possesses some: but this, while they subject it to reason, they turn into the ministry of holy zeal. Pride raises some; but while they incline the mind to divine fear, they change this to the defense of justice into the voice of free authority. The strength of the flesh entices some; but while they subject the body to exercising pious works, whence they suffered the sting of iniquity, thence they purchase the gains of piety. Whence also well the same blessed Job after many contests immolates a victim for his friends. For those whom he bore long as enemies through contention, at length through sacrifice he restores as citizens; because while by subduing we turn whatever vicious thoughts into virtues, we change the adverse studies of temptations through the victim of intention, as it were to friendly hearts. Let it suffice that we have discussed these things in three volumes in

a threefold way. For in the very beginning of this work we fixed the root of the tongue as if into the mass of a tree about to be born, so that we may afterwards produce the branches of exposition, as individual places require.

BOOK FOUR.

In which Gregory, having prefaced with a few words that the letter of Scripture sometimes fights with itself, and that the imprecations of Job like those of Jeremiah and David, according to that which they sound, cannot be understood without absurdity, exposes the words of Job from the beginning of the third chapter, to the twentieth verse historically, mystically, and morally.

CHAPTER I.

PREFACE. 101. The letter of Scripture sometimes contradicts itself.

The sense of Scripture is penetrated by the humble by assiduity of reading.—He who considers the text and ignores the sense of sacred locution, does not so much instruct himself with erudition as confound himself with ambiguity, because sometimes the words of the letter contradict themselves; but while they dissent from themselves through contrariety, they send the reader to the understanding of the truth. For what is it that Solomon says: It is better to eat and drink (Eccles. 2:24); and not long after subjoins: It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting (Eccles. 7:3)? Why did he prefer mourning to feasting, who before praised

eating and drinking? For if by election it is good to eat and drink, without doubt it ought to be better to hasten to the house of joy than to the house of lamentation. Hence it is that he again says: Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth (Eccles. 11:9). And a little after subjoins: For youth and pleasure are vain (ibid. 11:10). What is this, that he either first commands things to be reprehended, or after commands he reprehends, except that he hints by the words of the letter themselves, that he who suffers difficulty externally should consider the understanding of truth, which he may follow? which understanding of truth surely, when it is sought through humility of heart, is penetrated by assiduity of reading. For as we discern the faces of unknown men and do not know their hearts, but if we are joined to them by familiar locution, by the use of colloquy we also investigate their thoughts; so when in sacred eloquence only the history is looked at, nothing else than the face is seen; but if we are joined to this by assiduous use, we surely penetrate its mind as if from the familiarity of conversation. For while we collect some things from others, we easily recognize in its words that it is one thing which they intimate, another which they sound. But by so much is anyone rendered a stranger to that knowledge as he is bound in its surface alone.

CHAPTER II.

Job's imprecations cannot be understood according to the letter without absurdity.

Ecce, for that which blessed Job is described to have cursed his day, saying: Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said: A man-child is conceived; if it be attended to according to the surface, what is found more reprehensible than these words? For who does not know that the day in which he was born could by no means stand then? For it is the mode of time that it has no state of mansion. For because it tends to be through things to come, it always hastens from things past not to be. Why therefore would so great a man curse a thing which he was not ignorant did by no means subsist? But perhaps someone may say that from this the weight of his virtue is seen, because being moved by tribulation, he brings a curse upon that thing which it is clear least subsists. But a perceived reason quickly destroys this, because if the thing which he cursed did subsist, he brought in a pernicious curse: but if it did not subsist, an idle one.

Whoever indeed is full of His spirit, who says: Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment (Matt. 12:36), fears so to admit idle things, as also pernicious ones. To which sentence is still added: Let that day be turned into darkness, let not God regard it from above, and let it not be in recordation, and let it not be illustrated with light: let darkness and the shadow of death obscure it, let a mist occupy it, and let it be involved in bitterness. Let a darksome whirlwind possess that night, let that night be solitary, nor worthy of praise; let it expect light, and not see it, nor the rising of the

surging aurora. Why is the day, which is known to have passed by the course of time, said to be turned into darkness? And since it was clear that it did not subsist, why is it wished that the shadow of death obscure it; or what mist occupies it, what implication of bitterness involves it; or what darksome whirlwind possesses the night, which no state holds? Or how is it wished to become solitary, which by passing was already nothing? Or how does it expect light, which both lacks sense and does not remain in its own state? To which words is still subjoined:

VERSE 11.—Why did I not die in the womb? Why did I not perish immediately as I came out of the belly? 71. Nothing of impatience in Job.—If we consider only the surface of the history, nothing of impatience seems more open than that so great a man, broken by the weight of sorrows, should seek his own death. But because it is certain that he was not broken by sorrows, it remains that he should be sought in the sense of his words. For he who, when he had lost everything, said: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord (Job 1:21); he who, when he was struck with a wound, said: If we have received good things at the hand of the Lord, why should we not receive evil? (Job 2:10); how could he, who was not broken by the loss of things, nor by the death of children, nor by the wound of the body, be broken by the words of a wife? For he who stood firm against things, how could he fall before words? Why therefore does he curse his

day, except that the 'day' here is not that which passes by the course of time, but that which is the light of knowledge? And the 'night' here is not that which follows the day, but that which is the ignorance of the mind.

But what is understood by the 'day' but that very time of the fall of man? For then the light of truth was as it were turned into the darkness of error for him. Or what is understood by the 'day' but the very light of the knowledge of God, which man lost by sinning? For he who by sinning lost the light of knowledge, surely fell into the night of ignorance. Why therefore does he curse the day of his birth, except that he deplores the very condition of human fragility? For he who is born in the night of ignorance, surely seeks the light of truth. But he who is born in the light of knowledge, if he sins, loses the light which he had. Therefore he curses the day of his birth, because he deplores that he was born to sin. For he who is born to sin, surely is born to the night of ignorance. Whence also follows:

CHAPTER III.

Why did I not die in the womb, why did I not perish immediately as I came out of the belly? Why was I received upon the knees? Why was I suckled at the breasts? For now I should have been lying still and quiet, and I should have rested in my sleep.

A confirmation of the proposed argument. How men were delivered from original sin before baptism was instituted. If he had perished imme-

diately upon coming out of the womb, would he have conceived the merit of retribution from this very destruction? Do the stillborn enjoy eternal rest? For whoever is not released by the water of regeneration is held bound by the guilt of the first bond. But what the water of baptism avails among us, this among the ancients was effected either by faith alone for little ones, or by the virtue of sacrifice for those older, or for those who had come from the stock of Abraham, by the mystery of circumcision. For that everyone is conceived with the fault of the first parent, the Prophet testifies, saying: Behold, I was conceived in iniquities (Psal. L, 7). And because he whom the water of salvation does not wash does not lose the punishments of original guilt, Truth openly declares through itself, saying: Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he shall not have eternal life (John III, 5). What is it then that he desires to have been dead in the womb, and hopes that he could have rested by the benefits of that same death, since it is certain that the rest of life would by no means receive him, if the sacraments of divine knowledge had by no means delivered him from the guilt of original fault? He who still adds with whom he could have rested, saying: With kings and counselors of the earth, who build solitudes for themselves. Who is ignorant that the kings of the earth and the counselors are as far from solitude as they are thronged by innumerable crowds of followers? Or how difficult it is for those to tend toward rest who are bound by such hard knots of

multiple reasonings? Scripture attesting, which says: A most severe judgment shall be for those who are in authority (Wisd. VI, 6). Whence in the Gospel Truth says: To whom much is given, much will be required of him (Luke XII, 48). He who still suggests whom he would have had as companions in the same rest, saying: Or with princes, who possess gold, and fill their houses with silver. It is very rare that those who possess gold tend toward rest, since Truth says through itself: It is difficult for those who have riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matth. XIX, 24). For those who here gape for the multiplying of riches, what joys of the other life do they hope for? Which, however, to show that it is very rare, and can happen only from a divine miracle, our Redeemer said: With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Because therefore these words on the surface disagree with reason, the letter itself already indicates that the holy man says nothing according to the letter in them.

CHAPTER IV

[Old III].

The imprecations of neither David nor Jeremiah are to be taken literally. But if we first discuss other curses in the sacred eloquence, we shall more subtly investigate that which was uttered by the mouth of blessed Job. For what is it that David, who did not return evil to those who requited him with evil, when Saul and Jonathan

fell in war, curses the mountains of Gilboa, saying: Ye mountains of Gilboa, let neither dew nor rain come upon you, neither let there be fields of firstfruits, for there the shield of Saul was cast away, as though he had not been anointed with oil (II Sam. I, 21)? What is it that Jeremiah, when he saw his preaching hindered by the difficulty of his hearers, curses, saying: Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying: A man child is born to thee (Jerem. XX, 15)? What then did the mountains of Gilboa offend at the death of Saul, so that neither dew nor rain should fall on them, and the word of the sentence should dry them from every bud of greenness? But because Gilboa is interpreted as "a running down," and by Saul, anointed and dead, the death of our Mediator is expressed; not undeservedly by the mountains of Gilboa the proud hearts of the Jews are signified, which while they flow down in the desires of this world, mixed themselves in the death of Christ, that is, the Anointed. And because in them the anointed king dies corporally, they themselves are dried from all dew of grace. Of whom also it is well said: That they may not be fields of firstfruits. For the proud minds of the Hebrews do not bear firstfruits, because at the coming of the Redeemer, for the most part remaining in perfidy, they would not follow the beginnings of faith. For the holy Church, fertilized in her firstfruits by the multitude of the Gentiles, will hardly at the end of the world receive the Jews whom she shall find; and gathering the last, she will place them as the remnants

of the crops. Of which remnants indeed Isaiah says: If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved (Isaiah X, 22, sec. LXX; Rom. IX, 27). However, the mountains of Gilboa can for this reason be cursed by the mouth of the prophet, so that while the fruit does not arise because the earth is parched, the possessors of the earth may be struck with the loss of sterility, so that they themselves might receive the sentence of the curse, who had deserved by their iniquity to receive the death of the king among them. But what is it that that man received the sentence of the curse from the Prophet, who announced his birth to his father? This indeed is as much more full of mystery within as it is void of human reason without. For if anything outwardly reasonable had perhaps sounded, it would by no means have kindled us to the study of interior understanding. Therefore he hints something more fully to us within, by showing nothing reasonable without. For if from his mother's womb the prophet came forth to be afflicted in this world, what did the messenger of his birth offend? But what does the person of the fluctuating prophet designate, if not the mutability of the human race coming through the merit of punishment? And what is expressed by his father, if not this world from which we are born? And who is that man who announces our birth to the father, if not the ancient enemy, who when he considers us fluctuating in thoughts, instigates the minds of the evil, who excel from the authority of this world, to the persuasion of our decep-

tion; and when he sees us act weakly, he extols those things as strong with favors, and speaks as of male children born, when he congratulates that we have stood out as corrupters of truth through a lie? Therefore he announces a male born to the father, when he demonstrates to this world him whom he has persuaded to be made a corrupter of innocence. For when it is said to anyone sinning and being proud, Thou hast acted like a man, what else is he declared than a male born in the world? Rightly therefore the man who announces the male born is cursed, because by his very announcement the reprobate joy of our corrupter is indicated. By these curses of holy Scripture, then, we learn what to seek in the voice of the curse in blessed Job, lest the reader, not understanding, should presume to redargue his words, whom God remunerates after wounds and words. Because therefore we have in some way distinguished these things which were to be sought in the preface, let us now follow the words of the history by discoursing on them.

CHAPTER I

[Rec. V].

CHAP. III. VERS. 1-3.---After this Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day, saying: Let the day perish in which I was born.

1. HISTORICAL AND MYSTICAL SENSE. Job did not utter a curse out of impatience.---It must not be discussed neglectfully what is said, He opened his mouth. For sacred Scripture indicates

from these things which it smallly premises, that those which it subjoins are to be reverently expected. For as we do not know what closed vessels have within, but when the mouth of the vessels is opened we recognize what is contained inside; so the hearts of the saints, which are hidden while the mouth is closed, are detected when the mouth is opened; and when they detect their thoughts, they are said to open the mouth, so that with an intent mind, as if from opened vessels, we may hasten to know what they contain within, and recreate ourselves with their inward odor. Whence also to the Lord about to speak sublime precepts on the mount it is premised: Opening His mouth He spoke (Matth. V, 2); although there this also ought to be taken, because then He opened His mouth in precepts, in which He had long since opened the mouths of the prophets. But it is to be very skillfully observed what is said, After this, so that indeed the virtue of the thing which is done may be truly felt from the time. For first the vastness of things, the extinction of pledges, the pain of wounds, the persuasion of the wife, the arrival of the friends are described, who are remembered to have rent their garments, and to have wept crying out, to have sprinkled their heads with dust, and to have sat long in the earth in silence, and then it is subjoined: After this Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day; so that by the very order of the narration it may be weighed that he by no means uttered a curse through impatience, who broke out into the voice of the curse while his friends were still silent. If

indeed being moved by anger he cursed, at the hearing of the loss of substance, at the knowledge of the death of his sons, the pain would surely excite him to the curse. But what he then said we have heard. For he said: The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away (Job I, 21). Again, if being moved by anger he cursed, at least being struck in the body, or being evilly persuaded by his wife, he could have brought in a curse. But what he then answered we have acknowledged. For he said: Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women. If we have received good things from the hand of the Lord, why should we not sustain evil things? (Job II, 10.) But after this it is described that the friends come, weep, sit, are silent; and soon this is subjoined, that he is said to have cursed his day. Too incongruous, therefore, it is that we should suspect him, with no one instigating, with no one striking, to break out into the voice of the curse from impatience, whom indeed we know among the losses of things and the death of sons, among the wounds of the body, among the words of the evilly persuading wife, to have returned great praises to the creator with a humble mind. He manifested, therefore, with what mind he said these things in quiet, who even being struck poured out so many praises of God. Nor indeed could he afterwards be proud when not struck, whom pain showed humble even in the striking. But when we certainly know that sacred Scripture prohibits a curse, why do we say that that is sometimes rightly done which we are

not ignorant is to be avoided by the same sacred eloquence?

[Rec. VI.] 2. One curse is from judgment, another from vengeance.---It is to be known indeed that sacred Scripture mentions a curse in two ways, one indeed which it approves, another which it condemns. For a curse is uttered in one way by the judgment of justice, in another by the malice of vengeance. For a curse by the judgment of justice was uttered to the first man himself when he sinned, when he heard: Cursed is the earth in thy work (Gen. III, 17). A curse is uttered by the judgment of justice when it is said to Abraham: I will curse them that curse thee (Gen. XII, 3). Again, because a curse is brought forth not by the judgment of justice, but by the malice of vengeance, we are admonished by the voice of the apostle Paul preaching, who says: Bless, and curse not (Rom. XII, 14). And again: Neither shall railers possess the kingdom of God (I Cor. VI, 10). God therefore is said to curse, and yet man is prohibited to curse; because what man does from the malice of vengeance, God does only from the examination and virtue of justice. But when holy men utter the sentence of a curse, they do not break out into this from a desire for revenge, but from the examination of justice. For within they behold the subtle judgment of God, and they know that they ought to strike with a curse the evils arising without; and in that they do not sin in the curse, in that they do not disagree from the internal judgment. Hence it is that Peter twisted the sentence of a curse against Simon offering

him money, saying: Thy money be with thee unto perdition (Acts VIII, 20). For he who did not say, is, but be, signified that he said these things in the optative, not the indicative mood. Hence Elijah said to the two captains of fifty coming to him: If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee (II Kings I, 10). With how much reason of truth the sentence of both of these prevailed, the end of the case showed. For both Simon perished in eternal perdition, and a flame coming from above consumed the two captains of fifty. Therefore the subsequent virtue testifies with what mind the sentence of the curse is brought forth. For when both the innocence of the curser remains, and yet the curse absorbs him who is cursed even unto destruction, it is gathered from the end of both parts that the sentence taken from the one and inward Judge is hurled against the guilty one.

3. Job's curse is from the rectitude of the judge.---Therefore if we subtly weigh the words of blessed Job, his curse is not from the malice of a delinquent, but from the rectitude of a judge; it is not of one moved by anger, but of one tranquil in doctrine. For he who brought in such right things while cursing did not succumb to the vice of perturbation, but bestowed the mastership of doctrine. For he saw the friends weep with a cry, he saw them rend their garments, he saw them sprinkle their heads with dust, he saw them become mute by the consideration of his percussion; and the holy man perceived that those who were seeking temporal prosperity, from the

comparison of their own mind had believed him broken by temporal adversity. He perceived that they would not weep so desperately for him struck with transitory affliction, unless they themselves withdrew a desperate mind from the hope of internal health; and while he breaks out outwardly into the voice of grief, he shows to those wounded within the virtue of the medicine, saying: Let the day perish in which I was born.

[Rec. VII.] 4. He curses the day of mutability from the intuition of eternity.---For what ought to be understood by the day of birth, but all this time of our mortality? which as long as it retains us in this corruption of our mutability, the immutability of eternity does not appear to us. He therefore who already sees the day of eternity sustains with difficulty the day of his mortality. And it is to be noted that he does not say, Let the day perish in which I was fashioned; but, Let the day perish in which I was born. For man was fashioned in the day of justice, but born already in the time of fault. For Adam was fashioned, but Cain was first born. What is it therefore to curse the day of birth, but openly to say: Let the day of mutability perish, and the light of eternity break forth.

[Vet. VII.] 5. The time of our mutability will one day utterly perish. The day which is here so desired to perish that it be ill, is the apostate spirit.---But because we are accustomed to say "perish" in two ways (for we say "perish" in one way when we wish something not to be; and we say "perish" in another way when we wish it to

be ill), by this which is subjoined of this day, Let darkness obscure it, and let it be wrapped in bitterness, it is clearly shown that this day is desired to perish not so that it be not, but so that it be ill. For that cannot be wrapped in bitterness which is not in every way utterly lost. But this time of our mutability is not some day so to perish, that is, to pass away, that it be ill; but so that it utterly be not, the angel in the sacred eloquence attesting, who says: By Him that liveth for ever and ever, that time shall be no longer (Apoc. X, 6). For even if the Prophet says, Their time shall be for ever (Psal. LXXX, 16), because time fails by moments, he called their failure by the name of time, showing that those who are separated from the consolation of internal vision fail without utter failure. Because therefore this time of our mortality perishes not so that it be ill, but so that it be not; it is to be sought what it is that is desired to perish not so that it be not, but so that it be ill. For the human soul, or the angelic spirit, is so immortal that it can die; so mortal that it cannot die. For it loses living blessedly, whether through vice or through punishment. But it does not lose living essentially, neither through vice nor through punishment. For it fails from the quality of living, but it does not feel the destruction of subsisting in every way even while dying. So that I may speak briefly, it is both immortally mortal and mortally immortal.

[Rec. VIII.] While therefore the day is desired that it perish, and a little after is said to be about to be wrapped in bitterness; whom shall

we believe that the holy man wished to express by the name of day, but the apostate spirit, who in the essence of living subsists even by dying? whom the destruction of life does not withdraw, because being placed in eternal pain, an immortal death extinguishes him by preserving him: who being already cast down from the glory of blessedness, is still desired to perish, so that, indeed, being thrust back with worthy punishments, he may also lose the license of tempting.

[Vet. VIII, Rec. IX]. 6. For what reason it is day, or for what reason it is night. What is desired for him, while he is desired to perish.---He indeed exhibits himself as day, because he entices through prosperity; but he ends in the darkness of night, because he leads to adversity. For he was showing day when he said, In whatever day you eat of it, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods (Gen. III, 5); but he brought in night when he led to the darkness of mortality. The day therefore is the brought-in promise of better things; but the night is the exhibited experience of calamities. The ancient enemy is day by nature well fashioned; but he is night by merit fallen into darkness. He is day when by promising good things he simulates himself an angel of light to human aspects, Paul attesting who says, For Satan himself transformeth himself into an angel of light (II Cor. XI, 14), but he is night when he obscures the minds of those consenting with the darkness of error. The holy man, therefore, bewailing the cause of the whole human race in his own grief, and thinking nothing special

in every way in a special wound, let him bring back to mind the origin of the fault; and by the consideration of justice, let him temper the pain of the punishment. Let him see the human race whence whither it fell, and let him say: Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said, A man is conceived. As if he should say openly: Let the hope brought in by the apostate angel perish, who simulating himself as day, shone forth from the promise of divinity; but exhibiting himself as night, obscured to us the light of our immortality. Let the ancient enemy perish, who showed the light of promise, and conferred the darkness of sin; who made himself known as day by fawning, but led even to the dark night from the impressed blindness of the heart. It follows:

CAPUT II.

VERS. 4.---Let that day be turned into darkness.

7. It is turned into darkness when the prosperity which it promises is understood to be adversity.---This day as it were shines to the minds of men when the persuasion of its depravity is believed to be prosperity, and what it is within is not seen. But when its iniquity is acknowledged as it is, the day of false promise is as it were obscured by certain darkness before the eyes of our judgment; because, indeed, what it is by merit is perceived such in its blandishment. Into darkness, therefore, the day is turned, when we understand as adversity even the prosperity which

it promises by persuading. Into darkness the day is turned when the ancient enemy is perceived by us as he is when raging, even while lurking under blandishments; lest he should mock by feigned prosperities as if from the light of day, and draw us through true miseries to the darkness of sin. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Old IX].

IBID.---Let not God seek it from above, and let it not be illustrated with light.

8. Why human nature was repaired, and not the angelic.---Omnipotent God, as He was able to make good things out of nothing, so, when He willed, through the mystery of His incarnation He repaired even lost goods. But He had made two creatures for understanding Him, namely, the angelic and the human: but pride struck both, and broke them from the state of innate rectitude. But one had the covering of flesh, but the other bore nothing weak of flesh. For an angel is only spirit, but man is both spirit and flesh. Therefore the Creator, having pitied that He might redeem, ought to have brought back to Himself that one which in the perpetration of the fault is certain to have had something from weakness; and He ought to have repelled the apostate angel so much more deeply, as when he fell from the fortitude of persisting, he bore nothing weak from the flesh. Whence rightly the Psalmist, when he said that the Redeemer had pitied men, expressed

also the very cause of the mercy, saying: And He remembered that they are flesh (Psal. LXXVII, 39). [Rec. X.] As if He were saying: By how much He saw their weak things, by so much He would not strictly punish their faults. There is yet another thing, for which both lost man ought to be repaired, and the proud spirit could not be repaired, because indeed the angel fell by his own malice, but an alien one prostrated man. Because therefore the human race is brought back to the light of penitence by the coming of the Redeemer, but the apostate angel is recalled to the light of restoration by no hope of pardon, by no amendment of conversion; let it be rightly said: Let not God seek him from above, and let him not be illustrated with light. As if it were openly said: Because he himself brought in darkness, let him tolerate without end what he did; nor let him ever receive the light of his former status, because he lost this even without being persuaded. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 5.---Let darkness and the shadow of death obscure it.

9. The blindness of error so overwhelms the devil, that he is not about to rise again to the light of penitence.---By the shadow of death, oblivion ought to be understood; because as death slays life, so oblivion extinguishes memory. Because therefore the apostate angel is delivered to eternal oblivion, he is obscured by the shadow of death. Let it be said therefore: Let darkness and

the shadow of death obscure him; that is, let the blindness of his error so overwhelm him, that he may by no means rise again further to the light of penitence through the memory of divine regard. It follows:

CHAPTER V

[Old X].

IBID.---Let a dark cloud occupy it, and let it be wrapped in bitterness.

10. What he suffers now, and what he is about to suffer after the judgment.---The ancient enemy, bound by the chains of his own iniquity, is suffering one thing now, and will suffer another at the end. For because he fell from the order of inward light, he now confounds himself within by the dark cloud of error. But after this he is wrapped in bitterness, because from the merit of his voluntary dark cloud he is tortured with the eternal torment of Gehenna. Let it be said therefore: He who lost the serenity of inward light, what is it that he tolerates before the extreme punishment? Let a dark cloud occupy him. Let there also be subjoined the subsequent punishment which devastates him even without end: Let him be wrapped in bitterness. For everything which is wrapped indicates its end as if nowhere; because as it does not show where it begins, so it does not detect where it ceases. The ancient enemy, therefore, is said to be wrapped in bitterness, because punishments not only of every kind, but also infinite, are prepared for his pride.

Which punishment of his indeed receives its beginning when the Judge, having become strict, comes to the extreme judgment. Whence also it is well added:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. XI].

VERS. 6.---Let a dark whirlwind possess that night.

11. With how great a tempest he is snatched to eternal punishments.---For it is written: God our God shall come manifestly, and shall not be silent. A fire shall burn in His sight, and a mighty tempest round about Him (Psal. XLIX, 3). A dark whirlwind therefore possesses this night, because that dreadful tempest snatches the apostate spirit from the sight of the strict Judge to eternal punishments. By a whirlwind therefore this night is possessed, because his proud blindness is struck by strict animadversion. It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

IBID.---Let it not be accounted in the days of the year, nor numbered in the months.

12. What is to be understood by the name of day, month, and year, in the words of Job.---We receive not inconveniently the year as the preaching of supernal grace; because as in a year time is perfected by gathered days, so in supernal grace the manifold life of virtues is completed. By the year also the multitude of the redeemed can

be understood; because as a year is drawn from a multitude of days, so from the collection of all goods, that innumerable universe of the elect is filled. For Isaiah preaches this year of perfect multitude, saying: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me: He hath sent me to preach to the meek, that I might heal the contrite of heart, and preach indulgence to the captives, and opening to those shut up, that I might preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Isai. LXI, 1). For the acceptable year of the Lord is preached when the future people of the faithful to be illustrated with the light of truth is foretold. But what through the days, if not each single mind of the elect; what through the months, if not their multiplied Churches, which make one catholic one, is designated? That night therefore let it not be accounted in the days of the year, nor numbered in the months; because the ancient enemy, pressed by the darkness of his own pride, beholds indeed the coming of the Redeemer, but by no means returns to pardon with the elect. For hence it is written: For nowhere doth He take hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold (Hebr. II, 16). [Rec. XII.] For for this reason our Redeemer was made not an angel, but man, because this without doubt ought to have been made, which He redeemed; so that He might both desert the lost angel by not taking hold of him, and repair man by taking hold of him in Himself. [Vet. XI.] These days which remain in internal light can also be understood as angelic spirits; but the months as their orders and digni-

ties. For each single spirit, because they shine, are days. But because they are distinguished by certain certain dignities, as some are thrones, others dominations, others principalities, others powers; for this very distribution of the hosts, they are called months. But because the ancient enemy by no means is reduced to the merit of light, by no means to the order of supernal hosts: he is neither numbered in the days of the year, nor in the months. For thus the blindness of perpetrated pride weighs him down, that he should not return further to those supernal hosts of inward clarity. By no means already is he mixed with the standing dignities of light, because by the merit of his own darkness he is always depressed to the lowest parts. Who because he remains for ever void of that frequency of the heavenly country, rightly is there still subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 7.---Let that night be solitary, and not worthy of praise.

13. The devil, when man is redeemed and idols are rejected, becomes solitary and without praise.---That night is made solitary, because it is separated by a perpetual distinction from the frequency of the heavenly country. Which, however, can also be understood in another way, namely, that it loses man, whom it had made its companion to perdition; and the enemy perishes alone with his own body, while the grace of the Redeemer reforms many whom he had destroyed. Therefore, the night is made solitary, when those

who are elect being taken away, the ancient enemy alone is delivered over to the eternal fires of Gehenna. But it is well said: "Nor worthy of praise." For when the human race, weighed down by the darkness of error, believed stones to be gods, by this very fact that it served idols, what else did it do than praise the deeds of its seducer? Whence it is well said by Paul: "We know that an idol is nothing; but the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons" (1 Cor. 8:4). Those therefore who were subjected to the veneration of idols, what else did they praise than the darkness of night? But behold we now see, that that night is known not to be worthy of praise, when already the veneration of idols is rejected by the redeemed human race; and a solitary night is left, because one does not go to torments with the damned apostate spirit. It follows:

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 8.---Let them curse it who curse the day, who are ready to raise up Leviathan.

14. By Christ his malice is already destroyed; in the end of the world his power shall be extinguished.---In the old translation it is not so said; but, "Let him curse it, who cursed the day, who is to take the great whale." By which words it is openly shown that the coming perdition of Antichrist at the end of the world is foreseen by the holy man. For the malignant spirit, who by merit is night, feigns himself to be day in the end of the world, when he shows himself as if God to men, when he falsely attributes to himself the clarity

of Divinity, and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. Therefore he curses the night, who curses the day; because He now destroys his malice, who by the illumination of His coming shall then also extinguish the power of his strength. Whence also it is well subjoined: "Who is to take the great whale." For the strength of this whale is taken in the waters, because the craftiness of the ancient enemy is overcome by the sacrament of baptism.

15. The elect angels indicate to us the darkness of his deceit.---But what is said in the old translation concerning the Author of all things, this in this translation, which is derived to us from the Hebrew and Arabic speech, is mentioned concerning His elect angels. Concerning these it is said: "Let them curse it who curse the day." [Rec. XIII.] For this proud spirit wished to show himself as day even to the angelic powers, when exalting himself above the rest as if in the power of divinity, he drew so many legions after him to destruction. But these indeed, who persisted with a humble heart in their Author, when they perceived night to be in his error, trod under foot the day of that clarity by thinking humble things of themselves: who now indicate to us the darkness of his deceit, and demonstrate how much his feigned clarity is to be despised. Let it be said therefore of the dark night, which closes the eyes of human infirmity: "Let them curse it, who curse the day," that is, let those elect spirits denounce by damning the darkness of his error, who see the magnitude of that clarity already feigned

from the beginning. But it is well added: "Who are ready to raise up Leviathan." For Leviathan interpreted is called "their addition." Of whom indeed, but of men? But it is rightly called "their addition," because after he brought in the first fault by evil suggestion, he does not cease to increase this daily by more grievous persuasions. Or certainly by way of reproach he was called Leviathan, that is, called the addition of men. For he found them immortal in paradise; but by promising divinity to immortals, he promised as it were to add to them something beyond what they were. But while he blandly asserted that he would give things not possessed, he craftily withdrew also those possessed. Whence also the prophet describes the same Leviathan, saying: "Upon Leviathan the bar serpent, upon Leviathan the crooked serpent" (Isai. 27:1). For this Leviathan in that which he promised to add to man, crept to him with crooked windings; because while he falsely promised impossibilities, he truly took away also possibilities. [Vet. XII.] We must indeed inquire why he who had said "serpent," and immediately subjoining "crooked," interposed "bar," unless perhaps because in the crookedness of the serpent there is a flowing softness, but in the bar there is the hardness of rigidity. That he might therefore mark him both as hard and soft, he names both "bar" and "serpent." For he is hard through malice, soft through blandishments. Therefore he is called a bar, because he strikes even to death; but a ser-

pent, because he pours himself in softly through snares.

16. The elect of the angels keep the devil shut up in the pit of the abyss.---But the elect spirits of the angels now keep this Leviathan shut up in the pit of the abyss. Whence it is written: "I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand: and he apprehended the dragon, the ancient serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss" (Apoc. 20:1, 2 et seq.). Whom however in the end of the world they recall to more open contests, and relax him entirely in his strengths against us. Whence also there again it is written: "When the thousand years shall be finished, Satan shall be loosed" (Ibid., 7). For that apostate angel, because he had been so created, that he was eminent above the other legions of angels, so by pride fell, that he is subjected to the dominion of the standing angels; so that either now for our utility, they ministering, he lies hid bound, or then for our probation, they relaxing him, being loosed he may exercise himself with all his strengths against us. Because therefore these elect spirits compress the proud apostate, who humble would not follow him, and by their administration it is disposed, that he should sometime be recalled to be utterly destroyed for the purpose of an open contest, let it be rightly said: "Who are ready to raise up Leviathan." But because the crafty enemy is not yet raised up to open wars, let it be insinuated how this night

now latently obscures the months of some. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 9.---Let the stars be darkened with the mist thereof.

17. Stars in the Scriptures are sometimes called saints, sometimes hypocrites. The light of hypocrites is obscured by open error.---In sacred Scripture by the name of stars sometimes the justice of the saints, which shines in the darkness of this life, is demonstrated, but sometimes the fiction of hypocrites, who show the good things which they do to men in order to receive praises. For if those living rightly were not stars, Paul would by no means say to his disciples: "In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Philip. 2:15). Again, if among those who seem to act rightly, some did not seek the retribution of human favor for their action, John would by no means see stars fall from the heavens, saying: "The dragon sent his tail, and drew a third part of the stars" (Apoc. 12:4). For by the tail of the dragon a part of the stars is drawn, because by the extreme persuasion of Antichrist some who seem to shine shall be snatched away. For to draw stars to the earth, is to involve those who seem to adhere to the study of heavenly life in the iniquity of open error from earthly love. For there are some who shine before human eyes as if by great works; but because these very works do not proceed from a pure heart, being captured in hid-

den thoughts, they are obscured by the darkness of this night; who often lose even those works which they do not do with a pure heart. Because therefore night is permitted to prevail, when even among good works the intention of the heart is by no means purified, let it be rightly said: "Let the stars be darkened with the mist thereof"; that is, against those who before human eyes shine as if by good works, let the dark malice of the ancient enemy prevail; and let them lay down this light of praise which they had taken before human judgments. For they are obscured by the mist of night, when their life is confounded by open error; that doubtless such they may appear even without in action, as they do not fear to appear to the divine judgment within themselves. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

IBID. Let it expect light, and not see it, nor the rising of the dawning day.

18. Christ with the good is one person, and the devil one with the reprobate. Those who act wickedly, or rightly not with a right heart, in vain expect eternal reward.---In the Gospel the Truth says: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). But as the same our Redeemer is one person with the congregation of the good; for He is the head of the body, and we the body of this head; so the ancient enemy is one person with the whole collection of the reprobate, because he himself as the head is eminent above them to iniquity, but they while they serve his persuasions, adhere like a body joined to the head. That therefore which

is said of this night, that is, the ancient enemy, is worthy to be derived to his body, that is, to all the wicked. Because therefore the Redeemer of the human race is light, what is it that is said of this night: "Let it expect light, and not see it": unless that there are some who show that they hold the faith by words, which they destroy by works? Concerning whom it is said by Paul: "Who confess that they know God, but in their deeds they deny Him" (Tit. 1:16). These doubtless either the things which they do are wicked, or they follow right works not with a right heart. For they do not seek perpetual retributions for their works, but transitory favors; and yet because they hear themselves praised as if holy, they think themselves to be truly holy; and by as much as they think themselves irreproachable from the estimation of many, by so much more securely do they expect the day of strict judgment. Concerning whom it is well said by the prophet: "Woe to those that desire the day of the Lord" (Amos 5:18). To whom blessed Job brings forth the due sentence, with the zeal of one foretelling, not with the wish of one desiring, saying: "Let it expect light, and not see it." For that night, namely the dark enemy, expects light in his members, and sees it not, because either these who hold the faith without works, when for the sake of the same faith they trust that they can be saved in the last judgment, their hope shall be frustrated, because they have demolished by living that which they held by confessing, or those who for human praise exhibit themselves in good action,

in vain expect the retribution of good works from the coming Judge; because while they do these for the ostentation of praise, they have already received their reward from the human mouth, the Truth attesting, who says: "Amen I say to you, they have received their reward" (Matth. 6:2, 5). Where also it is well added: "Nor the rising of the dawning day."

19. The wicked shall not see the brightness of the Church in the last judgment. For the Church is called the dawn, which is changed from the darkness of its sins to the light of justice. Whence also the Bridegroom wonders at her in the Song of Songs, saying: "Who is she that cometh forth as the rising dawn?" (Cant. 6:9). For the Church of the elect rises as a dawn, which deserts the darkness of its former wickedness and turns itself to the brightness of new light. Therefore, in that light which is shown at the coming of the strict Judge, the body of the damned enemy does not see the rising of the dawning day; because when the strict Judge comes for retribution, every wicked man, pressed down by the darkness of his own merits, is ignorant of with how great brightness the holy Church rises into the internal light of the heart. For then the mind of the elect is caught up on high, that it may be illustrated by the rays of the Divinity; and by that respect wherewith it is bedewed, it is raised above itself by the flashing of grace. Then the holy Church becomes a full dawn, when it utterly loses the darkness of its mortality and ignorance. In judgment, therefore, it is still dawn, but in the kingdom

it is day; because although it already begins to see the light in judgment with the restoration of bodies, yet it consumes the fuller sight of it in the kingdom. The rising of the dawn, therefore, is the beginning of the brightening Church, which the reprobate cannot see, because they are dragged away from the sight of the strict Judge, pressed down to the darkness by the weight of their evils. Whence it is rightly said by the prophet: "Let the impious be taken away, lest he see the glory of God" (Isai. 26:10, sec. LXX). Hence it is that it is said of this dawn through the Psalmist: "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy face, from the disturbance of men" (Psal. 30:21). For every elect one in judgment is hidden by an internal sight in the face of the Divinity, while the blindness of the reprobate without is disturbed, being repelled by the strict animadversion of justice.

20. Hypocrites, beholding the works of the just but not their intention, see not their light. Which also we receive not inconveniently for the present, if we search more subtly into the hearts of simulators. For the arrogant and hypocrites behold the deeds of the good outwardly, and recognize them as praised by men in their deeds, and they wonder at their celebrated name, and see that they receive praises for things well done; but with what zeal they flee those same praises, they see not. They consider their open works; but that they work these with inward hope alone, they are ignorant. For those who are bright with the true light of justice are first changed from the darkness of internal intention, so that they may fully

desert the obscurity of earthly appetite within, and perfectly convert their hearts to the desires of supernal light, lest while they appear bright to others, they be obscure to themselves. The arrogant, therefore, because they consider the deeds of the good and do not weigh their hearts, imitate that whence they may be able to be praised without, not that whence they may rise within to the light of justice: and as it were they know not how to see the rising of the dawning day, because they disdain to consider the intention of a religious mind.

21. Judea saw not the light of Christ coming and of the Church being born. The holy man also, full of the grace of the prophetic spirit, can behold the perfidy of Judea at the coming of the Redeemer, and prophesy the losses of its blindness through these words as from the quality of one wishing, so as to say: "Let it expect light, and not see it, nor the rising of the dawning day." For Judea expected the light, and saw it not; because it sustained that the Redeemer of the human race was indeed to come by prophesying, but knew Him not when He came; and those eyes of the mind which it opened to hope, it closed to the presence of the light. Which also saw not the rising of the dawning day: because it despised to venerate those weak beginnings of the holy Church; and while it believed that this was being weakened by the deaths of its own people, it was ignorant to what strong things it would arrive. But because speaking of the infidels, he has made known the members of the wicked head, he turns

his words again to the head of the wicked themselves, saying:

CHAPTER XII.

Verse 10. "Because it shut not up the doors of the belly that bore me, nor took away evils from my eyes."

22. Paradise was the womb of the human race, whose doors the serpent opened. What the mother's womb is to each man, that supreme habitation of paradise was to the whole human race. For from it the offspring of the human race came forth as from a womb, and as if to the increments of the body, so to the increases of the progeny it emanated without. Our conception coalesced there, where the first man, the origin of men, dwelt. But the serpent opened the doors of this belly, because by crafty persuasion he dissolved the heavenly command in the heart of man. The serpent opened the doors of this belly, because he burst into the enclosures of the mind fortified by supernal admonitions. The holy man, therefore, in the punishment which he endures, brings back the eyes of the mind to the fault. Let him grieve for this, which the dark night, that is, the obscure suggestion of the ancient enemy, brought into human minds; let him grieve for this, that the human mind in its deception consented to the crafty suggestion, and let him say: "Because it shut not up the doors of the belly that bore me, nor took away evils from my eyes." Nor let it move that he complains of not having shut, whom he detests for having opened the gate of

paradise. For he says "it shut not up," meaning it opened; and "it took not away evils," meaning it inflicted them. For as it were he would take them away, if he were to rest; and as it were he would shut them, if he were to cease from irruption. For he considers of whom he speaks, and weighs that it was to the evil spirit as if he had given us gains, if he had not brought losses. Thus we speak of robbers, that they give life to their captives, if they have not taken it away.

23. MORAL SENSE. It is pleasing to repeat these things from the beginning, and to retract them morally from that which we recognize in the use of present life. Blessed Job, considering, after the human race fell from the state of mind, with how great confidence it is raised up in prosperous things, or with how great perturbation it is broken by adverse things, recurs in mind to that state of immutability which it could have had in paradise, and declared by cursing how despicable he beheld the lapse of mortality varying through prosperity and adversity, saying:

CHAPTER XIII.

Verse 3. "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, A man is conceived."

24. Day is prosperity, night tribulation. Day is the delight of sin, night the blindness of the mind. It is as it were a certain day when the prosperity of this world smiles. But this day ends in night, because often temporal prosperity leads to the darkness of tribulation. The prophet had

despised this day of prosperity, when he said: "I have not desired the day of man, Thou knowest" (Jer. 17:16). The Lord announced that He would suffer this night of tribulation in the last time of His incarnation, when He said through the Psalmist as if from the past: "Even unto the night my reins have rebuked me" (Psal. 15:7). Moreover, by the day the delight of sin can be understood, and by the night the blindness of the mind, through which man suffers himself to be prostrated in the perpetration of fault. He wishes, therefore, the day to perish, that everything which is seen to flatter fault may be destroyed by the intervening vigor of justice. He wishes also the night to perish, that what the blinded mind perpetrates even by consent, it may extinguish by the animadversion of penitence.

25. Scripture calls man in three ways. Man is snatched from the delight of sin through voluntary darkness of the mind. But we must inquire why in the day man is said to be born, and in the night conceived? Sacred Scripture calls man in three ways, namely, sometimes by nature, sometimes by fault, sometimes by infirmity. For man is called by nature, as it is written: "Let us make man in our image and likeness" (Genes. 1:26). Man by fault, as it is written: "I have said, Ye are gods, and all children of the Most High; but ye shall die like men" (Psal. 81:6). As if He should openly say: Like delinquents ye shall die. Whence also Paul says: "Whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?" (1 Cor. 3:3). As if he

should say: Ye who lead discordant minds, do ye not yet sin from reprehensible humanity? Man is called by infirmity, as it is written: "Cursed is the man that putteth his trust in man" (Jerem. 17:5). As if he openly said, in infirmity. Man, therefore, is born in the day, but conceived in the night, because he is by no means snatched away by the delight of sin, unless he be first weakened through voluntary darkness of the mind. For first he becomes blind in mind, and afterwards he subjects himself to reprobate delight. Let it be said, therefore: "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, A man is conceived": that is, let the delight perish which snatched man into fault, let the incautious infirmity of the mind perish, which blinded even to the darkness of wicked consent. For while man does not cautiously perceive the blandishments of delight, he falls even into the night of most wicked perpetration. We must, therefore, watch skillfully, so that when fault begins to flatter, the mind may recognize to how great destruction it is being drawn. Whence it is aptly added:

CHAPTER XIV.

Verse 4. "Let that day be turned into darkness."

26. The beginning of delight is to be chastised by the lamentations of penitence. For the day is turned into darkness when fault is seen in the very beginning of delight, to what end of destruction it snatches. We turn the day into darkness when, punishing ourselves strictly, we

torment those same blandishments of wicked delight through the strict lamentations of penitence, when by weeping we pursue whatever we sin silently in the heart from the delight of sin. Because every faithful one is not ignorant that thoughts are to be subtly searched out in judgment, Paul attesting, who says: "Their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also defending one another" (Rom. 2:15); discussing himself inwardly, he vehemently examines himself before the judgment, that the strict Judge may come already more tranquilly, in that He sees his guilt, which He desires to discuss, already punished as a fault. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XV.

Ibid. "Let not God require it from above."

27. That he may not be punished by God in judgment. God requires those things which He discusses by judging; He does not require those which by forgiving He leaves already unpunished in His own judgment. Therefore this day, that is, this delight of sin, shall not be required by the Lord, if it is punished by spontaneous animadversion, Paul attesting, who says: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:31). For God to require our day, therefore, is to search out subtly in judgment everything which rejoices in fault against our mind; in which requisition He then more severely strikes him, whom He finds to have now more softly spared himself. But it well follows: "And let it not be illustrated by light." For the Lord

appearing in judgment, illustrates by light everything which He then rebukes. For as it were under a certain obscurity is covered whatever is not then recalled to the memory of the Judge. For it is written: "But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light" (Ephes. 5:13). As it were certain darknesses hide the sins of the penitent, of whom it is said by the Prophet: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (Psal. 31:1). Because, therefore, everything that is covered is hidden as it were in darkness; in the day of the last judgment that is not illustrated by light, which is not discussed by vengeance. For those acts of ours, which He shall not then have wished justly to punish, Divine mercy itself in some way hides from itself by knowing them. But in the light is shown whatever is then demonstrated in the sight of all. Let this day, therefore, be turned into darkness, so that we may strike everything wherein we fail through penitence. Let the Lord not require this day, and not illustrate it with light; so that we striking our own fault, He may not rebuke this by the animadversion of the last judgment.

28. The penitent alone finds a place where he may hide himself from God the Judge. But the Judge Himself is to come, who may penetrate all things, and touch all things. Who because He is everywhere, there is no place whither one may flee. But because He is appeased by the weepings of our correction, he alone finds a place of flight from Him, who after perpetrating fault now hides

himself from Him in penitence. Whence also it is aptly added concerning this day of delight:

CHAPTER XVI.

Verse 5. "Let darkness and the shadow of death obscure it."

29. The hidden judgments of God are certain darknesses. Darkness indeed obscures the day, when the lamentations of penitence inflicted transfix the delight of the mind. By darkness also hidden judgments can be designated. For in the light we recognize what we see; but in darkness either we discern nothing at all, or we are blinded with uncertain sight. Hidden judgments, therefore, are as it were certain darknesses before our eyes, because they can by no means be searched out. Whence also it is written of God: "He made darkness His secret place" (Psal. 17:12). And because we do not deserve to be absolved, we acknowledge: but by Divine grace preventing us, we are liberated through His hidden judgments. Darkness, therefore, obscures the day, when His inscrutable judgments mercuryfully hide from that ray of strict animadversion the joy of our delight which is to be wept for. Where also it is aptly subjoined: "And the shadow of death."

30. The shadow of death is taken in three ways in the Scriptures. For in Sacred Scripture the shadow of death is sometimes taken for oblivion of the mind, sometimes for imitation of the devil, sometimes for death of the flesh. For the shadow of death is taken for oblivion of the mind; because, as we said above, as death

makes that which it kills not to be in life, so also oblivion makes that which it intercepts not to be in memory. Whence also rightly, because John came to preach to the people of the Hebrews that God whom they had forgotten, it is said through Zacharias: "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:79). For to sit in the shadow of death is to grow faint in oblivion from the notice of Divine love. The shadow of death is taken for imitation of the ancient enemy. For he, because he brought in death, is called death, John attesting, who says: "And his name was Death" (Apoc. 6:8). By the shadow of death, therefore, his imitation is designated; because as a shadow is drawn according to the quality of the body, so the actions of the wicked are expressed from the species of his imitation. Whence rightly Isaias, when he saw the Gentile peoples fail in imitation of the ancient enemy, and rise again to the rising of the true sun, relates as if from the past what he considers certainly to be future, saying: "To them that sat in darkness and the shadow of death, light is risen unto them" (Isai. 9:2). The shadow of death is also taken for death of the flesh; because as true death is that by which the soul is separated from God, so the shadow of death is that by which the flesh is separated from the soul. Whence rightly it is said by the voice of the martyrs through the Prophet: "Thou hast humbled us in the place of affliction, and the shadow of death has covered us" (Psal. 43:20). For those whom it is certain die not in spirit, but in the flesh alone, say that they

are by no means covered by true death, but by the shadow of death.

31. Christ by His single death deleted the double death of men. What is it, therefore, that blessed Job asks for the shadow of death to obscure the day of wicked delight; except that for deleting sins before God's eyes, he requires the Mediator of God and men, who would take upon Himself only the death of the flesh for us, and delete the true death of delinquents through the shadow of His death? For He came to us who were held in death of the spirit and the flesh; He brought His one death to us, and loosed our two which He found. For if He Himself should take both, He would liberate us from neither. But He mercuryfully accepted one, and justly condemned both. He brought His single death to our double death, and dying He subdued our double death. Whence also not undeservedly He lay in the sepulcher for one day and two nights, because namely He joined the light of His single death to the darkness of our double death. He therefore who took only the death of the flesh for us, bore the shadow of death, and hid from God's eyes the fault which we committed. Let it be said therefore rightly: "Let darkness and the shadow of death obscure it." As if it were openly said: let Him come who, to snatch debtors from death of the flesh and spirit, may pay the death of the flesh not owing. But because the Lord relaxes no sin unpunished, for either we pursue this by weeping, or He by judging, it remains that the mind always watch skillfully for its emendation.

In what therefore each one considers himself to be mercuryfully succored, this it is necessary that confessing he wipe away. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVII.

Ibid. "Let a mist occupy it."

32. The salutary mist of a penitent mind. Because in a mist the eye is confounded, that very confusion of our mind through penitence is called a mist. For as a cloudy mist obscures the day with a nebulous mass, so confusion clouds the mind with perturbed thoughts. Concerning which it is said by someone: "There is a shame that bringeth glory" (Ecclus. 4:21). For when by repenting we bring back to the mind things badly done, we are soon confounded by heavy grief, a crowd of thoughts makes an uproar in the soul, grief crushes, anxiety devastates, the mind is turned into misery, and is as it were obscured by a certain cloud of mist. For this mist of confusion had salutarily oppressed the mind of those to whom Paul said: "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" (Rom. 6:21). Therefore let a mist occupy this day of sin, that is, let the affliction of penitence perturb the blandishment of wickedness with worthy grief. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

Ibid. "Let it be involved in bitterness."

33. Salutary grief for wicked delight. For the day is involved in bitterness when, the mind returning to cognition, the torments of penitence follow the blandishments of sin. We involve the day in bitterness when we behold what punishments follow the joy of wicked delight, and surround this with sharp weepings. For because that which is involved is covered on every side, it is desired that the day be involved in bitterness, so that each one may behold from every part what evils threaten the uncorrected, and may wipe away the wantonness of his pleasure by the lamentations of sadness.

34. How much greater it ought to be for consent to fault. But if we have heard the day, which we called the delight of sin, assailed by so many prayers, that namely surrounding weepings may expiate whatever the soul through negligence commits while delighted, with how great animadversion of penitence is the night of this day to be struck, namely the very consent to fault? For as it is of lesser fault when the mind is carnally snatched into delight, but yet resists its delight through the spirit; so it is of heavier and full wickedness not only to be dragged into the enticement of sin by delight, but also to serve it by consent. By a hand of penitence so much the tighter, therefore, is the mind to be wiped from pollution, as it beholds itself more filthily defiled through consent. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

Verse 6. "As for that night, let a dark whirlwind seize upon it."

35. The force of compunction. For the excited spirit of grief is as it were a certain whirlwind of a tempest. For while each one understands the sin which he has done; while he subtly weighs the wickedness of his own depravity, he clouds the mind with grief, and as if the air of serene joy were shaken, he devastates all tranquility of heart with the whirlwind of penitence. For unless this whirlwind crushed the mind as it recognizes itself, the Prophet would by no means have said: "In a vehement spirit Thou shalt break the ships of Tarshish" (Psal. 47:8). Tarshish indeed is called the exploration of joy. But when the vehement spirit of penitence occupies the mind, it perturbs in it all exploration of reprehensible joy, so that it no longer pleases it to do anything but weep, it attends to nothing but what can terrify it. For it sets before its eyes on one side the strictness of justice, on the other the merit of fault: it beholds with what punishment it is worthy, if the piety of the sparing One be wanting, which is accustomed to rescue from eternal penalty through present lamentations. A vehement spirit, therefore, breaks the ships of Tarshish, when the strong force of compunction confounds our minds given to this world, as to a sea, with salutary terror. Let him say therefore: "As for that night, let a dark whirlwind seize upon it"; that is, let not the blandishments of secure quiet cherish the perpetration of fault, but let the piously raging bitterness of penitence burst in.

36. What it is to possess the night, and to be possessed by the night. But it is to be known, that when we leave sins unpunished, we are possessed by the night; but when we punish these with the animadversion of penitence, doubtless we possess the night which we have made. But then the sin of the heart is brought back under the possession of our right, if it is repressed when it begins. Whence also it is said by the Divine voice to Cain thinking wicked things: "Thy sin shall be at the doors, but the appetite thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it" (Genes. 4:7). For sin is present at the doors, when it knocks in thoughts. Whose appetite is underneath, and man has dominion over it, if the wickedness of the heart being inspected, it is more quickly pressed down, and before it grows to hardness, it is subdued by a resisting mind. That the mind therefore may more quickly feel its transgression, and restrain the tyranny of fault under its own right by repenting, let it be rightly said: "As for that night, let a dark whirlwind seize upon it." As if it were openly said: Lest the captive mind serve fault, let it not leave fault free from penitence. And because what we pursue by weeping, we certainly hope this will by no means be objected to us by the coming Judge, it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

Ibid. "Let it not be counted in the days of the year, nor numbered in the months."

37. God is to be asked that the evils we have done may not be objected to us in judgment. The year of our illumination is then perfected, when, the eternal Judge appearing to the holy Church, the life of its pilgrimage is completed. Then it receives the remuneration of its labor, when, this time of war being fulfilled, it returns to the fatherland. Whence it is well said by the Prophet: "Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness" (Psal. 64:12). For as it were the crown of the year is blessed, when the time of labor being finished, the remuneration of virtues is conferred. The days indeed of this year are each of the individual virtues; but the months are the multiple deeds of virtues. But behold when the mind is raised up through confidence, so that it hopes to be remunerated for its virtues when the Judge comes, there occur to its memory also the evils which it has done; and it greatly fears, lest the strict Judge who comes to remunerate virtues, also examining those things which have been illicitly done, should subtly weigh them; lest when He completes the year, He should also number the night. Let it say, therefore, of this night: "Let it not be counted in the days of the year, nor numbered in the months." As if it should pray to the strict Judge, saying: When, the time of the holy Church being completed, Thou manifestest Thyself for the last examination, so remunerate the gifts which Thou hast conferred, that Thou require not the evils which we have committed. For if that night is counted in the days of the year, everything which we have done

is confounded from the estimation of our depravity. And the days of virtues no longer shine, if the dark confusion of our night obscures them in Thy sight.

38. Therefore let us leave nothing unpunished. But if we do not wish an inquisition to be moved then concerning our night, it is now to be greatly cared for, that we watch in the discussion of it; lest any fault whatever remain unpunished for us, lest the perverse mind dare to defend what it has done, and by defending, join wickedness to wickedness. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI

[Rec. XIX].

VERSE 7.---Let that night be solitary, and not worthy of praise.

39. Let us not exaggerate by excusing.---There are some who not only in no way bewail what they do, but even do not cease to praise and defend it. And surely while a fault is defended, it is doubled. Against which it is rightly said by a certain one: Thou hast sinned, add not again (Ecclus. 21:1). For he indeed adds sin to sin, who also defends his ill deeds; and he does not leave the night solitary, who also adds the patronage of defense to the darkness of his fault. Hence it is that the first man, being questioned concerning the night of his error, would not have that same night be solitary; because while he was called to penitence by the questioning, he added to it the supports of excuse, saying: The woman, whom Thou gavest

to be my companion, gave me of the tree, and I did eat (Gen. 3:12); namely, secretly twisting the vice of his transgression upon the Author, as if he were to say: Thou didst provide the occasion of delinquency, who gavest the woman. Hence it is that the branch of this error is protracted in the human race from that root even until now, so that what is ill done is still even defended. Let him say therefore: Let that night be solitary, and not worthy of praise. As if he were openly to pray, saying: Let the fault which we have committed remain alone, lest while it is praised and defended, it bind us more manifoldly in the sight of our Judge. We ought not indeed to have sinned; but would that, not joining other things, we might at least leave alone those things which we have done.

40. He truly pursues his own fault, who treads underfoot the prosperity of the world.---But among these things it is to be known, that he truly pursues his own fault, who is now instigated to the love of the present world by no appetite for prosperity; who considers how fraudulent are the blandishments of this world, and weighs its favors as certain persecutions. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII

[Rec. XX].

VERSE 8.---Let them curse it, who curse the day.

41. He punishes past faults who detects the snares of the seducer in the very suggestion.---

As if he were openly to say: Let those truly strike the darkness of this night by repenting, who now, despising, tread underfoot the light of the prosperity of the world. For if we take the day as the joy of delight, it is rightly said of this night: Let them curse it who curse the day; because surely those truly correct past evils through the animadversion of penitence, who are now carried away by no delight to deceptive goods. For as for those whom other harmful things still delight, it is false what is seen, because they bewail other things perpetrated. But if, as was said above, we take the crafty suggestion of the old enemy, they are understood to curse the night, who curse the day; because namely those truly punish past faults, who detect the snares of the malignant seducer in the very bland suggestion. But it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XXIV, Rec. XXI].

[VERSE 8.] Who are ready to raise up Leviathan.

42. They raise up the devil against themselves, who despise his tyranny.---For all who tread underfoot with the mind those things which are of the world, and desire with full intention those things which are of God, raise up Leviathan against themselves, because they inflame his malice by the instigation of their conduct. For those who are subject to his will are possessed by him as if by quiet right, and their proud king

enjoys a certain security, while he dominates their hearts with unshaken power. But when the spirit of each one grows warm again toward the desire for his Creator, when he leaves the torpor of negligence, and kindles the cold of his former insensibility with the fire of holy love; when he remembers his innate liberty, and blushes as a servant to be held by the enemy, because that same enemy considers himself to be despised, because he sees the ways of God being apprehended, he grieves that the one taken should resist against him, and soon he is kindled with zeal, soon he is moved to contest, soon he excites himself to innumerable temptations against the rebelling mind, and instigates in every art of laceration, so that by hurling the darts of temptations he may pierce the heart, which but a short time ago he possessed by quiet right. He was, as it were, sleeping indeed, while he rested lulled in the depraved heart; but he is awakened in the provocation of the contest, when he has lost the right of perverted domination. Let those therefore curse this night, who are ready to raise up Leviathan: that is, let those strongly raise themselves against sin by the judgment of strictness, who in their temptations do not fear to excite the ancient adversary. For it is written: Son, coming to the service of God, stand in justice and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation (Ecclus. 2:1). For whoever hastens to be girded in divine service, what else does he do than prepare himself for the contest against the ancient adversary, so that being free in the contest he may

receive blows, who quiet under tyranny served in captivity? But in that very thing, that the mind is girded against the enemy, that it subdues some vices, and resists others, sometimes something of a fault, which however may not greatly harm, is permitted to remain.

43. On account of humility God allows that he who has subdued many and grave vices, should not expugn one very small one.---And often the mind, which overcomes many and strong adversities, does not expugn one in itself, and perhaps a very small one, although it watch with great intention. Which is surely done by divine dispensation, lest shining on every side with virtues, it be lifted up in elation; so that while it sees in itself some small thing reprehensible, and yet is not able to subdue this, it may by no means attribute the victory to itself, but to the Author in those things which it is able strongly to subdue. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Rec. XXII].

VERSE 9.---Let the stars be darkened by the mist thereof.

44. Thus those who are stars, are obscured by some mist.---For the stars of this night are darkened by mist, when even those who already shine with great virtues, still sustain something remaining of the obscurity of fault, so that they also shine with great clarity of life, and yet still unwillingly drag the relics of the night. Which is

done for this purpose, as has been said, that the mind advancing to the virtue of its justice, may be better strengthened by infirmity; and may shine more truly in good things from that source, whence small reprehensible things humbly obscure it even unwillingly. Whence also well with the Israelitish people, having received the land of promise, the Gentile people of the Canaanites, not being slain, but made tributary, is said to have been divided, as it is written: The Canaanite dwelt in the midst of Ephraim, being made tributary (Josh. 16:10). For what does the Canaanite, a Gentile people indeed, signify but vice? And often with great virtues we enter the land of promise, because we are strengthened by inward hope of eternity. [Vet. XXV.] But while among sublime deeds, we retain certain small vices, we as it were allow the Canaanite to live in our land. Who nevertheless is made tributary, because this very vice, which we cannot subdue, we humbly turn back to the use of our utility; so that from it the mind may feel mean things of itself even in the highest, in that it does not expugn even the small things which it desires by its own strength. Whence well again it is written: These are the nations which the Lord left, that He might instruct Israel in them (Judges 3:1). For to this end certain of our minimal vices are retained, that our intention may always exercise itself solicitous in the contest; and may not be proud of victory from that source, from which it sees enemies living in itself, by whom it still fears to be overcome. Israel therefore is instructed by the reserved nations,

when in certain minimal vices the elation of our virtue is compressed, and it learns in the small things resisting it, that of itself it does not subdue the greater.

45. No one in this life, with however great holiness he may shine, is able to see God as He is.---This nevertheless which is said: Let the stars be darkened by the mist thereof; can also be understood otherwise. For that night, namely the consent to fault, which was propagated to us by the transgression of the first parent, struck the eye of our mind with so great obscurity, that in the exile of this life, oppressed by the darkness of its own blindness, with however great force it has intended the light of eternity, it is not able to penetrate it. For after the punishment we are born condemned sinners, and we come to this life with the merit of our death; and when we raise the edge of the mind to the ray of the supernal light, we are darkened by the very obscurity of our infirmity. And indeed many in this infirmity of the flesh have been strengthened with so great virtue, that they were able to shine to the world as stars. Many in the darkness of the present life, while they exhibit superior examples of themselves, shine above us in the manner of stars; but with however great coruscation of work they shine, with however great fire of compunction they kindle themselves; it is surely certain that while they are still burdened with corruptible flesh, they are by no means able to see the eternal light as it is. Let him say therefore: Let the stars be darkened by the mist thereof; that is, let

even those in their contemplation still feel the darkness of the ancient night, concerning whom it is surely certain that they already expand the rays of their virtues to the human race in the mist of this life, because although they already leap up with the mind to the highest things, yet they are still burdened in the lowest things by the weight of the first fault. Whence it comes to pass that they provide examples of light without as stars, but yet within they do not ascend, being oppressed by the mist of the night, even to the certitude of fixed vision. For often the mind is so kindled, that although it be placed in the flesh, yet it is snatched away into God, all carnal thought being subjugated; and yet it does not behold God as He is, because namely, as has been said, the weight of the first damnation presses it in the corruptible flesh. Often it desires to be so absorbed as it is, that it may attain eternal life, if it could be done, without the intervention of bodily death. Whence Paul, when he ardently sought the internal light, but yet somehow feared the losses of exterior death, says: As long as we are in this tabernacle, we groan being burdened, because we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, that that which is mortal may be swallowed up by life (2 Cor. 5:4). [Vet. XXVI.] Holy men therefore desire to see the true morning, and, if it be granted, they wish to attain even with the body that secret of inward light. But with however great ardor of intention they leap up, the ancient night still burdens them, and the just Judge presses down the eyes of this corruptible

flesh, which the crafty enemy opened to concupiscence, from the contemplation of His internal splendor. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XXIII].

[VERSE 9.] Let it look for light, and not see it, nor the dawning of the rising aurora.

46. The rising of the aurora is the clarity of internal truth.---For with however great intention the still pilgrim mind bestirs itself to see the light as it is, it is not able, because the blindness of its own damnation hides this from it. (Now the rising of the aurora is the clarity of internal truth, which ought always to be new to us. Which the night undoubtedly does not see, because through fault our blind infirmity does not ascend to that light, which already irradiates the supernal citizens, while it is still placed in the corruptible flesh. For within this aurora rises, where to the spirits of the angels the clarity of the divinity is always shown new; and as it were the joy of light always arises, which is never finished.) But the rising of the aurora is that new birth of the resurrection, by which the holy Church, the flesh also being raised up, rises to contemplate the light of eternity. For if the resurrection of our flesh itself were not as it were a certain birth, the Truth would not have said of it: In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the seat of His majesty (Mat. 19:28; Luke 22:69). He saw therefore that this was a rising, which He called a

regeneration. But with however great virtue the elect now shine, they are not able to penetrate what that glory of the new birth will be, by which then with the flesh they ascend to contemplate the light of eternity. Whence also Paul says: That which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him (1 Cor. 2:9). Let him say therefore: Let it look for light, and not see it, nor the dawning of the rising aurora; because our infirmity, darkened by spontaneous vice, unless it first pay the debt of its own punishment through death, does not penetrate the clarity of the internal light. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XXIV].

VERSE 10.---Because it shut not up the doors of the womb that bore me, nor took away evils from mine eyes.

47. Our consent opened the doors of concupiscence, whence innumerable evils.---As also was said above, it shut not up, he says for it opened; and it took not away, for it brought upon. This night therefore, namely fault, opened the doors of the womb, because it unlocked the desires of concupiscence to man conceived to sin. For the doors of the womb are the desires of concupiscence, concerning which it is said by the Prophet: Enter into thy chambers, shut thy doors (Isai. 26:20). For we enter the chambers, when we enter the secrets of our mind. But we shut the doors,

when we restrain illicit desires. These doors of carnal concupiscence therefore, while our consent opened them, drew us away to innumerable evils of corruption. Whence we groan even now under the weight of mortality, although we have come to this by our own will; because the justice of judgment also so requires, that what we did spontaneously, we should endure unwillingly. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERSES 11, 12.---Why did I not die in the womb? Why did I not perish immediately as I came forth from the womb? Why was I received upon the knees? Why suckled at the breasts?

48. What is to be understood in the words of Job when he wishes himself an abortion.---Far be it from us to believe that blessed Job, endowed with so great knowledge of the spirit, praised by so great attestation of the internal Judge, wished that he had perished as an abortion. But because, as is also known by the remuneration, he has within a witness of his fortitude, his weights of locution are to be weighed within.

[Vet. XXVII. Rec. XXV.] 49. Sin is perfected in the heart in four modes or stages, and as many in deed.---For in four modes sin is perpetrated in the heart, in four it is consumed in deed. For in the heart it is perpetrated by suggestion, by delight, by consent, and by the audacity of defense. For suggestion is made by the adversary, delight by the flesh, consent by the spirit, the audacity of defense by elation. For the fault,

which ought to have terrified the mind, extols it, and by casting it down elevates it, but by elevating it more heavily supplants it. Whence also the ancient enemy broke that rectitude of the first man with these four blows. For the serpent persuaded, Eve was delighted, Adam consented; who also being questioned, would not through audacity confess his fault. This indeed is done daily in the human race, which is not unknown to have been done in the first parent of our race. The serpent persuaded; because the hidden enemy secretly suggests evils to the hearts of men. Eve was delighted; because the carnal sense soon subjects itself to delight at the words of the serpent. But Adam, being placed over the woman, gave assent; because while the flesh is snatched away into delight, the spirit also being weakened is inclined from its own rectitude. And Adam being questioned would not confess his fault, because namely the spirit, by which in sinning it is disjoined from the truth, is in that degree more wickedly hardened in the audacity of its ruin. In the same four modes also sin is consumed in deed. For first the hidden fault is done; but afterwards it is even opened before the eyes of men without confusion of guilt; from then on it is also led into custom; at the last also it is nourished either by the seductions of false hope, or by the obstination of miserable despair.

50. Job deplores these four modes of sinning in the heart.---These modes of sin therefore, which are either done secretly in the heart, or perpetrated openly in deed, blessed Job consid-

ers, and deplores into how many stages of sins the human race has fallen, saying: Why did I not die in the womb? Why did I not perish immediately as I came forth from the womb? Why was I received upon the knees? Why suckled at the breasts? For the first womb of conception was the tongue of evil suggestion. But the sinner would have died in the womb, if man had recognized that he was about to die in the suggestion itself. Who nevertheless came forth from the womb; because after the suggesting tongue conceived him in sin, soon delight also snatched him away without. After the coming forth he was received upon the knees; because when he proceeded to the delight of the flesh, he surely consumed the fault through the consent of the spirit, all the senses being subjected as if the knees were placed under. But being received upon the knees, he was also suckled at the breasts. For in the consent of the fault, the senses of the spirit being addicted, many arguments of empty confidence followed, which nourished the soul born in sin with poisonous milk, and lest it should fear the harsh punishments of death, they cherished it with bland excuses. [Vet. XXVIII.] Whence also the first man after the fault stood forth more audacious, saying: The woman, whom Thou gavest to be my companion, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat (Gen. 3:12). Who indeed through fear had fled to hide himself; but yet being questioned it became known how much even in fearing he was swollen. For when present punishment is feared from sin, and the lost face of God is not loved; the fear is

from swelling, not from humility. For he is proud, who does not leave sin, if it were permitted not to be punished.

51. He deplores and prays against the four modes by which men sin in deed.---But by these four modes, as has been said, fault, as it is done in the heart, is also perpetrated in deed. For he says: Why did I not die in the womb? For the womb of the sinner is the hidden fault of man, which secretly conceives the sinner, and still hides its guilt in darkness. Why did I not perish immediately as I came forth from the womb? One comes forth from the womb out of the uterus, when the sinner is not ashamed to commit also in the open those things which he has committed in secret. For as if from the womb of their hiding they had proceeded, of whom the Prophet said: And they have preached their sin as Sodom, and have not hidden it (Isai. 3:9). Why was I received upon the knees? Because surely the sinner, when he is no longer confounded by his iniquity, is also strengthened in that same iniquity by the supports of very bad custom. As if upon the knees the sinner is cherished that he may grow, while the fault is firmed by customs that it may flourish. Why suckled at the breasts? Because while the fault has begun to proceed into use, surely it feeds itself either with the false hope of divine mercy, or with the open misery of despair; so that it may by no means return to correction, in that it either inordinately simulates its Creator to be pious to it, or inordinately fears this which it has done. Let the blessed man therefore behold the falls of the hu-

man race, and let him intend into what precipices it has been merged into the pit of iniquity, saying: Why did I not die in the womb? that is, in that hidden perpetration of sin, why did I not wish to mortify myself from the life of the flesh? Why did I not perish immediately as I came forth from the womb? that is, after I went forth to open iniquity, why did I not even then know myself lost? For he would have perished in his own judgment, if he had known himself lost. Why was I received upon the knees? that is, even after the open fault, why did custom still receive me in it, so that it might render me stronger for wickednesses, and cherish me sustaining me in depraved uses? Why suckled at the breasts? that is, after I came into the custom of fault, why did I nourish myself for more atrocious wickedness either by the confidence of false hope, or by the milk of miserable despair? For when fault has come into use, the mind now resists it more weakly even if it desire it; because as many times as it is bound by depraved frequentation, it is as it were tied by so many chains to the mind. [Vet. XXIX.] Whence it comes to pass that the enervated mind, when it is not able to be loosed, inclines itself to certain solaces of false consolation; insofar as it promises itself so great mercy from the coming Judge, that He will not utterly kill even those whom He shall find to be rebuked. To which thing this worse happens, that the tongue of many like him consents to it, when many also exaggerate ill deeds with praises: whence it comes to pass that the fault grows incessantly, nourished by favors. But

to cure the wound is neglected, which seems worthy of the reward of praise. Whence it is well said by Solomon: My son, if sinners suckle thee, do not acquiesce to them (Prov. 1:10). For sinners indeed suckle, when they either bring in evils to be perpetrated with blandishments, or extol those perpetrated with favors. Or are they not suckled, of whom it is said by the Psalmist: Since the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul: and he who does iniquitous things is blessed (Psalm 9:24)?

52. The fourth stage of sin is more difficult to correct.---It is also to be known, that those three modes of sinners are more easily corrected according to the order of their descent, but this fourth one is more difficult to emend. Whence also our Redeemer raises up the girl in the house, the young man outside the gate, but Lazarus in the sepulchre. For he still lies dead in the house, who is hidden in sin. He is already led out as if outside the gate, whose iniquity is opened even to the shamelessness of public perpetration. But he is pressed by the mound of burial, who in the perpetration of wickedness is also burdened being pressed by the use of custom. But these He mercifully recalls to life, because for the most part divine grace illustrates with the light of its respect not only those dead in hidden iniquities, but also in open ones, and those pressed by the mass of depraved custom. But the fourth dead man our Redeemer acknowledges at the report of the disciple, yet He does not raise him up, because it is very difficult that he whom after the

use of bad custom even the tongues of flatterers receive, should be recalled from the death of his mind. Of whom it is also well said: Let the dead bury their dead (Luke 9:60). For the dead bury the dead, when sinners press down a sinner with favors. For what else is it to sin, but to fall; and to bury, but to hide? But those who follow the sinner with praises, hide the extinguished one under the mound of their words. But Lazarus also was dead, yet not buried by the dead. For faithful women had overwhelmed him, who also reported his death to the giver of life. Whence also he immediately returned to the light, because when the mind dies in sin, it is more quickly brought back to life, if solicitous thoughts live over it. But sometimes, as also was said above, false hope does not intercept the mind, but a worse despair pierces it, which while it utterly kills all hope of pardon, nourishes the soul more abundantly with the milk of error.

[Vet. XXX, Rec. XXVI]. 53. Job bewails that he sinned in the first man, and the miseries of this sin.---Let the holy man consider therefore, after the first fault how much worse evils man committed; after he lost paradise, even to how great precipices of this exile he descended, and let him say: Why did I not die in the womb? that is, when the suggestion of the serpent conceived me a sinner, then would that I had recognized what death would follow me, lest suggestion should snatch me away even to delight, and bind me more tightly to death. Why did I not perish immediately as I came forth from the womb? As

if he were to say: Would that coming forth to exterior delight, I had recognized that I was being deprived of the interior light; and at least in that delight I might fall, lest through consent death should punish more sharply. Why was I received upon the knees? As if he were to say: Would that consent had by no means received me, my senses being subjected to depravity, lest that same consenting should snatch me away worse to audacity. Why suckled at the breasts? As if he were to say: Would that I had been unwilling to flatter myself at least after the evils perpetrated, lest I should bind myself more wickedly to the fault, the more softly I should cherish myself in it. By these voices of his reprehensions therefore he refutes that he sinned in the first parent. But if man by no means descended to the misery of this exile by sinning, let him say what quiet he could have enjoyed. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERSE 13.---For now should I have been asleep and been silent, and should have rested in my sleep.

54. The first condition of man, from which he fell by sinning. The quiet silence of innocent man.---For this purpose man had been placed in paradise, that if he should bind himself to the obedience of his Creator by the bonds of charity, he might at some time pass to the heavenly fatherland of the angels without the death of the flesh. For so was he created immortal, that yet if he should sin, he could also die; and so was he

created mortal, that if he should not sin, he could also not die; and by the merit of free will he might reach the beatitude of that region, in which he could neither sin nor die.

Where therefore after the time of redemption, the death of the flesh being interposed, the elect pass over, thither without doubt the first parents, if they had persisted in the state of their creation, could have been transferred even without the death of their bodies. Sleeping therefore he would be silent, and in his sleep man would rest, while being led to the rest of the eternal fatherland, he would find as it were a certain retreat from this clamor of human infirmity. For after sin he watches as if crying out, who bears repugnant the contention of his own flesh. This silence of rest man when created had, when he received the free choice of will against his enemy. To whom because he succumbed of his own accord, he soon found in himself what would make a noise against him, soon in the contest of infirmity he found tumults; and although he had been created by the author in the peace of silence, yet being voluntarily subjected to the enemy, he endured the clamors of the fight.

For the very suggestion of the flesh is as it were a certain clamor against the quiet of the mind, which before the transgression man did not feel; because doubtless he had not that which he might endure from infirmity. But after he voluntarily subjected himself to the enemy, bound by the chains of his own fault, he serves him in certain things even unwillingly, and suffers

clamors in his mind, when the flesh struggles against the spirit. Or did he not hear clamors within, who endured the words of the depraved law against himself, saying: I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members (Rom. 7:23)? Let the holy man contemplate therefore in how great peace of heart he would rest, if man had been unwilling to receive the words of the serpent, and let him say: For now should I have been asleep and been silent, and should have rested in my sleep, that is, I should retreat within the secret of the mind to the contemplation of the Creator, unless the fault of the first consent had betrayed me outside of myself to the tumults of temptations. But with what companions also he would enjoy the joys of this rest, let him add, saying:

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERSE 14.---With kings and consuls of the earth.

55. He would have been a companion of angelic joy. Who the angels are as kings and consuls.---From insensible things we learn what we should think of sensible and intelligible things. For the earth is fecundated by the air, and the air is disposed from the quality of the sky. So men are over the beasts, angels are over men, and archangels indeed over the angels. For that men are over the beasts, we both see by use, and are taught by the words of the Psalmist, who says: Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, all

sheep and oxen, moreover also the beasts of the field (Psal. 8:8).

But that angels are over men, the angel testifies through the prophet, saying: The prince of the kingdom of the Persians resisted me (Dan. 10:13). But that angels are dispensed by the powers of the superior angels, Zechariah the prophet bears witness, who says: Behold the angel, who spoke in me, went forth; and another angel went forth to meet him, and said to him: Run, speak to this boy, saying: Jerusalem shall be inhabited without a wall (Zech. 2:3). For if in the very offices of the holy spirits the highest powers by no means disposed the least, in no way would the angel have known from the angel this which he should say to the man.

Since therefore the Creator of all things holds all things through Himself, and yet for the distinguishing of the order of the beautiful universe, He rules some things by the dispensing of others, not undeservedly do we receive the spirits of the angels as kings, who the more familiarly they serve the Author of all, the more do they rule the subjects. With kings therefore he would sleep, because doubtless man would already rest with the angels, if he had been unwilling to follow the tongue of the persuader. Who are well also called consuls, because they consult for the spiritual republic, while they join us to themselves as companions for the kingdom. They are well called consuls, because while we acknowledge the will of the Creator at their reporting, we find in them

without doubt a counsel from this narrowness of our tribulation.

[Vet. 32.] 56. The saints before Christ were detained in hell, now they seek heaven without delay. The holy preachers are kings and consuls.--- But because blessed Job is filled with the holy spirit of eternity, and eternity has not "to have been" or "to be about to be," to which doubtless neither things past pass away, nor things which are to come, come, because it sees all things by the present, he can contemplate the future preachers of the Church in the presence of the spirit, who after they pass from their bodies, are by no means deferred by spaces of delays, like the ancient Fathers, from the perception of the heavenly fatherland. For as soon as they go out from the binding of the flesh, they rest in the heavenly seat, Paul attesting, who says: We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1).

But before our Redeemer by His death paid the penalty of the human race, the barriers of hell held even those who followed the ways of the heavenly fatherland, after their egress from the flesh: not that penalty should strike them as sinners, but that, because the intercession of the Mediator had not yet arrived, the guilt of the first fault might prohibit them, resting in more remote places, from the entrance of the kingdom. Whence according to the testimony of the same our Redeemer, the rich man who is tor-

tured among those in hell, contemplates Lazarus resting in the bosom of Abraham (Luke 16:19). Who indeed if they were not still in the depths, he being placed in torments would not see them. Whence also the same our Redeemer, dying for the debt of our fault, penetrates the hells; that He might bring back His own, who had adhered to Him, to heavenly things.

But whither redeemed man now ascends, thither indeed if he had been unwilling to sin, he would reach even without redemption. Let the holy man consider therefore that if he had not sinned, he would ascend even not redeemed to that whither it is necessary for the holy preachers to arrive with great labor after redemption. And with whom he would already now rest, let him intimate, saying: With kings and consuls of the earth [Vet. 33]. For the kings are the holy preachers of the Church, who know both how to dispose rightly those committed to them, and how to rule their own bodies well; who while they temper the motions of desires in themselves, reign over the subjected thoughts by the law of virtue. Who are also well called consuls of the earth. For they are kings, because they preside over themselves; but consuls of the earth, because they provide a counsel of life to extinguished sinners. They are kings, because they know how to rule themselves; they are consuls of the earth, because they draw earthly minds to heavenly things through the counsel of their exhortation. Or was he not a consul of the earth, who said: But concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I

give a counsel (1 Cor. 7:25)? And again: She will be more blessed, if she so remain, according to my counsel (ibid., 40). But it is well added:

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SAME.---Who build solitudes for themselves.

57. They bear a tumultuous crowd within themselves. One given to luxury, angry, avaricious, proud, serving secular cares.---For all, who either desire unlawful things, or wish to be seen as something in this world, are compressed in the heart by dense tumults of thoughts; and while they excite crowds of desires within themselves, they trample the prostrate mind with the foot of a miserable frequentation. For one has subjected himself to the law of luxury, and fashions before the eyes of the mind schemes of base deeds: and when the effect of the work is not granted, this is more frequently done by the intention of the thought. Perfection of pleasure is sought, and the mind being enervatedly shaken, hence and thence both solicitous and blinded, searches into the occasion of the most wicked fulfillment. This mind therefore suffers as it were a certain people, which is devastated by the insolent tumult of thoughts.

Another has laid himself down under the dominion of anger; and what does he carry out in his heart, except strifes, even those which are absent? He often does not see those present, contradicts those absent, brings forth and receives insults within himself, and answers more harshly

to those received; and when no one is present who might oppose him, he composes strifes in his heart with great clamors. He therefore sustains a crowd within, whom the vehement weight of inflamed thought presses.

Another has delivered himself to the law of avarice, and loathing his own things, covets those of others: He for the most part being unable to obtain the things coveted, turns the day indeed into idleness, but the night into thought: he is torpid from useful work, because he is fatigued by unlawful thought; he multiplies counsels, and expands the bosom of the mind more widely with inventions of thoughts; he is busy to reach the things coveted, and seeks certain most secret channels of causes to obtain these. Who as soon as he estimates that he has found something subtle in a cause, already exults that he has obtained what he had coveted: already he meditates what he should add even to the thing acquired, and treats how it ought to be cultivated in a better state. Because he already as it were possesses it, and as it were brings it to a better appearance, soon he considers the snares of the envious, and weighs what strife may be moved against him: he inquires what he should answer, and when he holds nothing, already the empty litigator labors in the defense of the thing which he desires. Although therefore he has received nothing of the coveted thing, he has yet in his heart already the fruit of concupiscence, the labor of strife. He is therefore pressed by a heavy people, who is devastated by the tumult of instigating avarice.

Another has subjected himself to the tyranny of pride; and while he raises the miserable heart against men, he subjects it to vice. He covets the fillets of high honors, seeks to be exalted by successes, and the whole of that which he desires to be, he depicts for himself within himself in his thoughts: already he as it were presides at the tribunal, already he sees the obediences of subjects obey him, already he is eminent above the rest, already he inflicts evils on others, or recompenses others because they have inflicted them. Already within himself, surrounded by wedges, he proceeds to the public, already he beholds by what obediences he may be supported; who yet thinking these things, creeps alone; already he tramples on some things, raises up others; already from those trampled on he satisfies his hatreds, already from those raised up he receives favors. He therefore who imprints so many phantasms on his heart, what else does he see than a waking dream? Because therefore he endures the causes of so many things which he fashions, doubtless he bears within him crowds born from desires.

Another already flees from unlawful things, but yet fears to be without the goods of the world: he desires to hold things granted, and is ashamed to be seen as less among men, and cares above all that he be not destitute in his house, nor despised in public. He inquires what may suffice him, what the necessity of subjects may ask; and that he may sufficiently fulfill the laws of patronage for his subjects, he seeks patrons whom

he himself may serve; but while he is familiarly joined to these, he is doubtless implicated in their causes, to which he often consents in unlawful things, and commits evils which on account of himself he does not desire, on account of other things which he does not leave. For often while he trembles that his honor in this world should be diminished, he approves those things before greater persons, which he already damns by his own judgment. While he considers solicitously what he owes to patrons, what to subjects; what he may increase for himself, what he may benefit his affections, he is as it were pressed by so great a frequency of crowds, as he is torn by the importunity of cares.

[Vet. 34.] 58. They alone are with themselves who have subdued vices.---But on the contrary holy men, because they desire nothing of this world, are doubtless pressed by no tumults in the heart; for they cast out all inordinate motions of desires from the bed of the heart with the hand of holy consideration, and because they despise all transitory things, they do not suffer the insolences of thoughts arising from them. For they desire only the eternal fatherland; and because they love nothing of this world, they enjoy great tranquility of mind. Whence also it is rightly said: Who build solitudes for themselves. For to build solitudes is to expel the tumults of earthly desires from the secret of the heart, and with one intention to pant for the love of interior quiet of the eternal fatherland. Or had he not expelled all tumults of thoughts from himself, who said:

One thing have I asked of the Lord, this will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord (Psal. 26:4)? He had fled indeed from the frequency of earthly desires to a great solitude namely himself, where he might the more safely behold nothing extraneous, the more he loved nothing incompetent. He had sought from the tumult of temporal things a certain great retreat, a quiet mind, in which he might the more purely discern God, the more he should find Him alone with himself alone.

59. And they are truly consuls, because they do not cease to consult for others.---But well these, who construct solitudes for themselves, are also called consuls, because they so build the solitude of the mind in themselves, that yet in that in which they prevail, they by no means cease to consult for others through charity. This consul, therefore, whom we just now brought forward, let us weigh a little more subtly, how for the offering of examples of a more sublime life, he scatters the counters of virtues to the subjected wedges of peoples. Behold for the insinuating of the retribution of good for evil, he confesses of himself, saying: If I have repaid to those repaying me evil, let me fall deservedly empty from my enemies (Ps. 7:5). For the exciting of the love of the Creator he insinuates, saying: But for me it is good to adhere to God (Psal. 72:28). For the imprinting of the form of holy humility, he indicates the secrets of his heart, saying: Lord, my heart is not exalted, nor are my eyes lifted up (Psal. 130:1). For the imitating of the rectitude of zeal by his

own example he excites us, saying: Did I not hate them, O God, who hated Thee, and did I not pine away over Thy enemies? I hated them with a perfect hatred, they were made enemies to me (Psal. 138:22). For the kindling in us of the desire of the eternal fatherland, he deplores the length of the present life, saying: Woe is me! that my sojourn is prolonged (Psal. 119:5). Truly he shone by the largess of the consulship, who by the example of his own conversation, scatters so many counters of virtues to us.

[Vet. 35.] 60. But let this consul tell whether he also builds a solitude for himself. For he says: Behold I have gone far off flying, and I remained in the solitude (Psal. 54:8). Flying he goes far off, because from the crowd of temporal desires he raises himself in the high contemplation of God. But he remains in solitude, because he perseveres in the remote intention of the mind. Concerning which solitude Jeremiah well says to the Lord: I sat alone from the face of Thy hand, because Thou hast filled me with threatening (Jer. 15:17).

For the face of the hand of God is that percussion of just judgment, by which He repelled proud man from paradise, and excluded him in this blindness of the present exile. But His threatening is the terror of the punishment still following. After the face of the hand therefore threats still terrify us, because by the experiment of judgment already both the punishment of the present exile has struck us, and if we do not cease to sin, it still adjudges to eternal punishments.

Let the holy man consider therefore, being cast forth hither, whence man has fallen, and this one sinning after those things, whither the justice of the judge still snatches; and let him cast out all crowds of temporal desires from himself, and hide himself in a great solitude of mind, saying: I sat alone from the face of Thy hand, because Thou hast filled me with threatening. As if he should say: While I consider what I already suffer by the experiment of judgment, trembling I seek a retreat of mind from the tumult of temporal desires, because I also still more sharply dread those eternal punishments which Thou threatenest. Well therefore it is said of kings and consuls: Who build solitudes for themselves. Because those who know both how to rule themselves well, and how to consult for others, since they cannot meanwhile be presented to that interior quiet, they imitate this within themselves through the study of a tranquil mind. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERSE 15.---With princes, who possess gold, and fill their houses with silver.

61. The princes are the rectors of the Church, gold is wisdom, silver the word of God.---Whom else does he call princes, except the rectors of holy Church, whom divine dispensation substitutes without ceasing in the place of the preceding preachers? Of whom the Psalmist says to the same Church: Instead of thy fathers sons are born to thee: thou shalt constitute them princes over all the earth (Psal. 44:17). But what does he call

gold, except wisdom? concerning which it is said through Solomon: A desirable treasure rests in the mouth of the wise (Prov. 21:20). Truly he saw wisdom as gold, which he called treasure. Which also is rightly signified by the appellation of gold; because as temporal things are bought with gold, so eternal goods with wisdom. If wisdom were not gold, in no way would it be said to the Church of Laodicea by the angel: I counsel thee to buy of me gold fired (Apoc. 3:18). For we buy gold, when being about to receive wisdom, we first offer obedience. To which contract indeed a certain wise man excites us, saying: Hast thou coveted wisdom? Keep the commandments, and the Lord will offer it to thee (Ecclus. 1:33).

But what are designated by houses, except consciences? Whence it is said to a certain healed one: Go into thy house (Matt. 9:6). As if he should hear openly: After the exterior miracle return to the conscience, and weigh what kind of one thou oughtest to exhibit thyself within to God. What also by silver, except the divine eloquences are figured? concerning which it is said by the Psalmist: The eloquences of the Lord are chaste eloquences, silver examined by fire (Psal. 11:7). The eloquence of the Lord is called silver examined by fire, because the word of God if it is fixed in the heart, is proved by tribulations.

[Vet. 36.] 62. If Adam had not sinned, only those would be born who are now to be saved.--- The holy man therefore full of the spirit of eternity, gathers together even what things are future; and those whom the centuries to come

long after would beget, he comprehends with the bosom of the mind being relaxed; and with great admiration he considers with what elect he would rest without labor in eternity, if through the appetite of pride no one had sinned, and let him say: For now should I have been asleep and been silent, and should have rested in my sleep with kings and consuls of the earth who build solitudes for themselves, or with princes who possess gold, and fill their houses with silver.

For because if no rottenness of sin corrupted the first parent, he would by no means beget from himself sons of Gehenna; but these who now are to be saved through redemption, alone should be born elect from him, let him look upon the same elect, and let him intend how he could have rested with them. Let him see the holy apostles so ruling the Church received, that they do not cease to offer counsel to it by the word of preaching, and let him call them kings and consuls. Let him see after these rectors rise up in their place, who both by living wisely possess gold, and by preaching right things to others, shine with the silver of sacred locution, and let him remember those princes rich with gold and silver, their houses of consciences being filled.

But because sometimes it by no means suffices for the prophetic spirit that it should foresee future things, unless it also represents past and ancient things to the heart of the one prophesying, the holy man opens his eyes below and above, and not only beholds future things, but

also brings back past things to memory. For he immediately joins:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERSE 16.---Or as a hidden abortion I should not have subsisted: or as those who being conceived saw not the light.

63. The saints born before the time of redemption are as it were abortions. They were more than those whom Moses mentions.---An abortion, because it is born before the full time, being extinguished is immediately hidden. Whom else therefore does the holy man call abortions, with whom he considers that he could have rested, except all the elect, who from the very beginning of the world were born before the time of redemption, and yet took care to mortify themselves to this world? Who not having the tables of the written law, died as it were from the womb, because they feared their Author by the natural law; and since they believed the Mediator about to come, they studied above all, by mortifying pleasures, to keep even those precepts which they had not received in writing.

That time therefore, which near the beginning of the world brought forth our fathers dead to this age, was as it were the womb of an abortion. For there Abel, who is not read to have resisted his brother killing him (Gen. 4:8, 24). There Enoch, who exhibited himself such, that he should be transferred to walk with the Lord (Gen. 5:22, 24). There Noah, who by this, that he pleased the divine examination, was a survivor in a clean

world (Gen. 7:23). There Abraham, who while he is a pilgrim in the age, was made a friend to God (Gen. 12:1). There Isaac, who with the eyes of the flesh being dimmed, did not see present things indeed by reason of age, but by the power of the prophetic spirit radiated with great light of seeing even in future ages (Gen. 27:1). There Jacob, who humbly fled the anger of his brother, and gently tamed it; who indeed was fecund with offspring, but yet more fecund with the abundance of the spirit, bound the same offspring under the bonds of his prophecy (Gen. 33:4).

But well this hidden abortion is said, because from the beginnings of the world, while we know some few by the writing of Moses, the greatest part of the human race is hidden from us. For it is not to be believed that only so many just ones existed even until the law was received, as many as Moses touched upon in a very brief description. Because therefore a multitude of good men brought forth from the beginning of the world, is for the most part withdrawn from our notice, it is called this hidden abortion. Which also is said not to have subsisted, because, a few being enumerated, their frequency is retained by no writing of memory among us.

[Vet. 37.] 64. They were conceived, but saw not the light, who were born after the law before Christ.---But it is rightly added: Or as those who being conceived saw not the light. For these, who after the law was received were born in this world, were conceived to their Author by the admonition of the same law. But yet being

conceived they by no means saw the light, because they were unable to reach to the advent of the Lord's incarnation, although they faithfully believed it. For the incarnate Lord says: I am the light of the world (John 8:12). And the Light itself says: Many prophets and just men have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them (Matt. 13:17). They were conceived therefore and saw not the light, because being excited to the hope of the Mediator about to come by the open voices of the prophets, they could in no way discern His incarnation. In these therefore the interior conception brought forth the form of faith, but did not lead this as far as the open vision of the divine presence, because death intervening snatched these from the world before the manifest Truth illustrated the world.

[Vet. 38.] 65. Job seeing things past and future, pants for eternal things.---The holy man therefore full of the spirit of eternity, binds to memory all things passing away with the hand of the heart; and because every creature is narrow to the Creator, through the same spirit, which has nothing else in itself or beside itself, except always to be, he beholds this which will be, this which has passed; and he extends the eye of the mind below and above, and considering things to come as if past, he burns in his marrow for eternal being, saying: For now should I have been asleep and been silent. For now is of the present time. And what is it to seek a rest standing always in the present, except to pant for that joy of eternity, to which nothing comes, nothing passes? Which

doubtless Truth, that He might in some way infuse His always-being into us, insinuates by Moses, saying: I am who I am. And thou shalt say to the children of Israel: He who is, has sent me to you (Exod. 3:14). But behold, because he beholds things passing, because he seeks a joy always present, because he remembers the light to come, because enumerating he weighs the orders of His elect: let him now insinuate to us more openly the rest of this light, and let him demonstrate by more manifest words what is done daily concerning the conversation of the wicked at that rest. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII

[Old XXXIX, New XXX].

VERSE 17. --- There the wicked have ceased from tumult, and there the weary in strength have rested.

66. The wicked delivered from heavy labor by the benefit of the Incarnation. --- A little before we have already said that because the noise of desires possesses the hearts of sinners, a heavy tumult of instigating thoughts oppresses them. But in this light, which those conceived have not at all seen, the wicked are said to cease from their tumult, because doubtless the Gentile peoples have found for the rest of their life the advent of the Mediator, which the fathers placed under the law long waited for, Paul attesting, who says: That which Israel sought, he hath not obtained, but the election hath obtained it (Rom.

11:7). In this light, therefore, the wicked cease from tumult, while the minds of the perverse, the truth being known, flee the laborious desires of the world, and acquiesce in the tranquility of inward love. Does not the Light itself call to cessation, which says: Come to me all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you: take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls; for my yoke is sweet, and my burden is light (Matth. 11:28, 29, 30)? For what heavy thing does He impose upon the necks of our mind, who commands every desire that disturbs to be avoided? What heavy thing does He command His subjects, who admonishes that the laborious journeys of this world be declined? Moreover, Paul the apostle attesting, Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6). But for this reason the Light itself deigned to set for the ungodly, lest the ungodly should remain in the tumult of their darkness. Let the holy man, therefore, contemplate that the Light, through the mystery of His incarnation, delivers the ungodly from heavy labor, while He wipes away the desires of depravity from their hearts; let him contemplate that all who are converted already taste here, through the tranquility of the mind, the rest which they desire to perceive in eternity, and let him say: There the wicked have ceased from tumult, and there the weary in strength have rested.

134 67. The more we are strengthened in the love of God, the more we fail from our own virtue. Eternal light our place. --- For all who

are strong in this world are strong as if by strength, not weary in strength. But those who are strengthened in the love of their Author, the more they grow strong in the desired fortitude of God, the more they fail from their own virtue; and the more robustly they seek eternal things, the more they are wearied by a healthy failing from temporal things. Hence the Psalmist, weary in the strength of his love, said: My soul hath failed in thy salvation (Psal. 119:81). For in advancing into the salvation of God he had failed, because desiring the light of eternity, now broken from confidence in the flesh, he panted. Hence again he says: My soul hath coveted and failed into the courts of the Lord (Psal. 84:3). Who doubtless when he said, Hath coveted, rightly added, And failed: because the coveting of divinity is much less if a proper failure does not soon also follow. For he who is kindled to desire the courts of eternity, it is surely worthy that he be wearied from this love of temporality, that he may grow as much cold from the study of the world as he rises more ardent into the love of God. Which if he perfectly seizes, he also fully leaves the world; and he dies to temporal things so much the more profoundly as he is animated more highly to the supernal life by the breath of eternity. Did she not find herself weary in her strength, who said: My soul melted when he spoke (Cant. 5:6)? Because doubtless the mind, while it is touched by the aspiration of hidden locution, weakened from the state of its own fortitude, is melted by that very desire by which it is absorbed; and thence it

finds itself weary within itself, from where it beholds the fortitude which it ascends to be beyond itself. Hence the prophet, when he said that he had beheld a vision of God, adds: I languished and was sick for many days (Dan. 8:27), because when the mind is strained toward the virtue of God, the flesh is wearied from its own fortitude. [Old XL.] Hence Jacob, who held the angel, soon limped on one foot (Gen. 32:25), because he who with true love looks back at sublime things, no longer knows how to walk into this world with double desires. For he leans upon one foot, who is strengthened by the love of God alone; and it is necessary that the other wither, because, the virtue of the mind increasing, it must without doubt follow that the strength of the flesh grows torpid. Let blessed Job, therefore, look upon the deep hearts of the faithful, and let him weigh what bosom of inward rest they find, while in advancing into God they are wearied from their own powers, and let him say: There the weary in strength have rested. As if he should openly insinuate, saying: There the rest of light remunerates those whom here, inwardly refreshing, their progress fatigues. Nor ought it to move that naming the light, he by no means added: In this, but There. For that which he beholds to contain the elect, he discovers this to be as it were our place. Whence the Psalmist, when he looked upon the immutability of eternity, saying: But thou art the self-same, and thy years shall not fail (Psal. 102:27), denounces this to be the place of the elect, adding: The children of thy servants shall

inhabit there (Ibid., 28). For God, who contains all things without position, remains a non-local place to us coming to Him. Which place while we reach, we see also even in this life how great the perturbation of our mind's tranquility was; because although the just are already quiet in comparison with the wicked, yet in the estimation of inward quiet they are by no means quiet. Whence also it is well added:

CHAPTER XXXIV.

VERSE 18. --- And formerly bound together without trouble.

68. The hard bonds with which even the just are bound here. --- For although no tumult of carnal desires possesses the just, yet the trouble of their corruption binds them, placed in this life, with hard bonds. For it is written: The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly habitation casteth down the mind that museth upon many things (Wisd. 9:15). By this very fact, therefore, that they are still mortal, they are weighed down by the weight of their corruption, and bound, being tightened by trouble, because they do not yet rise up in that liberty of incorruptible life. For they tolerate one thing from the mind, another from the body, and they sweat daily in an internal contest against themselves. Are they not bound by a hard bond of trouble, whose mind doubtless is dissolved in ignorance without labor, and is not learned except with the study of labor? Forced it is raised, willingly it lies, from the lowest things it is scarcely lifted, and yet

being elevated it straightway falls. laboriously overcoming itself, it beholds supernal things; but being beaten back, it flees the light which had irradiated it. Are they not bound by a hard bond of trouble, whom when the kindled spirit draws with full desire to the bosom of inward peace, the flesh disturbs with a fervent contest? Which although it no longer meets them as if in an army set up in opposition before their face, yet it still murmurs from the back of the mind as if captive: and although fearing, yet with a base noise it fouls the appearance of beautiful quiet in the heart. The elect, therefore, although they valiantly overcome all things, when they desire the security of inward peace, it is a heavy trouble to them still to have something to overcome. Who, besides these, sustain also those bonds which heavy necessity tightens from without. For to hunger, to thirst, to grow weary, are bonds of corruption: which indeed cannot be loosed, except when our mortality is changed into that glory of immortality. [Old XLI.] For we fill the body with refreshments, lest being attenuated it fail; we attenuate it with abstinence, lest being filled it oppress us. We enliven it with motions, lest it perish by the stillness of immobility; but we sooner stop this by placing it, lest it succumb by its own enlivening. We cover it with the aids of garments, lest cold destroy it, and we cast away the sought aids, lest heat burn it. Meeting so many diversities, therefore, what do we do, except serve corruptibility, so that at least the multiplicity of bestowed service may sustain

the body, which the anxiety of weak mutability weighs down? Whence it is well said by Paul: For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected it in hope: Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God (Rom. 8:20). For the creature is subjected to vanity not willingly, because man, who willingly deserted the state of innate constancy, weighed down by the weight of just mortality, unwillingly serves the corruption of his mutability. But this creature is then snatched from the servitude of corruption, when it is raised up by rising incorrupt into the glory of the children of God. Here, therefore, the elect are bound by trouble, because they are still cast down by the penalty of their corruption. But when we are stripped of the corruptible flesh, we are relaxed as if from these bonds of trouble by which we are now tightened. For we already desire to be presented to God, but we are still hindered by the obligation of the mortal body. Rightly, therefore, are we said to be bound, because we do not yet have the free progress of our desire to God. Whence Paul well, desiring eternal things, but yet still carrying the burden of his corruption, being bound cries out: I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ (Phil. 1:23). For he would not seek to be dissolved, unless he doubtless saw himself bound. But these bonds, because he had seen that they were most certainly to be broken in the resurrection, the Prophet already rejoiced as if broken, when he

said: Thou hast broken my bonds, I will sacrifice to thee the host of praise (Psal. 116:16).

Epilogue. --- Let the holy man, therefore, contemplate that internal light receives converted sinners, and let him say: There the wicked have ceased from tumult. Let him contemplate that holy men, fatigued by the exercise of desire, rest more deeply in that inward bosom, and let him say: And there the weary in strength have rested. Let him contemplate that, being absolved from all the bonds of their corruption at once, they reach those incorrupt joys of liberty, and let him say: And formerly bound together without trouble. Moreover, it is well said, Formerly bound; because while that always present gladness is discerned, all that will be and flows away already seems as if past. For while the end of things is attended to, all that passes is weighed as if already having been. But let him tell what all these whom inward rest will receive have done here in the meantime. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXV

[New XXXI].

IBID. --- They have not heard the voice of the exactor.

69. The devil is the exactor. He is not heard when he who tempts is resisted. --- Who else ought to be understood by the name of exactor, except that importunate persuader, who once bestowed the coin of deception upon the human race, and from this daily does not desist from de-

manding the debt of death? Who in paradise lent to man the money of sin; but iniquity increasing, he daily demands this with usury. Concerning this exactor, Truth says in the Gospel: And the judge deliver thee to the exactor (Luke 12:58). The voice of this exactor, therefore, is the temptation of a wretched suggestion. Now we hear the voice of the exactor when we are beaten by his temptation; but we do not hear [so as to obey] if we resist him who beats. For he hears who feels the temptation; but he hears [so as to obey] who consents to the temptation. Let it be said, therefore, of the just: They have not heard the voice of the exactor, because although they hear his suggestion, because they are tempted, they do not hear [so as to obey], because they contemn consenting. [Old XLII.] But because what the mind greatly loves, it also more often repeats in speech, blessed Job, because with love he beholds the frequency of inward peace, again serves the description of it, saying:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSE 19. --- The small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master.

70. As merits are here, so in heaven will rewards be diverse. --- Because in this life there is a distinction of works for us, in that life there will doubtless be a distinction of dignities, so that what here one exceeds another in merit, there one may transcend another in retribution. Whence Truth says in the Gospel: In my Father's house there are many mansions (John 14:2). But

in those same many mansions that very diversity of retributions will be in some way concordant; because so great a force in that peace associates us, that what each one has not received in himself, he may exult to have received in another. Whence also those not laboring equally in the vineyard (Matth. 20:10), all equally obtain a penny. And indeed in the Father's house there are many mansions, and yet disparate laborers receive the same penny; because there will be one beatitude of gladness for all, although there is not one sublimity of life for all. He had beheld the small and the great in this light, who said from the voice of the Head: Thy eyes did see my imperfect state, and in thy book all shall be written (Psal. 139:16). He had beheld the small and the great when he said: The Lord hath blessed all that fear him, the little with the great (Psal. 115:13).

71. Who is the servant of sin, who is free from it, and that here no one is free from it. --- Moreover, it is well added: And the servant free from his master. For it is written, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin (John 8:34); because doubtless whosoever subjects himself to an evil desire, submits the necks of his mind, formerly free, to the dominion of iniquity. But we contradict this master when we resist the iniquity which had taken us; when we violently resist habit, and treading under foot perverse desires, we claim for ourselves against this the right of our inborn liberty; when we strike at fault by repenting, and wash the stains of filth with tears. But for the most part, the mind

already bewails that which it remembers to have done perversely; it now not only forsakes the things wickedly done, but even punishes them with most bitter lamentations; yet nevertheless, while it remembers those things which it has done, it is terrified with dread concerning the heavy judgment. It has now perfectly converted itself; but it does not yet perfectly raise itself into security, because while it weighs how great is the strictness of the last examination, it trembles anxious between hope and fear, because it knows not what the coming just Judge may repute concerning the things perpetrated, or what He may relax. For it remembers how wickedly it has committed things; but it knows not whether it has worthily bewailed the things committed; and it fears lest the enormity of the fault exceed the measure of penitence. And for the most part Truth already relaxes the fault, but the afflicted mind still trembles concerning pardon, while it is greatly anxious for itself. Here therefore the servant already flees his master, but he is not free, because man already forsakes his sin by correcting and repenting, but yet still he greatly fears the strict Judge concerning the retribution for it. There therefore the servant shall be free from his master, where there shall no longer be any doubt concerning the pardon of sin, where the memory of his fault no longer sentences the secure mind, where the soul does not tremble under guilt, but exults free in His indulgence.

72. Whether there is no memory of sin in heaven; and how this does not hinder beatitude.

--- But if man is touched by no memory of his sin there, whence does he congratulate himself on being rescued? Or how does he return thanks to the Bestower for the pardon he has received, if, by the intervening oblivion of past wickedness, he knows not himself to be a debtor to punishment? For that which the Psalmist says is not to be passed over neglectfully: The mercies of the Lord I will sing for ever (Psal. 89:1). For how does he sing the mercies of God for ever, if he knows not that he has been miserable? And if he remembers not past misery, whence does he return praises to the largess of mercy? But again it is to be asked, how the mind of the elect can be perfect in beatitude, if the memory of its guilt touches it amidst its joys? Or how does the glory of perfect light shine bright, which fault, brought back to the mind, overshadows? But it is to be known that as we now often remember sad things with joy, so then we remember past wickedness without injury to our beatitude. For for the most part in the time of health we bring back past pains to memory without pain; and by the more we recollect ourselves to have been sick, the more we love ourselves being healthy. There will therefore be even in that beatitude a memory of fault, not such as may pollute the mind, but such as may bind us more closely to joy; so that while the soul remembers its pain without pain, it may both more truly understand itself a debtor to the Physician, and love the health it has received all the more, by as much as it remembers from what trouble it has escaped. In that joy, therefore, we shall then

so behold our evils without weariness, as now being placed in the light, we see darkness with the mind without any dimness of heart; because although that is obscure which we discern with the mind, this is of the judgment of light, not of the passion of blindness. And for ever therefore we return praise of mercy to our Bestower, and are in no wise burdened by the consciousness of misery; because while we look back upon our evils without any evil of the mind, both there will never be anything which may pollute the hearts of those praising from past iniquities, and there will always be that which may kindle these to the praise of the Deliverer. Because therefore the rest of internal light so raises the great in itself, that yet it does not leave even the little ones, let it be rightly said: The small and the great are there. And because the soul of the converted sinner is there so touched by the memory of its fault, that nevertheless it is depressed by no confusion of that same memory, it is congruously subjoined: And the servant free from his master.

BOOK FIVE.

It expounds the remaining part of the third chapter from verse 20, the whole of the fourth chapter, and the first two verses of the fifth.

CHAPTER FIRST.

1. That the saints here fear prosperity more than adversity. --- Although the divine judgments are very occult, as to why it often goes ill with the good in this life, and well with the bad, they are then more occult, when it also goes well with the good here, and ill with the bad. For when it goes ill with the good, and well with the bad, this is perhaps discovered, because even the good, if they have committed any faults, receive them here, that they may be more fully freed from eternal damnation; and the bad find here the good things which they do for this life, that they may be drawn forth to torments alone for the future. Whence also it is said to the rich man burning in hell: Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things (Luke 16:25). But when it goes well with the good here, and ill with the bad, it becomes very uncertain whether the good receive good things for this reason, that being provoked they may grow to something better; or whether

by a latent and just judgment they perceive here the remuneration of their works, that they may become empty of the rewards of the life following; and whether adversity strikes the bad for this reason, that it may defend them, by correcting them, from eternal punishments; or whether their punishment begins here, that when at length to be completed it may lead them to the last torments of Gehenna. Because therefore the human mind is pressed by the heavy dimness of its uncertainty amidst the divine judgments, holy men, when they behold the prosperity of this world to be at hand for them, are troubled with fearful suspicion. For they fear lest they receive the fruit of their labors here; they fear lest that which the divine justice beholds as a latent wound in them, it may repel them from inward things by heaping upon them outward gifts. But when they silently think that they do no good things except that they may please the Lord alone, nor do they exult in the very abundance of their prosperity, they indeed fear less the occult judgments against themselves concerning prosperous things, but nevertheless they bear the same prosperous things with difficulty, because they hinder them from their inward intention; and they tolerate the blandishments of the present life with molestation, because they are not ignorant that they are somehow delayed in their internal desire by these. For in this world honor occupies more than contempt, and the sublimity of prosperity burdens more than the adversity of necessity. For through the latter sometimes,

when a man is pressed externally, he is more freely relaxed to concupiscent those things which are within. But through the former the mind, while it is compelled to obey many things, is restrained from the course of its desire. Whence it comes to pass that holy men fear the prosperity of this world more than its adversity. For they know that the mind, while it is pressed by bland occupation, is sometimes willingly derived to external things. They know that often a clandestine thought so deceives it, that it knows not how it is changed. Moreover, they weigh what are the eternal good things which they desire, and they know how nothing is all that which blandly smiles for a time; and their mind tolerates all the prosperity of this world the more with difficulty, by as much as it is wounded by the love of supernal felicity, and it is the more raised in the aspernality of present sweetness, by as much as it beholds this, because it blandly smiles on it furtively in the contempt of eternal glory. Whence blessed Job, when contemplating the supernal rest he said: The small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master, immediately adds:

CHAPTER II

[New II].

VERSE 20. --- Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?

2. That those contemplating eternal things flee earthly prosperity. --- In sacred Scripture

prosperity is sometimes designated by the appellation of light, but the adversity of this world by the name of night. Whence also it is well said through the Psalmist: As is its darkness, so is its light (Psal. 139:12). For because holy men so tread under foot the prosperity of the world, despising it, as they also tolerate its adversity, treading it under foot, they say, subtruding both the adversity and prosperity of the world to themselves through great highness of mind: As is its darkness, so is its light. As if they should say more openly: As its sad things do not press the fortitude of our intention, so its bland things do not corrupt it. But because these things, as we have said, disturb the mind of the good even when they do not raise it, holy men, who know themselves to be miserable in the affliction of this exile, flee to shine bright in its prosperity. Whence it is well said now: Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery? For light is given to the miserable when they who, contemplating things sublime, acknowledge themselves to be miserable in this pilgrimage, receive the clarity of transitory prosperity. And when they greatly bewail because they return slowly to their country, they are compelled moreover to tolerate the burdens of honor. The love of eternal things wears them away, and glory from temporal things smiles on them. Who, while they think what those things are which hold them in the lowest, and what those things are which they do not see of the sublime; what those things are which support them on earth, and what they have lost of the celestial, are bitten

by the grief of their prosperity; because although they see that they are in no wise fundamentally oppressed by it, they nevertheless weigh anxiously that their thought is divided in the love of the Lord and in the dispensation of it. Whence well when he says: Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery? he immediately adds:

CHAPTER III

[Old II, New III].

VERSE 20. --- And life to them that are in bitterness of soul.

3. That here both the elect and the reprobate are in bitterness; by what distinction. --- For all the elect are in bitterness of soul, because they either do not cease to punish by weeping those things which they have committed, or they affect themselves with heavy grief because, being cast far hither from the face of their Creator, they are not yet in the joys of their eternal country. Of whose heart it is well said through Solomon: The heart that knoweth the bitterness of its soul, in its joy a stranger shall not be mingled (Prov. 14:10). For the hearts of the reprobate are also in bitterness, because they are afflicted even by their own evil desires; but they know not that same bitterness, because, being blinded of their own accord, they cannot weigh that which they tolerate. But on the contrary, the heart of the good knows its bitterness, because it understands the affliction of exile in which, being cast out, it is lacerated; and it feels how tranquil are those things which

it has lost, and how confused those in which it has fallen. But this embittered heart is at length brought back to its joy, and a stranger is not mingled in its joy; because he who now by the desires of the heart casts himself out from this grief, will remain excluded then from that inward solemnity of it.

4. Who is dead to the world, and to whom the world is dead. --- These therefore who are in bitterness of soul, desire fundamentally to die to the world; so that as they themselves seek nothing in the world, so now they may be held by no obligation from the world. And it often happens that a man now does not hold the world in his mind, but nevertheless the world binds the man with occupations: and he indeed is already dead to the world, but the world is not yet dead to him. For the world still beholds him as if living, while it contends to snatch him, intent on other things, into its acts. Whence well Paul, when he also perfectly despised the world, and saw himself made such as this world could in no wise concupiscent, says free, the bonds of this life being broken: The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world (Gal. 6:14). For the world had been crucified to him, because he did not love it, being already dead to his heart. But he had also crucified himself to the world, because he studied to exhibit himself to it such that he could not be concupiscented by it as if dead. For if in one place there be a dead man and a living man; although the dead man does not see the living, yet the living sees the dead; but if both be dead, the one in no wise sees

the other. So he who no longer loves the world, but nevertheless is loved by it, even if not willing, although he himself, as if dead, does not see the world, nevertheless the world, not yet dead, sees him. If indeed neither does he himself retain the world in love, nor again is he retained by the love of the world, they are mutually extinct to each other; because while the one does not seek the other, the dead, as if dead, does not attend. Because therefore Paul neither sought the glory of the world, nor was he himself sought by the glory of the world, he glories that both he was crucified to the world, and the world to him. Because many seek this, but nevertheless do not in every way rise to the summit of extinction, they rightly say, groaning: Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to them that are in bitterness of soul? For life is given to the embittered when the glory of this world is bestowed on the sad and groaning. In which life, truly, they affect themselves with the punishment of a most powerful fear, because although they themselves do not hold the world, nevertheless they still fear themselves to be such as may be held by the world; because unless they lived to it in some small measure, it would doubtless not love them for its use. For the sea retains living bodies in itself; but dead ones it immediately expels outside itself. It follows:

CHAPTER IV

[New IV].

VERSE 21. --- Who look for death, and it cometh not.

5. That those desiring to die to the world are often compelled to serve in human ministries. Not without gain to themselves and others. --- For they desire to mortify themselves fundamentally, and to be extinguished from all life of temporal glory; but by the occult judgments of God they are often compelled either to be set over in government, or to be occupied with enjoined honors, and amidst these they look for most full mortification without ceasing. But the expected death does not come, because their use lives to temporal glory even against their will, which nevertheless they tolerate for the fear of God. And within indeed they preserve the desire of piety, but without they fulfill the ministry of order; to the end that they may neither recede from perfection through intention, nor contradict the disposition of the Creator through pride. For it is done by the wonderful piety of the Divinity, when he who with a perfect heart tends to contemplation, is occupied with human ministries; that both his perfect mind may benefit many weaker ones, and whence he himself regards himself as imperfect, thence he may rise more perfect to the summit of humility. [Old III.] For sometimes holy men, from whence they tolerate the detriments of their desires, from thence they bring back greater gains, others being converted; because while it is not permitted to them to be vacant as they seek, it pleases them to snatch others with themselves, with whom they are mingled. It comes to pass

therefore by a wonderful dispensation of piety that from whence they judge themselves to be more destroyed, from thence they rise more opulent to the construction of the celestial country.

6. That God often defers fulfilling pious desires, that they may grow. --- But sometimes for this reason they by no means arrive at conceived desires, that by that intervening slowness, they may be dilated in the same desires, the bosom of the mind being relaxed; and those things which perhaps being fulfilled could be extenuated, it is done by a great disposition that, being repelled, they may grow. For they so seek to be mortified, that they may now perfectly, if it were permitted, contemplate the face of their Creator. But their desire is deferred, that it may profit; and it is nourished by the bosom of its slowness, that it may grow. Whence the Bride, panting in the desire of her Bridegroom, well cries out: In my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, and I found him not (Cant. 3:1). The Bridegroom hides himself when he is sought, that not being found he may be sought more ardently; and the seeking Bride is deferred, lest she find, that being made more capable by her slowness, she may find more manifoldly in some time what she sought. Whence blessed Job, when he said: They look for death, and it cometh not, that he might subtly expound this very desire of those seeking, immediately adds:

CHAPTER [NEW V].

IBID. --- Like those digging for a treasure.

7. That they increase where the end is nearer. --- For all who seek a treasure by digging, when they have begun to dig deeper, they burn more instantly for the labor; because from whence they judge themselves to be even now approaching the hidden treasure, thence they labor more strenuously in the digging. Those therefore who fully desire their own mortification, seek it as those digging for a treasure; because by how much they become nearer to the end, by so much they exhibit themselves more ardent in the work. Therefore they do not fail by laboring, but rather they increase to the use of labor; because from whence they consider the rewards now nearer, thence they sweat more delectably in the work. Whence well Paul says to certain ones seeking the hidden treasure of the eternal country: Not deserting our collection, as is the custom of some, but consoling, and so much the more, as you shall see the day approaching (Heb. 10:25). For to console one laboring, is likewise to persist in labor, because the relief of labor is the vision of one laboring with him: just as when a companion is joined on a journey, the way indeed is not taken away, but nevertheless by the society of the companion the labor of the journey is lightened. While therefore Paul sought those consoling themselves in labors, he added saying: So much the more, as you shall see the day approaching. As if he should say: Let the labor increase from whence the rewards of labor themselves now approach, as if he clearly say: Do you seek a treasure? but you ought to dig more ardently from

whence you have now arrived at the sought-for gold by digging.

8. Those dead to the world hide themselves within themselves from earthly things. --- Although this which is said: They look for death, and it cometh not, as those digging for a treasure, can be understood also in another way. For because we cannot perfectly die to the world, unless we be hidden from visible things within the invisible things of our mind, rightly those who desire their own mortification are compared to those digging for a treasure. For we die to the world through invisible wisdom, of which it is said by Solomon: If thou shalt seek her as money, and shalt dig her up as treasures (Prov. 2:4-5). For wisdom does not lie on the surface of things; because it lies hidden in invisible things. And then touching wisdom we apprehend our mortification, if having left visible things we be hidden in invisible things; if we so seek this, digging the heart, that the mind may cast out from itself, by the hand of holy discretion, everything that it thinks which is earthly, and may recognize the treasure of virtue, which was hiding itself. For it easily finds the treasure in itself, if it repels from itself that mass of earthly thought which had evilly pressed it down. But because he calls the sought death like a treasure, he rightly subjoins:

CHAPTER VI.

VERSE 22. --- And they rejoice vehemently, when they have found the sepulcher.

9. That divine contemplation is a sepulcher in which the mind dead to the world rests. --- For as a sepulcher is the place where the body is hidden, so divine contemplation is a certain sepulcher of the mind, where the soul is hidden. For we live as it were still to this world, when we wander abroad into it with the mind; but being dead we are hidden in the sepulcher, when being mortified outwardly, we are concealed in the secret of internal contemplation. Therefore holy men do not cease to mortify themselves with the sword of the sacred word from the importunity of temporal desires, from the tumult of useless cares, from the clamor of resounding perturbations, and they hide themselves within before the face of God in the bosom of the mind. Whence well it is said by the Psalmist: Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy face, from the disturbance of men (Ps. 31:20 [30:21 Vulg.]). Which although it be done perfectly hereafter, even now it is done in great part, when they are snatched into interior things by delight from the tumults of temporal desires; that their mind while it is wholly stretched into the love of God, may be lacerated by no useless perturbation. Hence it is that Paul had seen the disciples through contemplation dead and as it were hidden in a sepulcher, to whom he said: For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). He therefore who seeks death, rejoices when he finds the sepulcher, because he who desires to mortify himself, greatly cheers up at the found rest of contemplation; that being extinguished to the world he may lie hid, and may

hide himself within the bosom of intimate love from all perturbations of exterior things.

10. That the dead were formerly buried with riches. --- But if to this which is said that a treasure is dug up, the finding of a sepulcher also be subjoined, it is necessary that our intention should behold this, that the ancients used to bury the dead with riches. He therefore who seeks a treasure, rejoices when he shall have found a sepulcher, because seeking out wisdom, when we turn the pages of sacred Scripture, when we search out the examples of those going before, we take joy as it were from a sepulcher, because we find the riches of the mind among the dead: who because they are perfectly extinguished to this world, rest in secret with riches. By the sepulcher therefore he is made rich, who is raised up in the virtue of contemplation through the examples of the just. But when he seeking asks: Why is light given to the miserable? he intimates why he presumes to ask this very thing, saying:

CHAPTER VII

[New VI].

VERSE 23. --- To a man whose way is hidden, and whom God hath surrounded with darkness.

11. That he who acts rightly is ignorant whether he shall persevere. --- For his way is hidden from a man, because although he considers in what quality of life he now is, yet he is ignorant to what end he tends. Although he now seeks heavenly things, although he asks for these

with full desires, yet he knows not if he shall remain in the same desires. For leaving sins, we tend toward justice; and whence we came, we know; but whither we arrive, we are ignorant. What we were yesterday, we know; but what it may happen that we be tomorrow, we know not. Therefore his way is hidden from a man, because he so places the foot of work, that nevertheless he cannot foresee the exit of its consummation.

[Old IV.] 12. He is ignorant whether God does not condemn what he thinks is right. He is surrounded with darkness. --- But there is also another hiding of our way; because sometimes those very things which we believe ourselves to do rightly, we are ignorant whether they be right in the examination of the strict Judge. For often, as we also said far above, our work is a cause of condemnation, and it is thought to be a progress of virtue. Often from whence the Judge is believed to be placated, from thence the peaceful one is incited to be angry; Solomon attesting, who says: There is a way which seemeth right to a man; but its last ends lead to death (Prov. 14:12). Whence holy men, when they overcome evil things, dread even their own well-performed deeds, lest while they seek to do good things, they be deceived by the image of the action, lest a pestiferous rot of putrefaction lie hid under the appearance of good color. For they know that being still burdened with the weight of corruption, they know not how to judge good things subtly; and when they bring before their eyes the rule of the last examination, they fear sometimes these very things in

themselves even which they approve. And indeed they desire internal things with all their mind, but yet trembling concerning the uncertainty of works, they are ignorant whither they step. Whence well after it was said: Why is light given to the miserable? it is added: To a man whose way is hidden. As if it were said: Why does he receive the success of this life, who knows not under what estimation of the Judge is the journey of his work? But well it is subjoined: And God hath surrounded him with darkness. For man is surrounded with darkness; because although he burns with celestial desire, he is ignorant what is disposed concerning himself within. And he greatly fears, lest anything should meet him in judgment, which now lies hid from him in the desire of good fervor. Man is surrounded with darkness, because he is pressed by the mist of his own ignorance. Or is he not surrounded with darkness, who for the most part remembers not past things, finds not future things, scarcely knows present things? A certain wise man had seen himself surrounded with darkness, when he said: The things that are in prospect, we find with labor; and the things that are in heaven, who shall search out? (Wisd. 9:16). With these darknesses the Prophet saw himself surrounded, when he could not penetrate the internal things of the intimate disposition, saying: He set darkness for His hiding place (Ps. 18:11 [17:12 Vulg.]). For our Author, because He took away the light of His vision from us cast down into this exile, hid

Himself from our eyes as if in the hiding place of darkness.

13. Hence there is matter of weeping for the saints. --- Which darknesses of our blindness indeed when we studiously behold, we provoke the mind to lamentations. For it weeps for the blindness which it suffers without, if it humbly remembers that it is deprived of light in interior things. And when it regards the darknesses with which it is surrounded, it afflicts itself with an ardent desire for intimate splendor; and with every effort of intention it shakes itself, and being repulsed seeks the heavenly light, which being created it deserted. Whence it happens for the most part, that in those very pious weepings that clarity of internal joy breaks forth; and the mind, which before had lain blind in torpor, vegetated by sighs recovers for the inspection of intimate brightness. Whence well follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[New VII].

VERSE 24. --- Before I eat, I sigh.

14. That the joy of contemplation often follows tears. --- For to eat is for the soul to be fed by the contemplations of heavenly light. Therefore it sighs before it eats, because first it is affected by the groans of tribulation, and afterwards it is satiated by the refreshment of contemplation. For unless it sigh, it does not eat; because he who does not humble himself in this exile through the lamentations of celestial desires, does not

taste the joys of the eternal country. For they are fasting from the food of truth, who rejoice in this poverty of pilgrimage. But he sighs who eats, because those whom the love of truth affects, the refreshment of contemplation also feeds. The Prophet sighing used to eat, when he said: My tears have been my bread (Ps. 42:3 [41:4 Vulg.]). For by its own mourning the soul is fed, when it is raised up to heavenly joys by weeping, and within indeed it tolerates the groans of its own pain; but from thence it perceives the food of refreshment, from whence the force of love flows forth through tears. Whence also blessed Job still follows the same force of tears, adding:

CHAPTER IX.

IBID. --- And as overflowing waters, so is my roaring.

15. What are the causes of mourning and trembling for the saints. --- Waters when they overflow, they come with impetus; and with multiple volumes increasing, they swell. But the elect while they set divine judgments before the eyes of their mind, while they tremble concerning the hidden sentence over themselves, while they trust that they can arrive at God, but nevertheless fear lest they should not arrive, while they recollect their past things, which they bewail, while they greatly fear those things which are still future to them, because they know them not; as it were certain volumes in the manner of waters are collected in them, which flow down into the roarings of sorrow as if into subject shores. Therefore

the holy man saw, how great are the volumes of thoughts in the lamentations of penitence; and he called those very waves of sorrow overflowing waters, saying: And as overflowing waters, so is my roaring. [Old V.] But sometimes the just, as we also said a little above, placed even in good works tremble, and lest they should displease in them by some hidden error, they are vacant in continual lamentations. Whom when divine scourges suddenly seize, they suspect themselves to have offended the grace of their Author, because either hindered by infirmities, or pressed by bitternesses, they do not rise to bestow pious works on their neighbors. And the heart is turned into lamentation, because the body is retarded from the ministry of its devotion. And when they consider that they do not increase their reward, they dread also that their past works have displeased. Whence well blessed Job when he called his roaring as overflowing waters, immediately added:

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 25. --- For the fear which I feared hath come upon me, and that which I dreaded hath happened.

16. How much the judgments of God are to be feared. --- The just therefore bewail and fear, and torment themselves with great lamentations, because they dread to be deserted; and although they rejoice concerning their own correction, yet that very correction perturbs their trembling mind; lest the evil which they tolerate be not a pious percussion of discipline, but a just animad-

version of vengeance. Which well the Psalmist considering says: Who hath known the power of Thy anger? (Ps. 90:11 [89:11 Vulg.]). For the power of divine anger cannot be comprehended by our mind, because its dispensation by obscure dispositions over us, often from whence it is estimated to desert, from thence it receives us; and from whence it is believed to receive us, from thence it relinquishes us; so that for the most part that becomes grace, which is called anger, and this sometimes is anger, which is thought to be grace. For scourges correct some, and lead some to the madness of impatience; and prosperity because it softens some, mitigates them from madness; others because it elevates them, it fundamentally eradicates from all hope of conversion. But vices drag all to the lowest things: but yet some return from these more easily, by how much they more deeply blush to have fallen in them. And virtues always raise up to heavenly things; but sometimes some while they conceive a tumor from virtue, fall by the very path of ascension. Because therefore the power of divine anger is by no means known, it is necessary that in all things it be feared without ceasing. It follows:

CHAPTER XI

[New VIII].

VERSE 26. --- Have I not dissembled? have I not been silent? have I not been quiet? and indignation is come upon me.

17. What things those set in power are wont to sin in thinking, speaking, and acting. --- Although placed in any place whatever, we sin in thinking, speaking, and acting, yet then the mind is snatched away more unbridledly through these three, when it is raised up by the prosperity of this world. For when it beholds itself preceding others in power, it feels thinking high things about itself elatedly. And when the authority of its voice is resisted by no one, the tongue is more licentiously unbridled through abrupt ways. And when it is permitted to do what it pleases, it justly estimates every thing to be permitted to itself which it pleases. But holy men when they are supported by the power of this world, reduce themselves under so much the greater discipline of mind, by how much they know that illicit things are as it were more licentiously suggested to them through the impatience of power. For they repress the heart from considering its own glory, they restrain the tongue from immoderate speech, they guard the work from the wandering of inquietude. [Old VI.] For often those who are in power, lose those things which they do rightly, because they think elatedly; and while they estimate themselves useful for all things, they condemn even the merit of bestowed utility to themselves. For that the deeds of anyone may be more worthy, it is necessary that they should always seem unworthy to him in his own eyes, lest that same good action should raise up the heart of the agent, and by raising it up should cast down the author more from elation, than it should help

those very ones on whom it is perhaps bestowed. For hence it is that the king of Babylon, while with an elated mind he revolved silently within himself, saying: Is not this Babylon, which I have built? (Dan. 4:27), was immediately turned into an irrational animal. For he lost what he had been made, because he would not humbly dissemble what he did. And because he extolled himself above men by elation of thought, he lost that very sense of man which he had in common with men. But often those who are in power, break out everywhere to the contumelies of subjects; and this which they serve by being vigilant in government, they lose through the procacity of the tongue, weighing their words with smaller dread of the Judge, because he who shall have said to his brother without cause, Thou fool, makes himself liable to the fires of Gehenna (Matt. 5:22). Often those who are in power, while they know not how to restrain themselves from licit things, slide down to illicit and unquiet works. For he alone does not fall into illicit things, who sometimes cautiously restrains himself even from licit things. By which constriction indeed Paul insinuates himself to be well bound, saying: All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient (1 Cor. 6:12). And that he might show from that very binding in how great liberty of mind he was dilated, he immediately added: All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any (Ibid.). For when the mind follows conceived desires, it is proved to serve the things by the love of which it is overcome. But Paul,

to whom all things are lawful, reduces himself under the power of no one, because by restraining himself even from licit things, he transcends as despised those things which if delighted in would press him down.

18. How Job avoided these. --- Blessed Job therefore, that he may instruct us, lets it be known what kind of man he was in power, saying: Have I not dissembled? For power when it is possessed, is both to be thought of for utility, and to be dissembled on account of tumor; to the end that he who uses it, may both know himself to be able, so that he ought to benefit; and may not know himself to be able, so that he ought not to be extolled. But what kind of man he was in the mouth, let him add saying: Have I not been silent? What kind towards illicit works, let him yet subjoin: Have I not been quiet? But to be silent and to be quiet can be yet more subtly scrutinized. For to be silent is to restrain the mind from the voice of earthly desires. For the force of a great clamor is the tumult of the heart.

19. That those who are set over others ought to intermit temporal occupations, that they may be vacant for God. --- Those also who are well in power rest, when they postpone the noises of earthly actions by intermitting them for divine love; lest while they occupy the lowest things without ceasing, the heart should fundamentally fall from the highest. For they know that by no means is the mind raised up to heavenly things, if it is continually occupied in the lowest things by the tumults of cares. For what should she who is

occupied obtain concerning God, who even being vacant labors to apprehend anything concerning Him? But well it is said by the Psalmist: Be vacant and see, that I am God (Ps. 46:10 [45:11 Vulg.]); because he who neglects to be vacant for God, hides the light of His vision from himself by his own judgment. Hence also it is said by Moses that the fishes which have not fins should not be eaten (Lev. 11:12-13). For the fishes which have fins are wont to give leaps above the waters. Only those therefore in the body of the elect pass as it were for food, who in that which they serve the lowest things, know at some time how to ascend to heavenly things by leaps of the mind, lest they should always lie hid in the depths of cares, and no breeze of the highest love should touch them as it were of free air. Those therefore who are occupied with temporal things, then well dispose exterior things, when they anxiously flee to interior things; when by no means they love the noises of perturbations without, but rest within at their own selves in the bosom of tranquility.

[Old VII.] 20. How depraved minds are affected concerning these occupations. How the pious. --- For depraved minds do not cease to revolve the tumults of temporal things within themselves, even when they are vacant. For in thought they preserve depicted the things which they love, and although they do nothing outwardly, yet at their own selves they labor under the weight of an unquiet quiet. To whom if the administration of the same things be offered, they fundamentally desert themselves, and fol-

low these fugitive temporal things through the course of intention with continual steps of thoughts. But pious minds do not seek these even when they are wanting, and bear them heavily even when they are present, because they greatly fear to go out from themselves through the care of exterior things. Which is well signified by that life of the two brothers, concerning whom it is written: Esau became a man skilled in hunting, and a man of agriculture; but Jacob was a simple man dwelling in tabernacles (Gen. 25:27, according to LXX). Or as it is said in another translation, He dwelt at home. For what is figured by the hunting of Esau, but the life of those who, poured out in exterior pleasures, follow the flesh? Who is also described as being a farmer, because the lovers of this world so much the more cultivate exterior things, by how much they relinquish their interior things uncultivated. But Jacob, a simple man, is said to dwell in tabernacles or in a house, because doubtless all who flee to be scattered in exterior cares, consist simple in thought and in the habitation of their own conscience. For to dwell in tabernacles or in a house, is to restrain oneself within the secrets of the mind, and by no means to dissipate oneself outwardly through desires, lest while they gape after many things without, they should recede from themselves with alienated thoughts. Let therefore the proven man, and one exercised in prosperity, say: Have I not dissembled? have I not been silent? have I not been quiet? For as we said above, holy men, when transitory prosperity smiles upon them, dissem-

ble the favor of the world as it were not knowing it, and with a strong step tread within upon this from whence they are raised up without. But they are silent, because they make no noise with any clamors of depraved action. For every iniquity has its voices before the secret judgments of God. Whence it is written: The cry of the Sodomites and Gomorrhaeans is multiplied (Gen. 18:20). But they are quiet, when not only are they snatched away by no turbulent appetite of temporal cupidity, but also they flee to be occupied more immoderately with the necessary cares of the present life.

21. Why the just assiduously suffer scourges. --- But doing these things, they still feel paternal scourges, that they may come so much the more perfect to the inheritance, as the discipline piously striking them daily purges them even from the smallest things. Therefore they do just things without ceasing, but assiduously suffer hard things, because often our justice itself, when brought to the examination of divine justice, is injustice, and that is filthy in the strictness of the Judge which shines in the estimation of the worker. Whence Paul when he said: I am conscious of nothing to myself, immediately added: But I am not in this justified (1 Cor. 4:4). Who soon insinuating the cause why he is not justified, says: But He that judgeth me is the Lord. As if he should say: Therefore in that I am conscious of nothing to myself I deny myself to be justified, because I know that I am examined more subtly by Him who judges me. [Old VIII.] Those things

therefore are to be dissembled which favor without, those things are to be repressed which make noise within, those things are to be declined which involve as if necessary; and yet in all these the scourges of the strict examination are still to be feared, because even our perfection itself is not without fault, unless the severe Judge should mercifully weigh this in the subtle balance of examination.

[New IX.] 22. If the just suffer so many things, what punishments remain for the iniquitous? --- But well it is subjoined: And indignation is come upon me. For with great art of doctrine about to speak he preferred the stripes to well-done deeds; that from hence each one may consider what punishments should remain for those sinning afterwards, if so powerful scourges here chastise even the just. For hence it is that Peter says: It is time that judgment should begin from the house of God. And if the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the impious and the sinner appear? (1 Pet. 4:17-18). Hence Paul, when he had said many things in praise of the Thessalonians, immediately added: So that we ourselves also glory in you in the Churches of God for your patience and faith, in all your persecutions and tribulations, which you sustain for an example of the just judgment of God (2 Thess. 1:4). As if he should say: While you tolerate so many hard things, who act so rightly, what else do you give than examples of the just judgment of God? because from your punishment it is to be collected how He will strike those with whom He

is angry, if He thus permits you to be afflicted, in whom He rejoices; or how He is about to strike those to whom He exhibits just judgment, if He thus torments even you, whom piously refuting He cherishes.

[Old IX, New X.] 23. That the intention of Job's friends was pious, but their speech incautious. What they ought to have done. --- Therefore the first speech of blessed Job being finished, in turn the friends, who had come to console, piously subject themselves to his increpation; and while they leap forward to words of contention, they lose that cause of piety for which they had come. Who indeed do this with no depraved intention; but although they exhibit affection to the struck one, yet they believed the struck one not except for iniquity; and while cautious speech by no means follows the good intention, the very proposition of piety is turned into the vice of transgression. For it ought to have been weighed to whom and when they spoke. For it was a just man to whom they had come, and surrounded by divine stripes. From his past life therefore they ought to have weighed those words of his which they were not able to understand; and from the present scourges not to refute him, but to fear concerning their own life; and to associate themselves with the flogged just man, not raising themselves as if by reasoning, but by weeping; that by no means their science should show itself through words, but the master sorrow should instruct the tongue of the consoling ones to speak rightly. Who even if they perhaps felt some differ-

ent things, it was indeed worthy that they should say these things humbly, lest they should heap up wounds on the struck one through immoderate words.

24. That the sayings or deeds of the better often displease the worse. --- For often, because they are not able to be understood, either the deeds or the sayings of the better displease the worse: but they are not to be rashly reprehended by them for this reason, that they can by no means be truly apprehended. Often something is done dispensatively by the greater, which is thought an error by the smaller. Often many things are said by the strong, which the weak therefore judge, because they are ignorant. Which that Ark of the Testament, inclined by the kicking oxen, well signified, which because the Levite, believing it about to fall, wished to raise up, he soon received the sentence of death (2 Sam. 6:7). [Old X.] For what is the mind of the just, but the Ark of the Testament? Which being carried by the kicking oxen is inclined; because sometimes even he who well presides, while he is shaken by the confusion of the subject peoples, is moved to the condescension of dispensation from charity alone. But in this, which is done dispensatively, that very inclination of fortitude is thought a fall by the unskilled. Whence also some subjects send the hand of reprehension against this, but they immediately fail from life by that very rashness of theirs. The Levite therefore as if helping, stretched out his hand, but delinquet he lost his life, because while all the weak correct

the deeds of the strong, they themselves are reprobated from the lot of the living. Sometimes also holy men say certain things condescending to the smallest, but certain things contemplating the highest they bring forth; and while they know not the force either of condescension or of altitude, fools boldly reprehend these things. And what is it to wish to correct the just man concerning his own condescension, but to raise up the inclined Ark with a proud hand of reprehension? What is it to reprehend the just man concerning an unknown locution, but to think the motion of his fortitude a slip of error? But he loses his life, who tumidly raises up the Ark of God, because by no means would anyone presume to correct the right things of the saints, unless he had first felt better things concerning himself. Whence also the same Levite is rightly called Uzzah, which indeed is interpreted the robust one of the Lord; because all presumptuous persons unless they believed themselves robust in the Lord with an audacious mind, by no means would they judge the deeds or sayings of the better as if weak. Therefore the friends of Job, while they leap forward against him as if in the defense of God, proudly exceed the rule of the divine precept.

25. If anything in these displeases, it is not to be kept silent, but to be brought forth with great humility. --- But when certain deeds of the better displease the worse, by no means is this which moves the mind to be kept silent, but to be brought forth with great humility; to the end that the intention of one piously feeling may truly pre-

serve the form of rectitude in this, that it walks through the way of humility. And therefore those things which we feel are to be said freely, and those things which we say are to be brought forth very humbly, lest we should not make right even those things which we intend rightly, by bringing these forth elatedly. Paul had said many things humbly to his auditors; but concerning that very humble exhortation he was busy to placate them yet more humbly, saying: I beseech you, brethren, that you suffer the word of consolation; for I have written to you in very few words (Heb. 13:22). To the Ephesians also bidding farewell at Miletus, to the afflicted and groaning ones, he recalls his own humility to memory, saying: Watch, keeping in memory that for three years night and day I ceased not with tears warning every one of you (Acts 20:31). To the same again through the Epistle he says: I beseech you, brethren, I a prisoner in the Lord, that you walk worthily of the vocation in which you are called (Eph. 4:1). From hence therefore let a disciple collect, if ever he feels anything rightly, with how great humility he ought to speak to a master; if the master of the Gentiles himself in those things which he preaches with authority, so submissively asks the disciples. From hence let each one collect, to those from whom he has perceived the examples of living well, how humbly he should say this which he understands well; if Paul subjected himself with a humble voice to those whom he himself raised up to life.

26. He who knows not how to speak humbly is ignorant of the rule of consolation. Eliphaz, however, who is the first of the friends to speak, although he comes with piety to console, yet by abandoning humility of speech, he is ignorant of the rule of consolation. While he neglects the guard of speaking, he even goes so far as to offer insults to the afflicted man, saying: The tiger has perished because it had no prey. The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the lioness, and the teeth of the young lions are scattered (Job 4:11). Namely, marking the blessed Job by the name of a tiger, as if for the vice of variety; by the roaring of the lion, the terror of the same man; by the voice of the lioness, the loquacity of his wife; and by the scattered teeth of the young lions, the destroyed voracity of his sons. Wherefore also the divine sentence rightly reproves the sense of the friends, which raised itself up in swollen correction, saying: You have not spoken before me what is right, as my servant Job has (Job 42:7).

27. For what reason God reproves the sentences of Job's friends, and Paul commends them. But I see it must be asked why Paul uses their sentences with such great authority, if these sentences of theirs are made void by the Lord's reproof? For they are the words of Eliphaz which he brought to the Corinthians, saying, as it is written: I will catch the wise in their own craftiness (1 Cor. 3:19; Job 5:13). How then do we reject as perverse things which Paul asserts from authority? Or how shall we think those things right by the attestation of Paul, which the Lord himself

defined as not right? But we know both these things to be not different sooner than that they are not so, if we more subtly weigh the words of the same Divine sentence; which surely, when it said: You have not spoken before me what is right, immediately added: As my servant Job has. It is clear, therefore, that some things in their sayings are right, but they are surpassed by comparison with what is better. For among other things which they say irrationally, they bring forth many strong sentences to the blessed Job, but compared to stronger words they lose the force of their strength. Moreover, many things which they say are wonderful, unless they were said against the adversity of the holy man. In themselves, therefore, they are great, but because they seek to transfix a just man, they lose the weight of that same greatness; because a javelin is thrown in vain, however strongly, to strike hard rocks; for it leaps back blunted all the further, the more strongly it came twisted. Therefore, although the sayings of Job's friends are very strong in certain things, yet when they strike the strong life of the holy man, they blunt all the edge of their sharpness. Because, therefore, they are great even in themselves, but ought by no means to have been assumed against the blessed Job; Paul both weighs these things from their virtue and brings them forth in authority; and the Judge, because they were brought forth incautiously, reproves them from the quality of the person.

28. Those things, as they have some things right and others perverse, are congruent with

heretics. But because we said above that these same friends of blessed Job hold the likeness of heretics, let us now track down how their words are congruent with heretics. For they feel some things that are very right, yet among these they slide down to perverse things. For heretics have this as their own property, to mix good things with evil, so that they may easily mock the sense of the hearer. For if they always spoke perverse things, being more quickly recognized in their perversity, they would persuade of what they wished very little. Again, if they always felt right things, they surely would not have been heretics. But while by the art of deceiving they serve both, they both infect good things from evil, and hide evil things among good, so that they may be received; as he who offers a cup of poison touches the mouth of the cup with the sweetness of honey; and while that which is sweet is tasted at the first touch, even that which is deadly is swallowed without doubt. And so heretics mix right things with perverse, so that by showing good things, they may attract hearers to themselves; and by exhibiting evil things, they may corrupt them with a hidden pestilence. Sometimes, however, corrected by the preaching and exhortation of the holy Church, they are saved from this diversity of their sense. Wherefore also the friends of Job offer the sacrifice of their reconciliation by the hands of the same holy man, and being even condemned are recalled to the grace of the supreme Judge. Whom that cleansing of the ten lepers in the Gospel well designates (Luke 17:15).

For in leprosy, both a part of the skin is led into brightness, and a part is retained in a healthy color. Lepers, therefore, express heretics, because while they mix perverse things with right, they sprinkle the healthy color with spots. Wherefore also they rightly cry out that they may be saved, Jesus, Master. For because they signify that they have erred in his words, they humbly call him Master for the sake of being saved; and when they return to the knowledge of the Master, they soon run back to the form of health. But because in the sayings of the friends we have led the preface of the exposition a little further, let us now subtly weigh their words themselves. It follows:

CHAPTER XII

[Old XII, New XI].

JOB 4:1, 2.---But Eliphaz the Temanite responding, said: If we begin to speak to thee, perhaps thou wilt take it ill.

29. The words of heretics are smooth at first, then harsh.---What is expressed by these interpretations of names has already been said above. Because, therefore, we hasten to things undiscussed, we avoid repeating what has been brought forth. This, therefore, is to be skillfully looked into, that those who hold the likeness of heretics begin to speak softly, saying: If we begin to speak to thee, perhaps thou wilt take it ill. For heretics fear to exasperate their hearers in the beginning of their speech, lest they be heard vigilantly, and they very much avoid their sadness,

that they may catch them in negligence. And almost always the things they propose are smooth; but those which they bring in by pursuing them are harsh. Whence also now the friends of Job begin from the reverence of a meek speech, but they break out even to the arrows of a most sharp invective; because also the roots of thorns are soft, but yet from that very softness of theirs they bring forth that with which they prick. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERSE 2.---But who can withhold the word conceived?

30. Some conceive and bring forth perverse words, others restrain them when conceived, others do not even conceive them.---There are three kinds of men, who differ by qualities drawn gradually from themselves. For there are some who both conceive perverse things for speaking, and are restrained from their speech by no gravity of silence. And there are others who, when they conceive perverse things, restrain themselves by a great vigor of silence. And there are some who, strengthened by the use of virtues, are carried forward even to that height, that they do not even conceive in their heart perverse things for speaking, which they would have to check by being silent. Therefore it is shown of what order Eliphaz is, who testifies that he cannot withhold the word conceived. In which matter this also became known, that he knew he would offend by speaking. For he would not wish to withhold words which he cannot, unless he foreknew that

through these he would inflict wounds. For good men restrain the precipitation of the word by the bridle of counsel, and cautiously consider lest by relaxing the wantonness of the tongue they transfix the conscience of the hearers by an incautious speech. Whence it is well said through Solomon: He who lets out water is the head of quarrels (Prov. 17:14). For water is let out when the flow of the tongue is unbridled. But the sender forth of water is made the head of quarrels, because through the incontinence of the tongue, the origin of discord is offered. The perverse, therefore, as they are light in sense, so are they precipitate in speech, and they neglect to withhold by thoroughly treating what they speak. But what a light conscience conceives, a lighter tongue immediately brings forth. Whence now Eliphaz collects from his own experience what he feels desperately concerning all, saying: But who can withhold the word conceived? It follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[New XII].

VERSES 3, 4.---Behold, thou hast taught many, and thou hast strengthened the weary hands; thy words have confirmed the wavering, and thou hast comforted the trembling knees.

31. How great Job was, whose praises even he who tries to bring a charge cannot keep silent.--- If the text of the history itself is looked at, it is of great utility to the reader, that from the

wrangling friends in blessed Job, instead of the laceration of vices, the proclamations of virtues are brought forth. For there is never so robust a testimony of life, as when he speaks things to be praised who tries to bring a charge. Let us weigh, however, of what height that man was, who, teaching the unlearned, strengthening the weary, and confirming the wavering, among the cares of the house, among the custody of manifold things, among the affection for his children, among the studies of so many labors, spent himself in instructing others. And indeed being occupied he practiced those things, but yet he served as a free man in the mastership of doctrine. He disposed of temporal things by ruling them; he announced eternal things by preaching them; he both showed the rectitude of life by acting to those seeing it, and instilled it by speaking to those hearing it. But whether heretics, or any perverse persons whatsoever, when they relate the good things of the just, they bend these into an argument for a charge. For from thence Eliphaz collects an occasion of objurgation against blessed Job, from whence he narrated things to be praised. For it follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERSE 5.---But now the plague is come upon thee, and thou hast fainted; it hath touched thee, and thou art troubled.

32. The perverse attack the life of the good in two ways.---All perverse people attack the life of the good in two ways, because they either assert

that they say perverse things, or that they do not keep the right things which they say. Whence also the blessed Job is reproved below by his friends concerning his speech; but now he is lacerated for having said right things, but not having kept them. Therefore, by the iniquitous, now the speech, now the action of the good is reproved, so that either the tongue, being reprehended, may be silent, or the life, being adjudged by the testimony of its own tongue, may succumb in crime. And it is to be noted that they first bring in praises of the tongue, and afterwards complain of the infirmity of life. For the iniquitous, lest they should publicly appear perverse, sometimes speak good things of the just, which they know are already known to others also. But as we have said before, they immediately draw these very things to the accumulation of guilt, and they show that they are to be believed in contrary things, from the fact that they also spoke prosperous things; and they insinuate evil things as if more truly, by as much as they also praised good things as if devotedly. They twist, therefore, the voices of favor into the use of a charge, while they afterwards more heavily wound the life of the just from thence, whence a little before they were defending it in appearance. But often they wonder at their good things which they before held in contempt, as if they were afterwards lost. Whence also Eliphaz, because he asserts the virtues of the holy man to be lost, adds them by enumerating them, saying:

CHAPTER XVI

[New XIII].

VERSE 6.---Where is thy fear, thy fortitude, and thy patience, and the perfection of thy ways?

33. Four degrees of virtues.---All these things, indeed, he substitutes for that sentence which he sent before, saying: But now the plague is come upon thee, and thou hast fainted; it hath touched thee, and thou art troubled. Therefore he asserts that all have perished together, in that he reproves the blessed Job for being troubled by the scourge. But it is very much to be looked into, that although he rebukes inconveniently, yet he narrates the orders of the virtues congruently. For he distinguished the life of the blessed Job by enumerating four degrees of virtues, while he joined fortitude to fear, and patience to fortitude, and perfection to patience. For in the way of God it is begun from fear, so that one may come to fortitude. For as in the way of the world audacity brings forth fortitude, so in the way of God audacity brings forth weakness; and as in the way of the world fear brings forth weakness, so in the way of God fear brings forth fortitude, Solomon attesting, who says: In the fear of the Lord is the confidence of fortitude (Prov. 14:26). For the confidence of fortitude is said to be in the fear of the Lord, because surely our mind by so much the more valiantly despises the terrors of temporal things, by as much as it more truly subjects itself to the Author of those same temporal things through dread. Which being constituted in the fear of the Lord, does not find outside what

it should fear, because while it is joined to the Creator of all things by a right fear, it is raised up by a certain power above all things. But fortitude is not shown except in adversity, whence also immediately after fortitude patience is substituted. For by so much each one demonstrates more truly that he has profited unto fortitude, as he more robustly tolerates the evils of others. For he has less gathered strength in himself, whom the iniquity of another prostrates. Who lies pierced through by the sword of his own pusillanimity, in that he is not able to bear contrariety. Because truly perfection is born of patience, immediately after patience, the perfection of ways is brought in. [Old XIV.] For he is truly perfect, who is not impatient towards the imperfection of his neighbor. For he who, not being able to bear the imperfection of another, deserts him, is himself a witness to himself that he does not yet profit perfectly. Hence in the Gospel the Truth says: In your patience you shall possess your souls (Luke 21:19). For what is it to possess the souls, but to live perfectly in all things, to dominate all the motions of the mind from the citadel of virtue? He therefore who holds patience, possesses his soul; because he is made strong against all adverse things from thence, whence he also dominates himself by conquering. And in that he laudably breaks himself, he exerts himself strongly unbroken; because when he overcomes himself in his pleasures, he prepares himself invincible to contrary things. But because Eliphaz rebuked by

inveighing, he now adds some things as if by exhorting, saying:

CHAPTER XVII

[New XIV].

VERSE 7.---Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or when were the upright destroyed?

34. Often the innocent perish here, and the upright are destroyed.---Whether heretics, in whose likeness we have said the friends of blessed Job are held, or any perverse persons whatsoever, as inordinately as they rebuke, so reprehensibly do they exhort. For he says: Who ever perished, being innocent, or when were the upright destroyed? For often here even the innocent perish, and the upright are utterly destroyed; but yet they are preserved for eternal glory by perishing. For if no innocent person perished, the Prophet would not say: The just perisheth, and there is no one who considereth it (Isai. 57:1). If God did not snatch away the upright by providing for them, Wisdom would by no means have said concerning the just: He was snatched away, lest malice should change his understanding (Wisd. 4:11). If no animadversion struck the just, Peter would very little have foretold, saying: It is time that judgment should begin at the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17). Those, therefore, are truly upright, who are prepared for all the adversities of the present life by the love of the supernal country. For they who fear to suffer

evils here for eternal goods, are evidently not upright. But Eliphaz does not think either that the upright are destroyed or that the innocent perish here, because often those who serve God not for the hope of heavenly glory, but for earthly retribution, they themselves imagine for themselves what they seek; and presuming to teach, when they preach earthly security, they show by all their labors what they love. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Old and New XV].

VERSES 8, 9.---But rather I have seen those who work iniquity, and sow sorrows, and reap them, perish by the blast of God, and be consumed by the spirit of his wrath.

35. They sow and reap sorrows. Why God sometimes tolerates the evil, sometimes strikes them immediately.---To sow sorrows is to say fraudulent things; but to reap sorrows is to prevail in saying them. Or certainly they sow sorrows who do perverse things; they reap sorrows when they are punished for that same perversity. For the fruit of sorrow is the retribution of damnation. But when it is immediately added that those who sow and reap sorrows perish by the blast of God and are consumed by the spirit of his wrath, in this place the reaping of sorrow is shown not yet as punishment, but still as the perfection of iniquity, because from the spirit of divine wrath, the punishment of that same reaping is substituted. They sow, therefore, sorrows

here and reap them, because the things they do are iniquitous, and they prosper in that same iniquity; as is said of the iniquitous through the Psalmist: His ways are polluted at all times; thy judgments are taken away from before his face, he shall dominate all his enemies (Psalm 10:5, Heb.). Concerning whom it is added a little after: Under his tongue is labor and sorrow (Ibid., 7). He sows sorrows, therefore, when he does perverse things; he reaps sorrows when he grows temporally from those same perversities. How then do they perish by the blast of God, who for the most part are permitted to subsist here for a long time, and more happily than the just? For hence it is said again concerning them through the Psalmist: In the labors of men they are not, and with men they shall not be scourged (Psalm 73:5). Hence Jeremiah says: Why doth the way of the impious prosper? (Jer. 12:1). For because, as it is written: The Lord is a patient rewarder (Ecclus. 5:4), he often tolerates for a long time those whom he damns forever; but sometimes he strikes quickly, he who runs together for the sake of comforting the pusillanimity of the innocent. Sometimes, therefore, almighty God suffers the iniquitous to prevail for a long time, so that the life of the just may be purged more purely. Sometimes, indeed, he slays the unjust quickly, and by their death he confirms the hearts of the innocent. For if he struck all who do evil now, for whom would he exhibit the last judgment? If, however, he struck none at all, who would have believed that God cares for human affairs? Some-

times, therefore, he strikes the iniquitous, so that he may show that he does not desert unavenged evils. Sometimes indeed he tolerates the iniquitous for a long time, so that he may insinuate to those considering, for what judgment he reserves them.

36. In what sense it is false, and in what sense true, that the iniquitous are destroyed.--- This sentence, therefore, of the destruction of the iniquitous, if it is not said generally concerning all with the end of the present world, is without doubt evacuated in great part by the virtue of truth. But then it will be true, when there shall no longer be a delay of iniquity. Which can perhaps be more rightly understood in this way, since neither does the innocent perish, nor is the upright destroyed; because even if he is worn down in the flesh here, he is repaired with true salvation in the sight of the eternal Judge. And those who sow sorrows and reap them, perish by the blast of God; because by as much as they here profit more highly by acting perversely, by so much more hardly are they struck by the subsequent damnation. But when it is set before the same sentence, Remember, it is evidently clear that a thing passed is brought back to the mind, but a thing future is not announced. Then, therefore, Eliphaz would have spoken more truly, if he had believed these things to happen generally concerning the iniquitous in the final animadversion.

37. God is aptly said to blast, when he retributes vengeance. Then he who is tranquil in himself, appears turbulent to those perishing.---

But this, that God is said to blast, urges that it be more subtly discerned. For we, when we blast, draw the air from the exterior parts inwards, and being drawn inwards we give this back outwards. Therefore God is said to blast in the retribution of vengeance, because from exterior causes he conceives the counsel of judgment inwards, and from internal counsel he emits the sentence outwards. As if by the blast of God, something is drawn from the exterior inwards, when he beholds our evils without, and disposes judgment within. And again, as if by the blast of God, the spirit is emitted from the interior outwards, when from the internal conception of counsel, the external judgment of damnation is brought in. Well, therefore, is it said that those who sow sorrows, perish by the blast of God; because from whence they do perverse things without, from thence they are rightly struck from the inmost parts. Or certainly since God is said to blast, because also the spirit of his wrath is immediately brought in, by the appellation of that blast his animadversion itself can be designated. For we, when we are angry, are inflamed by the blast of fury. So that the Lord may be demonstrated thinking upon vengeance, he is said to blast in being angry; not that he himself receives in his nature the vicissitude of mutability, but that after long patience, when he executes the vengeance of the sinner, he who is tranquil in himself, appears turbulent to those perishing. For the reprobate mind, because it beholds a judge adverse to its acts, is shown to itself as if moved, because in the sight of that one it is

itself troubled by its own guilt. But after he has admonished as if gently, he openly joins words of increment, saying:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 10.---The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the lioness, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

38. Harsh words of Eliphaz against Job.---For what does he call the roaring of the lion, unless, as we have premised a little before, the severity of the husband? what the voice of the lioness, unless the loquacity of the wife? what the teeth of the young lions, unless the edacity of the offspring? For because the sons feasting were extinguished, they are signified by the expression of the teeth. All which things while the rigid Eliphaz exults that they are broken, he denounces them as if justly damned. Whose hardness of reproof he still redoubles, when he adds:

CHAPTER XX.

VERSE 11.---The tiger has perished, because it had no prey, and the young of the lions are scattered.

39. The tiger, varied and rapacious, aptly signifies hypocrites.---For whom does he sign by the name of the tiger, but blessed Job with the mark of variety, or sprinkled with the spots of simulation? For every simulator, in that which he desires to appear upright, does not show himself clean through all things; because while he

assumes certain virtues through hypocrisy, and secretly subjects himself to vices, certain latent vices suddenly break out in the face, and show the skin of the superinduced simulation, as if of a vision, varied from its admixture; so that it is often a wonder why a man, who is seen to prevail in such great virtues, is also defiled by such reprobate acts. But truly every hypocrite is a tiger, because while a clean color is drawn from simulation, it is varied by the interrupting blackness of vices. For often while he is extolled for the cleanness of chastity, he is fouled by the filth of avarice. Often while he is shown beautiful by the virtue of largess, he is defiled by the spots of luxury. Often while he is clothed with the decorum of chastity and largess, as if from zeal of justice, he is darkened by the atrocity of cruelty. Often he is clothed by largess, chastity, and piety from a beautiful vision, but is marked by the interfused obscurity of pride. And so it happens that with vices mixed in, while the hypocrite does not show a clean appearance in himself, he can by no means have, as it were, one color of the tiger. Which tiger, namely, seizes prey, because it usurps for itself the glory of human favor. For he who is extolled by seized praise, is satiated as if with prey. Well, moreover, is the praise of hypocrites called prey. For it is prey, when the things of others are violently taken away. But every hypocrite, because simulating the life of justice, he snatches for himself the praise of the just, it is certainly a thing of another that he takes. Eliphaz therefore, because he knew that blessed Job had

done things to be praised in the time of his incolumity, by the subsequent percussion, believed that he had held these through hypocrisy, saying: The tiger has perished, because it had no prey. As if he should say openly: The variety of thy simulation is extinguished, because the flattery of praise is also taken away; and now thy hypocrisy has no prey, because struck by divinity, it lacks human favors.

40. The ant-lion adumbrates those who are timid against the stronger, bold against the small.---But in the translation of the Seventy interpreters, the tiger is by no means said, but, The ant-lion has perished, because it had no prey. For the ant-lion is a very small animal, adverse to ants, which hides itself under the dust, and kills ants carrying grain, and consumes them when killed. But it is called Myrmicoleon in Latin, either the lion of ants, or certainly more expressly ant and lion together. Rightly, however, is it named ant and lion, because either to flying things, or to any other minute animals it is an ant, but to the ants themselves a lion. For it devours these as if a lion, but is devoured by those as if an ant. When therefore Eliphaz says: The ant-lion has perished, what does he reprove in blessed Job under the name of the ant-lion, but fear and boldness? As if he should say to him openly: Not unjustly hast thou been struck, because thou wast timid against the erect, bold against the subjects. As if he should say openly: Against the astute fear pressed thee, against the simple temerity puffed thee up. But now the ant-

lion has no prey, because thy timid elation while it is pressed by lashes, is prohibited from the injury of another. But because we have said that the friends of blessed Job hold the type of heretics, it necessarily urges, that we intimate how these same words of Eliphaz are also to be understood typically.

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 10.---The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the lioness, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken.

ALLEGORICAL SENSE.---41. Diverse things are figured by the same thing in the Scriptures.---Because the nature of each thing is composed of diversity, in the sacred eloquence diverse things are lawfully figured through any thing. For the lion has virtue, and it has cruelty. By virtue therefore it signifies the Lord, by cruelty the devil. For hence it is said of the Lord: The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered (Rev. 5:5). Hence it is written of the devil: Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8). But by the name of the lioness sometimes the holy Church, sometimes Babylonia is designated. For because she is bold against adversities, the Church is called a lioness; as is approved by the voices of the same blessed Job, who, indicating Judea forsaken by the Church, says: The sons of the merchants have not trodden it, nor has the lioness passed through it (Job 28:8). But sometimes by the name of the lioness the city of this world, that is, Baby-

lonia, is expressed, which is made fierce against the life of the innocent by the immensity of cruelty, which being associated with the ancient enemy, as if with a most cruel lion, conceives the seeds of his perverse persuasion, and brings forth from herself reprobate sons to his similitude, as if cruel whelps. But the young of the lions are any reprobates, generated to an iniquitous life by the error of malignant spirits: who also all together make the universal city of the world, which we have said before, Babylonia, and yet the same individuals, the sons of Babylonia, are called as if not the lioness, but the whelps of the lioness. For as the whole of Zion together is called the Church, but the sons of Zion are remembered as each of the saints individually, so also the sons of Babylonia are each of the reprobates individually, and the same Babylonia all the reprobates together.

42. The saints fear temptations; heretics, secure in their own sanctity, contemn them.---But holy men, as long as they are in this life, keep themselves with solicitous circumspection, lest the lion going about should snatch them by lying in wait, that is, the ancient enemy should kill them under some image of virtue; lest the voice of the lioness should roar in their ears, that is, lest the glory of Babylonia should avert their sense from the love of the heavenly country; lest the teeth of the young lions should bite, that is, lest the persuasion of the reprobate should grow strong in the heart. But on the contrary, heretics are now as if secure in their sanctity, because they suspect that they have surpassed all things

by the merits of their life. Whence it is also now said: The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the lioness, and the teeth of the young lions, are broken. As if it were said openly: We are therefore worn away by no scourges, because we tread under foot both the virtue of the ancient enemy, and the cupidity of earthly glory, and the persuasions of all the reprobate, by surpassing them by the merits of our life. Whence it is still added:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSE 11.---The tiger has perished, because it had no prey, and the young of the lions are scattered.

43. Satan is rightly called both a lion, and a tiger, and an ant-lion. Heretics glory as if over a conquered Satan.---He repeats him with the word of the tiger whom he signified by the appellation of the lion. For Satan is called a lion because of his cruelty, and not incongruously is he called a tiger because of the variety of his multiform astuteness. For now he objects himself to human senses as he is, lost; now he shows himself as an angel of light. Now by flattering he persuades the minds of the foolish; now by terrifying he draws them to guilt. Now he strives openly to persuade to vices; now in his suggestions he is cloaked under the appearance of virtue. This beast, therefore, which is sprinkled with such great variety, is rightly called a tiger, which among the Seventy interpreters, as we have said before, is called an ant-lion (Myrmicoleon). Which animal, namely, hidden

in the dust, kills ants, as we have said, carrying grain; because certainly the apostate angel, cast down from the heavens to the earth, besets the minds of the just, who prepare for themselves the refreshment of good works, in the very journey of action; and when he overcomes them through snares, he kills them unforeseen as if ants carrying grain. But rightly is it called an ant-lion, that is, lion and ant. For to ants, as we have said, it is a lion, but to flying things an ant; because certainly the ancient enemy, as he is strong against those consenting, so he is weak against those resisting. For if assent is offered to his suggestions, he can by no means be tolerated as a lion; but if he is resisted, he is worn away as an ant. To some therefore he is a lion, to others an ant; because carnal minds scarcely tolerate his cruelty, but spiritual minds tread upon his infirmity with the foot of virtue. Heretics therefore, because they are proud from the presumption of sanctity, say as if exulting: The ant-lion, or certainly the tiger, has perished, because it had no prey. As if they should say openly: The ancient adversary has no prey in us, because as to our studies he already lies conquered. But for this reason he is repeated by the appellation of the ant-lion or the tiger, who had already been designated by the broken roaring of the lion, because whatever is said through joy, is often replicated. For the mind redoubles its voices when it exults. Whence also with true gladness the Psalmist frequently repeats this, that he knew himself to have been heard, saying: The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping;

the Lord has heard my deprecation; the Lord has received my prayer (Psalm 6:9, 10).

44. The saints rejoice with fear over tamed vices. Hypocrites, if even one is overcome, think themselves perfect.---But holy men, when they become cheerful that they are snatched from certain vices, shake themselves with great fear even in that exultation; because although they are already snatched from the storm of any tempest, they know themselves to be yet in the doubtful waves of the uncertain sea: and thus they exult in hope, that they may tremble in fear; thus they tremble in fear, that they may exult in the confidence of hope. Whence it is said by the same Psalmist: Serve the Lord in fear, and exult unto him with trembling (Psalm 2:11). But on the contrary, those who swell from the appearance of sanctity, when they overcome any one vice, soon lift up their mind in pride, and glory as if over the perfection of their life; and because perhaps they have been once snatched from the danger of the tempest, they now forget that they are sailing in the sea: they estimate themselves great in all things, and think they have conquered the ancient adversary to the foundation; they look back upon all below themselves, because they judge themselves to transcend all through wisdom. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERSE 12.---Moreover a hidden word was spoken to me.

45. Heretics affect a new and occult doctrine, why.---Heretics simulate that they hear a hidden word, so that they may draw a certain reverence of their preaching over the minds of their hearers. Whence they also preach hiddenly, insofar as their preaching may seem as holy as it is occult. But they refuse to have common knowledge, lest they be estimated equal to others; and they always seek out certain new things, which while others know not, they glory among the minds of the unskilful concerning the singularity of their knowledge. Which, as we have said, they insinuate as occult, because namely so that they may be able to show it as wonderful, they confirm that they have perceived it hiddenly. Whence in Solomon a woman holding the type of heretics, says: Stolen waters are sweeter, and hidden bread is more pleasant (Prov. 9:17). Whence here also it is added: And as it were stealthily my ear received the veins of its whispering. They perceive the veins of whispering stealthily, because deserting the grace of social knowledge, they by no means enter to this through the door, the Lord attesting, who says: He who enters not through the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up another way, the same is a thief and a robber (John 10:1, 2). Therefore he receives the veins of the divine whispering stealthily, who, to perceive the notice of his virtue, having deserted the door of public preaching, seeks the rifts of depraved intelligence. But because he who enters from elsewhere is a thief and a robber, and loves darkness, and dreads the clarity of light, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 13.---In the horror of a night vision, when deep sleep is wont to occupy men.

46. That they may show the things they teach to be high, they declare themselves scarcely to grasp them. Now they are extolled for the singularity of wisdom.---Often heretics, while they endeavor to say higher things, are themselves witnesses to themselves that the things they proffer are not true. For in a night vision one discerns doubtfully. Therefore they assert that they have perceived the rifts of whispering in the fear of a night vision, because so that they may show to others the things they teach to be high, they denounce themselves as being scarcely able to grasp them. But from this it is to be gathered how they will be able to be certain to their hearers, which things they themselves have seen doubtfully. Therefore in a wonderful order, when flowing forth speaking high things, they are bound by the very voices of their height in the manifestation of their folly. But how much they are elevated concerning the singularity of wisdom, is shown when it is immediately added: When deep sleep is wont to occupy men. As if it were said openly by heretics: When men sleep below, we watch for perceiving supernal things, because those things are known to us, to the knowing of which, namely, the torpid hearts of other men do not rise. As if they should say more openly: In those things in which our intelligence erects itself, the sense of the rest of men sleeps. But

sometimes when they behold this to be despised by the hearer, they simulate that they themselves fear what they say. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER XXV.

VERSE 14.---Dread held me and trembling, and all my bones were terrified.

47. Now they simulate themselves to be fearful.---For because they desire to appear wonderful concerning the height of their doctrine, they as it were greatly fear the things they feign; and since it is of less labor to hear than to speak, they are bold to proffer those things, which namely they construct because they themselves were scarcely able to hear them. Whence it is still added:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERSES 15, 16.---And when a spirit passed by, I being present, the hairs of my flesh stood up; there stood one, whose face I did not acknowledge.

48. Now they feign to have known incomprehensible things in themselves.---That they may indicate themselves to have known incomprehensible things, they narrate that a spirit did not stand, but passed by before them; and they simulate that they have seen an unknown face, so that they may show themselves to be known to him who cannot be known by the human mind. Where it is still added:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERSE 16.---An image before my eyes, and I heard a voice as of a gentle breeze.

49. They are unable to behold God spiritually, nor yet do they always err. They speak certain true and sublime things.---Often heretics imagine God to themselves imaginally whom they are unable to behold spiritually; and they pretend to hear his voice as of a gentle breeze, because they rejoice to be as it were more familiar than others for knowing his secrets. For they do not teach those things which God speaks publicly, but those which are as it were hiddenly inspired into their ear. These things, therefore, we have said, that we might more intimately intimate what is to be felt under the appearance of heretics in the sermons of Eliphaz. But since the friends of blessed Job would not be friends of so great a man, unless they had manifestly learned something from the truth, because although they err in sentences of correction, yet in the knowledge of the truth they do not altogether stumble: let us replicate these same words a little above, that we may more subtly discern how those things which are said concerning the perception of truth, can be truly proffered by those who feel rightly. For sometimes heretics speak certain true and sublime things, not that they themselves perceive these divinely, but that they have learned them from the contention of the holy Church; nor do they draw these to the profit of conscience, but to the ostentation of knowledge. Whence it

happens mostly that they say high things by knowing, but they know not by living the things they say. Whether therefore from the appearance of heretics, namely of those holding not the life of knowledge but the words, or certainly from the person of the friends of blessed Job, who from the knowledge of truth could without doubt experience by perceiving what they studied to speak by teaching, let us discuss these same things which we have run through, spoken more subtly; that while the sermon of Eliphaz is solicitously discussed, it may be demonstrated of how great knowledge he was; although in the same knowledge he did not hold humility, who specially arrogated the common good to himself. For he says:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERSE 12.---Moreover a hidden word was spoken to me.

ALLEGORICAL SENSE.---50. The hidden word, the Son of God, or the locution of the Holy Spirit. This is perceived by few. It can be felt, not expressed.---For the invisible Son is called the hidden word, of whom John says: In the beginning was the Word. Which he also insinuates as hidden, when he subjoins: And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. But this hidden word is spoken to the minds of the elect, when the power of the only-begotten Son is manifested to believers. The allocution of internal aspiration can also be understood through the hidden word; of which John says: His unction teaches you con-

cerning all things (1 John 2:27). Which aspiration namely by touching lifts up the human mind, and depressing temporal thoughts, inflames this with eternal desires, so that nothing already may please it, except those things which are supernal, and it may contemn all things which sound around from human corruption below. To hear the hidden word, therefore, is to conceive the locution of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Which certainly cannot be known, except by him by whom it can be had. Whence also by the voice of Truth it is said concerning this hidden locution: I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may remain with you forever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive (John 14:16). For as the same Paraclete after the ascension of the Mediator, another consoler of the human race, is invisible in himself; so he kindles every one, whom he shall have filled, to desiring invisible things. And because worldly hearts love only visible things, the world receives him not, because it does not rise to loving invisible things. For secular minds, by as much as they dilate themselves without through desires, by so much do they narrow the bosom of the heart to his reception. And because there are very few in the human race, who being purged from the filth of temporal desires, are dilated by this very purgation to the perception of the Holy Spirit, this is called a hidden word, because that is perceived in the heart by some without doubt, which is unknown by the greatest part of men. Or certainly this afflation of the Holy Spirit is the hidden

word, because it can be felt, but it cannot be expressed by the noise of locution. When, therefore, divine aspiration without noise lifts up the mind, the hidden word is heard, because the speech of the Spirit sounds silently in the ear of the heart. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XX].

IBID.---And my ear received, as if by stealth, the veins of his whispering.

51. He seeks a mind abstracted from visible things. In what various ways He speaks to it.--- The ear of the heart receives the veins of the heavenly whispering by stealth, because the mind, being breathed upon, knows the subtlety of the inward locution both rapidly and secretly. For unless it hides itself from outward desires, it does not penetrate the inward ones. And it is hidden that it may hear, and it hears that it may be hidden; because being withdrawn from visible things, it beholds invisible things, and being filled with invisible things, it perfectly contemns visible things. It is to be noted, however, that he does not say: "My ear received, as if by stealth, his whispering;" but "the veins of his whispering." For the whispering of the hidden word is this very locution of inward aspiration. But the veins of the whispering are called the origins of the causes by which this very aspiration is led to the mind. For God opens, as it were, the veins of His whispering when He secretly insinuates to us in what

ways He comes to the ear of our intelligence. For sometimes He touches us with love, sometimes with terror; sometimes He shows how nothing present things are, and raises the desire to love eternal things; sometimes He first points out eternal things, that afterwards temporal things may become vile. Sometimes He opens to us our own evils, and extends us even to this, that we should grieve for the evils of others also. Sometimes He sets before our eyes the evils of others, and wonderfully corrects us, being touched with compunction, from our own depravity. To hear the veins of the divine whispering by stealth, therefore, is to recognize the hidden ways of divine aspiration thinly and secretly.

52. God whispers to us, because He does not make Himself fully manifest. Through created works, as if through certain chinks, He offers Himself to be admired.---Although we are able to understand either the whispering or the veins of the whispering in another way. For he who whispers speaks secretly, and does not express his voice, but imitates it. We, therefore, as long as we are pressed by the corruption of the flesh, in no way see the clarity of divine power, as it remains immutable in itself: because the edge of our weakness does not sustain that which shines intolerably upon us from the ray of His eternity. When, therefore, Almighty God indicates Himself to us through the chinks of contemplation, He by no means speaks to us, but whispers, because although He does not fully intimate Himself, He nevertheless manifests something of Himself

to the human mind. But then He no longer whispers, but speaks, when His certain species is revealed to us. For hence it is that in the Gospel the Truth says: "I will announce to you plainly of the Father" (John 16:26). Hence John says: "We shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). Hence Paul says: "Then shall I know, even as I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12). But now the divine whispering has as many veins coming to us as the divinity itself presides over created works. For while we behold all things that are created, we are lifted up in admiration of the Creator. For as water flowing gently is sought through the chinks in the veins, that it may be increased, and pours itself forth so much more vastly as it finds the veins more open; so we, while we studiously collect the knowledge of the divinity from the consideration of His creature, open, as it were, the veins of that whispering to us; because through that which we see made, we admire the power of the maker; and through those things which are in public, that emanates to us which is hidden in secret. For it breaks forth to us as if by a certain sound, while He shows us His works to be considered, in which He indicates Himself in some way, while He manifests how incomprehensible He is. Because, therefore, we cannot worthily consider Him, we do not hear His voice, but scarcely a whispering. For because we do not suffice to weigh fully even those things which are created, it is rightly said: "And my ear received, as if by stealth, the veins of his whispering." For being cast out from the joys of paradise, and punished with the penalty

of blindness, we scarcely apprehend the veins of the whispering, because we also weigh His wonderful works rapidly and thinly. [Vet. XXI] But it must be known, that by as much as the mind, being lifted up, considers His power, by so much, being repressed, it dreads His rectitude. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XXI].

VERSE 13.---In the horror of a vision by night.

53. The mind trembles so much the more for its own deeds, by how much the higher it is raised to God. Hence it fears and loves God more.--- The horror of a vision by night is the dread of secret contemplation. For the human mind, by how much the higher it is raised to consider eternal things, by so much the more heavily does it dread, being shaken, for its temporal deeds; because it perceives itself more truly guilty, by as much as it beholds itself to have disagreed from that light which glitters above it; and so it comes to pass that, being illuminated, it fears more, because it beholds more through how great things it discordance from the rule of truth; and its own very progress shakes it with grave dread, which before saw nothing as if more securely. Although by however great virtue it may have progressed, it does not yet comprehend anything manifest of eternity, but still beholds under a certain mist of imagination. Whence also this same is called a vision by night. For in the night, as we have

also said above, we see doubtfully; but in the day we see constantly. Because, therefore, to contemplate the ray of the inward sun, the cloud of our corruption interposes itself, nor does that immutable light break forth, as it is, to the weak eyes of our mind; we still behold God as if in a vision by night, while without doubt we are misty under an uncertain contemplation. But although the mind may have conceived some last thing concerning Him, nevertheless in the consideration of His magnitude it grows horrific, and fears more, because it feels itself unequal to those very footsteps of its contemplation, and having relapsed to itself, it loves Him more closely, whose wonderful sweetness being unable to bear, it has scarcely tasted this under an uncertain vision. But because the summit of this sublevation is by no means reached, unless first the crowd of carnal desires importunately making a noise be repressed, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Rec. XXII].

IBID.---When deep sleep is wont to occupy men.

54. Contemplation is not reached unless carnal desires are put to sleep. Sleep is taken in three ways.---Whoever desires to do those things which are of the world, wakes, as it were; but whoever, seeking inward quiet, flees the noise of this world, falls asleep, as it were. But first it must be known that sleep, being figuratively placed

in Sacred Scripture, is taken in three ways. For sometimes by sleep the death of the flesh is expressed, sometimes the torpor of negligence, but sometimes, earthly desires being trodden under foot, the rest of life. For by the name of sleep or sleeping the death of the flesh is intimated, as Paul says: "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep." And a little after: "Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Thess. 4:13, 14). Again, by sleep the torpor of negligence is designated, as is said by the same Paul: "It is now the hour for us to rise from sleep" (Rom. 13:11). And again: "Awake, ye just, and sin not" (1 Cor. 15:34). By sleep also, carnal desires being trodden under foot, the rest of life is figured, as is said by the voice of the bride in the Song of Songs: "I sleep, and my heart waketh" (Cant. 5:2); because, namely, the holy mind, by how much the more it restrains itself from the noise of temporal concupiscence, by so much the more truly does it know inward things; and it wakes so much the more alertly to inward things, by how much the more it hides itself from outward disquietude. Which is well figured by Jacob sleeping on his journey (Gen. 28:11), who placed a stone at his head, and fell asleep: he saw a ladder reaching from the earth to heaven, the Lord leaning upon the ladder, and also angels ascending and descending. To sleep on the journey, indeed, is to rest in this transit of the present life from the love of temporal things. To sleep on the journey is to close the eyes of the mind from the appetite of

visible things in the course of the passing days: which eyes the seducer opened to the first men, who said: "For God knows that in whatever day you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened" (Gen. 3:5). Whence also a little after it is added: "She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave to her husband, who did eat, and the eyes of both were opened." For guilt opened the eyes of concupiscence, which innocence kept closed. But to behold angels ascending and descending is to contemplate the citizens of the heavenly country, either with how great love they cohere to their Author above themselves, or with how great compassion of charity they condescend to our infirmities.

55. To rest from the actions of the world is not sufficient for contemplation, unless virtues also be exercised.---And it is greatly to be noted that he who sleeps beholds the angels, who places his head upon a stone; because doubtless he himself, ceasing from outward works, penetrates inward things, who with a careful mind, which is the principal part [Greek, *to hegemonikon*] of man, observes the imitation of his Redeemer. For to place the head upon a stone is to cohere with the mind to Christ. For those who are removed from the action of the present life, but are snatched to heavenly things by no love, can sleep, but they cannot see the angels; because they contemn holding the head upon the stone.

[Vet. XXII.] For there are some who indeed flee the actions of the world, but are exercised by no virtues. These, namely, sleep by torpor,

not by study; and therefore they do not behold inward things, because they have placed the head not on the stone but on the earth. To whom it for the most part happens that, by how much more securely they cease from external actions, by so much more widely do they collect within themselves the noise of unclean thought through leisure. Whence under the species of Judea, the soul torpid with leisure is bewailed by the Prophet, when it is said: "The enemies saw her, and did mock at her Sabbaths" (Lam. 1:7). For by the precept of the law, one ceases from outward work on the Sabbath. The enemies, therefore, seeing the Sabbaths, mock, when malignant spirits draw these very leisures of vacation to illicit thoughts; so that each soul, by how much it is believed to serve God being removed from external actions, by so much the more does it serve their tyranny by thinking illicit things. But holy men, who are put to sleep from the works of the world not by torpor but by virtue, sleep more laboriously than they were able to wake, because in that which they overcome by deserting the actions of this world, they fight daily by a robust conflict against themselves, lest the mind grow torpid through negligence, lest being subjected to leisure it grow cold to unclean desires, lest it be more fervent than is just in those very good desires, lest under the species of discretion by sparing itself, it languish from perfection. It does these things, and withdraws itself inwardly from the unquiet concupiscence of this world, and deserts the noise of earthly actions, and being

intent on virtues through the study of quiet, it sleeps waking. For it is not led to contemplate inward things, unless it be studiously withdrawn from those things which implicate externally. For hence it is that the Truth says through itself: "No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24). Hence Paul says: "No man warring for God entangleth himself with secular businesses, that he may please him to whom he hath approved himself" (2 Tim. 2:4). Hence through the Prophet the Lord, admonishing, says: "Be vacant, and see, that I am God" (Ps. 46:11). Because, therefore, inward knowledge is by no means beheld unless one ceases from external implication, the time of the hidden word and the divine whispering is now rightly expressed, when it is said: "In the horror of a vision by night, when deep sleep is wont to occupy men," because namely our mind is in no way snatched to the power of inward contemplation, unless it be first studiously put to sleep from the tumult of earthly desires. But the human mind, being raised up by a certain machine of its contemplation, by how much the higher things it beholds above itself, by so much the more terribly does it tremble within itself. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Rec. XXIII].

VERSE 14.---Fear seized me, and trembling, and all my bones were terrified.

56. By how much the higher we contemplate the rectitude of God, by so much the more do we fear for our own.---What is signified by the bones, but strong deeds? Of which also it is said by the Prophet: "The Lord keepeth all their bones" (Ps. 34:20). And often men estimate those things which they do to be of some moment, because they are ignorant of how subtle is the judgment of inward strictness. But when, being snatched through contemplation, they behold heavenly things, they melt away in some manner from that very security of their presumption; and they tremble so much the more in the divine sight, by how much they weigh even their good deeds as not worthy of His examination, whom they behold. For hence it is that he who had progressed by working strong things, being raised up by the spirit, cried out: "All my bones shall say: Lord, who is like unto Thee" (Ps. 35:10)? As if he were to say: My flesh has no words, because my weak things are profoundly silent before Thee; but my bones speak the praise of Thy magnitude, because even those things which I believed to be strong in me, tremble at the consideration of Thee. Hence it is that Manoah, fearing at the sight of the angel, says: "We shall surely die, because we have seen the Lord" (Judg. 13:22). Whom his wife immediately consoles, saying: "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands" (Ibid., 23). But what is it that at the vision of an angel the man becomes timid, and the woman bold, unless that as often as heavenly

things are shown to us, the spirit indeed shakes itself with fear, but nevertheless hope presumes? For thence hope raises itself to daring greater things, whence the spirit is troubled, because it sees first those things which are heavenly. [Vet. XXIII.] Because, therefore, when the mind, being raised up, beholds the higher things of heavenly secrets, all the solidity of human strength trembles, it is now rightly said: "Fear seized me, and trembling, and all my bones were terrified." As if it were openly said: Perceiving the secrets of inward subtlety, whence I believed myself strong within myself, thence I staggered before the sight of the judge. For contemplating the strictness of divine justice, we rightly fear even for those very works which we thought we had done strongly. For our rectitude, being led to the inward rule, if it finds a strict judgment, impinges upon inward rectitude with many windings of its own crookedness. Whence Paul, well, when he perceived himself both to have the bones of virtues, and yet under strict examination these same bones of his trembled, said: "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's day." Yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself (1 Cor. 4:3). But because, having heard the veins of the divine whispering, these same bones of his trembled, he immediately added: "Yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord." As if he were to say: I remember that I have done upright things, and yet I do not presume on my merits, because our

life is led to His examination, under which even the bones of our fortitude are troubled.

57. The grace of contemplation is not lasting.---But when the mind is suspended in contemplation, when overcoming the narrowness of the flesh, it searches into something of the liberty of inward security through the force of speculation, it cannot stand long above itself; because although the spirit carries it up to the highest things, yet the flesh still presses it downwards by the very weight of its own corruption. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERSE 15.---And when a spirit passed before me, the hair of my flesh stood up.

58. We indeed know invisible things, but rapidly.---The spirit passes before us, when we know invisible things, and yet we see these not solidly, but rapidly. For the mind is not fixed long in the sweetness of inward contemplation, because it is recalled to itself, being reverberated by the very immensity of the light. And when it tastes inward sweetness, it glows with love, it strives to go above itself, but broken, it relapses to the darkness of its own weakness; and progressing by great virtue, it sees that it cannot see that which it ardently loves, nor yet would it ardently love, unless it saw it in some degree. The spirit, therefore, does not stand, but passes, because our contemplation both opens the heavenly light to us when we gape for it, and soon hides it when we grow weak. And because in this life by however

great virtue one may have progressed, he yet still feels the sting of his own corruption: "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things" (Wisd. 9:15), it is rightly subjoined: "The hair of my flesh stood up."

[Rec. XXIV.] 59. No one here is so perfect, to whom there is not always born what should be cut off.---For the hairs of the flesh are any superfluities of human corruption. The hairs of the flesh are the thoughts of the old life, which we so cut off from the mind, that we are fatigued by no grief for the loss of them. But it is well said through Moses: "Let the Levites shave all the hair of their flesh" (Num. 8:7). For a Levite is called "one taken up." It behoves the Levites, therefore, to shave all the hair of their flesh, because he who is taken up into divine obsequies ought to appear clean before the eyes of God from all thoughts of the flesh, lest the mind bring forth illicit thoughts, and render the beautiful species of the soul deformed as if by sprouting hairs. But by however great virtue of holy conversation one may have been raised up, as we have said, there yet still is born to him from the oldness of life what must be tolerated. Whence also the very hairs of the Levites are commanded to be shaved, not plucked out. For the hairs being shaved, the roots remain in the flesh, and grow again to be cut back, because indeed superfluous thoughts are to be amputated with great study, but yet they can by no means be amputated fundamentally. For the flesh always generates superfluities

which the spirit must always cut back with the iron of solicitude. But yet we behold these things in us more subtly then, when we penetrate the heights of speculation. Whence it is now rightly said: "When a spirit passed before me, the hair of my flesh stood up."

[Vet. XXIV.] 60. The mind devoted to contemplation cuts these off more solicitously, and so almost fixes the Spirit, yet does not hold Him long.---For the human mind, being raised up in the citadel of contemplation, tortures itself so much the more harshly for superfluities, by how much it beholds that which it loves to be exceedingly subtle; and when it gazes upon the beautiful thing which it desires above itself, it strictly judges whatever weak thing in itself it previously tolerated tranquilly. The hairs, therefore, dread while the spirit is passing, because superfluous thoughts flee before the force of compunction, so that nothing fluid, nothing now remiss may please, because the severity of inward visitation inflames the breathed-upon mind even against itself. And when that which is born illicitly in the heart is cut back by continual strictness, it for the most part happens that the quickened mind adheres a little more broadly to the ray of its speculation, and almost fixes the spirit which was passing. Nor yet does this very delay of contemplation fully open the power of the Divinity, because His immensity transcends human strengths, even when increased and raised up. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 16.---There stood one, whose face I did not acknowledge.

61. Man having become entirely carnal through sin, does not think without images of bodies. Who without these may perceive his own soul, and then God.---For we do not say "a certain one" (quidam), except of him whom we either will not, or are not able to express. But with what mind "a certain one" is said in this place, is namely explained, when it is immediately subjoined: "Whose face I did not acknowledge." For the human soul, being expelled from the joys of paradise by the vice of the first men, lost the light of invisible things, and poured itself out entirely into the love of visible things; and it was blinded from inward speculation by as much as it was deformedly scattered without; whence it comes to pass that it knows none but those things which it knows by groping, so to speak, with corporal eyes. For man, who if he had willed to keep the precept, was to be spiritual even in the flesh, by sinning was made carnal even in mind, so that he thinks only those things which he draws to his soul through images of bodies. For the body is of heaven, of earth, of waters, of animals, and of all visible things, which he gazes upon incessantly, into which while the delighted mind throws itself entirely, it becomes gross from the subtlety of inward intelligence; and because it is no longer able to raise itself to the highest things, it lies willingly

weak in these. But when it strives with wonderful efforts to rise from these, it is a very great thing if the soul, the corporal species being repressed, be led to the knowledge of itself; so that it may think of itself without a corporal image, and by thinking of itself, may prepare for itself a way even to considering the substance of eternity.

[Vet. XXV.] 62. How much the human soul differs from the divine substance. If it does not yet perceive what God is, it certainly perceives what He is not.---In this way, therefore, it exhibits itself to itself as a kind of ladder, by which, ascending from external things, it may pass into itself, and from itself tend towards its Author. For when it deserts corporal images, the mind, coming into itself, ascends not a little. But although the soul is incorporeal, because it nevertheless adheres to the body, it is recognized from its own quality, which is retained in the place of the flesh. Which, while it forgets things known, knows things unknown, remembers things given to oblivion, grows cheerful after sad things, is dejected after joyful things: by its own very diversity it indicates how much it differs from the substance of eternal immutability, which is always, as it is, the same: everywhere present, everywhere invisible, everywhere whole, everywhere incomprehensible, it is discerned by the gasping mind without sight, heard without doubt, received without motion, touched without a body, retained without a place. When the mind, accustomed to corporal things, thinks upon this substance, it sustains the phantasms of diverse images. Which while

it drives away from the eyes of its intention by the hand of discretion, postponing all things to it, it already in some degree beholds this. Which if it has not yet apprehended what it is, it has certainly recognized what it is not. Because, therefore, the mind is snatched to unaccustomed things when it searches into the essence of the divinity, it is now rightly said: "There stood one, whose face I did not acknowledge."

63. Standing belongs to God alone.---But it was well said, "there stood." For every creature, because it was made out of nothing, and of itself tends to nothing, has not to stand, but to flow away. But a rational creature, by that very thing that it was created after the image of its Author, is fixed, lest it pass into nothing; but an irrational one is by no means fixed, but is delayed in passing, until it fulfills the species of the universe by the ministry of its vision. For although heaven and earth afterwards remain for eternity, yet of themselves they now hasten to nothing, but they persevere to be changed into better for the use of those whom they serve. Standing, therefore, belongs to the Creator alone, through whom all things pass Him who passes not, and in whom some things are retained, lest they pass. Whence also our Redeemer, because the state of His divinity could not be taken by the human mind, showed this to us coming to us, created, born, dead, buried, rising again, and returning to heavenly things, as if by passing. Which He well intimated through the Gospel to the enlightened blind man, to whom passing He gave hearing, but

standing He restored his eyes (Matt. 9:27; 20:30; Mark 8:22; Luke 18:35; John 9:1). For through the dispensation of His humanity He had to pass; but through the power of His divinity, because He is everywhere present, He has to stand. The Lord, therefore, is said to hear the voices of our blindness passing, because being made man He has compassion on human misery. But standing He restores light, because He illustrates the darkness of our infirmity from the power of His divinity. Well, therefore, after it was said: "And when a spirit passed before me," it is subjoined: "There stood one, whose face I did not acknowledge." As if it were openly said: Him whom I felt by passing, I found not to pass. It is He Himself, therefore, who passes, He Himself who stands. For He passes, because being known He cannot be held; but He stands, because in as much as He is known, He appears immutable. Because, therefore, He who is always the same is discerned rapidly, God is seen simultaneously passing and standing. Or certainly His standing is to be varied by no mutation, as is said to Moses: "I am who I am" (Exod. 3:14). And as James insinuates Him, saying: "With whom there is no transmutation, nor shadow of change" (Jas. 1:17). But because whoever now apprehends anything of the contemplation of eternity, beholds this through His co-eternal species, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXV.

IBID.---An image before my eyes.

64. Whatever we perceive of the Father, we see through the Son.---For the Image of the Father is the Son, as Moses insinuates concerning the creation of man, saying: "God created man, in the image of God created He him" (Gen. 1:27). And as a certain wise man says through the expression of Wisdom concerning the same Son: "For He is the brightness of the everlasting light" (Wisd. 7:26). And as Paul says: "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His substance" (Heb. 1:3). When, therefore, His eternity is discerned, as the possibility of our infirmity admits, His image is set before the eyes of our mind; because when we truly intend upon the Father, we see Him, so much as we receive, through His own Image, that is, through the Son; and through that species, which was born of Him without beginning, we endeavor in some way to discern Him, who neither begins nor ends. Whence also this same Truth says in the Gospel: "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). But it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Rec. XXVI].

IBID.---And I heard a voice as of a gentle breeze.

65. The voice of the Holy Spirit is both a gentle breeze and a vehement spirit.---For what is designated by the voice of a gentle breeze, but the knowledge of the Holy Spirit, who proceeding from the Father, and receiving of that which is

the Son's, is infused thinly into the knowledge of our infirmity? Who nevertheless coming upon the Apostles, is demonstrated through an external sound as if through a vehement spirit, when it is said: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" (Acts 2:2). For the Holy Spirit, when He insinuates Himself to the knowledge of human infirmity, is expressed both by the sound of a vehement spirit, and by the voice of a gentle breeze; because namely coming, He is both vehement and gentle: gentle, because He tempers His knowledge to our senses, so far as it may be known in some way; vehement, because however much He tempers this, nevertheless by His advent He perturbs the blindness of our infirmity by illuminating it. For by His illustration He touches us gently, but He shakes our poverty immensely.

66. A gentle breeze because He reveals Himself here but a little to the saints. In contemplation, whatever the mind is able perfectly to behold is not God. ---The voice of God, therefore, is heard as of a gentle breeze, because to His contemplators still placed in this life, the Divinity by no means insinuates Himself as He is, but demonstrates His brightness thinly to the blear-eyed eyes of our mind. Which is well signified by the very acceptance of the law, when it is said, that Moses went up, and the Lord came down upon the mount (Exod. 24:1). [Vet. XXVI.] The mount, indeed, is our contemplation itself, into which we ascend, that we may be raised up to see those things which are beyond our infirmity. But into

this the Lord descends, because to us who make much progress He opens some small part of Himself to our senses; if indeed anything can be called either small or a part in Him, who always remaining one and the same, cannot be understood partially, and yet is said to be participated by His faithful, since in His substance a part is by no means admitted. But because we cannot express Him in perfect speech, we resound Him to some extent by babbling, according to the measure of our humanity, as if hindered by the weakness of infancy. But because even when raised up in great contemplation, we reach something subtle of the knowledge of eternity, it is shown by the words of sacred history, when the noble prophet Elijah is instructed concerning the knowledge of God. To whom, when the Lord promised that He would pass before him, saying: "Behold, the Lord passeth by, a great and strong wind, overturning the mountains and breaking the rocks in pieces before the Lord"; He immediately added: "The Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a whistling of a gentle breeze" (1 Kings 19:11, 12). For the wind before the Lord overturns the mountains, and breaks the rocks in pieces; because the fear which rushes in from His advent both casts down the height of our heart and liquefies its hardness. But the Lord is said not to be in the wind of commotion and the fire, but it is not denied that He is in the whistling of a gentle breeze; because, forsooth, when the

mind is suspended in the sublimity of contemplation, whatever it prevails perfectly to behold is not God: but when it beholds something subtle, this is what it hears of the incomprehensible substance of eternity. For we perceive, as it were, a whistling of a gentle breeze, when we subtly taste the savor of uncircumscribed Truth by a sudden contemplation. Then, therefore, is that which we know of God true, when we feel that we cannot fully know anything of Him. Whence it is well subjoined there: "Which when Elijah had heard, he covered his face with his mantle, and went out and stood in the door of the cave" (Ibid.). After the whistling of the thin breeze, the prophet covers his face with his mantle, because in that most subtle contemplation of Truth, he recognizes by how great ignorance man is covered. For to draw the mantle over the face is to veil the mind from the consideration of its own infirmity, lest it should dare to seek higher things; so that it may by no means opening the eyes of understanding precipitately beyond itself, but reverently close them to that which it is not able to apprehend. Who, doing these things, is described to have stood in the door of the cave. For what is our cave, but this habitation of corruption, in which we are still retained from of old? But when we begin to perceive something of the knowledge of Divinity, we stand, as it were, already in the door of our cave. For because we cannot perfectly go forth, yet gasping for the knowledge of Truth, we already catch something of the breeze of liberty. To stand, therefore, in the entrance of the cave,

is, the obstacle of our corruption being repressed, to begin to go out to the knowledge of Truth. Whence also the Israelites, beholding from afar the cloud descending into the tabernacle, are remembered to have stood in the doors of their tents (Exod. 33:9); because they who in any way behold the advent of Divinity, as it were, already proceed from the habitation of the flesh. Because, therefore, the human mind, with whatever virtue it may stretch itself, scarcely knows the outermost parts of the innermost things, it is rightly said now: "And I heard a voice as of a gentle breeze." But because since Divine knowledge exhibits to us at least a little of itself, it perfectly teaches the ignorance of our infirmity, let him who heard the voice of a gentle breeze say what things he has learned from this very hearing. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVII

[Rec. XXVII].

VERS. 17.---Shall man be justified in comparison of God, or shall a man be more pure than his Maker? 67. Human justice compared to divine is injustice. Those who must repress complaints concerning God's scourges.---Human justice compared to divine justice is injustice: because even a lamp is seen to shine in the dark, but placed in the ray of the sun it is darkened. What, then, did Eliphaz, rapt in contemplation, know, but that man cannot be justified in comparison of God? For we believe those things to be right

which we work outwardly, but when we least know internal things, as if placed in the sun's ray, we are in darkness. But when we perceive those things in some way, we do not judge these in any way, because each one judges the more subtly concerning the darkness, by how much more truly the brightness of the light is established for him. For he who sees the light, knows what to think of the darkness. For he who is ignorant of the brightness of light, even approves obscure things as if they were bright. But it is well subjoined: Or shall a man be more pure than his Maker? Whosoever murmurs concerning a percussion, what else does he do but accuse the justice of the one who strikes? A man, therefore, thinks himself more pure than his Maker, if he prepares a complaint against the scourge; and he undoubtedly postpones Him to himself, whose judgment concerning his own affliction he redargues. That, therefore, man may not dare to reprehend the judge of fault, let him humbly think upon the Author of nature, because He who wonderfully made man out of nothing, does not impiously afflict him when made. Which Eliphaz then learned, when he heard a voice as of a gentle breeze. For in the consideration of the divine magnitude, it is learned how humbly He is to be feared in His animadversion. And he who tastes supernal things, tolerates inferior things with equanimity, because he fully beholds within, of how much value he should estimate that which he does without. For he badly thinks himself upright, who is ignorant of the rule of supreme

rectitude; and often a piece of wood is believed to be straight, if it be not brought to the rule; but when it is joined to the rule, it is found by how great a crookedness it swells, because, forsooth, rectitude in cutting reproves what the deceived eye approved. Eliphaz, therefore, because he beheld supernal things, exerts a strict judgment concerning inferior things; and although he does not rightly redargue the blessed Job, nevertheless, in comparison of the Creator of all, he rightly describes the measure of the creature, saying:

[CHAPTER XXXVIII [Vet. XXVII, Rec. XXVIII]. VERS. 18, 19. Behold, they that serve Him are not stable, and in His angels He found wickedness: how much more shall they that dwell in houses of clay, who have a foundation of earth, be consumed as by a moth?

68. Why the angelic nature is mutable, and whence it becomes immutable. The fall of angels admonishes men to distrust their own infirmity. The moth, concupiscence.---The angelic nature, even if by adhering to the contemplation of the Creator it remains immutably in its state, nevertheless by the very fact that it is a creature, it has in itself a changeableness of mutability. But to be changed, is to go from one thing to another, and not to be stable in oneself. For each thing tends toward something else by as many steps, as it were, as it is subject to the motions of its own mutability. But the incomprehensible nature alone knows not how to be moved from its state, which, from that which is always the same, knows not how to be changed. For if the substance of the

angels had been alien from the motion of mutability, though well created by the Author, it would by no means have fallen from the height of its blessedness in the reprobate spirits. But wonderfully did the Almighty God create the nature of the highest spirits good, but mutable, so that both they who would not remain might fall, and they who would persist in their condition might do so the more worthily, by how much they stood even by their own choice; and might become of greater merit with God, by how much they had fixed the motion of their mutability by the station of their will. Because, therefore, the angelic nature also is in itself mutable, which mutability, namely, it overcame through this, that it is bound by the chains of love to Him who is always the same, it is rightly said now: Behold, they that serve Him are not stable. And the document of the same mutability is immediately subjoined, when it is added concerning the apostate spirits: And in His angels He found wickedness. From whose fall he well gathers a consideration of human infirmity, when he immediately subjoins: How much more shall they that dwell in houses of clay, who have a foundation of earth, be consumed as by a moth? For we dwell in houses of clay, because we subsist in earthly bodies. Which Paul, carefully considering, says: We have this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7). And again: We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands (2 Cor. 5:1). The earthly foundation also is the substance of the flesh.

Which the Psalmist had carefully beheld in himself, when he said: My bone was not hidden from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret, and my substance in the lower parts of the earth (Psalm 139:15). But the moth is born from a garment, and by being born it corrupts that same garment from which it arises. The flesh is, as it were, a certain garment of the soul; but this garment, forsooth, has its own moth, because from the flesh itself arises carnal temptation, by which it is rent. For our garment is consumed, as it were, by a certain moth of its own, when the corruptible flesh engenders temptation, and through this arrives at destruction. As by a moth is man consumed, when from himself arises that by which he may be crushed. As if he should say openly: If those spirits cannot be immutable of themselves, who are depressed by no infirmity of the flesh; by what temerity do men think that they constantly remain in good, whom, in that which the intellect raises to the highest things, the carnal infirmity aggravating hinders, so that through the vice of corruption they have in themselves that whence they may grow old from their inward novelty?

[Vet. XXVIII.] 69. Angels are teachers, who however holy, are not without fault. The moth, doing damage without sound, exhibits the wicked not attending to their own losses.---Holy teachers can also be understood by angels, as it is said by the prophet: The priest's lips keep knowledge, and they seek the law at his mouth, for he is the angel of the Lord of hosts (Mal. 2:7). Who with whatever virtue they may shine,

cannot be altogether without fault, when they walk the journey of the present life, because their steps, forsooth, are touched either by the mud of an illicit work, or by the dust of thought. But they dwell in houses of clay, who exult in this seductive life of the flesh. Paul had contemned to dwell in this house of clay, when he said: But our conversation is in heaven (Philip. 3:20, 21). Let him say, therefore: Behold, they that serve Him are not stable, and in His angels He found wickedness; how much more they that dwell in houses of clay, who have a foundation of earth, shall be consumed as by a moth? As if he should say openly: If they who, announcing eternal things, accoutre themselves against temporal things, cannot pass the way of the present life without contagion, what detriments do they sustain who rejoice that they are in the pleasures of carnal habitation? For they who serve Him are not stable, because when the mind strives after high things, it is dissipated by the thought of its own flesh; so that often the mind while it gasps for inward things, while it beholds celestial things alone, struck by a sudden carnal delight, lies rent from itself, and he who was rejoicing that he had overcome the troubles of his infirmity, groans prostrate by a sudden wound. Wickedness, therefore, is found even in the angels, while a subreption of a deceptive life sometimes weighs down even those very ones who announce the truth. If, therefore, even these are struck by the iniquity of this world, whom a holy intention raises against it, by what blows are they penetrated, whom the very delight of

their own infirmity prostrates before its darts? Who are well described as being consumed as by a moth. For a moth does damage, and makes no sound; so the minds of the wicked, because they neglect to consider their own losses, lose integrity as if unknowingly. For they lose innocence from the heart, truth from the mouth, continence from the flesh, and by the access of time, life from their age. But they by no means behold that they are incessantly losing these things, while they are occupied with all desire in temporal cares. As if, therefore, they are consumed by a moth, because without sound they tolerate the bite of fault, while they are ignorant how great detriments of life and innocence they suffer. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VERS. 20.---From morning until evening they shall be cut down. 70. The reprobate do not change their perverse mind even at the last time.---From morning until evening the sinner is cut down, while from the beginning of his life until the end, he is wounded by the perpetration of iniquity. For at all times the reprobate, through the increase of malice, redouble the blows against themselves, by which, being cut down, they fall into the deep. Concerning whom it is well said by the Psalmist: Bloody and deceitful men shall not halve their days (Psalm 55:23). To halve one's days, indeed, is to divide the time of life badly spent in pleasures for the lamentations of penitence, and to repair this by partitioning

it for good use. But the wicked by no means halve their days, because they do not change their perverse mind even at the last time. Against which Paul well admonishes, saying: Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Ephes. 5:16). We redeem the time, indeed, when we repair by weeping the past life, which we lost in wantonness. It follows:

CHAPTER XL.

IBID.---And because none understandeth, they shall perish for ever. 71. They neglect to know what punishments await them, and what rewards await the just.---None, namely, of those who from morning until evening are cut down. None understandeth either of those who perish, or of those who imitate the lost morals of the perishing. Whence elsewhere it is written: The just perisheth, and there is no one who thinketh in his heart, and men of mercy are gathered, because there is no one who understandeth (Isa. 57:1). The wicked, therefore, while they seek temporal things alone, and contemn to know what good things remain for the elect in eternity; while they behold the affliction of the just, but do not recognize what is the retribution of the affliction, stretch out the foot of their action into the deep, because they of their own accord close their eyes to the light of understanding. For deceived by foolish pleasures, while they love temporally those things which they see, alienated from themselves they do not see where they rush into eternity. Morning can also designate prosperity,

and evening the adversity of this world. From morning, therefore, until evening the reprobate are cut down, because they both perish by wantonness through prosperity, and through adversity they rise up to madness by being impatient. Whom from morning until evening fault would by no means cut down, if they either believed prosperity to be a fomentation, or estimated adversity to be the cutting of their wound.

[Vet. XXIX.] 72. Who use prosperity or adversity well.---But because by no means is the multitude of the human race so deserted, that all things are permitted to tend to destruction, there are some who despise the delight of the present life, and even when they are present, consider them to be transitory, and tread them down out of love for eternity. And when they place their step in this first grade of judgment, being more vigorous they arrive at higher things, so that they despise all temporal things not only because they are to be lost more quickly, but they do not desire to adhere to these, even if they could have been eternal; and they withdraw their love from things beautifully created, because they tend with the steps of their heart toward the Author of beauty Himself. And there are some who love the goods of the present life, but yet by no means attain these: who gasp after temporal things with all their desires, seek the glory of the world, but can by no means obtain it. These, so to speak, the heart draws toward the world, the world repels toward the heart. For it often happens that, broken by their own adversities, they return to

their mind, and having returned into themselves they consider how vain those things were which they sought, and immediately turn themselves to lamentation for so foolish a desire; and they desire eternal things the more strongly, by how much they grieve that they have labored more foolishly for temporal things. Whence well, the reprobate having been described, it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLI

[Rec. XXIX].

Vers. 21.---But they that shall be left shall be taken away from them. 73. Whom the world despises, God chooses.---Whom else do we accept as the left, but the despised of this world? Whom while the present age chooses for the use of no glory, it leaves behind as the least and unworthy. But the Lord is said to take away the left of the world, because He deigns to choose the despised of this age, as Paul attests, who says: Not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong (1 Cor. 1:26, 27). Which is well signified in the books of Kings by the Egyptian boy fainting on the way, whom the Amalekite, being sick, deserts on the journey, but David finds, refreshes with food, makes him the guide of his journey; he pursues the Amalekite, finds him feasting, and utterly extinguishes him (1 Sam. 30:13). For what is it that

the Egyptian boy of the Amalekite is fainted on the journey, but that the lover of the present age, covered with the blackness of his sin, is often left behind infirm and despised by the same age, so that he cannot by any means run with it, but, broken by adversity, becomes torpid? But David finds him, because our Redeemer, truly strong of hand, sometimes converts to His love those whom He finds despised by the glory of the world. He feeds him with food, because He refreshes him with the knowledge of the word. He chooses him as the guide of the journey, because He makes him also His preacher. And he who was not able to follow the Amalekite is made the guide of David, because he whom the world deserted as unworthy, being converted, not only receives the Lord in his mind, but by preaching brings Him even to the hearts of others. With whom as guide, namely, David finds the Amalekite feasting and extinguishes him, because through those very ones preaching, Christ destroys the joy of the world, whom the world despised to have as companions. Because, therefore, for the most part, whom the world leaves, the Lord chooses, it is rightly said now: They that shall be left shall be taken away from them. It follows:

CHAPTER XLII.

IBID.---They shall die, and not in wisdom. 74. The custom of Scripture, that where it interposes something foreign, it soon returns to the treated argument.---What is it that he above brought forth the destruction of the reprobate, saying:

Because none understandeth, they shall perish for ever; and immediately added concerning the elect of God: But they that shall be left shall be taken away from them; and subjoins this immediately, which would not agree with the same elect, saying: They shall die, and not in wisdom? For if they are taken away divinely from the reprobate, in what way are they said to die not in wisdom? But forsooth it is the custom of sacred Scripture, that when it narrates something, a sentence of another cause having been interposed, it immediately returns to the previous things. For after it said: And because there is no one who understandeth, they shall perish for ever, it soon brought in the lot of the elect, saying: But they that shall be left shall be taken away from them. And again, sending the eye of its sentence to that destruction of the reprobate which it had foretold, it suddenly added: They shall die, and not in wisdom. As if he should say: These of whom I said that not understanding they shall perish for ever, will undoubtedly die not in wisdom. But that this is sometimes the manner of sacred eloquence we shall better show, if we bring forth some similitude of this thing from it. For the Apostle Paul, when he was admonishing his beloved disciple concerning the instituting of the offices of the Church, lest he should perhaps inordinately promote some to sacred orders, said: Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins, keep thyself pure (1 Tim. 5:22). Who immediately converting his words to the infirmity of his body says: Drink no longer

water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities (Ibid., 23). And immediately he subjoins, saying: Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment, and some men they follow after (Ibid., 24). What, therefore, does that pertain to, that he prohibited water from being drunk by the infirm one, this which he subjoined concerning the hidden and manifest sins of certain men, but that a sentence concerning his infirmity having been interposed, he returned in the end to that which he said above: Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins? For that he might show with how great care those same sins were to be sought out, an admonition of discretion against the trouble of infirmity having been interposed, he immediately brought in that in some they were open, in others they were hidden, saying: Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment, and some men they follow after. As, therefore, through this sentence Paul does not agree with the same words with which he subjoined it speaking of Timothy's infirmity; but returned to that which he narrated above by intermitting; so in this place Eliphaz when he said concerning the elect: But they that shall be left shall be taken away from them, immediately adding: They shall die, and not in wisdom, immediately recurs to that which he brought forth above concerning the reprobate, saying: And because none understandeth, they shall perish for ever.

[Vet. XXX.] 75. The reprobate and the elect die, these in wisdom, those in insipience.---For this reason, moreover, the reprobate despise the elect, because they tend toward the invisible life through visible death. Concerning whom it is well said now: They shall die, and not in wisdom. As if it were openly said: They fly death and wisdom together; but they utterly desert wisdom, but do not escape the snares of death. And because they who were some time to die could have lived by dying, while they fear the death which will undoubtedly come, they lose life and wisdom together. But on the contrary the just die in wisdom, because the death which they cannot altogether avoid, when it imminently threatens for the truth, they contemn to defer; and while they bear it with equanimity, they turn the punishment of the propagation into an instrument of virtue, so that from thence life ought to be received, whence through the merit of the first fault it is forced to be finished. But because Eliphaz brought forth these things truly against the wicked, estimating the blessed Job to be reprehensible, he inflated himself with the pride of wisdom. Whence also after the predicaments of such great rectitude, he subjoins words of derision, saying:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Rec. XXX].

CAP. V. VERS. 1.---Call now, if there be any that will answer thee. 76. What it is to call God, what

for God to answer.---For the Almighty God often deserts the prayer of him in perturbation, who contemns His precepts in tranquility. Whence it is written: He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, his prayer shall be an abomination (Prov. 28:9). But our calling is to implore God with humble prayer; but God's answering is to afford the effect to the prayers. He says, therefore: Call, if there be any that will answer thee. As if he should say openly: However much afflicted thou mayest cry, thou hast not God answering, because the voice in tribulation does not find Him, whom the mind in tranquility contemned. Where still deriding he subjoins:

CHAPTER XLIV.

IBID.---And to which of the saints wilt thou turn? 77. As if he should say despisingly: Thou art not able to find even the saints as helpers in thy affliction, whom thou wouldst not have as companions in thy hilarity. Who after the derision immediately subjoins a sentence, saying:

CHAPTER XLV.

VERS. 2.---Anger killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the little one.

78. Eliphaz speaks truth, but not truly against Job. How great the fault of anger, how many the evils. ---Which sentence would indeed be true, if it had not been brought against the patience of so great a man. But let us consider what is said, even if it is repelled by the virtue of its hearer, that

we may show how right is that which is brought forth, if it were not unjustly deserved against the blessed Job; since it is written: But Thou, O Lord, judgest with tranquillity (Wisd. XII, 18); we must greatly know that as often as we restrain the turbulent motions of the mind under the virtue of meekness, we endeavor to return to the likeness of our Creator. For when anger lashes the tranquillity of the mind, it disturbs it, being in a manner torn and rent, so that it does not agree with itself, and loses the force of its inward likeness. We should consider, therefore, how great is the fault of anger, through which, while meekness is lost, the likeness of the heavenly image is corrupted. Through anger wisdom is lost, so that it is not known at all what is to be done or in what order, as it is written: Anger resteth in the bosom of a fool (Eccles. VII, 10); because indeed it withdraws the light of understanding when it confounds the mind by moving it. Through anger life is lost, even if wisdom should seem to be held, as it is written: Anger destroyeth even the prudent (Prov. XV, 1, according to LXX); because, namely, the confounded mind by no means fulfills even if it is able to understand anything prudently. Through anger justice is forsaken, as it is written: The anger of man worketh not the justice of God (Jas. I, 20); because while the disturbed mind exasperates the judgment of its own reason, it thinks everything that fury suggests to be right. Through anger the grace of social life is lost, as it is written: Be not a constant companion with an angry man, lest thou learn his paths, and

take a scandal to thy soul (Prov. XXII, 24, 25). And the same: Who shall be able to dwell with a man whose spirit is easy to be angry? (Prov. XVIII, 14.) Because he who does not temper himself from human reason, must of necessity live alone like a beast. Through anger concord is broken, as it is written: A passionate man stirreth up strifes. And an angry man diggeth up sins (Prov. XV, 18). For the angry man diggeth up sins, because he makes even the evil, whom he incautiously provokes to discord, worse. Through anger the light of truth is lost, as it is written: Let not the sun go down upon your anger (Eph. IV, 26); because when anger strikes the darkness of confusion upon the mind, God hides from it the ray of His knowledge. Through anger the splendor of the Holy Spirit is excluded; on the contrary, according to the old translation, it is written: Upon whom shall my spirit rest, but upon him that is humble and quiet and trembleth at my words? (Isa. LXVI, 2.) For when He said humble, He immediately added quiet. If therefore anger withdraws the quiet of the mind, it closes its habitation to the Holy Spirit, by whose departure the mind, being empty, is soon led to open madness, and is dissipated from the inward foundation of thoughts even to the surface.

79. The image of the angry man is expressed in the best colors. ---For the heart inflamed by the stings of its own anger palpitates, the body trembles, the tongue becomes impeded, the face catches fire, the eyes are exasperated, and acquaintances are by no means recognized.

With the mouth indeed he forms a cry, but the sense ignores what he speaks. In what, then, is he far from those who are possessed, who is not conscious of his own action? Whence it happens for the most part that anger leaps even to the hands, and as reason recedes further, it rises more boldly; and the mind is not able to restrain itself, because it has become of another's power; and fury exercises the limbs abroad in blows, where within it holds captive the mind itself, the mistress of the limbs. Sometimes, however, it does not put forth the hands, but turns the tongue into a dart of malediction. For he demands the destruction of a brother by prayers, and seeks to have God perpetrate that which he himself, perverse man, either fears or is ashamed to do. And it happens that he performs homicide by wish and voice, even when he ceases from the injury of a neighbor with his hands. Sometimes anger, when the mind is disturbed, as if from judgment indicates silence; and the more it does not express itself abroad through the tongue, it catches fire within more grievously, so that every angry man withdraws his speech from his neighbor, and by saying nothing, says how much he is turned away. And sometimes this severity of silence is carried on through the dispensation of discipline, if only the form of discretion is carefully held in the inner parts. Sometimes indeed, while the inflamed mind is restrained from accustomed speech, by the approach of time it is separated entirely from the love of the neighbor, and sharper stings come to the mind, and causes

which more heavily exasperate arise; and in the eye of the angry man a mote is turned into a beam, while anger is changed into hatred. For the most part anger closed within the mind through silence seethes more vehemently, and silent it forms loud voices; it objects words to itself by which it may be exasperated, and as if placed in the examination of a cause, it responds more harshly exasperated; which Solomon briefly intimates, saying: The expectation of the wicked is fury (Prov. XI, 23). And so it happens that the disturbed mind feels the greater noise of its own silence, and the flame of closed anger consumes it more heavily. Whence well before us a certain wise man said: The thoughts of the angry man are viperous generations, they eat the mind their mother.

80. Four degrees by which we are affected by anger. ---But it is to be known that anger inflames some more quickly, and leaves them more easily. But some it moves slowly indeed, but holds them longer. For some, like ignited reeds, while they make a noise with voices, give forth as it were certain sounds of their own ignition; they indeed make a flame more quickly, but immediately cool into ashes. But others, not unlike heavier and harder wood, receive ignition slowly, but nevertheless once ignited are extinguished with more difficulty; and because they more slowly excite themselves into harshness, they keep the fire of their fury longer. But others, which is more wicked, both receive the flames of anger more quickly and lay them down more slowly. But

some both receive them slowly and lose them more quickly. In which four ways, indeed, the reader clearly recognizes that the last approaches more to the good of tranquillity than the first, and the third surpasses the second in evil. But what does it profit that we say how anger holds the mind, if we do not also express how it ought to be restrained?

81. Two modes of restraining anger. ---For in two ways anger, being broken, becomes unaccustomed to possess the mind. The first indeed is, that the mind should be solicitous before it begins to do anything, and propose to itself all the contumelies which it can suffer, that meditating on the reproaches of its Redeemer, it may prepare itself for adversities. Which indeed coming, it receives the more strongly, as it has armed itself more cautiously by foreknowledge. For he who is caught unprovided by adversity, is found as it were sleeping by the enemy; and the enemy kills him more quickly, because he pierces one who does not resist. For he who prenotes imminent evils through solicitude, expects hostile incursions as if watching in ambush; and thence he is valiantly girded for victory, whence he was thought to be caught unknowing. Solicitously, therefore, the mind before the beginnings of its action ought to meditate on all adversities; that always thinking on these, always protected against these by the breastplate of patience, it may both providently overcome whatever shall happen, and whatever shall not happen it may count as gain. But the second mode of preserving

meekness is, that when we behold the excesses of others, we should think on our own sins, in which we have exceeded in other things. For the consideration of our own infirmity excuses to us the evils of others. For he patiently bears an injury brought upon him, who piously remembers that perhaps he still has that in which he himself ought to be tolerated. And as if fire is extinguished by water, when fury rises in the mind, his own fault is recalled to the mind of each one, because he is ashamed not to spare sins, who remembers that he has often committed sins to be spared either by God or his neighbor.

82. One anger is from impatience, another from zeal. The first blinds the eye, the other so disturbs it as to dispose it to seeing more clearly. ---But among these it is to be wisely known that one is the anger which impatience excites, another which zeal forms. The former is generated from vice, the latter from virtue. For if no anger arose from virtue, Phinehas would not have appeased the impetus of divine animadversion by the sword. Because Eli did not have this anger, he excited the motion of heavenly vengeance implacablemente against himself. For in as much as he was lukewarm against the vices of his subjects, so much did the strictness of the eternal Rector burn against him. Of this it is said by the Psalmist: Be angry, and sin not (Psal. IV, 5). Which indeed they do not rightly understand, who wish us to be angry only with ourselves, and not also with our neighbors when they delinquent. For if we are commanded to love our neighbors as

ourselves, it remains that we should be angry at their errors as at our own vices. Of this it is said by Solomon: Anger is better than laughter, because by the sadness of the countenance the mind of the delinquent is corrected (Eccles. VII, 4). Of this again the Psalmist says: My eye is disturbed through anger (Psal. VI, 8). For anger through vice blinds the eye of the mind, but anger through zeal disturbs it; because by that at least by which it is shaken by the emulation of what is right, that contemplation which cannot be perceived except by a tranquil heart is dissipated. For the very zeal of rectitude, because it agitates the mind with disquietude, soon obscures its sight, so that it does not see in commotion the higher things which it saw almost before when tranquil. But thence it is more subtly led back to high things, whence for a time, lest it should see, it is beaten back. For that emulation of eternal right opens more largely in tranquility after a little while those things which it meanwhile closes through commotion; and whence the mind is disturbed lest it see, thence it profits so that it may be clarified for seeing more truly: as when eye-salve is put into a sick eye, light is entirely denied; but thence it truly receives it after a little while, whence it salubriously loses it for a time. But never is contemplation joined to commotion, nor is the perturbed mind able to behold that which the tranquil mind is scarcely able to gape after, because neither is the ray of the sun seen when the moved clouds of heaven cover its face, nor does the disturbed fountain return the image of

the beholder, which the tranquil one properly shows, because in as much as its wave palpitates, so much does it obscure the species of likeness in itself.

83. Caution must be taken lest anger, when moved from zeal, should dominate the mind. --- But when the mind is moved through zeal, it is to be taken care of above all things that this same anger, which is assumed as an instrument of virtue, should not dominate the mind, nor precede it as if a mistress, but as a handmaid ready for service, should never recede from the back of reason. For then it is more robustly raised against vices, when subject to reason it serves as a handmaid. For however much anger may arise from the zeal of rectitude, if immoderate it overcomes the mind, it immediately contemns to serve reason; and it dilates itself more impudently, the more it thinks the vice of impatience to be a virtue. Whence it is necessary that he who is moved by the zeal of rectitude should attend to this before all things, lest anger should pass outside the dominion of the mind, but in the vengeance of sin considering time and mode, he should restrain the rising perturbation of the soul by more subtle retractation, repress animosity, and dispose fervid motions under equity; so that he may become a more just avenger of another, by how much he first stood as his own victor, that he may so correct the faults of delinquents, as he who corrects may first grow through patience, and judge his own fervor by transcending it, lest being intemperately excited by the very zeal of

rectitude, he should wander far from rectitude. Because indeed, as we have said, even the laudable emulation of a good mind disturbs the eye, it is now rightly said: Anger killeth the foolish man. As if it were openly said: Anger through zeal disturbs the wise, but anger through vice slays the foolish, because the former is restrained under reason, but the latter irrationally dominates the conquered mind. But well it is subjoined.

CHAPTER XLVI.

IBID.---And envy slayeth the little one.

84. The envious man by the very fact of his envying testifies that he is less than him whom he envies. ---For we are not able to envy except those whom we think in some way better than ourselves. He therefore is a little one who is slain by envy, because he gives testimony to himself that he is less than him by whose envy he is tortured. Hence it is that the crafty enemy stole upon the first man by envying him, because having lost beatitude, he recognized himself to be less than his immortality. Hence it is that Cain fell into the commission of fratricide (Gen. IV, 5-7); because his sacrifice being despised, he fretted that one was preferred to him whose host God accepted: and whom he abhorred to be better than himself, he cut off, lest he should be at all. Hence Esau burned to the persecution of his brother (Gen. XXV, 34; XXVII, 41), because having lost the blessing of the first-born, which nevertheless he himself had sold for a meal of lentils, he groaned that he was less than him whom he preceded

in being born. Hence his brothers sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites passing by (Gen. XXXVII, 27, 28), because having known the mystery of revelation, lest he should become better than they, they endeavored to oppose his advancements. Hence Saul pursued David, his subject, by hurlnig a spear (I Sam. XVIII, 11), because he feared that he whom he felt to be increased daily with great successes of virtues, would grow beyond him. He therefore is a little one who is slain by envy, because unless he were himself inferior, he would not grieve at the good of another.

85. In envy the ancient serpent shakes and vomits all his poison. Description of the envious man. ---But among these things it is to be known that although through every vice which is perpetrated, the poison of the ancient enemy is infused into the human heart, yet in this wickedness the serpent shakes all his bowels, and vomits the pest of malice to be imprinted. Of which indeed it is written: By the envy of the devil death entered into the world (Wisd. II, 24). For when the rottenness of envy has corrupted the conquered heart, even the exterior parts indicate how heavily madness instigates the mind. For the color is affected with pallor, the eyes are depressed, the mind is inflamed, and the limbs freeze, there is madness in the thought, gnashing in the teeth; and when the growing hatred is hidden in the retreats of the heart, the enclosed wound pierces the conscience with blind pain. Nothing of his own pleases as joyful, because his own punishment wounds the wasting mind, which the felicity of another tor-

tures; and by how much the fabric of another's work is led on high, by so much the foundation of the envious mind is dug deeper; so that where others hasten to better things, there he himself may fall more miserably; by which ruin indeed even that is destroyed which was thought to have risen as a perfect work in other acts. For envy when it has wasted the mind, consumes all the well-done things which it shall find. Whence it is well said by Solomon: Soundness of heart is the life of the flesh; but envy is the rottenness of the bones (Prov. XIV, 30). For what are signified by the flesh except certain weak and tender things; and what by the bones, except strong acts? And it for the most part happens that some with true innocence of heart seem weak in some of their acts; but some now exercise some robust things before human eyes, but nevertheless waste within by the pestilence of envy towards the goods of others. Well therefore is it said: Soundness of heart is the life of the flesh, because if the innocence of the mind is guarded, even if some things are weak without, they are sometimes strengthened. And rightly is it subjoined: Envy is the rottenness of the bones, because through the vice of envy even strong acts of virtues perish before the eyes of God. For the bones to rot through envy, is for certain robust things to perish.

86. The diminution and death of envy, is the beginning or perfect love of eternity. But why do we say these things about envy, if we do not also intimate how it may be rooted out? For it is difficult for a man not to envy another in that which

the other desires to obtain; because whatever temporal thing is received, it becomes so much the less to each, as it is divided among many; and therefore envy tortures the mind of the desirer, because that which he reaches after, another either by receiving it entirely takes it away, or by its quantity restricts it. He, therefore, who desires to be fully free from the plague of envy, let him love that inheritance which the number of co-heirs does not straiten; which is both one to all, and whole to each; which is shown to be so much the more large, as the multitude of those who receive it is expanded. The diminution of envy, therefore, is the rising affection of internal sweetness; and the full death of it is the perfect love of eternity. For when the mind is withdrawn from the desire of that thing which is partitioned by the number of those who receive it, so much the more it loves its neighbor, as it less fears its own losses from his advancement. Which, if it is perfectly rapt in the love of the heavenly country, is also fully solidified in the love of its neighbor without any envy; because when it desires no earthly things, there is nothing that contradicts its charity toward its neighbor. Which charity, what else is it but the eye of the mind; which if it is touched by the dust of earthly love, is soon beaten back and hurt from the intuition of the internal light? Because, however, he is a little one who loves earthly things, and great who covets eternal things, it may also be thus not inconveniently understood: Envy slayeth the silly one, since no one dies by

the languor of this plague, except him who is yet weak in his desires.

SECOND PART, CONTAINING FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK SIX.

The whole of the fifth chapter, beginning from the third verse, is explained in a spiritual sense, some few things allegorically, but the greater part morally.

CHAPTER I.

181. Job represents Christ and the Church, his friends represent heretics. I have proposed to discuss the words of blessed Job and his friends, preserving the truth of the history, by a mystical interpretation; because it is clear to all who know the truth that holy Scripture takes care to promise the Redeemer of the world in all its allegations, and studied to signify him through all the elect, as if through his members. Whence also the same blessed Job is called in the Latin eloquence 'grieving,' so that through both his name and his wounds, the passion of our Redeemer might be designated, of whom the prophet says: Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows (Isa. 53:4). From whom the tempter, having taken away all things, slew both servants and sons; because he struck with the weapon of perfidy in the time of his passion not only the

Jewish people serving out of fear, but also the apostles themselves regenerated in his love. The body of blessed Job is worn away by a wound, because our Redeemer did not disdain to be fixed with nails on the gibbet of the cross. But from the sole of the foot even to the crown of the head he received wounds, because the raging tempter afflicts the holy Church, which is his body, with persecution not only through the extreme and last, but even to the highest members. Whence also Paul said: I fill up those things which are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh (Col. 1:24). Whom his wife strives to persuade to curse, because all the carnal within the holy Church exist as crafty helpers of the tempter. For she who provokes him to curse, designates the life of the carnal; because, as we have already said above (Book III, c. 20, n. 36, 37), those placed within the holy Church with uncorrected morals, by as much as they are near to the good through faith, by so much the more hardly do they press them through their life. For because they cannot be avoided as if faithful, they are tolerated by the faithful so much the worse, as they are the more internal. But his friends, who come as if to console, but exceed in words of harsh invective, hold the type of heretics, who when they strive to defend God against the good, offend.

2. The spiritual senses which Gregory brings forth, proceed from the root of history. The words of Job's friends are by no means to be reprobated in all things. These things therefore spoken more largely above, I have now studied

to gird up briefly from a mystical designation, so that my reader might remember from this very replication that in this work I serve the spiritual understanding. And yet when the use of utility demands, I also study to discuss the words of the history subtly. But when it is necessary, I embrace both at once, so that allegory may germinate spiritual fruits, which nevertheless the truth of history produces from the root. But the friends of blessed Job, whom we said held the type of heretics, we by no means reprobate in all things in their sayings, because while it is said against them through the supernal sentence: Ye have not spoken before me the thing that is right, and immediately it is subjoined, as my servant Job (Job 42:7), it is certainly clear that that is not entirely despised which is reprobated by comparison with the better. For they incautiously slide into his reprehension; but nevertheless because they are friends of so great a man, they learned many mystical things from his familiarity. Whence as we also said above (Book V, n. 27), Paul also uses their words, and assuming these in aid of his assertion, testifies that they were brought forth from the truth. Which truth nevertheless rightly reproves them, because however strong a sentence ought not to have been brought forth against a holy man. Mystically therefore the words of Eliphaz may be weighed, with which he speaks to blessed Job, saying:

CHAPTER II.

VERS. 3.---I saw the fool with a firm root, and I cursed his beauty immediately.

ALLEGORICAL SENSE. 3. The Jews are fools, even obnoxious to the malediction of heretics on account of the rejection of Christ. For the Jewish people stood as a foolish one, because it despised the very presence of eternal Wisdom in the flesh. Which as if with a firm root gained strength, because it overcame by extinguishing temporally the life of the elect. But Eliphaz despises this one by cursing, because surely all heretics, of whom we said the friends of blessed Job held the type, when they glory in the name of Christ, reprove the perfidy of the Jews by authority. Of which fool it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 4.---Let his children be far from safety, and let them be crushed in the gate, and there shall be none to deliver them.

4. All the perfidious are children of these. They are crushed in Christ, who is the gate. The children of this fool are all who are generated by the preaching of that perfidy. Who surely are far from safety, because even if they receive temporal life without affliction, they are struck more heavily with eternal vengeance, as the Lord says of these same children of his: Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves (Matt. 23:15). It follows: And let them be crushed in the gate, and there shall be none to

deliver them. Who else ought to be understood by the name of 'gate,' but the Mediator of God and men, who says: I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved (John 10:9)? The children of this fool, therefore, advance outside the gate, and are crushed in the gate, because the depraved offspring of the Jews flourished in the observation of the Law before the advent of the Mediator; but in the very presence of our Redeemer they fell, repulsed from the service of the Divinity by the merits of their perfidy. Whom surely there is no one to deliver, because surely while they tried to extinguish the Redeemer himself by persecuting him, they cut off the remedies of deliverance offered to them; of which it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 5.---Whose harvest the hungry shall eat, and the armed man shall seize him.

5. The Gentiles eat their harvest, that is, the sacred oracles, and seize their riches. For the harvest of this fool had been the crop of sacred speech. For certain grains of the ears are the words of the prophets, which the fool had, but did not eat, because the Jewish people held the Law indeed as far as the word, but through the fastidiousness of foolishness they fasted from its understanding. But the hungry man eats the harvest of this fool, because surely the Gentile people eats by understanding the words of the Law, at which the Jewish people labored without understanding. The Lord foresaw these hungry ones of

the faith, when he said through the Evangelist: Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled (Matt. 5:6). Of these hungry ones it is said by Anna prophesying: They that were full before have hired out themselves for bread; and the hungry were satisfied (1 Sam. 2:5). But because he lost the harvest, it is rightly subjoined how the fool himself also perishes, when it is said: And the armed man shall seize him. Which surely Truth forewarns the disciples, saying: The hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service (John 16:2). It follows: The ancient enemy seized the Jewish people armed, because in it he extinguished the life of faith by the darts of fraudulent suggestion, so that from whence it believed itself to adhere to God, from thence it resisted his ordination.

CHAPTER V.

IBID.---And the thirsty shall drink up his riches.

6. The oracles of God are both a harvest and riches. In what way they are said both to be eaten and to be drunk. The thirsty drink up the riches of this fool, because the converted minds of the Gentiles are irrigated by the streams of sacred speech, which the Jewish people had possessed in the ostentation of pride. Whence also it is said to the same through the prophet: Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye (Isa. 55:1). Because indeed by the name of 'money' the divine oracles

are signified, the Psalmist testifies, saying: The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth (Ps. 12:6). They, therefore, who have no money, are called to the waters, because surely the Gentile world, which had not received the precepts of holy Scripture, is satiated by the inundation of sacred speech, which it now drinks so much the more greedily, as it had long thirsted for this dry. The same divine oracles, therefore, are called both harvests and riches: harvests, because they refresh the fasting mind; riches, because they compose us with great beauty of morals. The same are said both to be eaten and to be drunk, because surely while some things in them are obscure, which we do not understand except interpreted, these we swallow as if by chewing; while some things truly easy to be understood we take as we find them, these we drink as if not chewed, because we swallow them whole. We run through these things under a mystical understanding in a brief speech, lest by chance we should seem to have passed over anything. But because the friends of blessed Job could not be his friends, unless they also shone in certain things with great honesty of morals, it remains that we should inquire morally into the virtue of their senses in their words, that while the weight of their speech is discussed, of what doctrine they were, might be shown.

CHAPTER VI.

VERS. 3.---I saw the fool with a firm root, and I cursed his beauty immediately.

MORAL SENSE. 7. Those following earthly things seem in prosperity with a firm root. A fool is fixed in the earth as if with a firm root, because he is solidified in earthly love with all his desires. Whence also Cain is described as the first to have built a city in the earth (Gen. 4:17), so that it might be openly shown that he placed a foundation in the earth, who was an alien from the solidity of the heavenly country. A fool is lifted up as if with a firm root, when he is supported here with temporal prosperity; so that he may attain all that he desires, sustain no adversities, prevail without resistance against the weak, contradict those acting well with authority, and arrive at greater advantages always from a worse action, so that from whence he deserts the way of life, from thence for a time he may live more happy. But when the weak behold the wicked to flourish, they tremble; and being troubled in themselves by the prosperity of sinners, they waver within in the steps of the mind. Of whom surely the Psalmist took the person when he said: But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped; for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked (Ps. 73:2, 3).

8. The prudent despise their glory. Nor do they delay to condemn. But when the strong behold their glory, they immediately attend to what punishment follows after glory; and with a deep internal thought they despise that which the proud swell with without, with the pride of empty inflation. Well therefore is it said: I saw

the fool with a firm root, and I cursed his beauty immediately. For to curse the beauty of a fool, is to judge his glory from considered damnation, because he is overwhelmed so much more atrociously in torments, as he is lifted up higher in sins; because that passes away which is extolled, that remains which is punished; because he who is honored in the way, will be condemned in the arrival; and he reaches as if through pleasant meadows to a prison, who through the prosperity of the present life tends to destruction. It is to be noted, however, that when he said he had cursed the beauty of the fool, he immediately added, 'immediately.' For it is the custom of the human and weak mind, that it is varied with the quality of those things which it looks upon. For often its judgment is led with the very appearance of the present thing, and according to that which it beholds, its intention and sense are formed. For very many, while they discern the glory of certain ones, are delighted with the sights of the same glory, and think it something great, and wish that they might deserve such things. But when they behold any glorious ones, either suddenly cast down, or perhaps even dying, because human glory in every way is nothing, they confess with a groan, so that they immediately say: Behold how nothing is man. Who surely would say this more rightly, if when they saw a man in glory, then thinking of his destruction, they had felt that passing power was nothing. For then human elation is to be weighed how nothing it is, when it lifts itself up above others by successes. Then it

is to be considered with what course felicity flies away, when it prevails before human eyes as if permanent. For any weak ones are able to weigh in death itself that the glory of one about to die is nothing. For then even those detract from it, who follow and love this even unto death. Well therefore is it said: I saw the fool with a firm root, and I cursed his beauty immediately. As if he said openly: Against the beauty of a fool, I had no delay in cursing, because when I saw this, I also saw at once the following punishment. For I would not have cursed immediately, if any delight in that glory had held me; but I cursed without slowness, because beholding the punishments about to remain, I reprobated his power without hesitation. But because all the iniquitous the more they advance in this world, the more they draw with them to destruction, it is rightly subjoined: Let his children be far from safety. For the children of a fool are they who are born in the ambition of this world from his imitation; who surely become so much further from safety, as they are struck with no infirmity in the perpetration of iniquity. Of whom it is well added:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 4.---And let them be crushed in the gate, and there shall be none to deliver them.

9. The day of judgment is the gate of the kingdom. Then he who refused to be corrected here cannot be delivered. For as the approach to a city is called a gate; so is the day of judgment the gate of the kingdom, because through it an

entrance is made by all the elect to the glory of the heavenly country. Whence also when Solomon beheld this day approaching to the retribution of holy Church, he said: Her husband is noble in the gates, when he sitteth among the senators of the land (Prov. 31:23). For the husband of the Church is the Redeemer of the human race, who shows himself noble in the gates, who before existed despised in contumelies, but will appear sublime in the entrance of the kingdom. Who resides with the senators of the land, because he will decree the sentence of judgment with the saints, the preachers of the same Church, as he himself says in the Gospel: Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his majesty, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). Which Isaiah also foretelling long before says: The Lord will come to judgment with the ancients of his people (Isa. 3:14). Of these gates Solomon says again: Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates (Prov. 31:31). For then holy Church receives of the fruit of her hands, when the retribution of her labor lifts her up to perceive heavenly things. Then her works praise her in the gates, when it is said to her members in the very approach of the kingdom: I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me (Matt. 25:35), and the rest. The children of this fool, therefore, were lifted up before the gate, but they shall be crushed in the gate,

because the lovers of this world are proud in the present life, but in the very approach of the kingdom they are struck with eternal animadversion. But it is well subjoined: And there shall be none to deliver them. For Truth delivers those from eternal adversity, whom he presses by discipline in temporal prosperities. He, therefore, who now refuses to be pressed, then cannot be delivered, because the iniquitous do not find him a deliverer by aid in the time of their affliction, whom they neglect to have as a father through discipline. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 5.---Whose harvest the hungry shall eat.

10. The wicked man, understanding and saying right things, has a harvest which others may eat. The fool also has a harvest, when any iniquitous person receives the gift of right understanding: he is taught by the sentences of Holy Scripture, he speaks good things, but yet in no way does he work that which he says: he brings forth the words of God, yet does not love them; by praising he exaggerates them, by living he tramples them. Because therefore this fool both understands and says right things, but yet does not love them by working, he fasts while having a harvest. Which indeed the hungry man eats, because he who pants after God with holy desires, learns what he hears, and does what he has learned; and while he is refreshed by the right preaching of a wicked teacher, what

else is it than that he is satisfied with the fruit of a fool? Did not Truth admonish his hungry ones, that they should eat the harvest of the fool, when to those burning with holy desires, he commanded concerning the Pharisees, saying: All things whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works (Matt. 23:3). As if he openly said: They cultivate the harvest of the word by speaking, but this they by no means touch by living ill. Let this harvest therefore refresh your hunger, because they keep this for you through the loathing of their own fatuity. But it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

IBID.---And the armed man shall seize him.

11. The devil often permits knowledge, that he may corrupt life. For the ancient enemy is overcome as if unarmed, when, openly suggesting evil things to the human mind, he endeavors to destroy all good things at once. But he comes armed, when, leaving some good things untouched, he secretly corrupts others. For often he does not tempt some in the understanding, and does not oppose them in the meditation of holy eloquence; but yet he supplants their life in operation, who, while they are praised for the virtue of knowledge, by no means regard the losses of their own works; and when the mind is led into the delight of favor, it does not heal the wounds of its own life. The armed enemy therefore has seized him, whom, covered with fraud, leaving

him in some things, he has overcome in another part. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

IBID.---And the thirsty shall drink up his riches.

12. Often the dull person understands by studying in the erudition of the divine law, that which the ingenious one knows not through negligence. Often the fool has a fountain of internal liquor, but he does not drink, because he indeed receives the genius of understanding, but yet he contemns knowing the sentences of truth by reading; he knows that he might prevail in understanding by studying, but being fastidious he ceases from all study of doctrine. The riches of the mind also are the words of sacred locution; but the fool beholds these riches with his eyes, and by no means takes them for the use of his ornament, because hearing the words of the law, he considers them indeed to be great, but he labors with no study of love to comprehend them. But on the contrary, another has thirst, but has not genius; love draws him to meditate, but the dullness of his sense contradicts him; and often he understands that in the erudition of the divine law by studying at some time, which the ingenious person knows not through negligence. The thirsty, therefore, drink the riches of this fool, while the dull who love attain the precepts of God, which the fastidious ingenious know not. In these indeed the eye of love enlightens the darkness of dullness; for thirst opens that

to the slower, which fastidiousness closes to the swifter. Who also therefore arrive at the heights of understanding, because they contemn none of the things which they have understood, even the least; and while they help their sense with their hands, they raise themselves beyond the height of the ingenious. Whence it is well said by Solomon: The stellio (lizard) stays itself with its hands, and dwelleth in kings' houses (Prov. 30:28). For for the most part birds, which their feather raises to flight, reside in briars; and the stellio, which has not feathers for flight, leaning on its hands, holds the edifice of the kingdom, because indeed often those who are ingenious, while they are torpid through negligence, remain in wicked acts, and the simple, whom the feather of genius does not help, the virtue of operation raises to obtain the walls of the eternal kingdom. The stellio therefore, while it stays itself with its hands, dwelleth in the king's houses, because the simple person arrives thither through the intention of right work, whither the ingenious person by no means ascends. But having heard these things, a question arises in our heart, why either the gift of understanding is bestowed on the negligent, or any studious person is hindered by the slowness of his own sense? To which it is more quickly answered, while it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 6.---Nothing on earth is without cause.

13. Why genius is bestowed slow to study, but sharp to the negligent. For therefore often even the slothful receives genius, that he may be more justly punished for negligence, because he contemns knowing what he could have attained without labor. And therefore sometimes the studious person is pressed by slowness of understanding, that he may find so much greater rewards of retribution, by how much more he labors in the study of discovery. Nothing therefore is on earth without cause, when both slowness profits the studious for a reward, and quickness increases for the slothful unto punishment. But for understanding those things which are right, we are sometimes instructed by the study of labor, but sometimes by the pain of percussion (scourging). Whence when it had been said, Nothing on earth is without cause; it is aptly immediately added:

CHAPTER XII.

IBID.---And sorrow shall not spring out of the ground.

14. Through the secret merits of minds, open scourges of punishments go forth. For sorrow goes forth as if from the ground, when man, created in the image of God, is scourged by insensitive things. But because through the secret merits of minds, open scourges of punishments go forth, sorrow does not spring from the ground, because the malice of our sense requires that it be struck by insensitive things. For behold, we see that for our correction the expected rain is

withheld from the parched earth, and the misty air is dried up by the burning sun; the sea rages with swelling storms, and intercepts some who have been taken up to pass over, and opposes the desired journey to others by the wave raised up into a heap; the earth not only diminishes the germs of fecundity, but even consumes the seeds received. In all which indeed is plainly beheld that which a certain wise man testifies concerning the Lord, saying: And the whole world shall fight with him against the unwise (Wisd. 5:21). For the world of the earth fights with the Lord against the unwise, when the adversity of the elements also militates in the punishment of the delinquent. But yet sorrow does not spring from the ground, because any insensitive thing whatsoever is excited to our affliction by the stimulus of our action. Sorrow does not spring from the ground, because by no means does punishment arise from that creature which strikes, but without doubt from that which by sinning extorted the force of the percussion. But we must take great care that when we are affected with the weight of sorrow in exterior things, we may tend by hope to the things above; so that the mind may arrive thither at the heights, whither the exterior punishment chastens us. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 7.---Man is born to labor, and the bird to flight.

15. As much as the flesh is affected by scourges, the mind is raised to higher things. For man is born to labor because indeed he who is endowed with received reason, considers that it is very impossible for him to escape these times of his pilgrimage (peregrinatio) without a groan. Whence well Paul, when he enumerated his tribulations to his disciples, added: For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto (1 Thess. 3:3). But in that the flesh is affected by scourges, the mind is raised to desire higher things; Paul again testifying, who says: For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). Man, therefore, is born to labor, and the bird to flight, because the mind flies away to the highest things from thence, whence the flesh labors more hardly in the lowest things.

16. The heavy labor of the carnal, none of the spiritual. The life of the carnal can also be signified by the appellation of man. Whence also Paul says: For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal? (1 Cor. 3:3.) To whom a little after he subjoined, saying: Are ye not men? (Ibid., 4.) In this life, therefore, man is born to labor, because every carnal person, when he desires transitory things, afflicts himself with the weight of his own desires. For it is a heavy labor, to seek this very glory of the present life, to perceive it at some time when sought, and when perceived to guard it with circumspection (circumspectio). It is a heavy labor, to apprehend that with great fatigue, which he

who shall apprehend it knows cannot stand long. But holy men, because they do not love transitory things, not only tolerate no weights of temporal desires; but even if any adverse things arise, they do not labor in those very pressures and languors of theirs. For what is harder than scourges? and yet concerning the scourged apostles it is written: They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41). What labor, therefore, is there to their minds, to whom even the punishment of stripes is not labor? Man, therefore, is born to labor, because he truly feels the evils of this world, who gapingly desires its goods. For whose mind is suspended to high things, whatever is moved against it from without is beneath it. Well therefore is subjoined, And the bird to flight. Because by so much the mind subtends itself from the affliction of labor, by how much it raises itself through hope to the highest things. Had not Paul been born, as it were a bird, to flight, who sustaining so many adverse things said: Our conversation (conduct) is in heaven (Phil. 3:20)? And again: For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1). As a bird, therefore, he had transcended the lowest things, whom, while yet lingering in the body on earth, the feather of hope already raised to the heights. But because no one by his own strength is able to raise himself to the heights, so that when he is afflicted with visible things, he

may be raised to invisible things, it is rightly soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERS. 8.---Wherefore I will pray to the Lord, and to God I will set my speech.

17. This is the gift of God. As if he plainly said: I entreat Him, by whom I know these things are bestowed. For if he believed that he had this of himself, he would not need to pray to God. It follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 9.---Who doeth great things and unsearchable and wonderful things without number.

18. The wonderful works of God have become cheap to human eyes by usage. Who may suffice to search out the wonderful things of Almighty God, that He created all things from nothing, that the very fabric of the world was disposed by the wonderful power of His strength, and the heaven is suspended above the air, and the earth is balanced above the abyss; that all this universe exists from invisible and visible things, that He made man, as I might so say, gathering in brief another world, but a rational one; that constituting him of soul and flesh, by an unsearchable disposition of power He mingled spirit and clay (lutum)? Of these things, therefore, some we know, and some we are; but yet we neglect to wonder, because those things which are won-

derful by incomprehensible investigation, have become cheap to human eyes by usage. Whence it comes to pass that if a dead man be raised, all leap out into admiration, and daily man who was not is born, and no one wonders, when without doubt it is clear to all that it is more to be created what was not, than to be repaired what was. Because the dry rod of Aaron flourished, all wondered; daily a tree is produced from the parched earth, and the virtue of dust is turned into wood, and no one wonders. Because five thousand men were satisfied with five loaves, all wondered that the foods increased in their teeth; daily the scattered grains of seeds are multiplied in the fullness of ears, and no one wonders. Beholding water once changed into wine all wondered; daily the moisture of the earth attracted into the root of the vine, is turned into wine through the cluster, and no one wonders. Wonderful therefore are all things which men neglect to wonder at, because, as we said before, they are torpid for considering them by usage. But well when he said: Who doeth great things, he immediately added: And unsearchable. For it had been less to do great things, if yet those things which were done could have been searched out. But it is rightly subjoined: And wonderful things without number, because it would be of less magnitude, if those unsearchable things which He created had been few.

19. The miracles of God are to be considered by study, not discussed by the intellect. Where faith wavers, how it is to be strengthened. Whence the resurrection becomes credible. But among these

things it is to be known that divine miracles ought both always to be considered by study, and never to be discussed by the intellect. For often the human sense, while seeking the reason of certain things and not finding it, plunges itself into the whirlpool of doubt. Whence it comes to pass that some men consider the bodies of the dead reduced to dust; and while they cannot collect the force of the resurrection from reason, they despair that these can return to their former state. Wonderful things, therefore, are to be believed from faith, they are not to be searched out through reason; because if reason expanded these to our eyes, they would not be wonderful. But when perhaps the mind wavers in these things, it is necessary that it should bring back to memory those things which it knows by usage, and yet does not collect by reason; so that by the argument of a similar thing it may strengthen the faith which it finds to be shaken by its own sagacity. For having considered the dust of human flesh, the shaken mind of some despairs, as to when dust may return to flesh, and compose the revived body through the lineaments of the members; when that aridity of the earth may grow green through living members, and distinguish itself through their species and forms. This indeed cannot be comprehended by reason, but yet it can easily be believed by an example. For who would believe that an immense tree should rise from one grain of seed, unless he held this certain by experiment? For in such great smallness of one grain and almost no dissimilarity of

itself, where lies hid the hardness of the wood, and the pith softer or harder than the wood, the roughness of the bark, the greenness of the root, the savor of the fruits, the sweetness of the odors, the diversity of colors, the softness of the leaves? And yet because we know this by experiment, we do not doubt that all things proceed from one grain of seed. What therefore is difficult, that dust should return to members, while we daily behold the power of the Creator, who both wonderfully creates woods from a grain, and yet more wonderfully fruits from woods? Let him say therefore: Who doeth great things and unsearchable, and wonderful things without number, because the magnitude of divine works can neither be discussed from quality, nor numbered from quantity. Whence also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 10, 11.---Who giveth rain upon the face of the earth, and watereth all things with waters. Who setteth up on high those that be low, and lifteth up those that mourn with safety.

MYSTIC SENSE.---20. God waters all things with the waters of grace. Man is signified by the name of the universe. Because we believe the friends of blessed Job to have been instructed by his society, it is necessary that we discuss these words of Eliphaz mystically. For Almighty God bestows rain on the earth, when He pours the grace of heavenly preaching into the parched hearts of the Gentiles. And He waters all things with waters, because He forms the sterility of lost

man to fruitfulness by the filling of the Spirit, as Truth says by Himself: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst (John 4:13). But man is signified by the name of the universe, because in him is shown the true species and great communion of the universe. For everything that is, either is and does not live; or is and lives, but by no means feels; or is and lives and feels, but does not understand nor discern; or is and lives and feels and understands and discerns. For there are stones, yet they do not live. There are shrubs, they live indeed, yet they do not feel. For the life of herbs and trees is called greenness, as it is said by Paul concerning seeds: Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die (1 Cor. 15:36). There are brute animals, they live and feel, yet they do not understand. There are angels, and they live and feel, and discern by understanding. Man therefore, because he has it in common to be with stones, to live with trees, to feel with animals, to discern with angels, is rightly expressed by the name of the universe, in whom according to something the universe itself is held. Whence also Truth says to the disciples: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). Namely, He willed man alone to be understood as every creature, to whom He created something common with all things.

21. God waters all things, when He calls from every kind of men to His knowledge. Although in this place "all things" can be understood otherwise also. For the grace of the Holy Spirit, when it

subjects the rich to itself, does not repel the poor; when it humbles the strong, it does not refuse the weak to come to it; when it collects the noble, it at the same time apprehends the ignoble; when it receives the wise, it does not contemn the foolishness of the unskilful. God therefore waters all things with waters, who by the gift of the Holy Spirit calls from every kind of men to His knowledge.

22. God waters all things, because He forms the force of His word in individuals according to the diversity of characters. But the very dissimilarities of characters can be designated by the name of "all things". For one is lifted up by elation, another is inclined by the weight of fear, another boils with lust, another pants with avarice, another casts himself down by remissness, another boils with anger. But through the doctrine of holy eloquence, while humility is bestowed on the proud, confidence is provided to the fearful, the luxurious is cleansed from uncleanness by the study of chastity, the avaricious is tempered from the heat of ambition by continence, the remiss is raised up by the rectitude of zeal (zelus), the wrathful is restrained from the excitement of his precipitation, God waters all things with waters; because He forms the force of His word in individuals according to the diversity of characters, so that everyone may find that in His eloquence, through which he may bear the germ of necessary virtue. Whence it is said by a certain wise man concerning the sweetness of manna: Thou didst provide them bread from heaven prepared

without labor, having in itself all delight, and the sweetness of every taste (Wisd. 16:20). For the manna had in itself all delight and the sweetness of every taste, in that namely in the mouth of the spiritual, it gave a taste according to the will of those eating, because the divine word both congruous to all, and not discrepant from itself, condescends to the quality of the hearers; which while every elect person profitably understands according to his own measure, he as it were turns the received manna into a voluntary taste. And because the glory of retribution follows the labor of a good work, after the watering of the waters it is rightly subjoined: Who setteth up on high those that be low, and lifteth up those that mourn with safety.

[Vet. VIII, Rec. X.] 23. Glory and joy will receive the servants of God, now despised and afflicted.--- The humble are set up on high, because those who are now despised for the love of God, then come as judges with God, just as that which we have already said a little before, Truth promises to the same humble ones, saying: You who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit upon twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). Then the Lord lifts up those that mourn with safety (sospitate), because those who, kindled by His desires, flee prosperity, suffer adversity, tolerate the tortures of persecutors, and chastise themselves through lamentations, receive then a safety so much the more sublime, as they now

devoutly die to all the joys of the world. For hence it is that it is said by Solomon: The heart that knoweth the bitterness of its own soul, in its joy a stranger shall not intermeddle (Prov. 14:10). For the human mind knows the bitterness of its soul when, kindled by desires for the eternal country, it acknowledges the penalty of its pilgrimage by weeping; but in its joy a stranger shall not intermeddle, because he who is now a stranger to the sorrow of compunction, is not then a partaker in the gladness of consolation. Hence it is that in the Gospel Truth says: Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy (John 16:20). And again: You now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you (Ibid. 22). Therefore the Lord is said to lift up those that mourn with safety, because He consoles with true salvation those afflicted temporally for His sake. Which, however, nothing prevents from being understood concerning the elect of God even in this life.

24. The humble are already set up on high from this life.--- The humble are indeed set up on high, because when they submit themselves out of humility, by the judgment of a high mind they pass beyond all temporal things; and when they estimate themselves as unworthy in all things, by the examination of right thought they transcend and tread upon the glory of this world. Let us see the humble Paul. Behold, he says to the disciples:

For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord; and ourselves your servants through Christ (2 Cor. 4:5). Let us see this humble man already set up on high. He says: Know you not that we shall judge angels (1 Cor. 6:3)? And again: He hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). Perhaps a chain then bound him outwardly, yet in mind he had been set in high places, who already through the certitude of his hope sat in the heavenly places. Holy men therefore are despised outwardly, and tolerate all things as if unworthy; but trusting themselves to be worthy of the heavenly seats, they expect the glory of eternity with certitude; and while they labor outwardly in the adversity of persecution, they fly within to the fortified citadel of the mind; and from thence they look down upon all things passing under them, among which they also discern themselves passing away bodily; they fear not threats, because by suffering they contemn even torments. For hence it is said by Solomon: The just shall be as a confident lion without terror (Prov. 28:1). Hence it is written by him again: Whatsoever shall befall the just, it shall not make him sorrowful (Prov. 12:21). For because all the upright are situated on the high peak of their intention, while they do not feel death by dying, in a wonderful way the darts of the reprobate both strike them and do not touch them. The humble therefore are set up on high, because from whence they despise themselves in all things, from thence they become more secure against all things.

[Vet. IX, Rec. XI.] The mind, ceasing to long for the things that are above itself, falls incessantly beneath itself.--- On the contrary, it is rightly said to the reprobate mind under the figure of Babylon through the prophet: Come down, sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground; there is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans (Isai. 47:1). For in this place the human mind is called a virgin, not as being incorrupt, as I suppose, but as being unfruitful. And because Babylon is interpreted "confusion", an unfruitful mind is rightly called the daughter of Babylon, which, in that it by no means brings forth good works, while it is composed by no order of right life, is as it were generated by confusion as its mother. But if she is called a virgin not as being unfruitful, but as being incorrupt, she is called what she was to the increase of her confusion after she has lost the state of salvation. To whom it is aptly said by way of rebuke by the divine voice: Come down. For the human mind stands on high when it longs for heavenly retributions; but it comes down from this state when, basely conquered, it subjects itself to the flowing desires of the world. To which is well added immediately: Sit in the dust. For descending, it resides in the dust, because deserting heavenly things, sprinkled with earthly thoughts it becomes vile in weak things. Where still by doubling it is subjoined: Sit on the ground. As if He should say openly by way of reproach: Because thou wouldst not lift up thyself in heavenly conversation, being prostrate beneath thyself be humbled in earthly

acts. Whence also it is necessarily added immediately: There is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans. For "Chaldeans" is interpreted "ferocious". But they are exceedingly ferocious who, following their own wills, know not how to spare even their own deaths. Ferocious are earthly desires which, not only against the precepts of the Creator, but often even against the strokes of scourgings, render the mind hard and insensible. But the daughter of the ferocious has no throne, because the mind which is born for the love of the world from depraved desires, and is hardened by the same desires, in that it subjects itself to earthly concupiscences, loses the seat of judgment; and it presides over no throne within itself, because it lacks the examination of discretion, and is as it were repelled from the session of its own judgment, because it wanders through outward concupiscences. For it is clear that the mind which has lost the seat of counsel within, scatters itself abroad through innumerable desires. And because it dissembles to act upon things understood, it is rightly blinded, so that it even knows not what it does; and often by a just judgment it is left in its own very will, and is relaxed under those laborious ministries of the world which it anxiously seeks.

[Vet. X.] Whence it is aptly subjoined there: Because thou shalt no more be called soft and tender; take the millstone and grind flour (Ibid. 2). It is certainly certain that parents spare their tender daughter, nor do they afflict her with hard and servile works. Therefore Almighty God calls

it as it were a tender daughter when He recalls the beloved soul of everyone from the laborious services of this world; lest while it is affected by outward acts, it should be hardened from inward desires. But the daughter of the Chaldeans is not called soft and tender; because the mind given up to depraved desires, in that which it anxiously seeks is left to the labor of this world, so that it may serve the world as a handmaid without, which within by no means loves God as a daughter. Whence also she is commanded to take the millstone and grind flour. The millstone is turned in a circle, and flour is brought forth. But every action of this world is a millstone, which while it heaps up many cares, turns human minds as it were in a circle; and from itself it throws out as it were flour, because with a seduced heart, it always begets the smallest thoughts.

[Vet. XI.] But sometimes he who is believed to be of some merit while quiet, being placed in any action is stripped; whence it is subjoined there immediately: Uncover thy nakedness, discover thy shoulder, reveal thy legs, pass over the rivers (Ibid. 2). For in the administration of work turpitude is uncovered, while a vile and abject mind is known in the ostentation of action, which before when quiet was thought to be great. The mind discovers its shoulder when it shows its work which was unknown. It reveals its legs because it manifests with what steps of desires it longs for the gains of the world. It also passes over the rivers, because it incessantly seeks the actions of this world, which daily flow down to an end;

and while it leaves some, it follows others, as if it always tended from river to river. These things we have said in a few words by way of digression, that we might show where the mind lies when shaken from the throne of holy intention; because if it shall cease to long for the things that are above itself, it falls incessantly even beneath itself. But it is fixed on high if, deserting the love of temporal things, it is bound to the hope of immutable eternity.

26. The joy of the servants of God is true; the joy of the iniquitous is from insanity, not from safety.--- Well therefore is it said: Who setteth up on high those that be low. And aptly is subjoined: And lifteth up those that mourn with safety. Often in this world even any joyful persons are lifted up, while they swell with the very glory of their prosperity. But the Lord lifts up those that mourn with safety, because He raises up His afflicted ones to the glory of true joy with solidity. For they are lifted up with safety, not with insanity, who being placed in good acts, rejoice with a firm hope in God. For some, as we have said, both perpetrate iniquities, and cease not to rejoice; concerning whom it is said by Solomon: Who are glad when they have done evil, and rejoice in most wicked things (Prov. 2:14). And again: There are wicked men, who are so secure as if they had the deeds of the just (Eccles. 8:14). These certainly are not lifted up with safety, but with insanity, who are proud when they ought to have been afflicted; and from thence the miserable ones flow down in exultation, from whence

they are wept for by the good. Being namely similar to the senses of phrenetics, they think the insanity in which they prevail to be virtue; who know not that this which they can do more than the healthy is from disease; and they estimate that they have as it were increased in strength, while they approach the end of life through the increases of languor. Who because they have not the sense of reason, are wept for, and they laugh; and they so much expand themselves in great exultation, as they being insensible are ignorant of the evil which they suffer. Therefore the Lord lifts up those that mourn with safety, because the mind of the elect does not become cheerful from the insanity of the present life, but from the certitude of eternal salvation. Whence aptly is soon subjoined concerning this very destruction of the wicked:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 12.---Who dissipateth the thoughts of the malignant, so that their hands cannot accomplish what they had begun.

27. The thoughts of the wicked are often vain, but their conscience is no less guilty.--- The minds of the reprobate always keep watch over perverse thoughts, but for the most part heavenly dispensation meets them; and although they do not correct the depravity of their counsel even when broken by adversities, yet He restrains their strength, lest they should prevail against the good. Against whom it is acted by a wonderful judgment, so that they lack indeed the effect of

the evil work, and yet He adjudges them guilty of conscience to the just sentence of the Judge. In that therefore they think evil things, they show what they themselves would do; but in that they cannot fulfill the evil things, those against whom they had thought them are defended. Whence also it is still well subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERSE 13.---Who catcheth the wise in their own craftiness, and dissipateth the counsels of the wicked.

28. Those resisting the counsels of God serve them against their will. It is shown by the examples of the brothers of Joseph, of Saul, of Jonah, and of the Jews.--- For often some, puffed up with human wisdom, when they see the divine judgments contrary to their desires, try to resist them with crafty machinations; and that they may twist the force of heavenly dispensation to their own wish, they persist in cunning thoughts and seek out more subtle counsels; but from thence they fulfill the will of God, from whence they strive to change it; and they obey the counsel of Almighty God while they strive to resist it, because often even that which resulteth frivolously against Him through human zeal, aptly militates for His disposition. Therefore the Lord catcheth the wise in their very craftiness, when human deeds congruously serve His counsels even then when they resist. Which we show better if we bring forward a few examples of things done.

[Vet. XII.] 29. Joseph had seen a dream, that the sheaves of his brothers bowed down to his sheaf (Gen. 37:7); he had seen a dream, that the sun and moon with the rest of the stars adored him. Because he related these things purely to his brothers, envy and fear of his future dominion immediately struck their hearts. And when they saw him coming to them, with raging malice they said: Behold, that dreamer cometh; come, let us kill him, and let us see what his dreams will profit him (Ibid. 20). And when they feared to be subjected to his dominion, they put the dreamer down into a pit, and sold him to the passing Ishmaelites: who, being led into Egypt, subjected to servitude, condemned on an accusation of luxury, aided by the merit of chastity, and raised up by the judgment of prophecy, was set over all Egypt; and being provident through heavenly wisdom, he collected corn and met the future danger of necessity. And when famine rushed upon the world, Jacob, anxious about the preparation of food, sent his sons into Egypt: who unknowingly find Joseph set over the dispensation of the corn, and that they might deserve to receive food, they were compelled to adore their dispenser with necks prone to the earth. Let us consider therefore the order of the thing done, let us consider how the divine power catcheth the wise in their own craftiness. For this reason Joseph had been sold by them, lest he should be adored; but for this reason he was adored, because he was sold. For they dared to do something craftily, that the counsel of God might be

changed; but they served by resisting the divine judgment which they tried to decline. For from thence they were compelled to fulfill the will of God, from whence they labored craftily to change it. Thus the divine counsel is fulfilled while it is avoided; thus human wisdom is caught while it struggles. The brothers feared lest Joseph should grow up over them; but by taking precautions it was brought about that that should happen which had been divinely disposed. Human wisdom therefore was caught in itself, which from whence it resisted the will of God through intention, from thence it militated for its fulfillment.

[Vet. XIII.] 30. Thus Saul, when he saw David his subject increasing by a daily success of virtues, promised him his daughter in marriage, and asked for her dowry that a hundred foreskins of the Philistines should be given by him, so that when the challenged soldier sought to increase beyond himself, he might end his life being delivered to the swords of his enemies, as it is written: The king hath no need of any dowry, but only a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that he may be avenged of the king's enemies (1 Sam. 18:25). Moreover Saul thought to deliver David into the hands of the Philistines; but David, strengthened by the favor of the inward disposition, offered to give a hundred, and brought back two hundred foreskins. By the proof of which work Saul being certainly overcome, was caught by heavenly providence in the counsel of his own wisdom; because from whence he believed that he should

extinguish the life of the increasing soldier, from thence he heaped up the glory of his virtue.

31. But because sometimes even the elect strive to be wise craftily, it is pleasing to bring forward another wise man, and to demonstrate how the craftiness of mortals is caught in inward counsels. For Jonah indeed wished to be prudently wise, when, being sent to preach repentance to the Ninevites, because he feared Judea would be deserted if the Gentiles were elected, he refused to fulfill the office of preaching (Jonah 1:2, 3, etc.). He sought a ship and chose to flee to Tarshish; but immediately a storm arises, the lot is cast, so that namely it might be known by whose fault the sea was troubled. Jonah is discovered in fault, he is plunged into the deep, swallowed by a devouring whale, and he arrives there, carried by the beast, where he spontaneously contemned to go. Behold, the storm finds the fugitive of God, the lot binds him, the sea receives him, the beast encloses him, and because he struggles against obeying his Author, he is carried, a guilty prisoner, in his own prison to the place to which he had been sent. At the command of God the man would not minister the prophecy; at the inspiration of God the beast vomits the prophet. Therefore the Lord catcheth the wise in their own craftiness, when He reduces even that to the use of His own will, through which the human will contradicts Him.

32. Let us still scrutinize the wisdom of the Hebrews, that we may see what it prohibited by providing, and what it provoked by prohibiting.

Certainly when a crowd of believers flocked to the miracles of our Redeemer, when the priests of the people, kindled with the torches of envy, proclaimed that the world went after Him, saying: Do you see that we prevail nothing? behold, the whole world is gone after him (John 12:19); that they might cut off from Him the force of such a great concourse, they tried to end His power by death, saying: It is expedient for us that one man should die, and that the whole nation perish not (John 11:50). But the death of the Redeemer availed for the joining of His body, that is, the Church, not for its separation. Whence also through the law it is commanded that the throat of a turtledove or a pigeon, in the figure of our sacrifice, be cut and not entirely severed, so that even after death the head remains attached to the body (Lev. 1:15); because namely the Mediator of God and men (1 Tim. 2:5), that is, the Head of us all, and the victim of true cleansing, from whence He suffered death for us, from thence He more truly adhered to us. After the cutting, therefore, the head of the turtledove remains attached to its body, because not even intervening death divides Christ from the Church. The persecutors therefore accomplished that which they perniciously labored at; they brought death, that they might cut off from Him the devotion of the faithful; but from thence faith increased, from whence the cruelty of the infidels believed that they extinguished it. And while they estimate that they cut off His miracles by persecuting, they were certainly compelled, unknowingly, to dilate

them. Therefore the Lord catcheth the wise in their own craftiness, when He reduces even that to the obedience of His piety, which human cruelty kindled against Him.

33. God grants some things propitiously, others He permits in anger.--- For the Just and Merciful One, disposing the acts of mortals, grants some things propitiously, others He permits in anger; and those things which He permits, He so tolerates that He turns them to the use of His own counsel. [Vet. XIV.] Whence in a wonderful way it comes to pass that even what is done without the will of God, is not contrary to the will of God, because while evil deeds are turned to a good use, even those things which repugn His counsel militate for His counsel. For hence it is said by the Psalmist: The works of the Lord are great, sought out according to all His wills (Psal. 110:2). For so His works are great, that through everything which is done by men, His will is sought out. For often from thence it is perfected, from whence it was thought to be repelled. Hence again it is said: All things whatsoever the Lord willed, He did in heaven and in earth (Psal. 134:6). Hence Solomon says: There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord (Prov. 21:30). It remains, therefore, that in all things which we do, we should inquire for the force of the heavenly will, to which namely, when known, our action ought devoutly to serve, and to follow it as the leader of its journey, lest it should serve Him even unwillingly, if being proud it declines it. For the force of the heavenly counsel can by no means be

avoided; but he tempers it to himself with great virtue, who restrains himself under His nods; and he lightens its weights to himself, who carries it willingly on the subjected shoulder of the heart. But because we made mention of persecutors above, let us show how even those things which are subjoined agree with their blindness. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 14.---They shall meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night.

34. The persecutors of Christ suffered darkness in the day. And as if blind they groped in the noon day.--- They met with darkness in the day time, because in the very presence of Truth they were blinded by the error of perfidy. For clearly it is seen through the day, but through the night our sight is obscured. Therefore the persecutors of our Redeemer, while they discerned the miracles of divine power, and yet doubted concerning His divinity, suffered darkness in the day, because they lost their sight in the light. Hence it is that Light itself admonishes them, saying: Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you (John 12:35). Hence it is that it is said of Judea: Her sun is gone down while it was yet day (Jer. 15:9). Hence it is that the prophet again took upon himself the voice of the penitent, saying: We have stumbled at noon day as in darkness; in dark places as dead men (Isai. 59:10). Hence again he says: Watchman, what

of the night? watchman, what of the night? The watchman said: The morning cometh, and also the night (Isai. 21:11, 12). For from the night the watchman came, because the Protector of the human race appeared and was manifest in the flesh, and yet Judea, oppressed by the darkness of its own perfidy, by no means acknowledged Him. Where it is well added from the voice of the watchman: The morning cometh, and also the night, because through His presence both a new light shone upon the world, and yet in the heart of the infidels the ancient blindness remained. [Vet. XV.] But it is well said: Groping in the noon day as in the night. For we seek that by groping, which we do not see with our eyes. But the Jews had seen His open miracles, and they still sought Him as it were by groping, when they said: How long dost thou hold our soul in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly (John 10:24). Behold, the light of miracles was present before their eyes, and yet stumbling in the darkness of their own heart, they still groped by inquiring. Whose blindness certainly kindled into cruelty, and their cruelty even unto open works of persecution. But the Redeemer of the human race could not long be held by the hands of His persecutors. Whence also it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

VERSE 15.---But he shall save the needy from the sword of their mouth, and the poor from the hand of the violent.

Christ overcame the tongues of the Jews and the sword of the Gentiles by rising again.--- For he himself is that poor man, of whom it is said by Paul: For our sakes he became needy, when he was rich. And because the Jews delivered up the Lord by accusing Him, whom when delivered the Gentiles killed, the tongue of the accusing Hebrews can be signified by the sword of the mouth, of whom it is said by the Psalmist: The sons of men, whose teeth are weapons and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword (Psal. 56:5); because the Gospel also being witness they cried out: Crucify him, crucify him (Luke 23:21). But by the hand of the violent, the crucifying Gentility itself can be expressed, which in the death of the Redeemer fulfilled the voices of the Hebrews by work. God therefore saved this poor man both from the hand of the violent, and from the sword of the mouth; because namely our Redeemer both bore the strength of the Gentiles and the tongues of the Jews by dying out of His humanity, but overcame them by rising again out of the power of His divinity. By which resurrection what else is done, but that our weakness should be strengthened to the hope of the life following? Whence also it is well subjoined soon:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 16.---And there shall be hope for the needy.

36. He solidified the hope of His own.--- The poor man being snatched away indeed, the needy is restored to hope, because the humble people

of the faithful is shaken with fear when the Redeemer dies, but is solidified when He rises again. For his death, being seen, struck those first poor ones of this people, namely the elect preachers, but his resurrection, being shown, repaired them. The poor man being saved, therefore, the needy receives hope, because when the Lord rises again in the flesh, every faithful one recovers strength to the confidence of eternal life. But behold, already Truth has come in manifest showing, already he has borne the death of the flesh and destroyed it by rising again, already he has honored the resurrection with the glory of the ascension; and yet the tongue of the Hebrews does not yet cease to provoke him with contumelies, whom he certainly tolerates with equanimity, so that by tolerating he may convert some, and eventually strike more strictly others by no means converted. For then the tongue of the infidels shall be silent from the unbridledness of its own loquacity, when it shall see him coming as a just judge, whom now it has judged unjustly. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID.---But iniquity shall stop her mouth.

37. The Jews shall cease from contumelies against Christ.--- For even now iniquity still dilates its mouth, because the tongue of the infidels by no means ceases to provoke the Redeemer of the human race with contumelies. But then it shall contract its mouth, when it shall close by punishment that which it does not wish to

close by study. Which, however, can also be well understood concerning converted persecutors. For the poor man (*pauper*) being saved, while the needy (*egenus*) returns to hope, iniquity is silenced with a contracted mouth, because as the miracle of His resurrection becomes clear, while a copious multitude of infidels believes, it has ceased from the injuries and contumelies of its Redeemer. For its mouth, which it opened by deriding God, it has now contracted by fearing Him.

MORAL SENSE.--- 38. The darkness of the envious and their anxious malice.--- It is pleasing to run through these things morally, the significance of the Jews being set aside, and to investigate from the wicked in general how they are acted upon. For the minds of iniquitous men, when they behold certain things well done by their neighbors, are tortured on the extended rack of their own envy (*livor*), and sustain a heavy penalty for their own malice, when they see good things in others while they themselves are wasting away. Rightly, therefore, is it said: They shall meet with darkness in the day-time, because their mind, when it is afflicted by the improvement of another, is obscured from the ray of light; because often in their neighbors, while they consider open good things, they investigate if any evil things lie hidden, and labor with solicitous inquiries, if by chance they may find anything which they can accuse. Indeed they behold sound members: but with the eyes of the heart closed, they seek by feeling for a wound. Whence also it is well subjoined: And they shall

grope in the noon-day as in the night. The day of a good work shines outwardly in one's neighbor; but they grope as if in the night, because they tolerate within the darkness of their own envy. They busy themselves to arrive at some things which they may reprehend, they seek an entrance for detraction; but because they are not able to find this, being blind they go about outwardly. Which is well expressed when the Sodomites, the angels protecting him, did not find the door in the house of Lot, as it is written: They pressed very sore upon Lot, and it was already near that they should break the doors, and the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door, and they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they could not find the door (Gen. 19:9-11). What is it that, while the wicked are opposing, Lot is led back within the house and fortified, except that every just man, while he sustains the snares of the wicked, returns to his mind and remains undaunted? But the men of Sodom are unable to find the door in the house of Lot, because the corrupters of minds find no entrance of accusation against the life of the just man. For being struck with blindness they go about as if around the house, who being envious scrutinize deeds and words. But because a strong and laudable action meets them on every side from the life of the just man, wandering they feel nothing else than the wall. Well therefore is it said: And they shall grope in the noon-day as in the night, because while they are unable to

accuse the good which they see, being blinded by malice, they seek the evil which they do not see for accusation.

39. Delight or terror draws us to fault; neither avails against the humble.--- Where also it is rightly subjoined: But he shall save the poor from the sword of their mouth, and from the hand of the violent. For he is poor (*pauper*), whosoever is not elated within himself. Whence also through the Gospel Truth says: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). Moreover, each one is drawn to fault in two ways. For either he is led by delight, or he is overcome by terror. For the sword of the mouth is the iniquity of persuasion, but the hand of the violent is the adversity of power. But because the truly humble, who in this place is called poor, in that he desires no prosperous things of this world, by so much he even boldly contemns adverse things, it is rightly said: He shall save the poor from the sword of their mouth and from the hand of the violent. As if it were openly said: God so solidifies the minds of the humble in Himself, that neither the blandishments of persuasions draw them to the perpetration of iniquity, nor the pains of punishments break them. For hope into eternity raises the mind, and therefore it feels no evils which it tolerates outwardly. Whence also it is subjoined: And there shall be hope for the needy. To the fruit of which hope, namely, when the poor man shall have arrived, every elated one is silenced. Whence also it is still subjoined: But iniquity shall stop her mouth. For now the

wicked man detracts from the good, and does not cease to tear by slandering those right things which he neglects to do in others. But then iniquity stops its mouth, when it recognizes how great glory of retribution is supplied to the just. For then it is not free for it to speak against the good, because torments bind the tongue for the worthy retribution of its own evils. Whence well, Anna prophesying, it is said: He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness (1 Sam. 2:9). But that every elect one may escape eternal punishments, and the poor man may ascend to perennial glory, he ought to be worn down here by assiduous scourges (*flagella*), so that he may be able to be found purged in the judgment. For by the very weight of our infirmity we are led downwards daily, unless we are raised up by the wonderful hand of the Artificer through subvening scourges. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERS. 17.---Blessed is the man whom God correcteth.

40. Every elect one ought to be worn down here by assiduous scourges (*flagella*).--- The first virtue is to avoid sins, lest they ought to be perpetrated; the second, however, at least to correct those perpetrated. But for the most part we not only by no means avoid imminent faults, but indeed we do not even recognize those committed. And the mind of the sinner becomes dark so much the more deeply, as it does not even

understand the loss of its own blindness. Whence it happens for the most part by the largess of the divine gift, that punishment follows fault, and scourges open the eyes of the delinquent, which security was blinding among vices. For the torpid soul is touched by a stroke, that it may be excited; so that he who, being secure, lost the state of his rectitude, being afflicted may consider where he lies. Hence, therefore, the very asperity of correction becomes the origin of light. Whence also through Paul it is said: *All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light* (Eph. 5:13), for the proof of salvation is the force of pain. Hence it is, forsooth, that Solomon says: *Medicine shall cause the greatest sins to cease* (Eccl. 10:4). Hence again he says: *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth* (Heb. 12:6). As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten (Rev. 3:19). Hence Paul says: *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby* (Heb. 12:11). Although therefore pain and blessedness cannot agree together at once, yet it is rightly said now, *Blessed is the man whom God correcteth;* because by this, that the sinner is pressed by the pain of correction, he is eventually instructed unto blessedness, which is without the intervention of pain. It follows:

VERS. 17, 18.---Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Lord; for he maketh sore, and

bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

41. Here also from hope he returns to fear.--- Holy Scripture speaks to our minds as to a certain sick man; to whom the medicines of physicians cannot be, unless they have been tempered from contraries. For cold things temper a hot sick man, and again hot things help a cold one. So holy eloquence, that it may oppose the vices of sinners, proposes now hope, now fear; so that it may raise this one by hope, and depress that one by fear; and through each contrary it may temper one cup of salvation for the mind, so that it may neither fall into presumption by the confidence of hope, nor turn into despair by the weight of fear. Hence it is, forsooth, that as was said a little before, *Blessed is the man whom God correcteth;* by which the minds of those fearing are raised; so immediately it is subjoined, *Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.* For because he is blessed who is corrected, it is greatly to be feared lest any one should depart from that very blessedness of correction. Whence also it is well added: *For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.* Because if the stroke did not cut off the fault, surely it would not prepare a remedy for the mind. He strikes therefore that he may heal, he wounds that he may bind up; because one goes to spiritual health through the pains of the flesh; and while scourges rage without, the remedies of medicines grow strong within.

VERS. 19.---He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

42. He delivers in six scourges, who keeps from faults; in the seventh evil does not touch, because one returns no further to fault.--- What is expressed by the number six except the course of the present life? which namely is terminated through six ages, that is, infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, gravity (middle age), and old age, as if through the spaces of six days. In which six troubles truly we are delivered by the Lord, if we are kept by divine grace from the single sins with which each age is instructed. For infancy is rude and simple, but still obnoxious to the vices of the flesh; childhood is light and unstable; adolescence is fervid and precipitate; youth is grave and proud; gravity is elated and rigid; old age is tremulous and querulous. In all these, forsooth, as if in six troubles, we are delivered by the Lord, if in each age, divine grace helping us, he presents us clean from iniquity. But in the seventh evil does not touch us; because when after this course of six days we shall have come to that seventh rest, in which namely we also rest from our labors, as God rests from His works, no adversity then hangs over us there, no temptation touches us, no iniquity defiles us, but being blessed in eternal purity, we are secure from the scourge and from fault. In the seventh therefore evil does not touch us, because in eternal rest we do not feel the sword of correction, who further have no spot of sins. It follows:

VERS. 20.---In famine he shall redeem thee from death; and in war from the power of the sword.

43. From the death of famine, he who delivers from the lack of good work; from the hand of the sword in war, he who delivers from the ferocity of temptation.--- What is designated in this place by the name of famine, except the lack of good works? What indeed by the word of war, except temptation itself? Therefore from death by famine we are delivered, when we are snatched from that very lack of works, lest we die for ever. But in war from the hand of the sword we are saved, when in the very fight of temptation, divine grace protecting us, we are kept lest we be wounded by the wickedness of sin. Death by famine, and the hand of the sword by war, can also be designated otherwise. For we die of famine when we lack the food of the word of God. Whence also it is said through the prophet: *I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord* (Amos 8:11). He therefore who by no means understands the word of God, truly he dies of famine. But in famine we are redeemed from death, if we are called by grace to the food of divine eloquence for our quickening. But in war we are saved from the hand of the sword; because while this world rages against us through temptations, we are not drawn away by the ferocity of the temptation itself. For by the *hand of the sword* the power of temptation is expressed. In war therefore we are delivered from the hand of

the sword, if in the very contest of temptation we are snatched from the snares of the adversary. It follows:

VERS. 21.---Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of calamity when it cometh.

44. He is hid from the scourge of the tongue, who is delivered from the elation of pride.--- The scourge of the tongue is the very asperity of contumely and detraction. Which by no means strikes us, if the shield of our humility receives it within. For whosoever is elated, is quickly struck by the scourge of the tongue, because he believes that to be true, which is said of him by the angry or the malevolent. But he who is fortified by the virtue of humility, is hid from the scourge of the tongue; because since he casts himself down below all things, he does not believe what is said; since he is not ignorant that he is inwardly this very thing, which is said by detractors. For the proud man, who believes good things of himself, does not receive evil things of himself; but the humble man, who believes evil things of himself, does not receive good things of himself; because from this he truly beholds himself, which he sees in himself, not from that which another speaks in him by detracting or by flattering. From the scourge of the tongue therefore he is hid, who is truly humbled within. It follows:

VERS. 22.---At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh; neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.

45. He shall laugh at the destruction of the world and famine, who rejoices in the hope of his own retribution.--- What is expressed by destruction (*vastitas*), except the ruin of this world; what by the name of famine, except that very lack of good work which we predicted before? He therefore shall laugh at destruction and famine, who rejoices in the hope of his own retribution; because when the world perishes, he arrives at that fatherland towards which he tends through love. And when sinners fail through the lack of good works, he congratulates himself on his own abundance, because he here brought forth fruit through good works, which he may be able to reap there without end. Whence also it is said: *Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.* What do we understand by the beasts of the earth, except the unclean spirits, who for the ferocity of their wickedness and the voracity of their malice are rightly designated by the name of beasts? Who are called beasts of the earth, because for the merit of their sin, they have been cast down into this darkness of the world as if into the lowest parts of the earth. He therefore does not fear the beasts of the earth, who sighs for the love of the heavenly fatherland; because the unclean spirits by no means draw him to wickedness, whom no earthly desires ensnare. For he who covets nothing earthly, has nothing at all whereby the unclean spirit may occupy him. It follows:

VERS. 23.---For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

46. Each elect one is a stone of the region.--- Who are designated by the name of stones, except all the elect? Concerning whom it is said by Peter: *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house* (1 Pet. 2:5). But what are the regions, except the diverse virtues? In which regions namely all the elect are stones, who then are not extraneous one to another, but each one is a native of the other's region, when he wonders at that virtue in him as in his own region, with which he himself does not shine, but the other is distinguished. A stone therefore has a league with the stones of the regions, because through each virtue every elect one venerates in another that which he loves. And the beasts of the earth become peaceful to him; because when the malignant spirits by no means draw him to wickedness, they make him peaceful in himself, as if by not impugning him. Or certainly the beasts of the earth become peaceful to him; because while the flesh no longer fights against the spirit, then the very ferocity of its irrational motion becomes tame for him. It follows:

VERS. 24.---And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and thou shalt visit thy beauty (*species*), and shalt not sin.

47. He has peace in his tabernacle, who does not disagree within himself.--- He enjoys peace in his tabernacle, who is divided within himself by no contradiction of mind and flesh. For our

body is a *tabernacle*; as also it is said by Paul: *For we know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God* (2 Cor. 5:1). And again: *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened* (Ibid., 4). Peace therefore the tabernacle enjoys, when the flesh agrees with the spirit, when it does not agitate worldly appetites, when it does not rebel against its own reason by any perturbation of illicit desire. Whence also it is rightly subjoined: *And visiting thy beauty, thou shalt not sin.* For who is he, who does not corrupt his own beauty by sinning, except he who fortifies himself by visiting himself daily? For we visit our beauty, when we see ourselves within through consideration. And when visiting ourselves, we behold what we are within, we run back to the state of rectitude of the mind through penitence; so that we may not defile by sinning in anything that beauty, which God created in us after His own image. For we keep our beauty by not sinning, if we cleanse it by assidueously visiting it. For he who neglects himself, degenerates from that beauty which he received after the image of God; because while he desires carnal goods, he stains it with the pollution of foul pleasure. But as that which is seen is called beauty (*species*), so the very intention of the heart is called the beauty of the mind, through which it is seen internally by our Creator. We visit therefore our beauty, when we vigilantly behold our intention. Which beauty we then visiting do not sin, if we recall it to that cleanness, through which it is discerned

by the supernal Judge. Rightly therefore it is said: *And visiting thy beauty, thou shalt not sin.* Because he who, always visiting, despises himself, he cleanses himself through penitence after the image of his Creator. And as he who sees his face in a mirror, is wont to wipe away the filths in it, if he has detected any; so he who visits the beauty of his mind, then endeavors to extinguish the filths of iniquity, lest he defile it by sinning. It follows:

VERS. 25.---Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be manifold, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth.

48. Manifold seed, multiplied good works.---Seed in sacred Scripture is taken now as the word of preaching, now as the fruit of pious operation, now as carnal offspring. For the word of preaching is called seed; as in the Gospel Truth says: *A sower went out to sow his seed* (Luke 8:5). Moreover, the operation of pious largess is called seed; as Paul says: *He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed* (2 Cor. 9:10). But carnal offspring is called seed; as it is written in the Law: *If a brother shall die without children, let his brother take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother* (Deut. 25:5; Matt. 22:24). But in this place for the seed to be multiplied, is to abound in good works. But the offspring is called as the grass of the earth, when spiritual thought is produced from our body as grass from the earth. And then seed is held manifold, and offspring grows as the grass of the earth, when from the good

seed of action, the grass of spiritual thought buds forth. It follows:

VERS. 26.---Thou shalt come to thy grave in abundance, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

49. Grave, eternal rest; shock of corn, the assembly of the saints.--- By the name of the grave, in this place, not the pit of a ditch, but eternal rest is designated. Moreover, to enter the grave in abundance, is to arrive at that rest after good works. But the shock of corn is the assembly itself of the saints, which is gathered from this floor of the world to the rest of the heavenly barn. Which is said to be brought in in its season, because each elect one, when he is led to rest after this life, is gathered in his own season, that is, when it is congruous for him. For not all come to eternal rest at one time, but each one when he makes an end to this life, then in his own season is carried as a shock of corn into the barn. But it is to be noted, what is said: *Like as a shock of corn cometh in.* For on the floor the corn is threshed, that it may be cleansed from the chaff; and so it is carried into the barn as if purged. So also all the elect, in this present life as if on a floor, are threshed by the strokes of scourges, that they may be cleansed here from the chaff of their sins; so that they may be led there to that rest as if already clean. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII

IBID.---*And the beasts of the earth shall be at peace with thee.*

51. The sharper the snares of the enemy, the more they compel us to ask for the aid of grace. ---It is first to be noted that he does not say "quieted" (*pacatae*), but "peace-making" (*pacificae*), namely, not because they have peace, but because they make peace. For cunning enemies, while they lie in wait, cause affliction; but the afflicted mind loves the return to its eternal country all the more, the more laboriously it lives in this miserable exile; and it humbles itself more truly to the grace of its Helper when it weighs the sharper snares of the enemies against itself. Therefore, the beasts of the earth become peace-making to the elect, because the evil spirits, when in their opposition they depress the hearts of the good, impel them, though unwillingly, to the love of the Lord. Hence, therefore, a stronger peace with God arises from the source whence a harder battle is generated for us by our adversaries.

[Old Edition XXII.] 52. The motions of the flesh roar in tempting, but they do not reach as far as the bite. On the contrary, they procure peace for us with God. ---The motions of the flesh (*motus carnis*) can also be understood by the beasts of the earth, which, while they harass our mind by suggesting irrational things, rise up against us like beasts. But when the heart is brought low under the divine law, the incentives of the flesh also subside; so that even if they murmur in tempting, they by no means rise up as far as the effect of works, as if to the madness of an open bite. For who, still subsisting in this corruptible flesh, fully tames these beasts of the earth, when that

eminent preacher, caught up to the third heaven, says: *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members* (Rom. 7:23)? But it is one thing to see these beasts raging in the field of work, another to hold them roaring within the cave of the heart. For when reduced within the barriers of continence (*claustra continentiae*), even if they still roar in tempting, they do not, as we have said, exceed as far as the bite of an unlawful action. The beasts of the earth are therefore peace-making, because although the motions of the flesh throb through desires, they nevertheless do not assail us with the open contradiction of work. Although, by the very fact that they are called peace-making, even that which we said concerning the evil spirits is not inappropriately received. For the motions of the flesh make peace for us with God when they contradict us by tempting. For the mind of the just man, in that it is directed toward heavenly things, is fatigued by a heavy war from the corruptible body. If this mind is at any time delayed from heavenly desires by any delight of this world, however small, it is impelled by the very war of its temptation to love that with its whole heart which no contradiction disturbs. Whence it happens that it recalls inward rest (*quietis intimae*) to memory, and fleeing the allurements of its flesh, sighs for that rest with full love. For everyone is compelled to consider by temptation whence and whither he fell, who, after he deserted the peace of God, feels a strife

arise against himself from within himself, and then more truly sees what he lost from the secure love of God, who, having slipped down into himself, finds his own reproach in himself. The beasts of the earth therefore make peace for us, because the motions of the flesh, while they harass us by tempting, impel us to the love of inward rest. But it is well added:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Old Edition XXIII.]

VERS. 24.---*And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle is in peace.*

205 53. In the Scriptures, full peace and commenced peace. ---In Holy Scripture, "full peace" (*pax plena*) is spoken of in one way, and "commenced peace" (*pax inchoata*) in another. For Truth had given commenced peace to the disciples when He said: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you* (John 14:27); and Simeon had desired full peace when he prayed, saying: *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word* (Luke 2:29). For our peace is commenced from the desire for the Creator, but it is perfected from the manifest vision. For it will then be full, when our mind is neither blinded by ignorance nor shaken by the assault of its own flesh. But because we touch upon its beginnings when we subjugate either the mind to God or the flesh to the mind, the tabernacle of the just man is said to have peace, because, namely, his body, which the mind in-

habits, is restrained from the perverse motions of desires under the disposition of justice. But what does it profit to restrain the flesh through continence, if the mind knows not how to expand itself through compassion in the love of the neighbor? For there is no chastity of the flesh which the sweetness of the mind (*suavitas mentis*) does not commend. Whence, after the peace of the tabernacle, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXV

IBID.---*And visiting thy likeness, thou shalt not sin.*

54. Let each one think of and love himself in another. Paul made all things to all men by condescending, not by falling. --- For the likeness (*species*) of a man is another man. For our neighbor is rightly called our likeness, because in him we discern what we ourselves are. For by a bodily visitation we go to our neighbor by the approach of steps; but by a spiritual one, we are led not by a step, but by affection. He therefore visits his own likeness, whosoever tends by the paces of love toward him whom he beholds similar to himself by nature; so that considering his own things in another, he may gather from himself how he should condescend to another who is weak. He visits his own likeness, who, that he may refresh another in himself, weighs himself in another. For hence Truth, when describing things done through Moses, signified things to be done, saying: *The earth brought forth the green herb and yielding seed after its kind, and

the tree yielding fruit, and having each one seed according to its likeness* (Gen. 1:12). For the tree produces seed according to its likeness, when our mind gathers consideration from itself into another, and brings forth the germ of a right work. Hence a certain wise man says: *What thou wouldst not have done to thyself, do not thou to another* (Tob. 4:16). Hence in the Gospel the Lord says: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them* (Matt. 7:12). As if He said openly: Visit your own likeness in another, and know from yourselves what you ought to exhibit to others. Hence Paul says: *I became to the Jews as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; and to them that are under the law, as if I were under the law, when I myself was not under the law, that I might gain them that were under the law; and to them that are without the law, as if I were without the law, when I was not without the law of God, but was in the law of Christ* (1 Cor. 9:20, 21). And a little after: *I am made all things to all men, that I might save all* (Ibid. v. 22). For neither did the eminent preacher, that he might become as it were a Jew, break out into perfidy; nor that he might be as it were under the law, did he return to fleshly sacrifice; nor that he might become all things to all men, did he change the simplicity of his mind into a variety of error; but by condescending he approached the unfaithful, not by falling; that namely, taking up individuals in himself, and transfiguring himself into individuals, he might gather by compassion, if he himself were so as they were, what he would

have rightly wished to be bestowed upon himself by others; and he might run to meet each one erring so much the more truly, as he had learned the manner of his salvation from his own consideration. Well therefore is it said: *And visiting thy likeness thou shalt not sin,* because then sin is fully conquered, when each one weighs from his own similarity how he may be expanded in the love of his neighbor. But when the flesh is restrained from vices, and the mind is exercised in virtues, it remains that each one should teach by speaking the life which he keeps in his conduct. [Old Edition XXIV.] For he gathers abundant fruits of preaching, who sends before the seeds of good operation. Whence, after the peace of the tabernacle, and the visitation of our likeness, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVI

VERS. 25.---*And thou shalt know that thy seed shall be manifold, and thy offspring as the grass of the earth.*

55. The seed of the just is manifold. ---For after the peace of the tabernacle, after the visitation of our likeness, the manifold seed of the just man arises, because surely after the maceration of the members and the greatness of conduct, the word of preaching is bestowed upon him so much the more fruitfully as this is preceded in his breast by the furrowing of a perfect work. For he receives the eloquence of speaking well who extends the bosom of his heart through the studies of living rightly. Nor does conscience hinder the speaker

when life precedes the tongue. Hence it is that the Egyptians, subjected to public service under the stewardship of Joseph (Gen. 47:20 sqq.), when they humble themselves by handing themselves over to the law of the king, also carry back grain for seed. For we receive grain for eating even as free men, when we are fed by the sacred eloquence and yet wander after certain things which we desire in this world in our pleasures. But having been made servants, we receive grain also for seed, because while we are fully subjected to God, we are also filled with the word of preaching. And since a great offspring of the faithful follows when holy preaching is dispensed, after the multiplicity of the seed it is rightly subjoined: And thy offspring as the grass of the earth. The offspring of the just man is compared to the grass of the earth, because he who is born from his imitation, while he deserts the withered glory of the present life, grows green in hope for eternal things. Or certainly, the offspring of the just man arises like grass, because while he shows by living what he asserts by preaching, an innumerable multitude of followers rises up. But whosoever now despises earthly desires, whosoever extends himself through the works of the active life, it is by no means sufficient for him to do great things outwardly, unless he is also able to penetrate internal things through contemplation. Whence also it is aptly subjoined immediately:

CHAPTER XXXVII

[Recent Edition XVII.]

VERS. 26.---*Thou shalt enter into the sepulchre in abundance, like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season.*

56. He who has subdued the flesh ought to be free for contemplation. And he who gives labor to preaching. ---For what is signified by the name of "sepulchre" but the contemplative life, which buries us as if dead to this world, while it hides those it has received from earthly desires in the inmost parts? For they had been dead to the outward life and also buried through contemplation to whom Paul said: *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God* (Col. 3:3). [Old Edition XXV.] The active life also is a sepulchre, because it covers us when dead to evil works; but the contemplative life buries us more perfectly, because it separates us fundamentally from all the actions of the world. Whosoever therefore has now subdued the reproaches of the flesh in himself, it remains that he should exercise his mind through the studies of holy operation; and whosoever now expands his mind through holy works, it remains that he should extend it even to the secret studies of inward contemplation. For he is not a perfect preacher who either neglects things to be done for the sake of the study of contemplation, or postpones things to be contemplated for the sake of the urgency of operation. For hence it is that Abraham buries his dead wife in a double sepulchre (Gen. 23:19); because surely every perfect preacher hides his soul, which is extinct to the desires of the present life, under the cover of good operation and contemplation, so that

as if insensible to fleshly concupiscence, it may lie hid under the active and contemplative life, which soul, previously feeling the desires of the world, was living mortally. Hence it is that the Redeemer of the human race exhibits miracles in the cities by day, and passes the night in the study of prayer on the mountain, that He may surely hint to perfect preachers that they should neither fundamentally desert the active life for the love of speculation, nor thoroughly despise the joys of contemplation through excessive operation; but that while quiet they should drink in by contemplating what they should pour back while occupied in speaking for the benefit of their neighbors. For by speculating one rises into the love of God, but by preaching one returns to the utility of the neighbor. Whence in Moses, while the heifer is sacrificed (Num. 19:3), scarlet twice dyed is commanded to be offered with hyssop and cedar wood. For we sacrifice the heifer when we extinguish the flesh from the wantonness of its pleasure. Which we offer with hyssop and cedar wood and scarlet; because with the maceration of the flesh, we burn the sacrifice of faith, hope, and charity. For hyssop is accustomed to cleanse our internal parts. And it is said by Peter: *Purifying their hearts by faith* (Acts 15:9). Cedar wood does not fail through any rottenness, because the end does not consume the hope of heavenly things. Whence also it is said by Peter: *He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and

that fadeth not away* (1 Pet. 1:3). Scarlet flames with a red color, because charity inflames him whom it fills. Whence also in the Gospel Truth says: *I am come to send fire on the earth* (Luke 12:49). But scarlet twice dyed is commanded to be offered, so that namely before the eyes of the internal Judge our charity may be colored with the love of God and of the neighbor; so that the converted mind may not so love rest for the love of God as to postpone the care and utility of the neighbor; nor so serve when occupied for the love of the neighbor as to fundamentally desert rest, and extinguish in itself the fire of supernal love. Whosoever therefore has already offered himself as a sacrifice to God, if he desires perfect things, he must necessarily take care that he extend himself not only to the breadth of operation, but also to the summits of contemplation.

[Old Edition XXVI.] 57. The active life is more suitable for some, the contemplative for others. Either one is to be cultivated according to each one's genius. ---But among these things it is greatly to be known that the temperaments (*conspersiones*) of minds are very different from one another. For some men are of such a leisurely mind that if the labor of occupation takes them up, they succumb at the very beginning of the work; and some are so restless that if they have a vacation from labor, they labor more heavily, because they tolerate so much worse tumults of the heart the more freely they are at leisure for thoughts. Whence it is necessary that neither should the quiet mind expand itself

to the exercise of immoderate work, nor should the restless mind narrow itself to the study of contemplation. For often those who were able to contemplate God in quiet have fallen when pressed by occupations; and often those who would live well for human uses when occupied have been extinguished by the sword of their own quiet. For hence it is that some restless spirits, while they seek out more by contemplating than they can grasp, break out even to perverse dogmas; and while they humbly neglect to be disciples of truth, they become masters of errors. Hence Truth says through Itself: *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.* *It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire* (Matt. 5:29). For the two lives, namely the active and the contemplative, when they are preserved in the mind, are held as two eyes in the face. For the right eye is the contemplative life, and the left is the active. But there are some, as we have said, who can by no means discretely behold supreme and spiritual things, and yet they take up the heights of contemplation, and therefore they slip into the pit of perfidy (*perfidiae foveam*) through the error of a perverse intellect. These, therefore, the contemplative life taken up beyond their strength compels to fall from the truth, whom the active life alone could have humbly guarded in the state of their rectitude. To whom rightly Truth says what we have prefaced: *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.* *It is better for thee to enter into life

with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.* As if He said openly: When thou dost not suffice for the contemplative life with suitable discretion, keep the active life alone more securely. And when thou failest in this which thou choosest as great, be content with that which thou regardest as least; so that if by the contemplative life thou art compelled to fall from the knowledge of truth, thou mayest be able at least one-eyed (*luscus*) to enter the kingdom of heaven through the active life alone. Hence again He says: *Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone (*mola asinaria*) were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea* (Matt. 18:6). What is signified by the sea but the present world; what by the millstone but earthly action? Which, while it binds the neck of the mind through foolish desires, sends it into the circuit of labor. There are therefore some who, while they desert earthly actions and rise beyond the strength of their intelligence to the studies of contemplation, having postponed humility, not only cast themselves into error but also divide all the weak from the bosom of unity (*gremio unitatis*). He therefore who offends one of the least, it had been better for him, with a millstone tied to his neck, to be cast into the sea; because surely it could have been more expedient for a perverse mind to perform earthly business occupied with the world than to be at leisure for the destruction of many through the studies of contemplation. Again, un-

less the contemplative life were more suitable for certain minds than the active, the Lord would by no means say through the Psalmist: *Be still, and see that I am God* (Ps. 46:10).

[Old Edition XXVII.] 58. The power of fear and love for contemplation. ---But among these things it is to be known that often love excites sluggish minds to work, and fear restrains restless ones in contemplation. For the weight of fear is the anchor of the heart; and for the most part it is shaken by the flood of thoughts, but it is held fast by the bonds of its own discipline; nor does the tempest of its restlessness draw it to shipwreck, because on the shore of divine love perfect charity binds it. Whence it is necessary that whosoever hastens to the studies of contemplation should first subtly question himself as to how much he loves. For the engine (*machina*) of the mind is the force of love, which while it draws it out from the world, lifts it on high. Let him therefore first discuss whether in seeking the highest things he loves, whether in loving he fears, whether he knows how either to comprehend unknown things by loving, or to venerate things not comprehended by fearing. For in contemplation, if love does not excite the mind, the torpor of its own lukewarmness obscures it; if fear does not weigh it down, its sense lifts it through vanities to the cloud of error; and when the closed door of secrets is opened to it more slowly, it is repelled further from it by its own presumption; because it desires to break into that which it seeks without finding; and when

the proud mind perceives error for truth, where it reaches its step as if inward, it tends outward. For hence it is that the Lord, about to give the law, descended in fire and smoke (Exod. 19:18); because He both illuminates the humble by the clarity of His showing, and obscures the eyes of the proud by the mist of error. Therefore the mind is first to be wiped clean from the appetite for temporal glory, and from all delight of fleshly concupiscence, and then to be raised to the sharpness of contemplation. Whence also when the law is received, the people are prohibited from the mountain, so that namely those who still desire earthly things with weak minds may not presume to consider sublime things. Whence also it is rightly said: *If a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned* (Ibid. v. 12, 13). For a beast touches the mountain when a mind subjected to irrational desires raises itself to the heights of contemplation. But it is struck with stones, because not sustaining the highest things, it is killed by the very strokes of the supernal weight.

59. What perfection is necessary to attain it. ---Those therefore who strive to apprehend the summit of perfection, when they desire to hold the citadel of contemplation, let them first prove themselves in the field of work by exercise, that they may carefully know if they now inflict no evils on their neighbors, if they bear with equanimity evils inflicted by their neighbors, if when temporal goods are presented the mind is by no means dissolved by joy, if when they are taken away it is not wounded by excessive sorrow; and

then let them weigh whether when they return within to themselves, in that they search out spiritual things, they by no means draw with them the shadows of corporal things, or perhaps drive away those drawn with the hand of discretion; if desiring to see the uncircumscribed light (*incircumscriptum lumen*), they suppress all the images of their own circumscription; and in that they desire to touch what is above them, they conquer what they are. [Old Edition XXVIII.] Whence it is now rightly said: *Thou shalt enter into the sepulchre in abundance.* For the perfect man enters the sepulchre in abundance, because he first gathers the works of the active life, and afterwards fundamentally hides from this world the sense of the flesh made dead through contemplation. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: *Like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season* (Ibid.).

60. Action ought to precede contemplation. ---For the time of action is first, that of contemplation is last. Whence it is necessary that every perfect man should first exercise his mind in virtues, and afterwards store it in the barn (*horreum*) of rest. For hence it is that he from whom the legion of demons departed at the Lord's command sits at the feet of his Savior, receives the words of doctrine, and desires to depart from his region together with the Author of salvation; but yet Truth itself, which bestowed salvation, says to him: *Return first to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee* (Luke 8:35-39). For when we receive how-

ever small a portion of divine knowledge, we no longer wish to return to human things, and we refuse to be burdened with the necessities of our neighbors; we seek the rest of contemplation, and we love nothing else but this which refreshes without labor. But Truth sends us when healed to our house, and commands us to tell what things have been done with us, so that namely the mind should first sweat in work, and afterwards ought to be refreshed through contemplation.

[Recent Edition XVIII.] 61. Rachel and Leah, Mary and Martha, are figures of contemplation and action. Great are the merits of the active life, but those of the contemplative are better. ---Hence it is that Jacob serves for Rachel, and receives Leah, and it is said to him: *It is not the custom in our land to give the younger in marriage before the elder* (Gen. 29:26, 27). For Rachel is called "the sight of the principle" (*visum principium*); but Leah is called "laborious." And what is designated by Rachel but the contemplative life, and what by Leah but the active? For in contemplation the Principle, which is God, is sought; but in operation one labors under a heavy bundle of necessities. Whence also Rachel is beautiful but sterile; Leah is blear-eyed (*lippa*) but fruitful; because surely when the mind seeks the leisure of contemplating, it sees more, but generates fewer sons for God; but when it directs itself to the labor of preaching, it sees less, but brings forth more abundantly. Therefore after the embraces of Leah, Jacob comes to Rachel, because every perfect man is first joined

to the fecundity of the active life, and afterwards is coupled to the rest of the contemplative life. For that the contemplative life is indeed shorter in time, but greater in merit than the active, is shown by the words of the Holy Gospel, in which two women are related to have done different things. For Mary, hearing the words of our Redeemer, sat at His feet; but Martha was busy about corporal ministries. And when Martha complained against the leisure of Mary, she heard: *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her* (Luke 10:41, 42). For what is expressed by Mary, who sitting heard the words of the Lord, but the contemplative life? What is signified by Martha occupied in outward services but the active life? But the care of Martha is not reproved, but that of Mary is even praised, because great are the merits of the active life, but those of the contemplative are better. Whence also the part of Mary is said never to be taken away, because the works of the active life pass away with the body, but the joys of the contemplative life grow stronger better from the end. Which the prophet Ezekiel expresses well and briefly, when having contemplated the flying animals he says: *And the likeness of a man's hand was under their wings* (Ezek. 10:21). For what can we understand by the wings of the animals but the contemplations of the saints, by which they fly across to the highest things, and deserting earthly things, poise themselves in heavenly

ones? What do we receive by the hands but operations? Because when they expand themselves in the love of the neighbor, they also corporally administer the goods which they are able. But their hands are under their wings, because they surpass the works of their action by the virtue of contemplation.

[Old Edition XXIX.] 62. By the name of "sepulchre" eternal rest can be understood. ---Not only contemplation in this life, but the rest of eternal and inward retribution can be understood by the "sepulchre"; in which rest one is quieted so much the more truly as the life of corruption is more perfectly killed in us. He therefore enters the sepulchre in abundance who, after the works of the present life have been heaped up, being fully dead to his own mutability, is hidden in the secret of the true light. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy face from the disturbance of men* (Ps. 31:20). Which the joined comparison also well commends, when it is subjoined: *Like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season.* For the grain in the crop is touched by the sun, because in this life the human soul is illustrated in respect of the supernal light; it receives rains, because it is made fat by the eloquence of truth; it is shaken by winds, because it is exercised by temptations; and it carries the growing chaff with it, because it daily tolerates the more wicked life of sinners against itself; and having been brought to the floor (*area*), it is pressed by the weight of threshing, so that it may be loosed from the con-

nection of the chaff; because our mind, subjected to heavenly discipline, while it perceives the scourges of correction, departs cleaner from the society of carnal men; and having left the chaff, it is led to the barn (*horreum*), because while the reprobate remain outside, the elect soul is lifted up to the eternal joys of the supernal mansion. Well therefore is it said: *Thou shalt enter into the sepulchre in abundance, like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season;* because while after affliction the just find the rewards of the heavenly country, as if after pressures the grains are carried to the barn; and in a foreign time (*alieno tempore*) indeed they feel strokes, but in their own they rest from the stroke. For the present life is a foreign time to the elect, whence also Truth says to some still unfaithful: *My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready* (John 7:6). And again: *This is your hour, and the power of darkness* (Luke 22:53). He therefore enters the sepulchre in his season like a shock of corn, who perceives eternal rest, having first felt here the pressures of discipline, so that he may be free from the chaff that is to be burned. But Eliphaz, because in the series of his locution he named the tabernacle, stones, beasts, seed, herbs, and the sepulchre, hinted himself that he did not speak these things according to the letter, who after all things immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER XXXVIII

VERS. 27.---*Lo this, as we have searched it out, so it is.*

63. The words of Eliphaz are to be understood spiritually. ---It is surely clear that in these words nothing is said by him according to the surface, because surely that which is searched out does not lie before the face. He therefore who indicates that he has searched out these things, demonstrates that he has sought inner things in outward words. But after everything he arrives at the folly of boasting, because he immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IBID.---Which having heard, consider it in thy mind.

64. It is a heavy unskilfulness in him to wish to teach one who is better. ---With however great learning a mind may be endowed, it is a heavy unskilfulness in it to wish to teach one who is better. Whence also those things which were rightly brought forward by the friends, are judged not to be right by the internal Judge. For in this they lose the force of their rectitude, that they do not suit the hearer; because medicines also lose their powers, when they are applied to healthy limbs. In everything therefore which is said, it is necessary that the cause, the time, and the person be weighed; whether the truth of the sentence strengthens the words, whether a suitable time requires this, whether the quality of the person does not oppose both the truth of the sentence and the suitability of the time. For he laudably sends forth darts, who first beholds the enemy whom he may strike. For he badly

bends the horns of a strong bow, who, directing his arrow with force, strikes a fellow-citizen.

BOOK SEVENTH.

It explains the whole of the sixth chapter, except the last three verses, partly allegorically, partly morally.

CHAPTER FIRST.

1. Job tried by scourges and reproaches. If he speaks anything which sounds like impatience, these things are to be weighed not by human judgment, but by divine. ---The minds of some are more tortured by scourges than by reproaches; but those of others reproaches more than scourges chastise. For often the torments of words rage more harshly against us than any punishments; and when they rouse us to defense, they prostrate us into impatience. Whence, lest any temptation should have been wanting to blessed Job, not only do scourges from above strike him, but the discourses of his friends afflict him more grievously than his wounds; so that the soul of the holy man, being pulsed on this side and on that, might break forth into the motion of anger and elation, and whatever he had lived purely, he might defile through the contumacy of proud speech. But touched by wounds he returned thanks; provoked by words he answered rightly; and being struck he makes known how

he held the health of the flesh for a very small thing. Speaking also he indicates how wisely he was silent. But some things are mixed with his words, which in human judgments might seem to pass the limit of patience: which things we truly understand, if we weigh the sentence of the supernal Judge in their examination. For He Himself both previously preferred blessed Job against the adversary, saying: *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth; a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and departing from evil?* (Job i. 8). He Himself after the trial reproved his friends, saying: *Ye have not spoken before me that which is right, as my servant Job* (Job xlii. 7). It remains therefore that when the mind fluctuates in the discourses of blessed Job, it should weigh their weight from the beginning and end of the same history. For he could neither be praised by the eternal Judge when about to fall, nor preferred after having slipped. If therefore, being caught in the tempest of ambiguity, we behold the first and the last things of this history, the ship of the heart is restrained by the ropes of its own consideration, as if from the prow and the stern, lest it be led into the rocks of error. We are overwhelmed by no storms of our ignorance, if we hold the tranquil shore of the supernal sentence. For behold, he says that which may move the mind of the reader with no small question. But who would dare to call that not right, which sounds right in the ears of God?

CHAPTER II.

CHAP. VI. VERS. 2, 3.---Would that my sins, by which I have deserved wrath, and the calamity which I suffer, were weighed in a balance: as the sand of the sea this would appear heavier.

TYPICAL SENSE. 2. Christ is the balance in which both what we deserve, and what He suffered for us, are weighed. He made known to us the gravity of our punishment. ---Who else is expressed by the name of the balance, but the Mediator of God and men? who came to weigh the merit of our life, and brought with Him at once justice and mercy; but outweighing in the scale of mercy, He lightened our faults by sparing us. For in the hand of the Father, being made as it were a balance of wonderful poise, He suspended on this side our calamity in Himself, and on that side our sins. But He made known the calamity to be of heavy weight by dying, and showed that sin is light in the presence of mercy by releasing it. Who conferred this first benefit of grace, because He made our punishment knowable to us. For man was created to contemplate his Creator, but, his merits requiring it, being cast down from internal joys, rushing into the misery of corruption, sustaining the blindness of exile, he both endured the punishments of his fault, and knew it not; so that he believed exile to be his country, and thus under the weight of corruption he rejoiced as if in the liberty of salvation. But He, whom man had left within, having assumed flesh, appeared as God without; and when He

presented Himself outwardly, He recalled the man expelled without to the things within, that he may now see his losses, now groan for the punishment of his blindness. Therefore the calamity of man appeared heavy in the balance, because he did not recognize the evil which he endured except in the presence of the Redeemer; for not knowing the light, he voluptuously endured the darkness of his damnation. But after he saw what he should love, he understood also what he should grieve for; and he felt that to be heavy which he endured, because that became known to be sweet which he had lost. Therefore the holy man, being shaken from the cloisters of silence by the sentences of his discoursing friend, and filled with the abundance of the prophetic spirit, let him speak in his own voice, let him speak in the voice of the human race: *Would that my sins, by which I have deserved wrath, and the calamity which I suffer, were weighed in a balance: as the sand of the sea this would appear heavier.* As if he were to say openly: The evil of our damnation is believed to be light, because it is not yet weighed by the recognized equity of the Redeemer. But would that He might come, and suspend the misery of so great an exile in the scale of His mercy, and teach us what we should seek after exile. For if it becomes known what we have lost, it insinuates that what we endure is heavy. Well, moreover, is this same calamity of our pilgrimage compared to the sand of the sea. For the sand of the sea is driven outwards by the heat of the waves, because also delinquent

man, since he has changeably endured the waves of temptations, has gone out of himself from his inmost parts. Moreover, the sand of the sea is of great weight; but the calamity of man is said to be heavier than the sand of the sea, because the punishment is shown to have been hard, while the fault is lightened by the merciful Judge. And because whoever recognizes the grace of the Redeemer, whoever loves the return to his country, being instructed groans under the weight of his pilgrimage, after the desire of the balance there is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 2.---Whence also my words are full of grief.

3. He does not cease to groan here who knows himself to be an exile. ---He who loves his pilgrimage as his country, knows not how to grieve even in the midst of griefs. But the words of the just are full of grief, because as long as he endures present things, he sighs for something else in speaking; he beholds everything which he has endured by sinning; and that he may return to the state of blessedness, he solicitously weighs the judgments by which he is afflicted. Whence it is subjoined:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 4.---For the arrows of the Lord are in me.

4. By arrows preaching or punishment is signified. ---For by the name of arrows sometimes the words of preaching, sometimes the sentences of animadversion (punishment) are designated. For the eloquences of preaching are expressed by arrows, because in that they strike vices, they transfix the hearts of those living evilly. Of these arrows it is said to the coming Redeemer: *Thy arrows are sharp, O thou most powerful; the peoples shall fall under thee in the heart* (Psal. xliv. 6). Of which Isaiah says: *I will send of them that shall be saved to the nations into the sea, into Africa, and into Lydia, holding the arrow, into Italy, into Greece* (Isai. lxvi. 19). Again, by arrows the percussion of animadversion is designated, as it is said to King Joash by Elisha: *Shoot the arrow.* Who shooting said: *Thou shalt smite Syria, until thou consume it* (4 Reg. xiii. 17). Therefore the holy man, because he respects the misery of his pilgrimage, because he groans under the percussions of the Lord's animadversion, let him say: *Whence also my words are full of grief, because the arrows of the Lord are in me.* As if he were to say openly: I do not rejoice in the damnation of exile, but being placed under judgment I grieve, because I recognize the force of the percussion. But there are many whom torments torture, but do not amend. Against which it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER V.

IBID.---The indignation of which drinks up my spirit.

5. The just are amended by the punishments which they sustain. ---For what is the spirit of man, but the spirit of elation? But the arrows of the Lord drink up the spirit of man, when the sentences of supernal animadversion restrain the afflicted mind from elation. The arrows of the Lord drink up the spirit of man, because they draw inwards him who was intent on outward things. For David's spirit had been drunk up, when he said: *When my spirit failed within me, then thou knewest my paths* (Psal. cxli. 4). And again: *I refused to be comforted, my soul was mindful of God, and I was delighted, and was exercised, and my spirit failed a little* (Psal. lxxvi. 4). Therefore the indignation of the arrows drinks up the spirit of the just, because the supernal sentences change the elect whom they find in sins, while they wound them; that the transfixed mind may desert its hardness, and from the health-giving wound the blood of confession may run. For they weigh whence and whither they have fallen, they weigh from how great blessedness to what torments of their own corruption they have fallen; and they not only groan in those things which they sustain, but moreover they fear that which the strict Judge threatens to delinquents from the fires of hell. Whence it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER VI.

IBID.---And the terrors of the Lord war against me.

6. They grieve for present punishments, they fear future ones. ---The mind of the just not only

considers what it endures, but also fears what remains; it sees what kind of things it suffers in this life; it fears lest after this it may suffer more grievous things. It mourns because in the exile of this blindness it has fallen from the joys of paradise; it fears lest even when exile shall be left, eternal death may follow. Already therefore it endures the sentence in punishment; but it still dreads the threats of the coming Judge because of fault. Hence the Psalmist says: *Thy wraths have passed over me, and thy terrors have troubled me* (Psal. lxxxvii. 17). For after the wraths of the internal Judge pass over, his terrors also trouble, because already we suffer one thing by damnation, and yet we fear another concerning eternal vengeance. Therefore the holy man, weighing the evils which he endures, let him say: *The arrows of the Lord are in me, the indignation of which drinks up my spirit.* But, fearing more grievous things for ever, let him add: *And his terrors war against me.* As if he were to say openly: Being struck indeed I grieve for present things; but this becomes more grievous in grief, because even being placed in punishment, I still greatly fear eternal torments. But because he already desires the intervention of the balance, already weighs the evils into which the human race has fallen, although placed in a Gentile nation, yet full of the gift of the prophetic spirit; with what ardor either Gentility or Judea thirsts for the coming of the Redeemer, he demonstrates by the following words, saying:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 5.---Will the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or will the ox low when he standeth before a full manger?

7. The desires of Gentility and of Judea for the coming of the Redeemer. ---For what is designated by the wild ass (*onager*), that is, the field ass, but the Gentile people? whom as nature brought forth outside the stalls of discipline, so it remained wandering in the field of its own pleasures. What is figured by the ox but the Jewish people, which, being placed under the yoke of supernal dominion, gathering proselytes to hope, drew the ploughshare of the law through the hearts which it could. But by the life of blessed Job attesting it, we know that we may believe that many even from the Gentiles expected the coming of the Redeemer. And when the Lord was born, Simeon coming in the spirit into the temple, we learned with how great desire the holy men from the Israelitish people wished to see the mystery of His incarnation. Whence also it is said to the disciples by the same Redeemer: *Many, I say to you, just men and prophets have desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them* (Luke x. 24). The grass therefore of the wild ass, and the hay of the ox, is this very incarnation of the Mediator, by which Gentility and Judea are satisfied together. For because it is said by the prophet: *All flesh is grass* (Isa. xl. 6), the Creator of the universe, taking flesh from our substance, willed to become grass, lest our flesh

should remain grass for ever. Then therefore the wild ass found grass, when the Gentile people received the grace of the divine incarnation. Then the ox had not an empty manger, when the law exhibited His flesh to the Jewish people expecting it, whom it prophesied to them expecting it for a long time. Whence also the born Lord is placed in a manger, that surely it might be signified that the holy animals, which were found for a long time fasting under the law, are satisfied by the hay of His incarnation. For being born He filled the manger, who offered Himself as food to the minds of mortals, saying: *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him* (John vi. 57). But because both the vows of the elect Gentiles were long delayed, and the holy ones from the Hebrew people groaned for a long time expecting their redemption, blessed Job, well narrating the mysteries of prophecy, insinuates the causes of affliction from both nations, saying: *Will the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or will the ox low when he standeth before a full manger?* As if he were to say openly: Therefore Gentility groans, because the grace of its Redeemer does not yet refresh it; and therefore Judea spreads its lowings, because, holding the law, but not seeing the Author of the law, it fasts standing before the manger. Which law indeed, because before the coming of the Mediator it was by no means held spiritually, but carnally, is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 6.---Or can that which is unsavoury be eaten, which is not seasoned with salt?

8. The law carnally understood is unsavoury, seasoned with salt by Christ. ---In the law the salt of the letter is the virtue of occult understanding. Whoever therefore, being intent on carnal observances, has not willed to understand this spiritually, what else has he eaten but unsavoury food? But the recognized Truth put salt in this food, when He taught that the savour of occult understanding lay hid in the law, saying: *If ye believed Moses, ye would perhaps believe me also, for he wrote of me* (John v. 46). And again: *Have salt in yourselves, and have peace among yourselves* (Mark ix. 49). But because before the coming of the Mediator Judea held the law carnally, Gentility refused to be subjected to its precepts commanding hard things. Therefore it willed not to eat unsavoury food, because before it perceived the seasoning of the Spirit, it dreaded to keep the force of the letter. For who of the Gentiles would bear that which is there commanded, to cut the flesh of sons for the observance of religion, to cut off the faults of words by death? Whence also it is still well subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

IBID.---Or can any one taste that which being tasted brings death?

9. The law carnally tasted was before mortiferous. ---For the law carnally tasted brought death, because it constrained the commissions of delinquents with hard animadversion; it brought

death, because both by the precept it made the fault known, and did not blot it out by grace, Paul attesting, who says: *The law brought nothing to perfection* (Heb. vii. 19). And again: *The law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.* And a little after: *Sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death to me by that which is good* (Rom. vii. 12, 13). But Gentility being converted to Christ, because it understands that He sounds through the words of the law, being straitened by its desires, seeks Him whom it vehemently loves spiritually among the carnal precepts. Whence also it is subjoined from the voice of the Church presently through the spirit of prophecy:

CHAPTER X.

VERS. 7.---The things which my soul before refused to touch, are now through anguish my food.

10. The words of Job are pregnant with spiritual understanding. It is foretold that the Gentiles would seek the food of the law, and that the Jews would not disdain the society of the Gentiles. ---For he falls greatly into error who suspects that the words of blessed Job were uttered for history alone. For that holy man, supported by so many praises of his Creator, what great thing, or rather what true thing would he say, if he had said that unsavoury food could not be eaten? Or who had offered to his eating mortiferous aliments, that he should subjoin: *Or can any one taste that which being tasted

brings death?* Which if we feel to be said of the colloquies of his friends, we are restrained from this understanding by the sentence subjoined, in which he says: *The things which my soul before refused to touch, are now through anguish my food.* For far be it that the holy man, established in the integrity of his state, should have ever despised the words of his friends, who, as we afterwards learned from his own attestation, was humble even to his servants. His words therefore are not void of mysteries, which, as we learn from the end of the history, the internal Judge also praises. Which would by no means have run even with such great veneration to the ends of the world, if they had not been pregnant with mystic understanding.

11. Blessed Job, therefore, because he is a member of the holy Church, speaks also from her voice, saying: *The things which my soul before refused to touch, are now through anguish my food,* because doubtless Gentility being converted, anxious with the heats of its love, hungers for the food of the old Scripture, which long ago in its pride it despised. Which things nevertheless agree also with the voices of Judea, if they be discussed a little more considerately. For she, from the erudition of the law, from the knowledge of the one God, had salt, and despised all nations as brute animals. But because, being erudite in the precepts of the law, she had contemned receiving the society of the Gentiles to herself, what else did she loathe but to take unsavoury food? For the divine sentence, death being proposed, had

forbidden that the Israelitish people should join a league with foreigners, and defile the life of holy religion (Exod. xxiii. 32). Whence also it is subjoined: *Or can any one taste that which being tasted brings death?* But because this same Judea was converted to the faith of the Redeemer from the part of the elect, she was busy to preach the light which she had known to the infidels of her own offspring through the holy apostles. But the pride of the Hebrews rejected the service of that preaching. Whence she presently turned the words of her exhortation to the gathering of the Gentiles, as it is said also through the same apostles: *It behoved us first to speak the word of God to you; but because ye have rejected it, and have judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles* (Acts xiii. 46). Whence in this place also it is aptly subjoined: *The things which my soul before refused to touch, are now through anguish my food.* For Judea, disdaining the life of the Gentiles, long ago would not as it were touch that, whose society she scorned to receive; but coming to the grace of the Redeemer, being rejected by the infidel Israelites, while she dilates herself to the gathering of the Gentiles through the holy apostles, she receives as it were hungering into food, that which before in her fastidiousness she despised as unworthy. For she endured the anguishes of her preaching, when she saw that what she spoke was despised among the Hebrews. But through anguish she ate the foods which long ago she had contemned, who, the hardness of the Jews

being rejected, desires to receive the Gentile peoples whom she had despised. Because therefore we have said these things figuratively, it remains now that we inquire morally.

MORAL SENSE.---12. The holy man, desiring the advent of the Redeemer under the appellation of the balance, while he opens himself through eloquence, instructs us in the study of living; while he relates his own things, he indicates some of ours; while he insinuates concerning himself what we may recognize, he confirms us, trembling and weak, in hope. For already we live by the faith of the Mediator, and yet we still sustain the hard scourges of internal animadversion for the purging of vices. Whence also after the desire of the balance he subjoins:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 4.---For the arrows of the Lord are in me, the indignation of which drinks up my spirit.

13. The good are pierced by scourges and the terror of judgment. Yet it is better to be moved by love. ---But behold, as has been said above, we are both pierced by the stroke of divine correction, and yet that is still more grievous which we dread concerning the terror of the future Judge from eternal animadversion. Whence it is immediately subjoined: *And the terrors of the Lord do war against me.* Yet the mind ought to be shaken out of fear and grief, and to be extended to the desires of the eternal country alone. For then we show the nobility of our regeneration, if we love Him as a father, whom now with a servile mind

we dread as a lord. Whence it is said also through Paul: *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba, Father* (Rom. viii. 15). Therefore let the mind of the elect lay aside the weight of dread, let it exercise itself in the virtue of love, let it desire the dignity of its renovation, let it pant for the appearance of its Creator; whom so long as it is not able to behold, it must needs, hungering, expect His eternity, that is, its own inward food. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

VERS. 5.---Will the wild ass bray when he has grass? or will the ox low when he stands before a full manger?

14. The wild ass designates the faithful people, the ox the ecclesiastical order. The cause of groaning for both here is the delayed vision of God. ---Who else are signified by the appellation of the wild ass, but they who, being established in the field of faith, are bound by the thongs of no office? Or whom does the signification of the ox express, but those whom the yoke of the order they have undertaken presses within holy Church for the office of preaching? Now the grass of the wild ass and the food of the ox is the internal refection of the faithful people. For some, after the manner of the ox, are held within the Church by the thongs of an office they have undertaken; others, after the manner of the wild ass, know not the stalls of a sacred order, and live in the field of

their own will. But when any one from a secular life pants with the desire of internal vision, when he longs for the food of inward refection, when, considering himself fasting in the blindness of this pilgrimage, he refreshes himself with what tears he can, the wild ass, as if not finding grass, brays. Another also bears the necessity of the order he has undertaken, swelters in the labour of preaching, and desires already to be refreshed by eternal contemplation; but because he does not yet behold the appearance of his Redeemer, he groans like an ox tied to an empty manger. For because, being placed far from internal wisdom, we do not discern the greenness of the eternal inheritance, like brute animals we fast from the desired grass. Concerning which grass indeed it is said by the voice of the Redeemer: *By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and find pasture* (John x. 9). But for the most part, which is wont to be more grievous to those that love, the life of the bad contradicts the holy studies of the good; and when the mind is snatched away to celestial desire, the well-begun intention is beaten back by the interrupting words and manners of fools; so that that which already by the effort of contemplation had flown to the highest things, girts itself in the lowest things against contests to subdue the folly of the wicked. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 6.---Or can that which is unsavoury be eaten, which is not seasoned with salt? Or can

any one taste that which being tasted brings death?

15. How grievous to the elect are the words and manners of carnal men. ---For the words and manners of carnal men thrust themselves like food into our minds, that they may be snatched into the belly of delight. But every elect person does not eat that which is unsavoury, because, judging the words and deeds of the wicked, he repels them from the mouth of the heart. Paul forbade unsavoury things to be brought for the eating of minds, when he said to his disciples: *Let your speech be always in grace, seasoned with salt* (Col. iv. 6). And to the Psalmist also the words of the reprobate had tasted unsavoury in the mouth of the heart, when he said: *The wicked have told me fables, but not as thy law, O Lord* (Psal. cxix. 85). But often the words of carnal men, while they thrust themselves importunately into our ears, beget a war of temptation in the heart; and although reason rejects these, and the tongue reprehends them, yet that is with labour conquered within which is judged with authority without. Whence it is necessary that that should not even come to the ears, which the mind, watching from the entrance of thought, should repel. Holy men, therefore, when they pant with desires of eternity, raise themselves to such a height of life, that they believe it already a grievous and depressing weight to themselves to hear the things which are of the world. For they estimate as greatly insolent and intolerable

whatever that is which does not sound of that which they love within.

16. It is not for all to be girt for undergoing tortures of the body for God. ---But often the mind is already snatched away by desire to sublime things, is already thoroughly separated from the foolish speech of earthly men, and yet is not yet girt for enduring the tortures of this present life for the love of truth; it already appetites supernal things, already contemns foolish things in the lowest, but has not yet directed itself to the tolerance of enduring adversity. Whence also it is subjoined: *Or can any one taste that which being tasted brings death?*

CHAPTER XIV.

17. By tolerating the infirmities of our neighbors, we are strengthened to undergo tortures. ---For it is hard to appetite that which tortures, to follow that which puts life to flight. But for the most part the mind of the just man extends itself to such a height of virtue, that it both presides within in the citadel of internal reason, and by tolerating the folly of some without, converts them. For those whom we strive to draw to strong things, it is necessary that we tolerate their weak things, because he does not raise up one lying, except he who bends the rectitude of his own state through compassion. But when we have compassion for the infirmity of another, we are more valiantly strengthened from our own; so that by the love of future things the mind may prepare itself for present adversities, and expect

the tortures of the body which it feared. For by the increase of celestial desires it is straitened; and when it considers how great is the sweetness of the eternal country, it ardently loves the bitternesses of the present life for it. Whence after the loathing of unsavoury food, after the impossible taste of death, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 7.---The things which my soul before refused to touch, are now through anguish my food.

18. For the love of the heavenly country we love the punishments of exile. ---For the mind of the just man profiting, which before, while it cared for its own things alone, loathed to bear the things of others, which having less compassion for the things of others, was not able to grow strong against adversities, when it draws itself to tolerate the weak things of its neighbor, it grows strong to overcome adversities; so that for the love of truth it afterwards more strongly appetites the tortures of this present life, by how much more it before fled from weak things. For by its own inclination it is raised up, by attraction it is stretched, by compassion it is strengthened; and when it dilates itself into the love of its neighbor, it gathers as it were from meditation with what great fortitude it may rise to its Author. For charity, which humbles us to the force of compassion, raises us higher in the summit of contemplation; and being multiplied it now glows with greater desires, it now pants to arrive

at the life of the spirit, even through tortures of the body. That, therefore, which it before refused to touch, this it afterwards eats through anguish, who, scarcely containing its desires, now loves even those punishments which it long ago feared, for the love of the heavenly country. For if the mind is directed with a strong intention toward God, whatever becomes bitter to it in this life, it esteems sweet, everything which afflicts it thinks rest; it desires to pass even through death, that it may be able to obtain life more fully; it desires to be thoroughly extinguished in the lowest things, that it may more truly ascend to the highest. But these things I falsely say concerning the mind of any just man, these things concerning the mind of blessed Job, unless he himself subjoin:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 8-10.---Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that He would let loose His hand, and cut me off! Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let Him not spare.

19. The example of Job blessing his striker. God crushes us, and the devil crushes us, with different results. ---But perhaps he seeks these things through contumacy, perhaps in that he desires to be perfectly extinguished, he accuses the injustice of the striker. Far be this. For with what mind he seeks it, he demonstrates by the following words, saying: *Neither will I contradict the

words of the Holy One.* By no means therefore does he murmur concerning the injustice of the striker, who calls his striker "holy" even among the blows. But it is to be known that sometimes the adversary crushes us, and sometimes God. Now from the crushing of the adversary we fail from virtue; but being broken by the crushing of the Lord, we are strengthened from vices in virtue. The Prophet had foreseen this crushing, when he said: *Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, and thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel* (Psal. ii. 9). The Lord rules and crushes us with a rod of iron, because with the strong rectitude of His dispensation while He refreshes us interiorly, He afflicts us exteriorly. For by how much He humbles the virtue of the flesh, He exalts the intention of the spirit. Whence also this same crushing is compared to a potter's vessel, as it is said also through Paul: *We have this treasure in earthen vessels* (II Cor. iv. 7). Who, expressing at once the crushing and the rule, says: *Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day* (Ibid. 16). The holy man, therefore, who desires to approach God even through scourges, says through the spirit of humility:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERS. 9.---He that began, let Him also crush me.

20. God mercifully corrects him that raises himself up concerning virtues. ---For for the most part the Lord begins to work the crushing

of vices in us; but when the mind is extolled from the very beginning of its progress, and when it already raises itself up as it were concerning its virtues, it opens an entrance to the adversary raging against it, who, penetrating the inmost parts of the heart, breaks in pieces everything which he shall have found in it of the study of a good beginning; and he exhibits himself so much more vehemently in the breaking of it, by how much more heavily he grieves because it had been advanced even to a little. Whence also, the Gospel being witness, by the voice of the Truth, to the neglected house of the conscience the unclean spirit who went out alone returns with seven spirits (Matth. xii. 45). Lest therefore after the beginnings of divine correction the ancient enemy should steal upon him, and draw him to the breaking of his virtues, the holy man congruously prays, saying: *He that began, let Him also crush me.* As if he should say openly: Let Him not cease to perform by striking this which He has begun in me, lest He should deliver me, being deserted, to the adversary for crushing. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

IBID.---That He would let loose His hand, and cut me off.

21. How much it is to be feared lest He should keep His hand bound from striking our vices. --- For often, being inflated with the confidence of long prosperity, we are raised up in a certain state of elation. And when the Creator beholds

us being extolled, but does not exercise His love towards us through blows, He as it were keeps His hand bound from striking our vices. Had He not bound the hand of His affection, when He said to the sinning people: *I will no longer be wroth with thee* (Isai. liv. 9); and: *My zeal has departed from thee* (Ezech. xvi. 42)? Let Him therefore *let loose His hand* is said, that He may exercise His affection. But it is rightly subjoined: *And cut me off.* For when a sudden pain of the scourge, or a temptation of infirmity, strikes us, secure and elated concerning the affluence of our virtues, immediately the elation of our mind, being cut off, falls from the summit of its state, so that it dares nothing concerning itself, but, prostrated by the stroke of its own infirmity, seeks the hand of Him that raises it up. Hence it is that holy men, when they are suspicious concerning the occult disposition towards themselves, dread prosperity itself more, they desire to be tempted, they long to be scourged, in order that fear and pain may instruct the incautious mind, lest in this way of pilgrimage, the enemy breaking forth from ambush, its own security should more miserably prostrate it. Hence the Psalmist says: *Prove me, O Lord, and try me* (Psal. xxvi. 2). Hence again he says: *I am ready for scourges* (Psal. xxxviii. 17). For because the saints consider that the wound of the correction of their own mind is not without rottenness, they willingly prepare themselves under the hand of the Physician for incisions, that, the wound being opened, the virus of sin may go out, which was killing

within under a sound skin. Whence also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 10.---And let this be my consolation, that afflicting me with pain, He spare not.

22. The saints fear prosperity, they desire scourges. ---The elect, who when they know that they have committed unlawful things, but searching find that they have suffered no adversities for those unlawful things, waste away with the force of an immense dread, they are feverish with fear, they labor being agitated by sinister suspicions, lest grace should have deserted them for eternity, whom in the present life no retribution for their evil keeps in custody; they fear lest the vengeance which is suspended should be reserved more heavy at the end; they desire to be struck by paternal correction, and they think the pain of the wound the medicines of salvation. Rightly therefore is it now said: *And let this be my consolation, that afflicting me with pain He spare not.* As if it were openly said: He who for this reason spares some here, that He may strike them for ever; for this reason let Him strike me here, that by not sparing, He may spare for ever. For I am consoled from affliction, because knowing the rottenness of human corruption, I am made certain of the hope of salvation from the wound. Which because he uttered not with a swelling but with a humble mind, he makes clear by subjoining, as we said before, saying:

CHAPTER XX.

IBID.---Nor will I contradict the words of the Holy One.

23. God often speaks silently by His works. --- For the most part the words of God to us are not the sounds of things spoken, but the effects of His operations. For in that He speaks to us which He silently works towards us. Blessed Job therefore would contradict the words of God, if he were to murmur concerning His strikings. But what he thinks concerning his Striker, he indicates, who (as we have already said) calls Him holy, whom he tolerates striking him. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI

[Old IX, New VIII].

VERS. 11.---For what is my strength, that I should sustain; or what is my end, that I should act patiently?

24. What is the fortitude of the just, and what that of the reprobate. ---It is to be known that the fortitude of the just is one thing, and that of the reprobate is another. For the fortitude of the just is to overcome the flesh, to go against one's own wills, to extinguish the delight of the present life, to love the harsh things of this world for the sake of eternal rewards, to despise the allurements of prosperity, and to overcome the fear of adversity in the heart. But the fortitude of the reprobate is to love transitory things without ceasing, to endure insensibly against the scourges of the Cre-

ator, to rest not from the love of temporal things even in adversity, to arrive at vain glory even with the loss of life, to seek out increases of malice, to impugn the life of the good not only with words and manners, but even with swords, to place hope in themselves, to commit iniquity daily without any failure of desire. Hence it is that it is said to the elect by the Psalmist: *Do manfully, and let your heart be comforted, all ye that hope in the Lord* (Psal. xxxi. 24). Hence per prophet reprobis dicitur: *Woe unto you that are powerful to drink wine, and strong men to mix ebriety* (Isai. v. 22). Hence it is said by Solomon that the holy ones contemplate internal rest without any debility of desire: *Behold the bed of Solomon, sixty strong men surround it, of the strongest of Israel* (Cant. iii. 7). Hence the Psalmist, speaking in the person of the Redeemer in His Passion against the reprobate, says: *Behold they have occupied my soul, the strong have rushed upon me* (Psal. lix. 3). How well Isaiah embraced both kinds of fortitude, saying: *They that trust in the Lord shall change their strength* (Isai. xl. 31). For because he said not they shall take, but they shall *change* their strength, he certainly made it plainly known that that which is laid down is one, and that which is begun is another.

25. In what things the reprobate is strong, the just is slothful. ---Are not even the reprobate strong, who run with so many labors to the concupiscence of the present life, who boldly object themselves to perils, who willingly bear contumelies for gains, who recoil from the lust of

their appetite conquered by no contrariety, who grow hard with strikings, and tolerate the evils of the world for the world, and seeking its joys, so to speak, they lose them, nor yet in losing these are they fatigued? Whence it is well said by the voice of the human race through Jeremiah: *He hath inebriated me with wormwood* (Lam. iii. 15). For he that is drunk knows not what he suffers. He therefore is drunk with wormwood, who, alien from the sense of reason through the love of the present world, while he accounts as light whatever he sustains for the world, is ignorant of the bitterness of the labor which he tolerates, because doubtless he is led delectably to all things in which he is painfully fatigued. But on the contrary, the just man studies to be weak for the sake of tolerating the perils of the world for the world, he beholds his end, he attends to how transitory the present life is, and he refuses to suffer labors outwardly for it, whose delight he has conquered within. Blessed Job therefore, pressed by the adversities of the present life, let him say from his own voice, let him say from the voice of all the just: *For what is my strength, that I should sustain? or what is my end, that I should act patiently?* As if he plainly insinuated, saying: I cannot tolerate the evils of the world for the world, because I am no longer strong in the desire for it. For while I behold the end of the present life, why do I suffer its weight, whose appetite I tread upon? And because all the unjust, as we said, so much more strongly bear the labors thereof as they are more greedily fed with its de-

light, he rightly soon subjoins that same fortitude of the reprobate, saying:

CHAPTER XXII

[Old X, New IX].

VERS. 12.---Neither is my strength the strength of stones, nor is my flesh of brass.

26. At the striking of God some are stones without sound, others sounding brass without sense. Job is strong not through insanity, but through the state of salvation. ---What are signified in this place by brass and stones, but the hearts of insensible men, who often both receive supernal blows, and yet are softened by no striking of discipline? On the contrary to the elect it is said through the prophet, the Lord promising: *I will take away from you the stony heart, and I will give you a heart of flesh* (Ezech. xi. 19). Paul also says: *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal* (1 Cor. xiii. 1). Now we know that stones when struck cannot return a clear sound; but brass when it is struck, a very sonorous sound is formed from its striking. Because this, like stones, lacks life, it has no sense in the sound. And there are some who, like stones, have so hardened themselves to the precepts of piety, that when the striking of supernal animadversion examines them, they by no means return the sound of humble confession. But some differing in nothing from the metal of brass, when they receive the scourges of supernal

striking, emit the sound of pious confession; but because they do not bring forth the voices of humility from the heart, being reduced to a state of salvation, they know not what they promised. The former, therefore, struck after the manner of stones, have not even voices; but the latter in nothing flee the imitation of brass, who, being placed in striking, speak good things which they do not feel. The former deny even words to the veneration of Him that strikes; the latter, promising what they do not fulfil, cry out without life. The holy man, therefore, fleeing the hardness of the reprobate among blows, let him say: *Neither is my strength the strength of stones, nor is my flesh of brass.* As if he openly confessed, saying: I flee the similitude of the reprobate under the scourge of discipline, because I have not so hardened after the manner of stones, that under the sting of striking I should be silent from the ministry of confession; nor again as it were brass do I resound the voice of confession, and am ignorant of the sense of the voice. But because at the striking the reprobate are weakly strong, but the elect are powerfully weak, blessed Job while he asserts that he is not strong through insanity, makes it known that he is strong through the state of salvation. [Old XI.] Whence therefore he perceived this same strength, let him insinuate, lest if he arrogate to himself the powers which he has, he should run powerfully to death. For for the most part a virtue possessed kills worse than if it were lacking; because while it raises the mind to confidence in itself, it transfixes it

with the sword of elation; and when it as it were vivifies it by strengthening, it kills it by elevating; namely, it draws it to destruction which it plucks away from the trust in internal fortitude by its own hope. But because blessed Job both prevails in virtue, and has not confidence in himself, and, so to speak, being weak he has powers, he aptly subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERS. 13.---Behold, there is no help for me in me.

27. Because he ascribes his powers not to himself, but to God. ---It is now evident to whose hope the mind of the struck recurs, when it denies that there is help for it in itself. But because he insinuates that he is weak in himself, to the merit of still greater fortitude let him add how he is also destitute of his neighbors,---IBID.:---My kinsfolk also have departed from me. But behold, despised outwardly, he presides within on the throne of judgment. For when he asserts that he is forsaken, immediately he breaks forth into a sentence, saying:

CHAPTER XXIV

[New X].

VERS. 14.---He that taketh away mercy from his friend, forsaketh the fear of the Lord.

28. What the love of God and the love of neighbor afford to each other. ---Who is desig-

nated in this place by the name of friend but any neighbor, who is faithfully joined to us by this, that, having now received a good work from us, he truly helps towards obtaining afterwards the eternal country? But because there are two precepts of charity, namely, the love of God and of our neighbor, through the love of God the love of neighbor is begotten, and through the love of neighbor the love of God is nourished. For he who neglects to love God, certainly knows not how to love his neighbor; and then we profit more fully in the love of God, if we are first suckled by the charity of our neighbor in the bosom of the same love. For because the love of God generates the love of neighbor, the Lord about to say through the Law, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor* (Deut. vi. 5; x. 12), premised, saying: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God* (Matth. xxii. 37, 39): that namely in the earth of our heart He might first fix the root of His own love, so that afterwards fraternal love might germinate through the branches. And again because the love of God coalesces from the love of neighbor, John testifies, saying: *He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?* (1 John iv. 20). Which divine love, however, is born through fear, but in growing is changed into affection.

29. The love of neighbor is proved in his distresses. How great is the iniquity of him who despises a friend in adversities. ---But often Almighty God, in order that it may be known how far any one is from His charity and that of his neighbor, or how much he has profited

in it, dispensing all things in a wonderful order, depresses some with scourges, and supports others with successes. And when He deserts some temporally, He shows in the hearts of others what evil lies hid. For for the most part they themselves pursue us as miserable, who beyond comparison worshipped us as happy. For when any one placed in prosperity is loved, it is very uncertain whether the prosperity or the person be loved. But the loss of happiness interrogates the force of love. Whence well a certain wise man says: *A friend is not known in good things, and an enemy is not hidden in evil things* (Ecclus. xii. 8). For neither does prosperity indicate a friend, nor does adversity conceal an enemy, because both the former is often covered by the reverence of our prosperity, and the latter is opened from the confidence of our adversity. The just man therefore, being placed in scourges, let him say: *He that taketh away mercy from his friend, forsaketh the fear of the Lord,* because doubtless he who from adversity despises his neighbor, is openly convicted that he did not love him in prosperity. And since Almighty God strikes some for this reason, that He may both instruct the struck, and provide to those not struck the occasion of a good work, whoever despises the struck, repels from himself the occasion of virtue; and so much the more wickedly he raises himself against the Author, as he neither recognizes Him as pious in his own salvation, nor as just in another's wound. But it is to be considered that blessed Job so speaks his own words, that the life of the

whole elect people also is signified through him. For because he is a member of the same people, when he narrates what he himself suffers, he also denounces those things which that people sustains, saying:

CHAPTER XXV.

VERS. 15.---My brothers have passed me by as a torrent, which rapidly passes in the valleys.

30. Why the reprobate are called by the just both brothers and passing by. They are rightly compared to a torrent. By a short and fugitive life they pass to eternal torments. ---Because the mind of the reprobate loves only present things, for the most part it now exists as much alien from the scourge, as it remains afterwards a stranger from the inheritance; and proud it despises the just, whom paternal severity mercifully afflicts. But often the reprobate retain the same faith by which we live, they perceive the same sacraments of faith, they are contained in the unity of the same religion; but yet they know not the bowels of compassion, they recognize not the force of charity, with which we are on fire towards God and our neighbor. Rightly therefore are they called both brothers and passing by, because they proceed from one womb of a mother with us through faith, but they are not fixed in one study of charity towards God and neighbor. Whence they are also aptly compared to a torrent which rapidly passes in the valleys. For a torrent flows down from the mountains to the depths, and being collected by winter rains, it dries up

with summer suns. For they who, loving earthly things, desert the hope of the supernal country, as it were seek the valleys from the mountains; whom however the winter of the present life multiplies, but the summer of the future judgment dries up, because when the sun of supernal strictness shall have glowed, it turns the joy of the reprobate into aridity. Well therefore is it said: *Rapidly passes in the valleys.* For for a torrent to pass rapidly to the valleys is for the minds of the wicked to descend to the lowest desires without any obstacle and difficulty. [Old XII.] For all ascent is in labor, descent in pleasure, because by effort the step is tended to higher things, but by remission it is declined to lower things. For to carry a stone to the summit of a mountain is of great labor, and the same to let down from the highest to the lowest is not labor. Namely, he rushes down without delay, who with great efforts arrived at the summit. With long study the crop is sown, it is nourished by the sun and long-continued rain, but yet by one and sudden spark it is consumed. For a little while buildings profit to the heights, but by sudden falls they seek the earth. The robust tree raises itself into the air by slow increments; but whatever it brought forth long to the heights, falls once and at once. Because therefore ascent is in labor, descent in pleasure, rightly is it now said: *My brothers have passed me by as a torrent, which rapidly passes in the valleys.* Which however can be understood also otherwise.

31. For if we understand the valleys to be the lowest places of punishments, all the unjust pass as a torrent rapidly to the valleys, because in this life, which they seek with all their desires, they can by no means stand long. For as many days of age as they receive, by as it were so many steps daily they tend to the end. They wish times to be increased to them, but because those granted cannot subsist, as many increments of living as they perceive, so many they lose from the space of living. The moments therefore of times fly by that which they follow, they lose that which they receive. Rapidly therefore they pass to the valleys, who indeed draw out the desires of pleasures into length, but are suddenly led down to the bars of hell. For because even this time, which is extended by any longevity, if it is closed by an end, is not long; from the end the miserable gather that that was short which they held in losing. Whence well it is also said by Solomon: *If a man live many years, and have rejoiced in them all, he must remember the darksome time, and the many days, which when they come, the past things shall be accused of vanity* (Eccles. xi. 8). For the foolish mind when it shall have suddenly found the evil, which by no means passes by, understands its eternity by tolerating it, because that which could pass by was vain. Now it is to be known that many desire to act rightly, but there are some things which contradict their weak minds from the present life; and while they fear to suffer adversities in the lowest things, they

stumble into the rectitude of supernal judgment. Whence it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVI

[New XI].

VERS. 16.---They that fear the frost, the snow shall fall upon them.

32. They who from fear of temporal losses desert justice, shall fall into eternal evils. ---For frost freezes below, but snow rushes down from higher places. And often some, while they greatly fear temporal adversities, object themselves to the strictness of eternal animadversion. Of whom it is well said by the Psalmist: *There have they trembled with fear, where there was no fear* (Psal. xiv. 5). For this one now desires to defend the truth freely, but yet in that very desire of his, trembling he greatly fears the indignation of human power; and while he fears man upon earth against the truth, he sustains from heaven the wrath of the same truth. That one, conscious of his sins, now desires to bestow those things which he possesses upon the needy, but yet he dreads lest he himself should be in want when the things are given. And while trembling he prepares the subsidies of the flesh by reserving them, he kills his soul from the nourishments of mercy; and when he fears to suffer want upon earth, he cuts off from himself the eternal abundance of supernal refreshment. Rightly therefore is it said: *They that fear the frost, the snow shall fall upon them,* because they who fear things to

be trodden upon from the lowest, suffer things to be feared from the highest; and when they will not pass through what they could have trodden upon, they receive judgment from the supernal regions, which they can by no means tolerate. But doing these things, they obtain the glory of the world temporally. But what are they to do at the time of their calling, when trembling they desert all things at once which they have kept here with grave fear? Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERS. 17.---At the time when they shall have been dissipated, they shall perish.

33. How great is their dread, as judgment approaches. ---For those whom the solicitude of the present life orders, the loss thereof dissipates; and then they perish even outwardly, who long ago perished within by neglecting eternal things. Concerning whom it is rightly added: *And as they shall have grown hot, they shall be dissolved from their place.* [Old XIII.] For every unjust man, when he shall have grown hot, is dissolved from his place, because approaching the judgment of internal strictness, when he has already begun to glow through the knowledge of punishment, he is separated from that delight of his flesh, to which he had long ago clung. For hence it is that it is said by the prophet against the reprobate: *And only vexation alone shall give understanding to the hearing* (Isai. xxviii. 19), because namely they do not understand eternal things, except when they are already punished

for temporal things without amendment. Then the mind is feverish, and inflames itself with the fires of an unfruitful penitence, it fears to be led to punishment, it retains the present life from desire; but it is dissolved from its place, because deserting the allurements of the flesh, its hardness is liquefied through punishment. But because we have heard what all the unjust will suffer at the time of their abstraction, let us still hear some things with which they are implicated in the space of their liberty. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Old XIV, New XII].

VERS. 18.---The paths of their steps are involved.

34. It profits nothing to propose right things, unless we are tenacious of the purpose. ---Everything that is involved is folded back into itself. And there are some who deliberate to meet seductive vices as it were with their whole intention, but the point of temptation rushing upon them, they do not persevere in the purpose of their deliberation. For one, inflated with the perverse daring of pride, when he considers that the rewards of humility are great, raises himself against himself, and as it were lays down the tumor of turgid fastidiousness, he promises to exhibit himself humble to any contumelies; but when suddenly the injury of a single word shall have struck him, he returns immediately to his accustomed elation, and is so led to tumor, that

he by no means remembers that he had desired the good of humility. Another, feverish with avarice, pants for increasing his means. He, when he beholds all things passing away swiftly, fixes his mind wandering through concupiscences, decrees now to seek nothing, and to possess only things obtained under the rein of great moderation; but when suddenly things which please shall have been offered to his eyes, immediately the mind pants in ambition, it does not contain itself, it seeks an occasion of acquiring these, and having forgotten the continence which it had pledged with itself, it disquiets itself with the stings of thoughts through the desires of acquisition. Another is polluted by the wasting of luxury, and is held captured now by long custom; but he beholds how great is the cleanness of chastity, and finds it base to be conquered by the flesh. He deliberates therefore to restrain the flux of pleasures, and prepares himself to resist custom as it were with all his powers. But either a form being presented to his eyes, or recalled to memory, when he is shaken by sudden temptation, immediately he is dissipated from his former preparation; and he who had raised against this the shield of deliberation, lies pierced through by the dart of delight; and thus luxury overcomes him nerveless, as if he had prepared no arms of intention against it. Another is kindled with the flames of anger, and is unbridled even to bringing contumelies upon his neighbors. But when no occasion of fury strikes his mind, he considers how great is the virtue of meekness, how great

the height of patience, and prepares himself to be patient even against contumelies; but when any small occasion of commotion arises, suddenly he is inflamed to the marrow to voices and contumelies; so that not only the promised patience does not return to memory, but even the mind knows not itself and the reproaches which it speaks. And when he shall have fully satisfied his fury, as it were after exercise he returns into tranquillity; and then he recollects himself to the bars of silence, when not the patience of the tongue, but the satisfaction of his own procacity has placed a rein. Scarcely therefore does he restrain himself late after the reproaches brought upon another, because also often the term of the field, not the right hand of the rider, coerces foaming horses from their course. Well therefore is it said of the reprobate: *The paths of their steps are involved,* because indeed they seek right things by deliberating, but are always folded back to their accustomed evils; and as it were stretched outside themselves, they return to themselves by a circuit, who indeed desire good things, but never depart from evils. For they wish to be humble, but yet without contempt; to be content with their own, but without necessity; to be chaste, but without maceration of the body; to be patient, but without contumelies; and while they seek to obtain virtues, but flee the labors of virtues, what else than that they know not the contests of war in the field, and desire to triumph in the cities concerning the war.

[Vet. XV.] 35. While some subdue certain vices, they neglect others, and soon succumb even to those they had mastered. ---However, this fact, that their paths are mentioned as involved, can still be understood in another way. For frequently some girt themselves vehemently against certain vices, but neglect to subdue others; and since they do not raise themselves against the latter, they also restore against themselves those which they had subdued. For one has already mastered the flesh from luxury (luxuria), but yet has not refrained his mind from avarice (avaritia); and while he keeps himself in the world for the exercise of avarice, and since he does not depart from earthly acts, when the point of occasion breaks out, he falls even into luxury, which he already seemed to have subdued. Another has conquered the heat of avarice, but by no means has subjected the force of luxury; and while he prepares the price for fulfilling luxury, he also subjects the neck of his heart to the yoke of avarice, which he mastered a short while ago. Another has already laid low rebelling impatience (impatientia), but has not yet conquered vain glory (inanis gloria); and when he inserts himself into the honors of the world through this, being pierced by the stings of causes, he returns captured to impatience; and when vain glory raises his mind to the defense of itself, he, being conquered, also tolerates that which he overcame. Another has subjected vain glory, but yet has not yet laid low impatience; and when he threatens many things to those resisting through impatience, blushing

not to fulfill what he speaks, he is recalled under the yoke of vain glory; and he, being conquered through one thing, tolerates that which he was rejoicing that he had fully conquered. Thus therefore by vicarious aid vices retain their fugitive, and receive him as it were already lost under the right of their dominion, and deliver him in turn to each other for vengeance. To the perverse therefore the paths of their steps are involved, because even if they lift their foot from one defeated wickedness, yet while another reigns, they entangle it even in that which they had defeated.

36. One sinning entangles himself, while one fault is the occasion of another and of many following. As it were man ends in a beast, while under the pretext of reason he sins against reason. ---But sometimes by the involved paths of the steps no fault is overcome, and one is perpetrated through another. For often the fallacy of negation is joined to theft, and often the fault of fallacy is heaped up by the guilt of perjury. Often any vice is committed by impudent presumption, and often (what becomes heavier than all fault) one even prides himself concerning the committed vice. 228 For although elation is accustomed to be born from virtue, yet sometimes a foolish mind exalts itself concerning perpetrated wickedness. But when fault is joined to fault, what else than that by involved paths and knotted bonds the steps of the perverse are bound? Whence well is it said against the perverse mind under the figure of Judea through Isaiah: It shall be a lair of dragons, and a pasture of ostriches, and demons

shall meet with onocentaurs, and the hairy one shall cry out one to the other (Isai. XXXIV, 13). For what is designated by dragons but malice (malitia), but what by the name of ostriches but hypocrisy (hypocrisis)? For the ostrich has the appearance of flying, but has not the use of flying, because hypocrisy also insinuates the image of holiness of itself to all looking on, but knows not how to hold the life of holiness. In the perverse mind therefore the dragon lies, and the ostrich feeds, because both latent malice is craftily covered, and the simulation of goodness is preferred to the eyes of those looking on. But what by the name of onocentaurs (onocentauri), but that both the slippery and the elate are figured? For in the Greek speech onos is called an ass, and by the appellation of an ass luxury is designated, the prophet attesting, who says: As the flesh of asses, their flesh (Ezek. XXIII, 20). But by the word of bull the neck of pride is demonstrated, as by the voice of the Lord it is said of the proud Jews through the Psalmist: Fat bulls have besieged me (Psal. XXI, 13). Onocentaurs therefore are they who, subjected to the vices of luxury, thence raise their neck, whence they ought to have been humbled. Who, serving the pleasures of their flesh, shame being expelled far away, not only do not grieve that they lose rectitude, but even yet rejoice concerning the work of confusion. But demons meet onocentaurs, because the malignant spirits serve them greatly according to their wish whom they behold rejoicing concerning these things which they ought to have wept for.

Where fitly is subjoined: And the hairy one shall cry out one to the other For who else are figured by the appellation of hairy ones (pilosi), but they whom the Greeks call Pans, the Latins incubi? whose form indeed is begun from a human effigy, but is terminated with a bestial extremity. By the name of hairy one therefore the roughness of any sin is designated, which even if at any time it begins as if from the pretext of reason, yet always tends to irrational motions; and as it were man ends in a beast, while fault, beginning through the image of reason, is drawn even to an irrational effect. For often the delight of eating serves gluttony (gula), and simulates that it serves the need of nature; and when it extends the belly into gluttony, it raises the members into luxury. But the hairy one cries out one to another, when perpetrated wickedness provokes to perpetrating another, and as it were by a certain voice of thought, fault being already committed, invites the fault which is still to be committed. For often, as we said, gluttony says: If you do not refresh the body with abundant food, you subsist in no useful labor. And when it shall have kindled the mind through the desires of the flesh, soon luxury also makes the words of its own suggestion, saying: If God did not wish men to be mixed corporally, he would not have made those very members fit for the uses of joining. And when it suggests these things as if from reason, it draws the mind to the unbridling of lusts. Which being often detected, it soon seeks the patronage of fallacy and negation; and it does not estimate itself to be guilty,

if by lying it should defend its life. The hairy one therefore cries out one to another, when under some appearance of reasoning a subsequent fault entangles the perverse mind from the occasion of a preceding fault. And when hard and rough sins depress this, as if called together in it the hairy ones rule concordantly; and thus it happens that the paths of the steps always involve themselves for the worse, while fault binds the reprobate mind through fault.

[Vet. XVI, Rec. XIII.] 37. The custom of sinning is sometimes preceded by blindness of the mind, and sometimes precedes it. ---But among these things it is to be known that sometimes the eye of the intellect is first blunted, and afterwards the captured mind wanders through exterior desires, so that the blind mind knows not where it is led, and willingly subjects itself to the allurements of its flesh. But sometimes the desires of the flesh first boil up, and after long use of the illicit work they close the eye of the heart. For often the mind beholds right things, yet does not raise itself daringly against perverse things; and resisting it is conquered, while, judging this very thing which it acts, it is overcome by the delight of its flesh. For because mostly the eye of contemplation is first lost, and afterwards the mind is subjected to the labors of the world through the desires of this flesh, Samson captured by the Allophyli (Philistines) testifies, who after he lost his eyes, was deputed to the mill, because namely the malignant spirits, after they dig out the edge of contemplation within by the stings

of temptations, send it outside into the circuit of labors. Again, because often even right operation is lost exteriorly, and yet the light of reason is still retained in the heart, the prophet Jeremiah insinuates, who while he narrates the captivity of Zedekiah, denounces the order of internal captivity, saying: And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah in his eyes, and all the nobles of Judah the king of Babylon slew, the eyes also of Zedekiah he plucked out (Jerem. XXXIX, 6). The king of Babylon is the ancient enemy, the possessor of intimate confusion, who first slays the sons before the eyes of the one looking on, because often he so kills good works, that he himself who is captured beholds them lost, grieving. For the mind mostly groans; and yet, conquered by the delights of its flesh, it loses loving the good things which it brought forth, it considers the losses which it suffers, yet does not raise the arm of virtue against the king of Babylon. But while seeing he is struck by the perpetration of wickedness, at some time he is led by the use of sin to this, that he is also deprived of the light of reason itself. Whence the king of Babylon, the sons having first been extinguished, plucked out the eyes of Zedekiah, because the malignant spirit, good works having first been withdrawn, afterwards also takes away the light of understanding. Which rightly Zedekiah suffers in Riblah. For Riblah is interpreted, 'these many things'. For to him also the light of reason is closed, who by perverse use is weighed down by the multitude of his iniquity. [Vet. XVII.] But in

whatever way fault proceeds, or breaks out from whatever occasions, yet the paths of the reprobate are always involved, so that being given over to perverse concupiscences, they either seek no good things, or seeking with weak desire, by no means do they stretch the free steps of the mind to these. For they either do not begin right things, or, broken in the way itself, they reach these very little. Whence it happens mostly that they return wearied to their own custom, and prostrate themselves from the intention of the mind in the pleasures of the flesh, they think only those things which pass away, they care for none which 230 remain with them. Whence fitly is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID.---They shall walk in vacuum, and perish.

38. The labor of those gasping for transitory goods is empty (vacuus). ---For they walk in vacuum who carry nothing with them of the fruit of their labor. For one toils for obtaining honors, another burns for multiplying faculties, another pants for deserving praises; but because everyone dying deserts all these things here, he has lost his labors in vacuum, who has carried nothing with him before the judge. On the contrary well is it said through the law: You shall not appear in the sight of the Lord empty (vacuus) (Exod. XXIII, 15). For he who has not provided the reward of the life to be deserved by acting well, appears empty in the sight of the Lord. Hence concerning the just it is said by the Psalmist: But coming they shall

come in exultation, carrying their sheaves (Psal. CXXV, 6). For to the examination of judgment they come carrying sheaves who show in themselves right works by which they may deserve life. Hence concerning each elect one the Psalmist says again: Who has not received his soul in vain (Psal. XXIII, 4). For he receives his soul in vain, who, thinking only present things, does not attend to those which follow him forever. He receives his soul in vain who, neglecting its life, prefers the care of the flesh to it. But the just do not receive their soul in vain, because by continual intention they refer to its utility whatever they operate corporally, so that even the work passing away, the cause of the work may not pass away, which prepares the rewards of life after life. But the reprobate neglect to care for these things, because surely, walking in vacuum, they flee the life following them, and finding they lose it. But better are we restrained from the imitation of the perverse, if we weigh their losses from the end. Whence well also with exhortation is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XIV].

VERS. 19. Consider the paths of Teman, the journeys of Sheba, and wait a little while.

39. Some are ensnared in the nets of the world under the name of honesty. Among these are they who carry on the care of household affairs, or who love their neighbors inordinately. ---Teman (Thema) indeed is interpreted South wind

(Auster), but Sheba (Saba) a net (rete). What is demonstrated here by the South wind, which dissolves members breathed upon with warmth, but a flux remission of living; what by the net but the obligation of action? For they who with a dissolved mind seek those things which are eternal, lest they should proceed with a free step to God, bind themselves by their own inordinate efforts; and when they entangle themselves in the flux acts of their own conversation, they place their feet in the meshes of the net as if about to remain. For as a little above we said that some are drawn back to faults already defeated through certain open and non-defeated vices, so some return to those things which they had left through certain things which are cloaked either by the name of honesty or the honor of praise. For there are many who now do not seek the things of others, and are divided from the quarrels of this world by a begun love of rest, they thirst to be instructed by sacred eloquoies, they desire to be vacant for supernal contemplations; yet they do not desert the care of household affairs with perfect liberty of mind, which while they serve lawfully, they are also entangled in the illicit quarrels of this world; and while they desire to protect earthly things studiously, they desert the rest of heart which they sought; and while the fleeing substance is protected by continual provision, the word of divine 231 knowledge conceived in the mind is dissipated, because, according to the sentence of Truth (Matth. XXIII, Marc. IV, Luke VIII), thorns oppress the seed having sprung up,

when importunate solicitudes of earthly things expel the word of God from the memory. With dissolved steps therefore they walk in a net, who while they do not perfectly desert the world, bind themselves by walking, lest they should walk.

40. And there are many who not only do not seek the things of others, but even leave all things which they had possessed in the world, they despise themselves, they require no glory of the present life, they separate themselves from the actions of this world, and almost tread upon whatever of prosperity may have smiled upon them. But yet still bound by the bond of carnal cognation (relationship), while they serve the love of proximity indiscreetly, they return often through the effect of cognations to those things which they already subdued even with their own contempt. And when they love the neighbors of the flesh more than is necessary, being drawn back exteriorly, they are divided from the parent of the heart. For often we see some, as much as pertains to their own study, now not to have the desires of the present life, to have left the world both in work and in profession; but yet for the inordinate affections of neighbors to burst into courts (praetoria), to be vacant for the quarrels of earthly things, to leave the liberty of intimate quiet, and to restore the studies of the world already destroyed in themselves a long time ago. Whither therefore do these walk but in a net, whom the perfection of life already begun had loosed from the present world, but the inordinate love of earthly cognation binds?

41. We ought to despise, hate, and not know our relatives for the sake of God. ---For they who with strict study, and not with dissolved steps, follow the reward of the eternal promise, as they despise themselves for the sake of divine love, so they postpone all things by which they feel themselves to be hindered; and when for the sake of God it is necessary that they serve all with what they are able, for the sake of God they deny private obsequies even to relatives. For hence it is that when a certain one said: Permit me first to go and bury my father (Matth. VIII, 21), he straightway heard from the mouth of Truth: Suffer the dead to bury their dead, but go thou, announce the kingdom of God (Ibid., 22). In which matter it is to be noted that while the elect disciple is restrained from the burial of a parent, that which out of carnal affection he owes even to strangers for the sake of the Lord, he is not permitted to exhibit to a dead father for the sake of the Lord. [Vet. XVIII.] Hence again Truth says: If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple (Luke XIV, 26). In which place, namely, while the hatred of our own soul is subjoined to the hatred of relatives, it is patently shown that we are commanded to hold relatives in hatred just as ourselves, so that snatching them toward eternal things, and postponing their carnal grace when it hinders, we may learn by the tempered art of discretion both to love them conveniently and to hate them salutarily, so far as that he may know

how to let hatred rise through love, that we may be able more truly to love them through hatred. Hence again it is said through Moses: Who said to his father and to his mother, I know you not; and to his brethren, I am ignorant of them; and they knew not their own children; these have kept thy eloquence and thy covenant, and have observed thy judgments (Deut. XXXIII, 9). For he desires to know God more familiarly, who for the love of piety desires not to know those whom he knew carnally. 232 For by a heavy loss divine knowledge is diminished, if it is shared with the knowledge of the flesh. Therefore everyone ought to become outside of his cognates and neighbors, if he wishes to be more truly joined to the Parent of all, so that he may love those same ones whom he usefully neglects for the sake of God so much more solidly, as he is ignorant in them of the soluble affection of carnal copula.

42. We ought to benefit our relatives more than others, provided that our progress toward God is not retarded thereby. We ought indeed to be kindly affected toward them, yet not to decline from the journey which leads to God. --- We ought indeed also temporally to benefit those to whom we are more closely joined more than others, because even a flame extends a fire to things moved near it, but first it burns that very thing where it is born. We ought to acknowledge the copula (bond) of earthly cognation; but yet to ignore this when it hinders the course of the mind, so far as that the faithful soul, kindled in divine study, may neither despise those things

which are joined to itself in the lowest parts, and, rightly ordering these things in itself, may transcend them by the love of the highest things. Solicitous care must therefore be provided lest the grace of the flesh creep in, and deflect the step of the heart from the right journey, lest it hinder the force of supernal love, and press down the rising mind with a weight imposed upon it. For in such a way ought everyone to compassionated the necessities of relatives, that yet he does not permit the force of his intention to be hindered through compassion, so that affection indeed may fill the bowels of the mind, but yet may not avert it from the spiritual purpose. For neither do holy men not love the neighbors of the flesh in bestowing necessary things, but by the love of spiritual things they overcome that very love in themselves, so far as to temper it by the moderation of discretion, that through this they may not decline from the right journey even in a small or least thing. Whom they well intimate to us through the signification of the cows, which, tending toward the mountains under the Ark of the Lord, walk with an affection that is at once rigid and sensory, as it is written: Taking two cows that were giving milk to calves, they joined them to a cart, and shut up their calves at home, and placed the Ark of God upon the cart (I Kings VI, 10). And a little after: The cows went in a straight line through the way which leads to Bethshemesh, and they walked in one journey, going and lowing, and not declining neither to the right nor to the left (Ibid., 12). For

behold, the calves being shut up at home, the cows which are bound to the cart under the Ark of the Lord groan and go on, they give lowings from their innermost parts, and yet they do not change their steps from the journey. They feel love indeed through compassion, but they do not deflect their necks afterward. Just so, just so is it necessary that they ought to go who, subjected to the yoke of the sacred law, now carry the Ark of the Lord through internal knowledge, so far as that through this, that they condole with the necessities of relatives, they may not decline from the begun journey of rectitude. Bethshemesh indeed is called the house of the sun. Therefore, with the Ark of the Lord placed upon it, to go to Bethshemesh is to approach the habitation of eternal light with supernal knowledge. But then we truly tend to Bethshemesh, when walking the way of rectitude, we do not decline to the neighboring sides of error even for the affection of our pledges (children). Whose grace surely ought to hold our mind, but ought not to turn it back, lest this same mind either, if it is not touched by affection, be hard; or, more touched, if it is inflected, be remiss.

[Vet. XIX.] 43. The grace of relatives ought to hold, but ought not to turn back. ---It is pleasing to behold blessed Job, in whom the yoke of divine fear had worn away the necks of the heart, under how great a moderation of discretion he carries the Ark of the divine sentence. 233 For having lost his calves he lows, because, having heard of the death of his children, he fell upon the earth

with his head shaven (Job I, 20); but yet he walks with a straight journey while lowing, because his mouth is opened in groaning to the praises of God, when he straightway says: The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done; blessed be the name of the Lord (Ibid., 21). But indiscreet minds know not this rule of living, and by as much as they seek the ways of God dissolvedly, by so much are they foolishly folded back to the journeys of the world.

44. The losses of tepidity seen in others are wont to move more piously. ---Rightly therefore the holy man mentions the paths of Teman after the journeys of Sheba, because whom the South wind (Auster) of reprobate tepidity has loosed, these surely the net of implication holds. But describing well the facts of the wicked, he admonishes to consider these, because by doing perverse things we love them, but we judge these same things seen in others; and those things which we believe less to be judged in ourselves, we know how foul they are in the action of others; and thus it happens that the mind returns to itself, and blushes to do what it reprehends. For as if from a mirror a foul face is displeasing, when the mind sees in itself from a similar life what it may turn away from. He says therefore: Consider the paths of Teman, the journeys of Sheba, and wait a little while. As if he should say openly: Attend to the losses of the tepidity of another, and then you will take hope of eternal things more firmly, if you see with the right eye of the heart what may be displeasing in others.

[Vet. XX.] 45. How usefully the brevity of this life is attended to. ---Well indeed is it said: Wait a little while. For often while the brevity of the present life is loved as if about to persevere for a long time, the mind is broken from eternal hope, and delighted with present things, is reverberated by the mist of its own desperation. And when it thinks that space which remains to it for living is long, suddenly deserting life, it finds eternal things which it may no longer be able to avoid. For hence it is that it is said through a certain wise man: Woe to those who have lost patience (Eccli. II, 16). Namely, they lose patience who, while they estimate themselves to stay a long time in visible things, desert the hope of invisible things. And when the mind is fixed in present things, life is terminated; and suddenly they arrive at unforeseen punishments, which, deceived by their own presumptions, they believed either would never happen to them, or would happen late. Hence Truth says: Watch ye therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour (Matth. XXV, 13). Hence again it is written: The day of the Lord as a thief in the night, so shall it come (I Thess. V, 2). For because arriving to snatch the soul it is not at all seen, it is compared to a thief in the night. By so much therefore ought it to be feared as if always coming, as it cannot be foreknown by us as about to come. Whence also holy men, because they look upon the brevity of life incessantly, live as if daily dying; and they prepare themselves so much more solidly for the things about to remain, as they always weigh from the end that no tran-

sitory things are. For hence indeed the Psalmist, beholding the life of the sinner to flee with a swift course, says: Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be (Psal. XXXVI, 10). Hence again he says: Man as grass his days (Psal. CII, 15). Hence Isaiah says: All flesh is grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the grass (Isai. XL, 6). Hence James corrects the minds of those presuming, saying: What is your life? It is a vapor appearing for a little while (Jac. IV, 15). Rightly therefore is it said: Wait a little while, because it is even immense what follows without end, and it is little whatever is finished. For it ought not to seem long [234] to us what tends by the course of its own time that it be not; which while it is led through moments, these very moments of its own which defer it, impel it; and whence it is discerned to be held, thence it is driven that it be not held. Well moreover does blessed Job, after he brought in the despising of the brevity of the present life, straightway rise in the voice of all the elect against the iniquitous, adding:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERS. 20.---They are confounded, because I hoped.

46. The constancy of the good affects the reprobate with shame. ---When the reprobate bring evils upon the good, if they behold these to be shaken from their internal hope, they are gladdened by the effect of the deception. For they reckon the propagation of their own error as a maximum gain, because they exult to have asso-

ciates in their own perdition. But when the hope of the good is fixed within, and is by no means reclined to the depths by exterior evils, confusion occupies the mind of the wicked, because while they cannot arrive at the innermost parts of the afflicted, they blush to exist as cruel ones in vain. Therefore let the holy man say from his own voice, let him say from the constancy of the universal Church afflicted and groaning, which among the adversities of the reprobate desires the joy of supernal retribution without any defect of mind, and endures even unto life by dying: They are confounded, because I hoped. As if he should say openly: Because by hard persecutions the reprobate do not soften the force of my rigidity, blushing they doubtless lose the labor of their own cruelty. Whence also he beholds the goods of the coming retribution as if now present, and attends to what guilt remains for the reprobate in judgment, subjoining:

CHAPTER XXXII.

IBID.---They came also even unto me, and were covered with shame.

47. The trepidation of the reprobate in judgment. ---To the holy Church indeed the reprobate come in the day of judgment, because even unto her glory then to be beheld are they led through, so that repulsed to the greater punishments of their own guilt they may see what they have lost. Then indeed shame covers the wicked, when the witness of conscience convicts them in the sight of the Judge. Then the Judge is discerned

exteriorly, but the accuser is tolerated interiorly. Then all guilt is brought back before the eyes, and the mind is tortured more heavily by its own fire above the burnings of Gehenna. Concerning whom it is rightly said through the Prophet: Lord, let thy hand be exalted, that they may not see; let them see and be confounded (Isai. XXVI, 11). For their merits now obscure the intellect of the reprobate, but then the knowledge of their guilt illuminates it, so that they may both not see now the things to be followed, and may discern them then after they have lost them. For now indeed they neglect to understand eternal things, or they despise the things understood when they seek them; but then they behold them understood without a doubt and desired, when they can by no means follow the things desired.

[Vet. XXI.] 48. The friends of Job covered with shame from his confidence in God. --- Which words of blessed Job also especially agree with his friends, who by hard upbraidings were attempting to shake the mind of the holy man. For he says: They are confounded, because I hoped. As if he should say openly: While by foolish increpations they cannot bend me to desperation, they themselves are confounded by the insanity of their own temerity. They came also even unto me, and were covered with shame. As if he should say: Seeing the wounds of the body, but not knowing the constancy of the mind, while they dared to upbraid me concerning injustice, they had not yet come even unto me; but pulsing me with a hard [235] invection, while they depre-

hend the mind to stand among adversities, they blush as if coming unto me. For by that they come unto me, by which they know me in my innermost parts; and there shame covers them, where the exterior loss does not touch me standing strongly. There are indeed some who know not how to fear God, except when they are terrified either by adversity experienced in themselves, or known in others, whom prosperous things elevate through audacity, contrary things disturb through infirmity. From whose number namely blessed Job redargues his friends to be, when he straightway subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERS. 21.---Now you are come, and now seeing my stroke you are afraid.

49. God is to be feared even in prosperity. ---As if he should say openly: I feared God then, when, supported by prosperous things, I did not feel the detriments of scourges. But you who have not feared God out of love, dread Him from the stroke of the whip alone. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIV.

VERS. 22, 23.---Did I say: Bring to me, and give me of your substance? or: Deliver me from the hand of the enemy, and rescue me from the hand of the strong?

50. The Church does not wish to hear from those who assert perverse things concerning the faith, what they teach as true concerning morals.

Malignant spirits were created without the infirmity of the flesh. ---If these words are referred to the person of the holy Church, because we have said that the friends of blessed Job hold the type of heretics, she rightly asserts herself not to need their substance. For the substance of heretics is not inconveniently understood as carnal wisdom, by which while they are perversely supported, they show themselves as if rich in words; which the holy Church does not seek, because she transcends this by spiritual intellect. But often heretics, while they assert perverse things concerning the faith, speak some subtle things against the ancient enemy concerning the temptations of the flesh. For sometimes they show in themselves as if healthy members of operation, in which they are held in the head by the bite of the serpent wounded in faith. But the holy Church does not wish to hear from these subtle things concerning temptations, who while they assert certain true things concerning conversation, lead to the false things of perfidy. Whence it is rightly said now: Did I say: Bring to me, and give me of your substance? or: Deliver me from the hand of the enemy, and rescue me from the hand of the strong? For he calls the strength of Satan the hand of the enemy, and he names the powers of malignant spirits the hand of the strong. Whom he mentions as strong for this reason, because while they were created without the infirmity of the flesh, an adjunct imbecility does not withstand their wicked efforts. But this which is subjoined:

[Vet. XXIV.] 55. Those who rebuke others should not flatter themselves. ---For from other deeds of the saints we learn what we ought to think of others. For holy men are neither free through elation, nor submissive through fear; but when uprightness raises them to freedom of speech, the consideration of their own infirmity keeps them in humility. For although they strike the faults of delinquents rebuking them from on high, yet judging themselves more subtly within themselves, they place themselves as it were among the abject; and by as much as they pursue the evil things in others, by so much do they return more severely to repress themselves; and again by as much as they by no means spare themselves even when doing better things, by so much the more vigilantly do they reprehend the deeds of others. For what can they wonder at externally concerning human power, who also despise themselves, even when they almost already grasp the citadel of innermost sublimity? Therefore, they judge well the height of earthly loftiness from without, because the weight of pride does not burden the eye within. Whence also blessed Job, when he despised the earthly prudence, strength, and substance in his friends speaking harshly, saying: Did I say: Bring to me, and give me of your substance? or: Deliver me from the hand of the enemy; and rescue me from the hand of the strong? Teach me, and I will be silent; and if perchance I have been ignorant of anything, instruct me; what he thinks of himself, he manifests a little below, saying: You rush upon

a ward (pupillum) (Verse 27). Thus it appears clearer than light in how great an infirmity he beholds himself, whom he calls a ward (pupillum). It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Rec. XVI].

VERS. 25.---Why have you detracted from the words of truth, since there is none among you who can rebuke?

56. He who wishes to correct others must be clean. He himself must be clean from vices who cares to correct those of others, so that he may not think on earthly things, nor succumb to lowest desires; so that he may see what should be avoided by others by as much more clearly as he more truly avoids these things himself through knowledge and life, because the eye which dust burdens by no means purely considers a blemish in a member, and the hands which hold mud are not able to wipe away superadded filth. Which, according to the series of the ancient translation, the divine voice well indicates to David laboring in exterior wars through a sign, when it says: You shall not build me a temple, because you are a man of blood (2 Sam. 7; 16:8; 1 Chron. 22:8). But he builds the temple of God, who is at leisure for correcting and instituting the minds of his neighbors. For we are the temple of God, who are constructed for true life by His inhabiting, Paul attesting, who says: The temple of God is holy, which you are (1 Cor. 3:17). But a man of blood is

forbidden to build a temple to God, because he who still lies under carnal acts must necessarily blush to instruct the minds of neighbors spiritually. Well therefore is it said: Why have you detracted from the words of truth, since there is none among you who can rebuke? As if it were openly said: With what temerity do you reprehend what you have heard, who, being ignorant of the causes of my stroke, still bring forth reprehensible things? It follows:

CHAPTER XVII

[Rec. XVII].

VERS. 26.---You devise speeches only to rebuke, and you bring forth words into the wind.

57. Two kinds of speech are harmful to men. There are two kinds of speech very importunate and harmful to the human race: one which cares to praise even perverse things, another which always strives to correct even right things. That one is led downwards with the river, but this one endeavors to bar against the streams of truth and the channel. That one fear oppresses, this one elation raises. That one catches grace from favors, this one anger agitates so that it may be shown as if from a contest. That one lies ready at hand, this one always swells from the opposite side. Therefore, from the quality of this latter kind blessed Job refuted his friends to have been, when he says: You devise speeches only to rebuke. But whence one arrives at the audacity of unjust rebuking, was immediately made known, when

he subjoined: And you bring forth words into the wind. For to bring forth words into the wind is to say idle things. For often while the tongue is by no means restrained from idle words, it is also unbridled to the temerity of foolish rebuking. For by certain steps of its own ruin a slothful mind is impelled into the pit of a fall. For while we neglect to avoid idle words, we arrive at harmful ones, so that at first it pleases to speak of the things of others, and afterwards the tongue bites by detractions the life of those of whom it speaks, and at some time it breaks out even to open insults. Hence the stings of angers are sown, strifes arise, the torches of hatreds are kindled, the whole peace of hearts is extinguished. Whence it is well said by Solomon: He who lets out water is the head of quarrels (Prov. 17:14). For to let out water is to relax the tongue into a flow of speech. Against which he also asserts in a good sense, saying: Deep water, the words from the mouth of a man (Prov. 18:4). He therefore who lets out water, is the head of quarrels, because he who does not refrain the tongue, dissipates concord. Whence on the contrary it is written: He who imposes silence on a fool, mitigates angers (Prov. 26:10).

[Vet. XXV.] 58. The evils of loquacity. The idle word. But because anyone serving loquacity cannot hold the rectitude of justice, the Prophet testifies, because he says: A talkative man (vir linguosus) shall not be directed upon the earth (Ps. 140:11). Hence Solomon says again: In loquacity sin shall not be wanting (Prov. 10:19). Hence Isa-

iah says: The cultivation of justice is silence (Isa. 32:17), namely indicating that the justice of the mind is desolated, when it is not spared from immoderate speech. Hence James says: If any man thinks himself to be religious, not refraining his tongue, but seducing his own heart, this man's religion is vain (James 1:26). Hence again he says: But let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak (Ibid., 19). Hence again he adds: The tongue is an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison (James 3:8). Hence by Itself the Truth admonishes us, saying: Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account of it in the day of judgment (Matt. 12:36). For an idle word is that which either lacks the reason of just necessity, or the intention of pious utility. If therefore an account is required for an idle speech, it must be greatly weighed what penalty follows that loquacity, in which sin is also committed through words of pride.

59. Without the censure of silence the whole mind lies open to the enemy. It should also be known that those who slip away through harmful words fall away from every state of rectitude. For the human mind, after the manner of water, being shut in is collected to higher things, because it seeks again that from whence it descended; and being relaxed it perishes, because it scatters itself uselessly through the lowest things. For by as many superfluous words as it is dissipated from the censure of its own silence, by so many rivers as it were it is led outside itself. Whence it does not suffice to return within to

the knowledge of itself, because being scattered outside through loquacity, it loses the force of innermost consideration. Therefore it exposes itself entirely to the wounds of the lying-in-wait enemy, because it shuts itself in by no defense of custody. Whence it is written: As a city that lies open, and without a circuit of walls, so is a man who cannot contain his spirit in speaking (Prov. 25:28). For because it does not have the wall of silence, the city of the mind lies open to the arrows of the enemy; and when it casts itself out beyond itself through words, it shows itself open to the adversary, whom he overcomes without labor by so much the more easily as this same mind which is conquered fights against itself through loquacity.

60. The disadvantages of immoderate silence. But among these things it should be known that when we are restrained from speech by too much fear, sometimes we are cooped up within the barriers of silence more than is necessary; and while we incautiously flee the vices of the tongue, we are secretly involved in worse ones. For often while we are immoderately restrained from speech, we tolerate a heavy loquacity in the heart, so that thoughts boil the more in the mind as the violent custody of indiscreet silence constricts them; and for the most part they flow abroad so much the more widely as they think themselves to be more secure, because they are not seen from without by rebukers. Whence the mind sometimes is raised into pride, and beholds those whom it hears speaking as if weak. And

when it closes the mouth of the body, it does not recognize how much it opens itself to vices by being proud. For it oppresses the tongue, it raises the thought; and when it by no means considers itself through negligence, it accuses all men before itself the more freely, as it also does more secretly. [Vet. XXVI.] But for the most part the very silent, when they suffer some unjust things, break forth into sharper grief by as much as they do not speak the things which they sustain. For if the tongue should calmly speak the inflicted molestations, grief would flow out from the conscience. For closed wounds torture more, because when the filth, which boils within, is cast out, the pain is opened for health. For the most part the very silent, while they look upon the evils of some, and yet in silence press the tongue, subtract as it were the use of medicine from the wounds they have seen. For they become the authors of death by so much as they would not eject by speaking the poison which they could. Whence also if immoderate silence were not in fault, the prophet would not say: Woe is me because I have held my peace (Isa. 6:5).

61. The tongue should be retained by discipline, and loosed by necessity. What therefore is there among these things, except that the tongue must be studiously refrained under the balance of great moderation, not insolubly bound, lest either being loosed it flow away into vice, or being restricted it grow torpid even from utility? For hence it is said by a certain one: A wise man will hold his peace until the time (Ecclus.

20:7), namely that when he considers it opportune, having set aside the censure of silence, by speaking those things which are congruous, he may spend himself in the use of utility. Hence Solomon says: A time of keeping silence, and a time of speaking (Eccles. 3:7). Discretely indeed the times of vicissitudes are to be weighed, lest either when the tongue ought to be restricted, it should uselessly loose itself through words; or when it can speak usefully, it should lazily restrict itself. Which the Psalmist well considering embraced in a short petition saying: Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of circumstance to my lips (Ps. 141:3). For a door is opened and closed. He therefore who sought not an obstacle to be placed to his mouth, but a door, clearly taught that the tongue both ought to be retained by discipline, and loosed by necessity, so that a discrete mouth both a voice may open at a congruous time, and again silence may close at a congruous time. Which because either the friends of blessed Job, or all heretics, whose type these hold, know not how to observe, they are reported to bring forth words into the wind, because namely the breath of levity carries away the sayings which the weight of discretion does not solidify.

BOOK EIGHT.

Explains the last part of the sixth chapter, from verse 27, and with the seventh the whole eighth. Furthermore, in this explanation from verse 11 of the eighth chapter to the end, he copiously discusses the vice of hypocrisy.

CHAPTER I.

1. Job's humility and love towards persecutors. By which the charity of the Church towards heretics is adumbrated. In the preceding book we have already treated, that blessed Job makes known to us the force of his humility, saying:

CAP. VI, VERS. 27.---You rush upon a ward (pupillum), and you strive to subvert your friend.

For he insinuates in how great an infirmity he weighs himself, whom he calls a ward (pupillum); but because wounded charity knows not how to recede from love, he both complains that he is willed to be subverted, and yet testifies that he is a friend. Whose words, as we have already often said, so specially agree with him, that yet through these, from the prophetic spirit, the sentiment of the faithful people, from the voice of the universal Church, is also expressed, which, tolerating the contrariety of heretics, both beholds itself as weak through humility, and

yet does not recede from the magnitude of the love to be preserved. For the people of the holy Church, because it is the son of a dead father, is not incongruously called a ward (pupillum); whose life of resurrection it now indeed follows through faith, but not yet contemplates through sight (speciem). But heretics rush upon the ward (pupillum), when they afflict the humility of the faithful people with importunate and false allegations. And yet he is a friend whom they strive to overturn, because the faithful people of God does not cease by loving to call to the truth even those themselves whom it tolerates as persecutors. But among these things it should be known that holy men neither fear through infirmity to sustain false things, nor being wounded do they ever keep silence from the truth. Whence is subjoined:

CHAPTER II.

VERS. 28.---But finish what you have begun; give ear and see if I lie.

2. Patience and benignity ought to be present with true charity against adversaries. For because he does not fear to endure adverse things, let him say: But finish what you have begun. But because he does not withdraw the preachments of truth from these very persecutors of his, let him subjoin: Give ear, and see if I lie. As if he were openly saying: I neither tremble before the molestations brought upon me, nor do I hide the helps of correction from ungrateful hearers, because both pressed by evils I am exercised, and benignly spent for my very persecutors I grow.

For the mind of the saints in this battle of temptations is both fortified by the shield (clypeo) of patience, and girded with the swords of love, it takes fortitude to endure evils, and exerts benignity to repay good things, so that it may both powerfully receive the weapons of hatreds, and validly return the darts of love. For by no means does he go armed to wars who either taking a shield does not use swords, or using swords is not fortified by a shield. Whence also the soldier of God, caught in the war of adversity, both ought to bring forward the shield of patience, lest he perish; and being prompt for preaching, bring in the darts of love, that he may overcome. Of which armor Paul briefly insinuates the sum, saying: Charity is patient, is benign (1 Cor. 13:4). But when one of both is wanting, it is not charity, if, namely, either tolerating the evil without benignity, he does not love, or again, exhibiting himself without patience, he neglects to tolerate those whom he loves. In order therefore that true charity may be held by us, it is necessary that both patience should support benignity, and again benignity should support patience, so that constructing a certain great edifice in our heart, patience may solidify the citadel of benignity, and benignity may adorn the buildings founded on patience. Let therefore blessed Job, prompt for patience, say: But finish what you have begun; being endowed with benignity let him subjoin: Give ear, and see if I lie.

3. The Church strives to recall those who err by reasons. But because the holy Church, insti-

tuted from the mastership of humility, does not command as if from authority the right things which she says to those who err, but persuades from reason, well is it said now: See if I lie. As if she should openly say: By no means believe those things which I assert from authority, but weigh whether they are true from reason. Which even if she says at any time what cannot be comprehended by reason, she reasonably persuades that human reason ought not to be sought concerning hidden things. But often heretics, while they receive the occasion of reasoning, are unbridled to the quarrels of contention. Whence also aptly is soon subjoined:

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 29.---Respond, I pray you, without contention.

4. Heretics seek strifes, not reasons. For heretics do not strive to attain the truth by their inquiries, but to be seen as victors. And while they desire to be shown wise without, they are bound within by the bonds of their own pride through foolishness. Whence it comes to pass that they seek the contests of contentions, and they know not how to speak peacefully concerning God, who is our peace, and from the business of peace they become inventors of strife. To whom it is well said by Paul: But if any man seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the Church of God (1 Cor. 11:16). But rightly is subjoined:

CHAPTER IV.

IBID.---And speaking that which is just, judge.

5. Nothing to be spoken inconsiderately. For he who speaks, while he awaits the sentence of the hearer concerning his words, is as it were subjected to the judgment of him by whom he is heard. He therefore who fears to be reproved in his sayings, ought himself first to examine what he says, so that between the heart and the tongue a certain just and discrete arbiter may sit, subtly weighing if the heart offers right words, which the tongue, receiving usefully, may lead to the judgment of the hearers. Blessed Job therefore, acting his own part against his friends, but denouncing ours against heretics, reprehends the precipitation of those who speak, and collects the words for their mind, saying: And speaking that which is just, judge. As if he were openly saying: If you do not wish to be reprehended in that you go forth to the egress of speech, hold the balance of justice within, so that what is said without may please from the weight of truth by as much as the balance of discretion weighs this within. And because these men exert a right judgment towards the words of others, who know first how to judge their own, after he said: Speaking that which is just, judge, aptly he soon subjoins:

CHAPTER V.

VERS. 30.---And you shall not find iniquity in my tongue, nor shall foolishness resound in my jaws.

6. The censor of his own words judges more rightly of those of others. Falsehoods must first be refuted, before truths are taught. As if he were openly saying: If you weigh your own things more subtly, you consider the things of others more truly, and when what you say begins to be right, you will recognize as just what you hear. For my tongue by no means resounds foolishness to you, if it does not proceed from your own conscience. Thus the holy Church strives first to show the assertions of enemies to be false, and then to open the preachings of truth, because when they estimate that they hold right things, they contumaciously impugn the right things which they hear. Beforehand, therefore, it is necessary that heretics feel their error, lest they contradict the truth they have heard, because if the plowman does not root out the thorns of the fields with the cutting of the plowshare, the earth does not produce the received seeds into a crop; and when the physician does not cast out the rottenness by the opening of the wound, healthy flesh by no means unites in the place of the rottenness. First, therefore, destroying perverse things, let him say: Speaking that which is just, judge; but afterwards insinuating right things, let him add: And you shall not find iniquity in my tongue, nor shall foolishness resound in my jaws. Heretics, moreover, are wont to say some things openly, and to hold others in secret. For by the tongue open speech is designated, but by the jaws secret handling.

7. The Church does not bring forth some things openly and hide others, after the manner of heretics. In the holy Church, therefore, neither does iniquity resound in the tongue, nor foolishness in the jaws, because those things which she preaches through public speech, she also keeps through intimate faith; nor does she teach one thing in the open, and retain another in secret, but she both brings out by speaking what she feels, and guards by living what she speaks; and from the banquet of supernal wisdom, whatever emanates through the tongue of preaching, this she tastes through the jaws of silent expectation. But blessed Job, being indeed one member of the universal Church, insinuating his own things, and manifesting the hearts of all the elect, let him open all that he feels, so that the attestation of his speech may make known the rectitude of his mind. It follows:

CHAPTER VI

[Vet. IV, Rec. III].

CHAP. VII, VERS. 1.---The life of man upon earth is a warfare.

8. Our life is both a warfare and a temptation in the same sense. It is itself a temptation to itself. In this place, in the old translation, the life of man is by no means called a warfare, but a temptation. But if the sense of each word is looked at, that which resounds outwardly is indeed diverse, but it forms concordantly one and the same understanding. For what but a fight against evil spirits

is expressed by the name of temptation? And what by the designation of warfare, but exercise against enemies? Temptation therefore is itself warfare, because while it watches against the snares of evil spirits, it undoubtedly toils in the preparation for battles. But it is to be noted, that this same life of man is not said to have temptation, but is asserted to be itself a temptation. For having spontaneously fallen from the state of its condition, and subjected to the rottenness of its own corruption, while it generates troubles for itself from itself, it has already become that which it tolerates. For because, being inclined, it has deserted the state of the mind, what has it found in itself but a motion of variety? Whence now, even if it raises itself to seek the highest things, it immediately falls back to itself by the impulse of slippery mutability. It wishes to stand in contemplation, but it is not able. It strives to fix the step of thought, but is unnerved by the lapses of its own infirmity. Which burdens of its mutability, because it sought them willingly, it carries unwillingly. Man could have possessed the flesh in quiet, if, being well formed by the Author, he had wished to be possessed by Him. And when he studied to raise himself against the Creator, he immediately found in himself the contumely of the flesh. But because along with the fault, the punishment is also propagated from the origin, we are born with the vice of infirmity inserted in us, and as it were we lead an enemy with us, whom we overcome with labor. The very life of man therefore is a temptation, for which

there arises from itself that by which it may be destroyed. Which, although it always cuts down by virtue what it generates by infirmity, yet it always generates by infirmity what it may cut down by virtue.

9. In how many ways we are tempted; how one temptation succeeds another. Thus therefore human life is a temptation, so that although it is already restrained from the perpetration of iniquity, yet in its very good works it is darkened, now by the memory of evils, now by the mist of seduction, now by the interruption of its own intention. For one already restrains the flesh from lust, but yet still tolerates the phantasms of lust, because of those things which he did willingly, he remembers unwillingly, and sustains as a punishment what he thought was pleasure. But because he fears to be drawn back to the conquered fault, he restricts the belly with the vigor of a wonderful abstinence, and the countenance grows pale from abstinence; and when the pallor is seen on the face, the life is praised by men as reverend; and soon vainglory comes to the mind of the abstainer with words of favor, which the shaken mind, while it is not able to subject it, seeks to wipe away from the face the pallor through which it had come; and so it happens that, bound by the ties of infirmity, either fleeing the pallor of abstinence, he fears again to be subjected to lust through food, or, overcoming the impulse of lust through abstinence, he greatly fears that his pallor may fight for vainglory. Another, overcoming the lapse of pride, already

apprehends the state of humility with all desire; and when he sees certain proud ones break out even to the oppression of the innocent, kindled by the excitation of zeal, he is forced to postpone to some extent what he had decreed, exerts the force of rectitude, and contradicts the depraved not with meekness, but with authority. Whence it often happens that either by the study of humility he deserts the zeal of rectitude, or again by the zeal of rectitude he disturbs the study of humility which he was holding. And since the authority of zeal and the humility of the purpose can hardly be preserved together, the man is rendered unknown to himself by the perturbation, so that he vehemently doubts, lest in the seduced mind either pride should insinuate itself under the authority of zeal, or fearful torpor should feign humility. Another, considering how great is the fault of fallacy, determines to fortify himself in the citadel of truth, so that a false speech may no longer go forth from his mouth, and he may disjoin himself utterly from the transgression of lying. But it often happens that when the truth is said, the life of a neighbor is burdened; and when he fears to inflict injury on another, he returns as if by the study of piety to that vice of fallacy which he had recently suppressed; and so it happens that although malice does not hold the mind, yet in it the shadow of a lie obscures the ray of truth. Whence also often because each one being questioned is not able to be silent, he either, speaking what is false, slaughters his own mind, or, speaking truths, burdens the life of his

neighbor. Another, excited by the love of his Creator, takes care to suspend the mind from earthly thoughts by assiduous prayer, and to place it in the secret security of intimate rest; but in the very ascent of his prayer, while he strives to be raised from the lowest things, he is repelled by the phantasm of the lowest things; and the eye of the mind is stretched to behold the light, but from corporeal use, it is obscured by the rising images of earthly things. Whence it often happens that the mind of the intentional person, fatigued by its own infirmity, either, deserting prayer, becomes torpid by sloth, or, if it remains long in prayer, the mist of the images that have arisen thickens before its eyes.

[Vet. V.] 10. From the occasion of virtues we sometimes fall more grievously. Well therefore is it said: The life of man upon earth is a temptation, when it finds there also the guilt of descent, where it thought it had apprehended the progress of ascent; and from there the mind is confounded, whence it was striving to rise from confusion, so that through this it may return lashed to itself, through which, being already collected and joined together, it was passing beyond itself. This one, being a stranger to the erudition of the divine law, is depressed by his own ignorance, lest he should work anything for obtaining salvation. That one, endowed with the knowledge of the divine law, while he rejoices that understanding is supplied to him above others, because he exults in a private joy, dissipates in himself the gifts of the perceived understanding;

and from there he is exhibited in judgment worse than the others, from whence he was shown for a time clearer than the others. Because the gifts of virtues do not raise this one, he declines even from the simple way of rectitude; and deputing himself as a stranger to the heavenly gift, he does perverse things as if more securely, by as much as he did not perceive the sublime gifts of the supernal gift. The spirit of prophecy fills that one, raises him to foreknowledge, and shows him all future things as already present. But while often and in many things he is raised above himself, that he may truly contemplate the future, the mind, led into self-confidence, estimates that the spirit of prophecy, which cannot always be had, is always present with him; and when he thinks everything he feels is prophecy, because he attributes this to himself even when he does not have it, he also loses it in so far as he could have had it. And so it happens that from there he returns sad after the merits of others, from whence he was going before joyful in the estimation of all. Therefore the life of man upon earth is a temptation, which either being a stranger to virtues is not able to rise to the heavenly reward, or being enriched with spiritual gifts sometimes falls more grievously from the occasion of virtues.

[Vet. VI.] 11. Our life is a warfare, because like this, in growing it decreases and is finished. But because a little above we said that this temptation is the same as warfare, it is to be known above all that something more is hinted to us by the designation of warfare than by the name of

temptation. For this is added to our understanding by the expression of warfare, that certainly through warfare one tends daily toward the end; and when by the order of warfare the place increases, the whole warfare of men fails at the same time. The life of man upon earth therefore is a warfare, because also, as we said above (Book VII, n. 31), each one while daily tending toward the end of life through the increments of times, by increasing life, ceases to live. For he expects the days to come; but when they come for the increase of life, they are already subtracted from the increase of life, because the step of a traveler also, while it profits in the forward parts, the journey that remains decreases. Our life therefore is a warfare, which by the fact that it is led to increase, by that it is finished so as not to be. Well therefore is it said: The life of man upon earth is a warfare, because while it desires to grow through the spaces of times, from that same space, which it collects by losing, it passes through by growing. Whence also the course of the warfare itself is aptly expressed, when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER VII.

IBID.---And like the days of a hireling are his days.

12. The elect, after the likeness of a hireling, wishes his days to be swiftly rolled away. He labors in what is another's. He takes care lest any day should slip away empty of work. A hireling desires his days to be rolled away more swiftly,

that he may arrive without delay at the reward of his labor. The days therefore of a man wise with true and eternal wisdom are rightly compared to the days of a hireling, because he considers the present life a way and not a fatherland, a warfare and not a palm; and he sees himself to be further away from the reward, the later he comes to the end. It is also to be considered that a hireling toils in the labors of others, but yet prepares for himself his own reward. Moreover by the voice of our Redeemer it is said: My kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). All of us therefore who, being endowed with the hope of heavenly things, are worn away by the exercise of the present life, labor in what is another's. For often we are forced to serve even the reprobate, we are constrained to return to the world the things that are the world's; and indeed we are fatigued by the labor of another, but yet we perceive our rewards; and through this we arrive at our own, that we purely minister the things of others. On the contrary, Truth says to some: If you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? (Luke 16:12). It is also to be known that a hireling carefully takes care to inspect lest ever a day should slip away empty of work, and the expected end of time should come in vain for remuneration. For in the study of labor he beholds what he may be able to perceive in the time of remuneration. For when work increases, the confidence of the reward advances; but when the work has become torpid, hope languishes from the remuneration. Whence also each of the

elect, weighing his life as the days of a hireling, tends so much more confidently by hope toward the reward, by as much as he now more robustly endures to the increase of labor; he weighs what is the course of the present time, counts the days with the works, fears lest the moments of life pass empty of labor; he rejoices in adversities, is refreshed by passion, is comforted by sorrow, because he sees himself to be remunerated so much more largely with the rewards of the subsequent life, by as much as for the love of Him he more truly spends himself in daily deaths. For hence it is that the citizens of the supernal fatherland say to its Creator with the voices of the Psalmist: For your sake we are put to death all the day long (Psalm 44:22). Hence Paul says: I die daily for your glory, brothers (1 Cor. 15:31). Hence again he says: For which cause I suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is powerful to keep my deposit until that day (2 Tim. 1:12). Holy men therefore, as many labors as they now exhibit commending them to the truth, so many pledges of their remuneration they already hold closed within the chamber of hope. But a heavy heat is now felt in the work, so that at some time refreshment may be perceived from rest. Whence also aptly it is soon subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. IV.].

VERS. 2, 3.---As a servant desires the shadow, and as a hireling waits for the end of his work, so also I have had empty months, and have counted to myself laborous nights.

13. He desires eternal rest. He is a servant, not free, as long as he is subject to corruption. For a servant to desire the shadow is to seek the rest of eternal refreshment after the heat of temptation and the sweat of work. For that servant had desired this shadow who said: My soul has thirsted after the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God? (Psalm 42:3). And again: Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged! (Psalm 120:5). Who as if fleeing the heat from sharp labor, and seeking the covering of refreshment to obtain rest, says again: I shall go into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God (Psalm 42:5). Paul was panting to apprehend this shadow, having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ (Phil. 1:23). To this shadow they had already arrived from the perfection of desire who were saying: We who have borne the burden of the day and the heat (Matt. 20:12). Moreover he who is said to desire the shadow is rightly called a servant, because each of the elect, as long as he is constrained by the condition of infirmity, is held under the yoke of dominant corruption, as if under the anxiety of heat. Who certainly when he shall have been stripped of corruption, then he becomes known to himself as free and tranquil. Whence also it is rightly said by Paul: The creature itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption,

into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God (Rom. 8:21). For the punishment of corruption now weighs down the elect, but then the glory of incorruption exalts them; and as much as regarding the weights of present necessity nothing of liberty is now shown in the sons of God, so much truly regarding the glory of subsequent liberty, nothing of servitude will then appear in the servants of God. The creature therefore, having put off the servitude of corruption, and having received the dignity of liberty, is turned into the glory of the sons of God, because, being united to God through the spirit, it is declared as if to have passed through and subjected that very thing which is a creature. But he who still desires the shadow is a servant, because as long as he tolerates the heat of temptations, he carries the yoke of a miserable condition. Where it is aptly subjoined: And as a hireling waits for the end of his work.

[Rec. V.] 14. The labor of the elect is lightened by the consideration of the reward. For when a hireling beholds the works to be done, he immediately binds his mind from the length and weight of the labor; but when he recalls his languishing mind to the consideration of the reward of the work, he soon reforms the vigor of his mind for the exercise of labor, and what he weighed as heavy from the work, he estimates as light from the remuneration. Even so all the elect, when they suffer the adversities of this world, when they tolerate insults to their integrity, loss of goods, and tortures of the body, weigh as heavy

those things by which they are exercised, but when they stretch the eyes of the mind to the consideration of the eternal fatherland, they find from the comparison of the reward how light is that which they suffer. For what is shown to be very unsupportable from pain, is lightened by provident consideration from the remuneration. Hence it is that Paul is always raised up more robust than himself against adversities, because certainly he waits for the end of his work as a hireling. For he estimates what he sustains as heavy, but weighs this as light through the consideration of the reward. He indeed indicates how heavy is that which he suffers (2 Cor. 11:23), who testifies that he has been in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths frequently; who from the Jews five times received forty stripes save one, who was three times beaten with rods, once stoned, three times suffered shipwreck, a night and a day he was in the depth of the sea; who bore perils of rivers, of robbers, from his own race, from the Gentiles, in the city, in the wilderness, in the sea, among false brothers; who labored in toil and misery, in many fastings, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness; who sustained combats without, fears within; who asserts that he was burdened beyond his strength, saying: We were burdened above measure, beyond our strength, so that we were weary even of living (2 Cor. 1:8). But how he wipes away the sweat of so great labor with the linen of remuneration, he himself announces, saying: The sufferings of this time are not worthy

to be compared with the future glory which shall be revealed in us (Rom. 8:18). He therefore waits for the end of his work as a hireling who, while he considers the progress of the remuneration, estimates as vile that in which he labors almost failing. Moreover it is aptly subjoined: If I also have had empty months, and have counted laborous nights to myself.

15. To the elect there are empty months and laborous nights, as they suffer want and adversities, and do not yet hold the reward. For the elect serve the Creator of things, and are often distressed by the want of things; through love they inhere in God, and yet they lack the supports of the present life. Those therefore who through their actions do not seek present things, lead empty months from the gains of the world. They also tolerate laborous nights, because they carry the darkness of adversities not only as far as want, but often even to the torture of the body. For to suffer contempt and indigence is not laborous to good minds; but when adversity is turned even to the affliction of the flesh, labor is undoubtedly felt from the pain. [Vet. VIII] It can also be understood not inconveniently that each saint leads empty months like a hireling, because he already sustains the labor, but does not yet hold the reward; he tolerates this, he expects that. But he counts laborous nights, because he heaps up for himself the adversities of the present time by exercising himself in virtues. For if he did not desire to progress in the mind, perhaps he would feel the things of the world as less harsh.

16. The Church has empty months in weak members, and laborous nights in strong ones. Labor for the world is known to be vain from its end. Which sentence, however, if it is brought to the voice of the holy Church, its understanding is investigated a little more subtly. For she herself has empty months, who sustains in her weak members earthly actions flowing away without the reward of life. She herself counts laborous nights, who in her strong members carries multiple tribulations. For in this life some things are laborous, some are empty, and some indeed are empty and laborous at the same time. For to be exercised by the tribulations of the present life for the love of the Creator is indeed laborous, but it is not empty. But to be dissolved in pleasures for the love of the world is indeed empty, but not laborous. But to suffer some adversities for the love of that same world is both empty and laborous at the same time, because both the mind is affected by the adversity, and it is not filled with the reward of remuneration. In those therefore who, being already placed in her, still flow away in pleasures, and therefore are not enriched with the fruit of good work, the holy Church leads empty months, because she spends the times of life without the gift of retribution. But in those who, devoted to eternal desires, suffer the adversities of this world, she counts laborous nights, because she carries the darkness of tribulations as if in the mist of the present life. But in those who both love the passing world, and yet are fatigued by its contrariety, she tolerates both

empty months and laborous nights at the same time, because no subsequent retribution rewards their life, and the present tribulation distresses them. Moreover, she rightly asserts that she has in them not days, but empty months. For by the name of months the collection and sum of days is signified. Through the day therefore each action is expressed, but through the months the end of the actions is hinted. And often when we do something in this world, suspended by an intense alacrity of hope, we do not think that very thing which we are doing is empty; but after we have arrived at the end of our actions, not obtaining what we seek, we grieve that we have labored in vain. We lead therefore not only empty days, but also empty months, when we weigh that we have labored without fruit in earthly actions, not from the beginning of the actions, but from the end. For when adversity follows our labors, as it were empty months of our life are proved, because from the completion of the actions it is recognized how vainly we were toiling in the actions.

17. The Church groans over this empty labor. But because in sacred eloquence night is sometimes put for ignorance, Paul testifying, who says to the disciples knowing the future life: You are all children of light, and children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness (1 Thess. 5:5); to whom he premised: But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief (Ibid. 4); the voice of the holy Church can be received in this place from the person of those

who, after the mist of their ignorance, return to the love of rectitude, and, illustrated by the rays of truth, wash away with tears what they have erred. For each one being illuminated looks back on how base it was that he labored for the love of the present life. [Vet. IX.]. In them therefore the holy Church, in whom she returns to life, compares her labor to a sweltering servant and a hireling desiring the end, saying: As a servant desires the shadow and as a hireling waits for the end of his work: so also I have had empty months, and have counted laborous nights to myself. For in the comparison there are two things which he premised; in the expression of fatigue also he immediately added two. To the sweltering one indeed he rendered empty months, because the more eternal refreshment is sought, the more it is seen how emptily one labors for this life. But to the one waiting he subjoined laborous nights, because the more we inspect from the end of the work the reward which we attain, the more we groan that we have long been ignorant of what we seek. Whence also the care itself of the penitent is vigilantly expressed, that he might be said to have counted laborous nights, because the more truly we return to God, the more subtly we weigh, grieving, the labors which we have endured in this world through ignorance. For the more sweet what he desires of eternal things becomes to each one, the more heavy is shown to him that which he was tolerating for the love of present things. But if the following words are weighed according to history alone, through

these without doubt is expressed the mind of the one grieving, how it is varied through diverse motions of desire, sadness impelling. For it is subjoined.

CHAPTER IX.

VERS. 4.---If I sleep, I shall say: When shall I arise? and again I shall expect the evening.

18. The one grieving despises present things, expects future things. For in the night the day is sought, in the day the evening is desired, because certainly pain does not permit present things to please; and since it affects the mind through the experience of present things, it always stretches it toward other things through expectation, as if by a consoling desire. But because the afflicted mind is led by appetite, and yet its pain, even when seduced by desires, is not finished, it is rightly subjoined,---IBID.:---I shall be filled with sorrows even until darkness. Moreover the cause of the same pain is expressed, when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. VI].

VERS. 5.---My flesh is clothed with rottenness, and with the filth of dust; my skin has withered and is drawn together.

19. The instability of fallen man.---But we discuss these things more subtly and fittingly if we return to the order of the preceding exposition.

For by sleep the torpor of idleness is expressed, but by rising the exercise of action. Also by the name of evening, because it is suitable for sleep, the desire for idleness is again figured. But the Holy Church, as long as it leads a life of corruption, does not cease to bewail the losses of its mutability. For man had been created for this purpose: that, with his mind standing firm, he might raise himself to the citadel of contemplation, and no corruption might turn him away from the love of his Creator. But in that he moved the foot of his will from the innate solidity of standing toward fault, he immediately fell from the love of the Creator into himself. Deserting the love of God, namely the true citadel of standing, he could not even consist in himself, because, by the impulse of slippery mutability, rushing down below himself through corruption, he even disagreed with himself. Who now, because he is not fixed by the solidity of his condition, is always varied by the motion of alternating desire, so that when quiet he desires action, and when occupied he pants for rest. For because the fixed mind would not stand when it could, it is no longer able to stand even when it wishes. For deserting the contemplation of its Creator, it lost the strength of its salvation, and wherever placed, being always sick, it seeks another place. Expressing therefore the variety of the human mind, let him say: If I lie down, I shall say: When shall I arise? and again I shall expect the evening. As if he said openly: Nothing perceived suffices the mind, because it has lost Him who truly could suffice. For in sleep I desire

rising, in rising I expect the evening, because even when quiet I appetite the exercise of action, and when exercised I seek the rest of quiet.

20. The just man must also seek to rise from sin. Lest he be exalted, he desires to be fortified by adversities. ---Which however can be understood in another way. For to sleep is to lie in sins. For if the appellation of sleep were not a fault, Paul would by no means say to his disciples: Awake, ye just, and sin not (1 Cor. 15:34). Whence also he admonishes his auditor, saying: Arise thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee (Eph. 5:14). And again: It is now the hour for us to rise from sleep (Rom. 13:11). Whence also Solomon rebukes the sinner, saying: How long, sluggard, wilt thou sleep (Prov. 6:9)? Every elect person, therefore, when he is pressed by the sleep of sin, endeavors to arise to the vigils of justice. But often when he has arisen, he feels himself exalted by the very magnitude of his virtues. Whence also he desires to be tempted by the adversities of the present life after virtues, lest he fall worse from confidence in virtues. For if he did not know that he is better preserved through temptation, the Psalmist would by no means say: Prove me, O Lord, and tempt me (Psal. 26:2). Well therefore is it now said: If I lie down, I shall say: When shall I arise? and again I shall expect the evening, because even in the sleep of sin the light of justice is sought; and when prosperous things of virtues elevate the mind, helping adversity is desired, so that indeed the soul, when it is lifted up more than it ought with the joy of

its virtues, may be solidified through contrariety by the sorrow brought forth by the present life. Whence also it is by no means said: I shall dread the evening, but I shall expect it. For we expect prosperous things, we dread adverse things. The just man, therefore, expects the evening, because when it is necessary for him to be exercised by tribulation, that very adversity becomes prosperous to him.

21. He is never not subject to the temptation of sin here. He does not fear temptations, but prepares himself against them. ---By the name of evening, the temptation of sin can also be designated, which often assails the mind all the more sharply, as the Spirit raises that same mind higher toward heavenly things. For by no means is sin so deserted in this life through the exercise of justice, that one may remain unshaken in that same justice, because even if righteousness already eliminates fault from the habitation of the heart, yet that same fault which is repelled, sitting at the doors of our thought, knocks that it may be opened to it. Which Moses also spiritually hinted at, when he narrated the moments of time corporally made, saying: Light was made; and adding a little after: The evening was made (Gen. 1:3, 5). Certainly the Creator of all, foreknowing human fault, then expressed in time what now is turned in the mind. For light is led toward evening, because certainly the shadow of temptation follows the light of righteousness. But because the light of the elect is not extinguished by temptation, by no means night, but evening

is said to have been made, because certainly temptation often hides the light of justice in the heart of the righteous, but does not destroy it; it draws it as if to the pallor of trepidation, but does not utterly extinguish it. The elect therefore after sleep appetite rising, after rising they wait for evening, because they both awake from sin to the light of justice, and placed in the very light of justice, they always prepare themselves against the allurements of temptations. Which indeed they do not fear, but expect, because they are not ignorant that even trials profit the utility of their righteousness.

22. No one here possesses complete health.--- However much they contend with virtue against their corruption, they cannot have complete health until the day of the present life is finished. Whence it is added: And I shall be filled with sorrows even until darkness. For now adverse things rush in: now prosperous things themselves also entice with crafty hilarity. Now rising vices excite the war of the flesh, now vanquished they call the soul to elation. The life of the good therefore is filled with sorrows even until darkness, because as long as the time of corruption is acted out, it is shaken by internal and external affliction, and does not find the security of salvation, unless when it leaves the day of temptation fundamentally. Whence well also this same cause of sorrows is immediately subjoined, when it is said: My flesh is clothed with rottenness and with the filth of dust. For as we said a little above, man voluntarily deserted his innate solidity, and plunged

himself into the whirlpool of corruption; whence now he either slips through unclean works, or is defiled through illicit thoughts. For that I may so speak, penally subjected to its own fault, our very nature has now become outside nature; and if relaxed it is led even to perverse works, but if restricted it is darkened by the importunate thought of perverse works. Therefore through the completion of illicit action rottenness affects the flesh, but through the levity of wicked thought dust rises as if before the eyes. By consenting to vices we are worn away by rottenness, but by tolerating the images of vices in the heart we are defiled by the filth of dust. He says therefore: My flesh is clothed with rottenness and with the filth of dust. As if he said openly: The carnal life, which I suffer, either the wasting of slippery operation pollutes, or from the memory of vices the darkness of miserable thought oppresses.

23. The flesh of the Church rots in its slippery members, and becomes filthy in those seeking the earth. ---Which however if we receive from the voice of the universal Church, we sometimes find it without doubt burdened by the rottenness of the flesh, and sometimes by the filth of dust. For there are many in it who, while they serve the love of the flesh, rot with the stench of luxury. And there are some who indeed abstain from the pleasure of the flesh, but yet lie with their whole mind in earthly acts. Let the Holy Church therefore say by the voices of its one member, let it say what it tolerates from both kinds of men: My flesh is clothed with rottenness and with the

filth of dust. As if it openly suggested, saying: There are many who are members to me through faith, but yet are not healthy or clean through action, because either, conquered by foul desires, they flow down to the rottenness of corruption, or, given to earthly acts, they are sprinkled with dust. For in those whom I tolerate as slippery, I groan for the flesh rotting; but in those whom I suffer as seeking the earth, what else do I carry but one defiled by dust?

24. The skin of the Church are those who serve only exterior cares: whence it should wither. --- Whence also it is subjoined aptly about both at once: My skin has withered, and is drawn together. For in the body of the Holy Church those who serve only exterior cares are congruously called the skin. Which skin indeed is drawn by withering, because the minds of the carnal, while they love present things, and covet them as if placed nearby, will not be stretched toward future things through long-suffering. Who while they neglect the fatness of internal hope, become withered so that they are drawn, because if despair did not dry up their hearts, by no means would the heat of this smallness of mind draw them. For the Psalmist had dreaded this drawing when, fearing the dryness of the mind, he said: Let my soul be filled as with marrow and fatness (Psal. 63:5). For the fatness of fatness fills the soul, when the infusion of heavenly hope refreshes it against the heat of present desires. The skin therefore withering is drawn together when the heart, given to exterior things and dried up

by despair, is not stretched into the love of its Author, but is folded back in itself, so to speak, in wrinkled thought.

25. He is not held by the love of present things who considers the brevity of this life. --- But it must be weighed that carnal minds for this reason love present things, because they by no means weigh how fugitive the life of the flesh is. For if they beheld the speed of its passage, they would by no means love it even when prospering. But the Holy Church daily beholds in its elect how great is the course in exterior things, and for that reason fixes the foot of solicitous intention in its inmost parts. Whence also it is subjoined aptly:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. VII].

VERS. 6.---My days have passed more swiftly than a web is cut off by the weaver.

26. The time of the flesh is aptly compared to a web.---By a very suitable similitude the time of the flesh is compared to a web, because as a web profits by threads, so mortal life by individual days; but in that it profits toward increase, in that it tends toward incision, because, as we also said above (Lib. VII, n. 30), when perceived times pass by, those to come are shortened, and of the whole space of life those which come become fewer, in that many are those which have passed. For a web, bound below and above, is fastened to two pieces of wood so that it may be woven; but in that the woven part is rolled up below,

in that what is to be woven is unfolded above; and whence it multiplies itself toward increase, thence what remains becomes less. So indeed we roll up the times of our life, both those passed as if below, and we unfold those to come from above, because by how much the more they become past, by so much the less do they begin to be future. But because even the web does not suffice for the expression of our time, for the velocity of our life passes even its haste, it is rightly said now: My days have passed more swiftly than a web is cut off by the weaver. For a web has slowness of progress, but the present life has no delay of failure. For in that, when the hand of the laborer is fixed, the term of arrival is elongated; in this indeed, because we incessantly consume time always ending, we arrive at the end of our journey even by resting, and we go through the course of our transit even while sleeping. The elect therefore, because they behold the moments of the present life run down under haste, by no means fix the intention of the heart in this journey of such great mobility. Whence also it is subjoined aptly immediately:

IBID.---And they are consumed without any hope.

27. The elect think of death even when healthy, the reprobate not even when it is imminent.---The mind of the reprobate is bound with such great love toward the days of the present life, that they always so desire to live here, as to wish, if they were able, never to finish the course of living. For they despise thinking of future

things, they place all hope in passing things, they covet to have nothing except those which pass away. And when they think too much on passing things, and hope for nothing in lasting things, the eye of the heart is so closed by insensible blindness, that it is in no way directed toward eternal light. Whence it happens that often now trouble shakes the body, and neighboring death cuts the strength of the vital spirit, and yet they do not cease to care for what things are of the world. And already the Avenger draws them to judgment; and yet they themselves, occupied by solicitous ordination of passing things, think of nothing else except how they may yet live in this world. Leaving all things, they dispose of them as if possessing them, because the hope of living is not broken even when life is terminated. Already they are drawn to judgment by sentence, and yet they still cling to things to be had by care. For by a hard mind death is believed to be far away, even when it is felt. And so the soul is loosed from the flesh, that retaining itself toward present things with immoderate love, while it is led to eternal punishment, it does not even know this very thing whither it is led; and deserting what it would not love with an end, it suddenly finds without end what it never foresaw. But on the contrary, the mind of the righteous is stretched toward the intention of eternity, even when the present life happily accompanies it. It uses great health of flesh, yet the soul is not retarded by its confidence. It does not yet break through any point of death, and daily it beholds this as if present.

For because life falls away incessantly, the hope of living is fundamentally amputated for it. Well therefore is it said of the days passing by: They are consumed without any hope. As if it were said openly: I have not placed the confidence of my mind in the present life, because I have despaired of everything that passes by treading upon it. Whence also it is subjoined aptly soon:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. VIII].

VERS. 7.---Remember that my life is wind.

28. The present life, dear to those not attending to eternal things, is vile to those who attend. The consideration of brief life is a grateful offering to God.---For they love the life of the flesh as if permanent, who do not attend to how great is the eternity of the following life; and when they do not consider the solidity of perenniality, they think the exile to be the fatherland, the darkness to be light, the course to be the station, because those who are ignorant of greater things are by no means able to judge of the least. For the order of judgment requires that we transcend what we strive to examine. For if the mind is not able to be over all things, by no means does it see clearly about these things by which it is conquered. Therefore the reprobate mind does not suffice to estimate the course of the present life, because it succumbs to its admiration out of love. But holy men, by how much they raise the heart toward eternal things, weigh how brief is that which is

closed by an end; and that becomes vile in their senses which passes by, in that by a radiating intellect there inter-shines what once received never recedes; and when they behold the infinity of perenniality, they no longer desire as great whatever a limit narrows. But the uplifted mind is led outside the terms of times, even when it is held by the flesh in time; and it despises things to be ended all the more highly, by how much more truly it knows infinite things. But this very consideration of human brevity is a great offering of virtue to our Author. Whence rightly now with deprecation the sacrifice of that same virtue is offered, when it is said: Remember that my life is wind. As if it were said openly: Look benignly upon one passing swiftly, because I ought to be seen all the more mercifully by thee, by how much I myself do not turn away my eyes from the consideration of my brevity. But because while the time of the present life is cut off, one does not return further to the operation of meriting pardon, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV.

IBID.---Neither shall my eye return to see good things.

29. After death there is no place for meriting pardon.---The eye of the dead does not return to see good things, because the soul, having put off the flesh, does not return to exhibit right works. Hence it is that the rich man whom the flame of hell was tormenting, because he had recognized that he could not repair himself by working; for

he was busy to profit not at all himself, but his brothers who were left behind, saying: I pray thee, father Abraham, that thou wouldst send him into the house of my father, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torments (Luke 16:27). For hope, even if false, is wont to refresh a sad mind. But that the reprobate may feel their punishment more heavily, they also lose hope of pardon. Whence, delivered to the avenging flames, he desired to help, as we said, not himself, but his brothers, because he recognized, with the added supplication of despair, that he would never be free from the torments of the fires. Hence Solomon says: Whatever thy hand is able to do, work instantly, because neither work, nor reason, nor knowledge, nor wisdom will be among those below, whither thou hastenest (Eccl. 9:10). By no means, therefore, shall the eye return to see good things, because the mind, finding its retribution, is in no way recalled to the use of operation. Because, therefore, everything that is seen flees, and those things which follow are to remain, blessed Job well embraced both in one verse, saying: Remember that my life is wind, neither shall my eye return to see good things. For having contemplated the course of present things, he said: Remember that my life is wind. But considering the eternity of the following things, he added: Neither shall my eye return to see good things. Where also he aptly takes up the voice of the whole human race, destitute of the gift of redemption, saying:

CHAPTER XV

[Old XIII].

VERS. 8.---Neither shall the sight of man behold me.

30. Then the grace of Christ does not free him, whom it does not reform now.---For the sight of man is the mercy of the Redeemer, which, when it looks back, softens the hardness of our insensibility. Whence, the Gospel also testifying, it is said: The Lord looked back at Peter, and Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said; and going out, he wept bitterly (Luke 22:61). But the sight of man no longer beholds the soul put off from the flesh, because after death he does not free him, whom before death grace did not reform for pardon. For hence Paul says: Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). Hence the Psalmist says: Since his mercy is for the age (Ps. 117:1). Because, doubtless, he whom mercy by no means rescues now, justice alone adjudges after the present age. Hence Solomon says: Because in whatever place the tree shall fall, whether toward the South or toward the North, there it shall be (Eccl. 11:3), because when at the time of the human fall, whether a holy or a malignant spirit shall have received the departing soul from the barriers of the flesh, it will retain it with itself forever without any change, so that neither, being exalted, may it rush forth to punishment, nor, being submerged in eternal punishments, may it ascend further to the remedy of rescue. Therefore the

holy man, considering the losses of the human race, because it is withdrawn from the present age without knowledge of the Redeemer, and is buried irreparably in eternal fires, and taking up its voice in himself, may say: Neither shall the sight of man behold me, because doubtless the grace of the Redeemer, which it does not now look upon to correct, it does not then look back upon to hide from destruction. For the Lord, coming into judgment, sees the sinner to strike him, but does not see him to recognize him for the bestowing of the grace of salvation; he examines faults, and is ignorant of the life of those perishing. Whence the holy man, when he confessed that he could not be seen by the respect of man after the present life, aptly soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. IX].

IBID.---Thy eyes are upon me, and I shall not exist.

31. Christ in judgment will see the reprobate to strike them, whom here he did not see to bestow mercy.---As if he said openly: Coming severely to judgment, and thou dost not see for saving, and thou dost see for striking, because him whom in the present life thou dost not look upon with the commiseration of thy dispensation, by looking upon him afterward, thou dost extinguish through justice. For now every sinner does not fear God and lives, blasphemes and prospers, because namely the merciful Creator, whom by

waiting he wishes to correct, by looking upon he does not wish to punish, as it is written: Overlooking the sins of men for the sake of repentance (Wisd. 11:24). But then the sinner, when he is looked upon, does not exist, because when the severe judge subtilely inquires into merits, the guilty one does not suffice for the torments.

32. The just know they will perish if they are judged by God with piety removed.---Although this also agrees with the voice of the just, whose mind always anxious intends for the coming examination. For they fear everything they do, while they cautiously consider before how great a judge they will stand. They behold the power of that magnitude, and weigh with how great a guilt of their own infirmity they are bound. They enumerate the evils of their own work, and against these they exaggerate the goods of the Creator. They consider how severely he judges perverse things, how subtilely he weighs good works, and they foreknow without ambiguity that they will perish if they are judged with piety removed; because this very thing also that we seem to live justly is a fault, if when he judges our life, divine mercy does not excuse this with himself. For hence it is written in this same book: The stars are not clean in his sight (Job 25:5), because judged severely with him, even they have the stains of pollution who shine through the cleanness of holiness. Well therefore it is said: Thy eyes are upon me, and I shall not exist. As if it were said openly by the voice of the just: If I am discussed by a subtile examination, I do not rise up by enduring

the judgment, because life does not suffice for the punishment if the immensity of just retribution presses upon it. But well both the fault of the same human race is briefly subjoined, and the punishment, when it is said immediately:

CHAPTER XVII

[Old XIV, Rec. X].

VERS. 9.---As the cloud is consumed, and passes away, so he that goes down to the lower parts shall not come up.

33. For the damned there is no return to pardon, or to those things which they loved.---For a cloud is suspended to the higher places; but thickened by the wind it is driven that it may run, but by the heat of the sun it is dissipated that it may vanish. Just so, doubtless, are the hearts of men, which through the genius of received reason flash out to the heights, but driven by the blast of the malignant spirit, are drawn hither and thither by the perverse motions of their own desires; but, by the severe respect of the heavenly judge, they melt away as if by the heat of the sun, and, once delivered to the penal places, they return no further to the use of operation. Therefore let the holy man, expressing the elation, the course, and the defect of the human race, say: As the cloud is consumed, and passes away, so he that goes down to the lower parts shall not come up. As if he were speaking openly, saying: He fails by running into the high place, who by being proud tends to destruction; whom if fault

once draws along to punishment, mercy does not further lead back to pardon. Whence also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERS. 10.---Neither shall he return any more to his house.

34. The house of the mind is that which it inhabits by loving. The hearts of those despairing are like clouds. They are poured out outside themselves.---Just as the house is the corporal dwelling place of the body, so to each mind that becomes a house which it has been accustomed to inhabit out of desire. To his house, therefore, he returns no more, because once each one, delivered to eternal punishments, is in no way recalled to this now where he had clung by love. Also by the name of hell the despair of the sinner can be designated, about which it is said through the Psalmist: But in hell who shall confess to thee (Ps. 6:6)? Whence again it is written: The impious when he shall have come into the depth of sins, contemns (Prov. 18:3). But whoever succumbs to impiety, certainly by dying leaves the life of justice. But he who even after sin is overwhelmed by the weight of despair, what else than after death is he buried in the punishments of hell? Well therefore it is said: As the cloud is consumed, and passes away, so he that goes down to the lower parts shall not come up, because for the most part with the perpetration of iniquity despair is also associated, and the way of return is already cut off. But rightly the hearts of those despairing

are compared to clouds, because they are both obscure with the darkness of error, and thickened with the multiplicity of sins; but being consumed they pass away, because being irradiated by the clarity of the extreme judge they are dissipated. The dwelling place of the heart is also wont to be understood as a house. Whence it is said to a certain one healed: Go into thy house (Mark 5:19), because doubtless it is worthy that the sinner after pardon return to his mind, lest he again admit that by which he may be justly struck. But he who shall have descended to hell, shall not ascend further to his house, because him whom despair overwhelms, it sends forth from the dwelling place of his heart, and he is not able to return inside, because, poured out outside, he falls every day compelled to worse things. For man had been created for contemplating the Creator, that he might always seek His form, and might inhabit in the solemnity of His love. But being sent outside himself through disobedience, he lost the place of his mind, because, scattered by dark journeys, he elongated from the inhabitation of the true light. Whence aptly it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX

[Old XV].

IBID.---Neither shall his place know him any more.

35. The place of man is God, deserted through disobedience. He is not to know in judgment those who have despised him here.---For the

place of man, but not local, was the Creator himself, who created him that he might consist in himself. Which place doubtless man deserted when, hearing the words of the seducer, he departed from the love of the Creator. But when almighty God by redeeming showed himself to man even corporally, he himself, so to speak, following the footsteps of his fugitive, came as a place to retain the man whom he had lost. For if the Creator could by no means be called a place, the Psalmist praising God would not say: The sons of thy servants shall inhabit there (Ps. 101:29). For we do not say "there", unless when we specifically designate a place. But there are many who even after having perceived the aid of the Redeemer are devolved to the darkness of despair; and they perish all the more wickedly, by how much they also contemn the offered remedies of mercy. Rightly therefore it is said of the damned man: Neither shall his place know him any more, because by his Creator he is then all the more severely not known in judgment, by how much now he is not recalled to the grace of reparation even through gifts. Whence also it is to be noted most greatly that he does not say: Neither shall he know his place any more, but he says: Neither shall his place know him any more. For while knowledge is attributed not to the man, but to the place, the Creator himself is plainly designated by the name of place, who, coming severely to the last examination, will say to those enduring in iniquity: I know you not whence you are (Luke 13:25). But all the elect, by how much they

consider the reprobate being severely repelled, by so much do they more solicitously purge themselves every day from the sordes of perpetrated iniquity. And when they behold others perishing growing cold from the love of life, they studiously enkindle themselves to the laments of penance. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 11.---Wherefore I also will not spare my mouth.

36. The elect prevent the wrath of the judge in confession.---For he spares his mouth who blushes to confess the evil he has done. For to send the mouth into labor is to occupy this for the confession of perpetrated iniquity. But the just man does not spare his mouth, because preventing the wrath of the severe judge, he rages against himself with the words of his own confession. Hence the Psalmist says: Let us prevent his face in confession (Ps. 94:2). Hence it is said through Solomon: He who hides his crimes shall not be directed; but he who shall have confessed and forsaken them shall follow mercy (Prov. 28:13). Hence again it is written: The just in the beginning is the accuser of himself (Prov. 18:17). But by no means is the mouth opened for confession, unless when by consideration of the severe judge it is narrowed through the fear of the spirit. Whence also aptly it is soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI

[Rec. XI].

IBID.---I will speak in the tribulation of my spirit.

37. The confession of sins ought to be accompanied by the grief of penance.---For the tribulation of the spirit moves the tongue, so that the voice of confession may attack the guilt of a perverse work. It is also to be known that often even the reprobate confess sins, but they contemn to bewail them. But the elect follow their faults, which they open with voices of confession, with the weepings of severe animadversion. Whence well blessed Job, after he promised not to spare his mouth, soon subjoined the tribulation of the spirit. As if he confessed openly, saying: The tongue so speaks the guilt, that by no means partaking of the stimulus of sorrow does the spirit wander through other things: but speaking faults, I open a wound; but thinking of faults for correction, I seek the health of the wound from the medicine of sorrow. For he who indeed insinuates the evils which he has perpetrated, but refuses to weep for what he has insinuated, as if with a withdrawn garment detects the wound, but with a torpid mind does not apply the medicine to the wound. It is necessary, therefore, that sorrow alone shake out the voice of confession, lest the wound produced, but neglected, by which it is now touched more licentially through human knowledge, should putrefy more greatly. On the contrary, the Psalmist had not only detected the plague of the heart, but applied also

the medicine of sorrow to the detected one, saying: I announce my iniquity, and I will think for my sin (Ps. 37:19). For by announcing he detects the hidden wound, but by thinking what else than does he apply the medicine to the wound? [Old XVI.] But for the afflicted mind, and one solicitously thinking of its own losses, a strife for itself arises against itself. For when it instigates itself to the laments of penance, it mangles itself with a hidden reproof. Whence also aptly soon is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID.---I will commune with the bitterness of my soul.

38. The compunct mind detects many things in itself to be bewailed. It recollects with how many gifts of God it was ungrateful.---For afflicted by the fear of divine judgment, while we bewail certain things badly done, excited more vigilantly to discuss ourselves by the very force of our bitterness, we find other things in ourselves also which we may bewail more fully. For often what was hidden to those torpid, becomes more subtilely known to those weeping; and the afflicted mind finds more certainly the evil which it had done and did not know, and its own strife opens to it more truly how much it has deviated from the peace of truth, because its own guilt, which secure it did not remember, it finds this in itself being moved. For the succrescent bitterness of penance importunately brings to the ashamed heart the illicit things which it committed, shows

the severe judge against these things, strikes threats of punishments, strikes the mind with fear, confounds it with shame, reproves illicit motions, disturbs the quiet of harmful security; it enumerates what good things the Creator bestowed upon it, what evils it itself responded with to those good things of his, that it was wonderfully created by him, that it was gratuitously nourished, that it was enriched with the substance of reason in its condition, that it was called by the grace of the Creator, that it itself being called did not wish to follow, that the mercy of the one calling did not despise it though deaf and resisting, that it was illuminated by gifts, that it was blinded by its own will by perverse acts even after the gifts, that it was expiated from the errors of its blindness by the scourges of paternal solicitude, that from the pains of the scourges it was led back to the joys of salvation by the medicine of mercy; that subjected to certain faults, even if not heavy ones, nevertheless it does not cease to sin even among the scourges; that heavenly grace did not leave its sinner even when contemned. When therefore it reproves the afflicted mind now by the replication of the gifts of God, now by the reproaches of its own action with so great severity, the bitterness of the soul has its own tongue in the heart of the just, which speaks to them all the more subtilely, by how much it is heard more interiorly. Whence also by no means is it said: I will speak in the bitterness of my soul, but, I will commune with the bitterness of my soul, because the force of sorrow, which reckoning each sin,

excites the torpid mind to laments, forms as it were words of communing to it, in which it may find itself having been corrected, and may rise up more solicitous now for its own custody. Therefore let the just man say out of his own voice, and holding the type of the holy Church, let him say out of ours: I will commune with the bitterness of my soul. As if he insinuated more openly, saying: I speak within against myself with the sorrow of my heart, and I hide myself outside from the stroke of the judge. But the mind pressed by the sorrows of penance is constricted in itself, and is separated from all delectations of the flesh by a strong thought, it desires to profit for the highest things, and nevertheless it still feels a contradiction from the corruption of the body. Whence also aptly soon is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERS. 12.---Am I the sea, or a whale, that thou hast surrounded me with a prison?

39. Man, the devil, the carnal, are constricted by a prison; when they are not able to fulfill what they wish.---Man is surrounded with a prison, because for the most part he both strives to rise up to the heights by the advances of virtues, and nevertheless is hindered by the corruption of his flesh. From which the Psalmist prays to be put off, saying: Lead my soul out of prison, for confessing to thy name (Ps. 141:8). But what is expressed by the appellation of the sea, except the hearts of the carnal fluctuating with swollen thoughts; what by the name of whale, except the ancient enemy?

Who while he penetrates the minds of seculars by possessing them, swims as it were in their slippery thought. But the whale is constricted by a prison, because the malignant spirit, cast down into the lower parts, lest he should prevail to fly away to heavenly things, is coarcted by the weight of his punishment, Peter attesting, who says: God did not spare the sinning angels, but delivered them drawn down by the ropes of hell into Tartarus to be reserved to be tortured in judgment (2 Pet. 2:4). The whale is astringed by a prison, because he is prohibited from tempting the good as much as he desires. The sea also is surrounded by a prison, because the swollen and insane desires of carnal minds are weighed down by the narrowness of their own impossibility for carrying out the evils which they appetize. For often they desire to dominate the better; but nevertheless they are subject to them, the divine judgment wonderfully disposing all things. The elated desire to harm the good, and nevertheless being subject they hope for solaces from them. For the fulfilling of the pleasures of the flesh they desire longevity of the present life, but nevertheless they are snatched from it under celerity. About whom it is well said through the Psalmist: He stationed the waters as in a wineskin (Ps. 77:13). For the waters are in a wineskin when their slippery desires, because they do not find the effect of the work, are depressed under the carnal heart. The whale therefore and the sea is pressed by the surrounding of a prison, because either the malignant spirit, or his followers, in

whose minds he collects himself, and rolls in them the waves of swollen thoughts, so that they may not be able to fulfill the evils which they appetize, heavenly severity narrows them.

[Old XVII, Rec. XII.] 40. The just complain that they suffer the same. Not out of swelling, but out of love of the truth.---But holy men, by how much with a cleaner heart they consider the secrets of heavenly things, pant for these with ardors increased every day. There they desire to be fully satiated, whence they still taste some small thing with the mouth of contemplation. They desire perfectly to subject the stimulus of the flesh, to tolerate nothing illicit in thought now from its corruption; but because it is written: The body which is corrupted aggravates the soul, and the earthly inhabitation depresses the sense thinking many things (Wisd. 9:15), by intention they already indeed eminent beyond themselves, but nevertheless, still subject to the uncertain motions of their own infirmity, they grieve that they are closed by the prison of corruption. He says therefore: Am I the sea, or a whale, that thou hast surrounded me with a prison? As if he said openly: The sea or the whale, namely the iniquitous, and their author the malignant spirit, because they desire to be unbridled for the sole license of perpetrating iniquity, are rightly constricted by the prison of their own punishment. But I, who already desire the liberty of thy eternity, why am I still pressed by the prison of my corruption? Which nevertheless is neither proudly required by the just, because, enkindled

by the love of the truth, they perfectly desire to transgress the narrownesses of their own infirmity; nor is it unjustly disposed by the author of the just, because by delaying he tortures the vows of his elect, by torturing he purges, so that they may some time convalesce better from the delay for perceiving what they desire. But the elect, as long as they are delayed from the intimate quiet, return to their heart; and there, hidden from the tumults of their own flesh, they seek as it were a most pleasant secret. But in it they often feel the stings of temptation, they suffer the incentives of the flesh; and there they find most heavy labors, where they had sought great rest from labor. Whence the holy man after the insinuated prison of his corruption, hastening to return to the quiet spaces of the heart, because he finds the same strife even in the inmost things which he flees from the exterior ones, immediately subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Rec. XIII].

VERSES 13, 14.---If I shall say, my bed shall comfort me, and I shall be relieved speaking with myself in my couch; thou shalt terrify me by dreams, and by visions thou shalt shake me with horror.

41. The just man returns from exterior things to the heart, nor finds he rest there. He is troubled by the terror of the judgments of God.---For in the sacred eloquence (*sacro eloquio*) the bed, the

couch, or the mattress, is wont to be understood as the secret of the heart. For hence it is that under the appearance of each soul the bride, excited by the hidden stings of holy love, says in the Song of Songs: In my bed by nights I sought him whom my soul loveth (Cant. 3:1). For in the bed and by night the beloved is sought, because indeed the appearance of the invisible Creator, every image of bodily vision being repressed, is found in the couch of the heart. Whence also to the same who love Him the Truth says: The kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:21). And again: If I go not away, the Paraclete will not come (John 16:7). As if He said openly: If I do not withdraw my body from the eyes of your intention, I do not lead you to the invisible understanding through the Comforter Spirit (*consolatorem Spiritum*). Hence of the just it is said by the Psalmist: The saints shall exult in glory, they shall rejoice in their beds (Psalm 149:5), because namely when they flee evils from exterior things, they glory secure within the secrets of their minds. But then the joy of hearts will be perfect when there shall be no fight of the flesh without. For as long as the flesh entices, because as it were the wall of our house is shaken, the couch also is troubled. Whence also it is rightly said by the same Psalmist: Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity (Psalm 40:4), because while the temptation of the flesh shakes us, our trembling infirmity confounds even the couch of the mind. But what in this place do we take for dreams or visions, except the imaginations of the last and strict examination? which

already in some way we discern through fear, but yet we do not see as it truly is. Therefore holy men, as we have said, always return to the secrets of the heart, when they suffer from this world either prosperity beyond their wish, or adversity beyond their strength; and, tired by external labors, they seek the couches of the mind as it were a mattress or a bed. But while by certain imaginations of thoughts they behold how subtle the divine judgments are, as if in the very rest of their mattress they are troubled by the vision of a dream. For they contemplate how strict a judge comes, who, while by the force of His immense greatness He illuminates the secrets of hearts, brings back all faults before their eyes. They weigh how great that shame is, to be confounded then in the sight of the whole human race, of all the angels, and of the archangels. They weigh what torment remains after the confusion, when Gehenna consumes both the guilty soul dying immortally and the flesh failing without end. When therefore the mind is shaken by such fearful imagination, what else is seen than a sad dream in the couch? Let him say therefore: If I shall say My bed shall comfort me, and I shall be relieved speaking with myself in my couch, thou shalt terrify me by dreams, and by visions thou shalt shake me with horror. As if he should openly confess, saying: If, fleeing exterior things, I return within, and in some way I desire to rest in the couch of the heart, there, while Thou objectest me to the contemplation of Thy strictness (*districtionis*), Thou terrifiest me vehemently by the

very imaginations of my providence. But it is well said: And I shall be relieved, speaking with myself in my couch, because namely when we tired return to the silence of our mind, as if speaking in the couch, we turn the hidden words of thoughts within us. But this our very communing is turned into fear, because from it the understanding is more vehemently opened to us, which may intent the terror of the judge in the mind.

[Vet. XVIII.] 42. Six causes of dreams.---Lest any one should study to search into these things according to the letter, it is greatly to be inquired in how many ways the images of dreams touch the mind. For sometimes dreams are generated by the fullness or emptiness of the belly, but sometimes by illusion, sometimes by thought and illusion together, sometimes by revelation, but sometimes by thought and revelation together. But the two which we first mentioned we all know by experience, but the following four we find in the pages of Holy Scripture. For unless dreams were for the most part made from the hidden enemy through illusion, the wise man would by no means indicate this, saying: Dreams and vain illusions have made many to err (Ecclus. 34:7). Or certainly: You shall not divine, nor observe dreams (Lev. 19:26). By which words indeed it is shown of what detestation are those things which are joined to divinations. Again, unless they sometimes proceeded from thought and illusion together, Solomon would least have said: Dreams follow many cares (Eccles. 5:2). And unless dreams sometimes arose from the mystery

of revelation, Joseph would not see by a dream that he was to be preferred to his brothers (Gen. 37:7), nor would the angel admonish the spouse of Mary by a dream that, the child being taken, he should flee into Egypt (Matt. 2:13, 14). Again, unless dreams sometimes proceeded from thought and revelation together, the prophet Daniel, in discussing the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, would by no means have begun from the root of thought: Thou, O king, didst begin to think in thy couch what should be hereafter, and he that revealeth mysteries showed thee what things are to come (Dan. 2:29). And a little after: Thou sawest, and behold as it were one great statue, that great statue, and high stature stood against thee (ibid. 31), etc. Therefore while Daniel reverently insinuates the dream to be fulfilled, and manifests from what thought it arose, it is plainly shown that this is for the most part generated from thought and revelation together.

43. We are not easily to believe dreams. Why the devil is permitted to affect the hearts of the saints by dreams. But indeed since dreams alternate with so many qualities of things, it ought to be believed in them with so much more difficulty, as it does not easily shine forth from what impulse they come. For often the malignant spirit promises prosperity even to those sleeping whom he intercepts waking by the love of this present life; and those whom he considers to fear adversities, he intends these more harshly to them by the images of a dream, so far as he may affect the undiscerning mind with diverse qual-

ity, and confound it, either lifting it up by hope, or depressing it by fear. But often he strives to affect even the hearts of the saints with dreams, that they may be diverted at least for a time and a moment from the intention of solid thought, although they themselves immediately shake off the mind from the imagination of illusion. But the lurking enemy, in what he least overcomes them waking, in that he more heavily assails them sleeping. Whom nevertheless the heavenly dispensation (*superna dispensatio*) kindly permits to do these things malignantly, lest in the hearts of the elect even sleep should be void from the reward of passion. Well therefore is it said to the Ruler of all (*rectori omnium*): If I shall say My bed shall comfort me, and I shall be relieved speaking with myself in my couch, thou shalt terrify me by dreams, and by visions thou shalt shake me with horror, because namely God wonderfully dispenses all things, and He Himself does what the malignant spirit desires to do unjustly, who permits this to be done only justly. But because the life of the just is both shaken by temptation during vigils, and fatigued by illusion through a dream, it tolerates the troubles of its corruption without, and within at its own self it heavily carries unlawful thoughts, what is it that it should do, so that it may pluck the foot of the heart from so many snares of scandals? Behold, blessed man, with how great perturbation we have known thee to be pressed on every side, but let us hear what counsel thou findest against this. It follows:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 15.---Wherefore my soul hath chosen suspension, and my bones death.

44. It is a remedy against the anxiety of the mind to carry it to high things.---What is designated by the soul but the intention of the mind, what by the bones but the strength of the flesh? But everything which is suspended is without doubt raised from the lowest things. Therefore the soul chooses suspension, that the bones may die, because while the intention of the mind raises itself to high things, it kills in itself all the strength of the exterior life. For holy men know most certainly that they can by no means have rest in this life; and therefore they choose suspension, because indeed, deserting earthly desires, they lift the mind to high things. But being suspended they bring death to their bones, because by the love of the heavenly country (*supernae patriae*), being girt in the studies of virtues, they follow with the bond of humility that which they had previously been strong in the world. It is pleasant to behold how Paul had suspended his soul, who said: But I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me (Gal. 2:20). And again: Having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ (Philip. 1:23). And: To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (ibid. 21). Who, calling back to memory the deeds of earthly strength, numbered as it were certain bones in himself, saying: A Hebrew of the Hebrews, according to the law a Pharisee,

according to zeal persecuting the Church of God (Philip. 3:5, 6). But by the suspension of the soul, because he kills these bones in himself, he immediately asserts, who subjoins: But what things were gain to me, those I have counted loss for Christ (ibid. 7). Which bones in himself he insinuates more vehemently extinguished, when he adds: For whom I have made all things loss, and I count them as dung (ibid. 8). But with his bones dead he shows how lifeless he hangs, who immediately subjoins, saying: That I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having my own justice, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Jesus Christ (ibid. 9). But because, his testimonies being compared, we have witnessed Paul suspended to high things, dead to the world, let us now show if blessed Job, full of the same spirit, flees the concupiscence of the exterior life. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Vet. XIX, Rec. XV].

VERSE 16.---I have despaired, I shall now live no longer.

45. Some of the just possess earthly things, others renounce them.---There are some of the just who so desire heavenly things, that nevertheless they are least broken from the hope of earthly things. They possess the patrimonies bestowed by God for the support of necessity, they hold the honors temporarily paid to them, they do not covet the things of others, they use their

own lawfully. Who nevertheless are alien from the same things which they have, because they are not held by desire to these very things which they possess. And there are some of the just who, girt for comprehending the summit of perfection, while they desire higher things within, relinquish all things without; who strip themselves of the things they had, and spoil themselves of the glory of honor; who by the desire of internal things through assiduity affect themselves with a friendly sorrow (*amici moeroris*), and will not have consolation from exterior things; who while they approach by the mind to internal joys, kill in themselves fundamentally the life of bodily delight. For to such it is said by Paul: For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). The Psalmist had expressed the voice of these, when he said: My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord (Psalm 83:3). For they long, but do not faint, who already indeed desire heavenly things, but yet are as yet least wearied from the delights of earthly things. But he longeth and fainteth for the courts of God, who, when he desires eternal things, does not endure in the love of temporal things. Hence the Psalmist says again: My soul hath fainted for thy salvation (Psalm 118:81). Hence the Truth Himself admonishes, saying: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself (Luke 9:23). And again: Unless a man renounce all that he possesseth, he cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:33). Therefore the holy man, with a mind divided from earthly desires, inserts himself in the number of these,

who says: I have despaired, I shall now live no longer. For to despair as a just man is to desert the goods of this present life by the choice of eternity, to seek things that will remain, and not to have confidence in temporal things. Who doing these things asserts that he shall by no means live longer, because namely he kills himself daily from the life of passion by a vivifying death (*vivificatrice morte*). For far be it that the holy man should despair of the bounty of divine mercy, lest he withdraw the step of the heart from the progress of the inward journey, lest, deserting the love of the Creator, he remain in the way as if destitute by the leader, and fall pierced by the sword of robbing despair. But lest we should seem to bend his words violently to the judgment of our understanding, we ought to weigh the premises from the following things. For in what sense he said these things, he himself immediately indicates, who subjoins:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XVI].

VERSE 16.---Spare me, O Lord, for my days are nothing.

46. Job deserted perishing goods by a pious despair, and sought things that remain forever.---For neither do these two words agree with themselves, *I have despaired* and *spare*. For he who despairs by no means now asks that he be spared, and he who still desires to be spared certainly least despairs. Therefore it

is from one thing that the holy man despairs, from another that he asks to be spared, because namely while he deserts the goods of his passing life through despair, he rises more robust in hope for obtaining the things which remain. Therefore by despairing he is better led to the hope of pardon, who so much more surely desires the things to come, as he more truly relinquishes present things from despair. And it is to be noted that, insinuating to us the force of his heart, he indeed brought forth one sentence concerning himself, but he repeated this by insinuating it a third time. For what he had said above: *My soul hath chosen suspension,* this repeating he added, *I have despaired;* and by longing for eternal things, and postponing temporal things, he finally brought this in, *Spare me;* and what he said above, *My bones death,* this indeed he subjoined, *I shall now live no longer;* this last he brought forth, *For my days are nothing.* [Vet. XX.] But he well considers his days to be nothing, because, as we have already often said a little above, holy men the more truly they know the highest things, the more sublimely they despise earthly things; and therefore they behold the days of the present life to be nothing, because they fix the eyes of an illuminated mind in the consideration of eternity. From which while they return to themselves, what do they acknowledge themselves to be but dust, and conscious of their own infirmity, they fear to be strictly judged? And when they behold the force of such great vigor, they tremble to be

examined what they are. Whence also it is yet aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERSE 17.---What is man that thou shouldst magnify him? or why dost thou set thy heart upon him?

47. The saints always consider their own vileness, and the gifts and judgments of God.---God magnifies man, because He enriches him with the bounty of reason, visits him with the infusion of grace, exalts him with the honor of conferred virtue. And since of himself he is nothing, He grants him by the gift of benignity to be a participant of His own knowledge. But the Lord sets His heart upon the same magnified man, because after the gifts He exerts judgment, He subtly weighs merits, He vehemently examines the weights of life, and He so much more strictly exacts penalties from him afterwards, as He has more largely prevented him by the bestowed gift. Therefore let the holy man behold the immensity of the heavenly majesty, and let him bring back the eye of consideration to his own infirmity. Let him see that the flesh is not able to take that which the Truth teaches by the spirit concerning itself. Let him see that even the raised spirit of man is not sufficient to tolerate the judgment which God intends under the examination of strict retribution, and let him say: *What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? or why dost thou set thy heart upon him?* As if he should openly exclaim, saying: Man is magnified by a spiritual gift, but

yet he is flesh; and Thou considerest his ways strictly after the gifts, but yet if he be judged with piety removed, the weight which hangs from Thy subtlety neither the spirit raised to justice is able to bear, because even if Thy gifts dilate him beyond himself, yet his own infirmity narrows him for the inquiry of Thy strict examination. Whence also it is yet aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 18.---Thou visitest him at dawn, and suddenly thou provest him.

48. Those whom God has enriched with gifts, He proves by temptations. That they may learn what they are from God, what from themselves. Therefore then they are troubled by slippery thoughts.---Who of us knows not that it is called dawn (*diluculum*) when now the nocturnal times are changed into the clarity of light? We therefore are pressed by the darkness of night when we are obscured by the perpetration of iniquity. But night is turned into light when the obscurity of our error is irradiated by the knowledge of truth. Night is turned into light when the brightness of justice illuminates our hearts, which the blindness of fault depressed. Paul had beheld this dawn arising in the minds of the disciples when he said: The night is passed, and the day is at hand (Rom. 13:12). Therefore the Lord visits us at dawn, because He illustrates the darkness of our error by the light of His knowl-

edge, He raises us by the gift of contemplation, He exalts us into the citadel of virtue (*arcem virtutis*). But it is to be noted that God after He visits at dawn, suddenly proves man, because both by approaching He promotes our hearts to virtues, and by receding He permits them to be shaken by temptation. For if after the gifts of virtues he is shaken by no temptation, the mind glories that it has these from itself. Therefore that it may both have the gifts of firmness, and humbly acknowledge its own infirmity, it is lifted up to high things through the approach of grace, and through the recession it is proved what it is of itself. Which is well hinted to us from the history of sacred reading (1 Kings 3:16), by which Solomon is recorded both to have received wisdom from God, and yet after that same wisdom was received, to have been immediately struck by the question of harlots. For as soon as he received the grace of so great a revelation, he bore the contest of base women, because namely often when the respect of intimate bounty illustrates our mind with granted virtues, slippery thoughts immediately trouble it, so that that which exults being raised by an immense gift, being also struck by temptation may find what it is. Thus Elias both visited at dawn, opened the heavens by his word; and yet proved suddenly, fleeing weak through the deserts, he feared one woman (1 Kings 19:3). Thus Paul is led to the third heaven, penetrating he considers the secrets of paradise (2 Cor. 12:2); and yet, returning to himself, he labors against the war of the flesh, he sustains another law in

his members, by whose rebellion in himself the law of the spirit grieves to be fatigued (Rom. 7:21). Therefore God visits at dawn, but suddenly after the visitation He proves, because both by the conferred gift He raises, and the gift being withdrawn for a little while, He demonstrates the man to himself. Which without doubt we suffer until, the stain of sin being fundamentally wiped away, we may be reformed to the substance of promised incorruption. Whence it is yet aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXX

[Vet. XXI, Rec. XVIII].

VERSE 19.---How long dost thou not spare me, nor let me alone, that I may swallow my spittle?

49. The savor of contemplation, not satiety, is given here. ---Saliva slides into the mouth from the head, but from the mouth it is led to the belly when it is swallowed. What therefore is our head but the Divinity? through which we take the principle of existing, that we may be a creature, Paul witnessing, who says: *The head of the man is Christ, but the head of Christ is God* (1 Cor. 11:3). But what is our belly but the mind? which while it receives its food, namely the heavenly understanding, being refreshed without doubt it rules the members of all actions. For unless the sacred eloquence (*sacra eloquia*) sometimes expressed the mind by the name of the belly, Solomon would surely not have said: *The lamp of the Lord is the spirit of man, which searcheth all the secrets of the belly* (Prov. 20:27), because

namely while the grace of the heavenly respect illustrates us, it also manifests all things hidden from our mind to us. What therefore is taken by the name of saliva but the savor of intimate contemplation? which flows down to the mouth from the head, because it scarcely touches us placed yet in this life with the taste of revelation from the clarity of the Creator. Whence also the Redeemer coming mixed spittle with clay, and repaired the eyes of the man born blind (John 9:6), because heavenly grace irradiates our carnal thought through the admixture of its contemplation, and reforms man from original blindness to understanding. For because nature brought him forth in this exile already expelled from the joys of paradise, man proceeded as if from birth without eyes. But as the holy man insinuates, this saliva indeed slides to the mouth, but that it may reach even to the belly it is not swallowed, because the contemplation of the Divinity touches the sense, but it does not fully refresh the mind, since the mind is not able to behold perfectly what it as yet sees by snatches, because the darkness of corruption prevents.

50. The mind pressed by the mass of the body is not able to adhere long to the heavenly light. ---For behold the mind of the elect already subjects earthly desires, already transcends all things which it considers to pass away, already is suspended from the delight of exterior things, and searches out what are the invisible goods, and doing these things it is for the most part snatched into the sweetness of heavenly contem-

plation, and already beholds something of the inmost things as it were through a mist, and with ardent desire endeavors to be present at the spiritual ministries of the angels; it is fed with the taste of uncircumscribed light (*incircumscripti luminis*), and being carried beyond itself it disdains to fall back to itself; but because as yet the body which is corrupted burdens the soul (Wisd. 9:15), it is not able to adhere long to the light which it sees by snatches. For the very infirmity of the flesh withdraws the soul transcending itself, and brings it back sighing to think on the lowest and necessary things. Therefore the saliva flowing down from the head touches the mouth, but reaches least to the belly, because indeed our understanding is now infused with the liquor of heavenly contemplation, but the mind is by no means fully satiated. For in the mouth is the taste, in the belly satiety. Therefore we cannot swallow the saliva, because we are not permitted to be satiated with the good of heavenly clarity, which as yet we taste from thinness. But because this very thing, which in some way we already know from above, is from the piety of Him who spares, but that we cannot perceive this perfectly is as yet from the penalty of the old condemnation, it is now rightly said: *How long dost thou not spare me, nor let me alone, that I may swallow my spittle?* As if it were openly said: Then Thou fully sparest man, when Thou shalt have admitted him to the perfection of Thy contemplation, so that being snatched within he may see Thy clarity, and the corruption of his flesh may not repel

him without. Then Thou permittest that I swallow the spittle, when Thou shalt have infused me with the savor of Thy clarity even to the abundance of satiety, so that I may no longer hunger by the taste of the mouth through indigence, but may subsist solid in Thee with the belly of the mind watered. But he who wishes to deserve the good which he seeks, ought to confess the evil which he has done. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Rec. XIX].

VERSE 20.---I have sinned; what shall I do to thee, O keeper of men?

51. Man fallen by himself, by himself is not able to rise.---Behold he confesses the evil which he has done, but he does not find the good which he ought to offer to God in recompense (*recompensationem*), because any virtue of human action is weak for washing away fault, unless the mercy of Him who spares fosters it, and the justice of Him who judges rightly does not press it. Whence it is rightly said by the Psalmist: *Thy mercy is better than life* (Psalm 62:4), because however innocent it may seem, yet before the strict judge our life does not deliver us, if the benignity of mercy does not release to it the debt of its guilt. Or certainly when it is said: *What shall I do to thee?* it is plainly shown that these very goods which we are commanded to do, do not profit the commander, but us. Whence again it is said by the Psalmist: *For thou hast no need

of my goods* (Psalm 15:2). But the humility of our destitution is expressed when God is called the keeper of men (*custos hominum*), because if His keeping does not at least protect us, before the snares of the hidden enemy, the waking eye of our solicitude sleeps, the Psalmist again witnessing, who says: *Unless the Lord keep the city, they watch in vain that keep it* (Psalm 126:1, 2). For we have fallen by ourselves, but we are not able to rise by our own strengths. Fault once laid us low of our own will, but the penalty of fault daily depresses us worse. We strive to rise to the lost rectitude by the endeavors of studies, but we are burdened by the weight of merits. Whence also it is aptly subjoined.

CHAPTER XXXII

[Vet. XXII, Rec. XX].

VERSE 20.---Why hast thou set me contrary to thee, and I am become burdensome to myself?

52. By sinning he is made contrary to God.---Then God set man contrary to Himself, when man deserted God by sinning. For being caught by the persuasions of the serpent, he stood forth as His enemy, whose precepts he despised. But the just Creator set him contrary to Himself, because He deputed him as an enemy from pride (*elatione*). But this very contrariety of fault is made to man a weight of punishment, so that being evilly free he may serve his own corruption, who being a good servant rejoiced in the liberty of incorruption. For deserting the healthful citadel

of humility, he arrived at the yoke of infirmity by being proud, and by erecting he subjected the neck of the heart, because he who would not be under the divine commands, laid himself low under his own necessities. Which we show better, if we express those things which being cast down he sustains, and first the weights of the flesh, and afterwards of the mind.

53. In how many ways man is burdensome to himself, on account of the body. And on account of the mind. Our mind ample and narrow.---For to say nothing of this, that he tolerates pains, that he pants with fevers, this very thing of our body which is called health is constricted by a certain sickness of its own. For by ease it pines away, by work it fails; failing by hunger, it is refreshed by food that it may subsist; becoming weary by refreshment, it is relieved by abstinence that it may thrive; it is bathed with water, lest it should dry up; it is wiped with towels, lest it should melt too much by the bathing; it is quickened by labor, lest it should grow torpid by rest; it is cherished by rest, lest it should succumb by the exercise of labor; fatigued by vigils, it is repaired by sleep; oppressed by sleep, it is shaken out by vigils, lest it should be wearied worse by its own rest; it is covered with clothes, lest it should be penetrated by the adversity of cold; failing by sought-for heat, it is cherished by the breath of the airs. And when it finds troubles from thence, whence it sought to avoid troubles, being evilly wounded, so to speak, it languishes from its own medicine. Fevers therefore being removed, and pains ceas-

ing, our health itself is a sickness, to which the necessity of curing is never wanting. For as many solaces as we seek for the use of living, we meet as it were so many medicines for our sickness. But the medicine also is turned into a wound, because adhering a little longer to the exquisite remedy, we fail more heavily from that which we provide providently for refreshment. So namely ought presumption to be corrected, so pride to be laid low. For because we once took up an elated spirit, behold we daily carry down-flowing mud (*lutum*).

54. Our mind also itself, excluded from the secure joy of the internal secret, now is deceived by hope, now is vexed by fear, now is cast down by sorrow, now is relieved by false hilarity; it pertinaciously loves transitory things, and is incessantly worn away by the loss of them, because it is also incessantly changed by a rapid course. But being subject to mutable things, it is also varied from itself. For seeking what it has not, it perceives it anxious; and when it has begun to have this, it tires it to have perceived what it sought. It often loves what it had despised, it despises what it loved. With labor it learns those things which are eternal, but of these it suddenly forgets, if it shall cease to labor. It seeks for a long time, that it may find a little of the highest things, but falling back more quickly to accustomed things, it does not persevere even a little in those which it finds. Desiring to be instructed, it can scarcely overcome its own ignorance, but being instructed, it fights more heavily against

the glory of science. It can scarcely subject to itself the tyranny of its own flesh, but yet as yet within it tolerates the images of fault, whose works it has already restrained without by overcoming. It raises itself in the inquiry of its Author, but the familiar darkness (*amica caligo*) of bodily things confounds it being reverberated. It wishes to behold in what manner the incorporeal thing rules the body, and it is not able. It seeks wonderfully what it is not sufficient to answer to itself, and being ignorant it fails under that which it prudently seeks. Considering itself ample and narrow at the same time, it knows not what it may truly estimate itself, because if it were not ample, it would by no means seek such things to be investigated, and again if it were not narrow, it would find at least this very thing which it seeks.

55. Man while, having left God, believed himself to be sufficient for himself, found nothing in himself but a tumult of perturbation. Job, being pressed by this, asks for the mercy of God. --- Well therefore is it said: Why hast thou set me contrary to thee, and I am become burdensome to myself, because while man being repulsed tolerates both troubles from the flesh and questions from the mind, he carries himself as a heavy weight indeed.

On every side he is pressed by languors, on every side he is urged by infirmities, so that he who, having left God, believed himself to be sufficient for himself for rest, should find nothing in himself but a tumult of perturbation, and being found should seek to flee from himself, but,

the Author being despised, he should not have whither he might flee from himself. A certain wise man, well contemplating the weights of this infirmity, says: A heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day of their coming forth from their mother's womb, until the day of their burial into the mother of all (Ecclus. 40:1).

But blessed Job, considering these things, and groaning why they were so ordained, does not rebuke justice, but inquires for mercy, that by questioning he may himself humbly knock at what divine piety may change by sparing. As if he should say openly: Why dost thou despise man as if contrary to thee, who I know for certain that thou dost not wish to perish even him whom thou art believed to despise? Whence well as yet he both expresses the humility of confession, and joins the voice of free inquiry, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIII

[Vet. XXIII].

VERSE 21.---Why dost thou not take away my sin, and why dost thou not remove my iniquity?

56. He desires the Mediator and the resurrection.---In which words truly what else but the desire for the waited-for Mediator is hinted? of whom John says: Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Or certainly sin is then fully taken away from the human race, when our corruption is changed by the glory of incorruption. For we can by no means be free from fault, as long as we are held in the

body of death. Therefore he desires the grace of the Redeemer, or the solidity of the resurrection, who hopes for his iniquity to be removed fundamentally. Whence soon adding both the punishment which he deserved from his origin, and the judgment which he fears from his own action, he adds:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Rec. XXI].

IBID.---Behold now I shall sleep in the dust; and if in the morning thou shalt seek me, I shall not be.

57. While he is pressed by present punishment, he is more heavily urged concerning future things. Humility is a cover from the sword of the judge.---To the first man sinning it was said: Dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return (Gen. 3:19). But by morning is called that manifestation of minds, which is demonstrated in the arrival of the judge with open thoughts as if after the darkness of the night. Of which morning indeed it is said by the Psalmist: In the morning I will stand before thee and will see (Ps. 5:5). But to seek on the part of God is to discuss man by a subtle interrogation, and to judge by strictly discussing.

Therefore blessed Job, considering the losses of human dejection, let him see that he is both already pressed by present punishment, and as yet more heavily urged concerning future things: And let him say: Behold now I shall sleep in the dust; and if in the morning thou shalt seek me, I

shall not be. As if he should more openly deplore, saying: in the present indeed I already suffer the death of the flesh, and yet as yet I fear a heavier death from the coming judgment, the sentence of thy strictness (districtionis): I sustain destruction for fault, but as yet coming to judgment I dread faults to be restored even after destruction.

Considering therefore exterior death, let him say, Behold now I shall sleep in the dust; fearing interior death let him add: And if in the morning thou shalt seek me, I shall not be. For with however much justice they may be strong, even the elect are by no means sufficient for themselves for innocence, if they should be strictly required in judgment. But this they now find for the solace of their deliverance, that they humbly know that they cannot be sufficient for themselves. Therefore under the cover of humility they hide themselves from the sword of so great animadversion, and in that they wait for the terror of the coming judgment with continuous fear, by that it is incessantly acted, that they may become more prepared. It follows.

CHAPTER XXXV

[Vet. XXIV, Rec. XXII].

CHAPTER VIII, VERSES 1, 2.---Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said, How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

58. The words of the just are heavy to the unjust. The fourfold power of speaking. Only one

is subject to crime.---To the unjust the words of the just are always heavy; and what they hear brought forth for edification, they bear these as if a weight imposed upon them. Which Bildad the Shuhite openly indicates concerning himself, saying: How long wilt thou speak these things? For he who says how long shows that he can no longer bear the words of edification. But when the iniquitous despise to be corrected, they criminalize what is well brought forth. Whence also he immediately adds: And the spirit of the speech of thy mouth is multiple. When multiplicity in speech is rebuked, without doubt the gravity of intelligence in sense is denied.

For the highest power of speakers is distinguished by a fourfold quality. For there are some whom the amplitude of both perceiving and speaking dilates, and there are some whom the want of both perceiving and speaking narrows. There are some who have the efficacy of speaking, but have not the acumen of perceiving; and there are some who are supported by the acumen of perceiving, but are mute from the want of locution. For this we see in men, which we often see in insensible things. For for the most part both abundant water is led from the innermost parts and is derived into the surface by large passages (meatibus). For the most part narrow it lies hid in the innermost parts, and finding the cracks of proceeding with difficulty, it sweats out narrower without. For the most part the least arises in hidden places; and when it finds clearly where it may go out, it proceeds thin from a large opening,

and large passages dilate themselves, but there is not what they may pour out. But for the most part ample it rises in hidden places, but pressed by narrow passages it flows forth most thinly.

So therefore in others the open mouth flows forth, what the large fount of genius ministers. In others neither sense reaches out the intellect, nor the tongue pours it out. In others indeed the mouth is open for speaking, but the tongue ready for rendering receives nothing from sense. But in others the large fount of perceiving exuberates from the heart, but an unequal tongue narrows this as if by a thin passage. In which four qualities of speaking indeed, only the third is subject to crime, which snatches this to itself through locution, to which it does not rise through genius. For the first is to be praised, which is strongly powerful in both. The second to be pitied, which humbly lacks both. The fourth to be helped, which is not able to fulfill what it perceives. But the third to be despised and repressed, which, while it raises itself by speech, lies down by sense, which similar to limbs swelling with inflation, proceeds vast but empty to the ears of the hearers. Which now Bildad twists to the crime of blessed Job, saying: [Vet. XXV.] The spirit of the speech of thy mouth is multiple. For he who attributes multiplicity of speech to the mouth, truly rebukes the want of the heart. As if he should say openly: Thou art lifted up by the abundance of spirit in the speech of the mouth, but thou art narrowed by the indigence of sense. But the wicked, when they rebuke right things, lest they

themselves should seem not to know what are just, bring forth goods known to all, which they have learned by hearing, as if unknown. Whence also Bildad immediately adds:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSE 3.---Doth God supplant judgment? or doth the Almighty subvert that which is just?

59. The wicked hunt for the praise of doctrine. They praise the justice of God where it is well with them, where it is ill they condemn it.--- These things blessed Job neither speaking had denied, nor being silent was ignorant of. But all forward persons, as we have said, boastingly bring forth even known things, that they may seem learned by speaking: they despise to be silent moderately, lest they should be believed to have been silent from unskilfulness. But it is to be known indeed that they then praise the rectitude of divine justice, when safety lifts them up to joy, and scourges chastise others; when they behold themselves to enjoy prosperity of things, others to be fatigued by adversity. For while they act perversely, but yet they think themselves right, they believe this, that prosperous things are supplied to them, to be due to their own merits; and by that they gather that God does not judge unjustly, in that no adversity saddens them as being as it were just. But if the force of heavenly correction shall have touched their life however briefly, being struck they immediately rebuke the counsel of the divine examination, which a little before while safe they preferred by admiring, and

they deny the judgment to be just, which is adverse to their morals, they dispute concerning divine equity, they leap forth to words of resistance (resultationis), and being corrected because they have transgressed, they transgress more heavily. Whence well also it is said by the Psalmist against the confession of the sinner: He will confess to thee, when thou shalt do well to him (Ps. 49:18). For the voice of confession is despised, which the pleasantness of prosperity forms. But only confession has the merit of great weight, which the force of sorrow by no means separates from the truth of rectitude, which adversity the witness of the heart sharpens even to the judgment of the voice. Therefore it is no wonder that Bildad praises divine justice, who tolerates nothing of adversity from the same justice.

60. The insanity of heretics against the Church pressed by adversities.---But because we have said that the friends of blessed Job hold the type of heretics, it is pleasing that we should show in a few things how the words of Bildad agree with the subreptions of heretics. For these while they behold the holy Church to be seized by temporal animadversion in themselves, more audaciously swell into the boasting of perverse preaching; and pretending the rectitude of the heavenly examination, they assert themselves to prosper from merits, but they attest her to be afflicted by worthy retributions, and with flattering words they immediately seek an entrance of subreption among sorrows, and they strike the life of others, the deaths of others being reproached, as if those

were already justly dead who would not believe worthy things concerning God. Whence Bildad the Shuhite, after he brought forth divine justice, adds there:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERSES 4, 5, 6.---If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression; if thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty; if thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

61. They had reproached the cutting off of peoples from the Church as an argument of error.--- As if the preachers of errors should say to afflicted Catholics: Provide for your lives, and know how perverse things you hold, from the damnation of those who have died among you, because unless your perfidy displeased the Creator of all, He would by no means take away from you so numerous peoples by raging destruction. For he says: If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression. As if saying openly: They are left in the hand of their own iniquity, who would not imitate the life of our rectitude. If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes (diluculo), and make thy supplication to the Almighty. For because heretics think themselves to hold the light of truth, they call the holy Church as if placed in the night of error, to the dawn (diluculum) of truth, so that both through the knowledge of God, she may rise as

if through the dawn, and through the prayer of penitence she may wash away past things. If thou wert pure (mundus) and upright (rectus). Pure namely in thought, upright in work. Surely now he would awake for thee. As if he should say openly: Because He who now does not put forth the virtue of His protection in thy tribulations, sleeps as it were from the help of one erring. And he would make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. That is, He removes the contrarieties of the present life, and immediately affords the security of tranquility. For because all perverse persons estimate temporal joy as the singular good of divine remuneration, those things which they themselves anxiously go about, these they promise to others for a great thing. Whence for the most part it happens, that either they promise lost things to be recovered, or they extend the minds of their hearers to yet greater rewards of the present life. Which Bildad patently expresses, when he immediately adds:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VERSE 7.---Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.

62. What they promise to their followers.---But if he calls the council of the mind the habitation of justice, the masters of errors promise a pacified habitation of justice to afflicted Catholics, because if they draw them to their own things, truly they are silent from contention. For those who could be drawn to perverse things, are now by so much more tranquilly quiet in

temporal peace, by how much further they are separated from the eternal. They also promise the riches of intelligence to increase to those following them. Whence also it is added: Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. But because their words are not easily believed, since often their life is demonstrated contemptible, they bring forth the sentences of the ancient fathers, and they bend their rectitude into an argument of their own error. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Rec. XXIII]

VERSE 8. For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers.

63. They abuse the authority of the ancient fathers.---They admonish the former age and the memory of the fathers by no means to be seen, but to be investigated: because they do not wish that to be beheld in it, which is clearly open to all. But sometimes, after the manner of the good, they teach certain things morally, and they insinuate in what manner present things are gathered from past things, and from those things which have already been taken away from our eyes by passing through, they demonstrate how null are those things which are seen. Whence also it is yet added:

VERSE 9. (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow.)

64. Those things which are already past teach us how quickly the rest are about to pass away.---Therefore the former generation is proposed to be interrogated, that the time of the present life may be shown to pass like a shadow; because namely if we reduce to memory those things which were, and are already past, we patently acknowledge how quickly this also which we hold flees. But often heretics praise the same fathers with us whom we venerate, but with a depraved intellect, they impugn us with those very praises of them. Whence also it is yet added:

CHAPTER XLI.

VERSE 10. Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

65. The wicked sometimes bring forth good things, but not well. They then strike themselves with their own sword.---It is to be noted that above he had said: The spirit of the speech of thy mouth is multiple; but now, the fathers being reduced to memory, he says: They will bring forth eloquences from their heart. As if heretics detesting the life of the holy Church, should say: Thou hast multiplicity of spirit in the mouth, thou hast it not in the heart. But those are to be heard against thee, who bringing forth words from the heart, taught right things by living.

But often the wicked, while they are ignorant of the vice of their own strength, boldly lacerate

the rectitude of others; and when they snatch to themselves the authority of rebuke against the good, they either bring forth those goods which they have learned not by seeing, but by hearing; or they heap upon others those evils, lying, which they themselves commit. But when they bring forth those goods which they despise to keep, it is to be known that for the most part truth so sounds through the mouths of adversaries, that moving their tongue it strikes their life, so that speaking and being ignorant of the summit of rectitude, they themselves should become both judges by words, and accusers by deeds. Whence Bildad adds wonderful things indeed against hypocrites, but he assails himself with the sword of the word, because unless he were a simulator of justice even from a little, he would by no means presume to teach a just man with such great temerity.

And indeed what he says are very strong; but these he ought to have said to the foolish, and not to the wise, to the wicked, and not to the upright, because he also asserts himself senseless who, while gardens are thirsty, pours water into the river. But meanwhile postponing to whom it is said, let us think subtly what is said, so that the things brought forth may instruct us, although they impugn the merit of their author. It follows:

VERSE 11. Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?

To whom Bildad compares the rush (scirpum), or the flag (carectum), he himself immediately opens when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERSES 12, 13. Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish.

66. The hypocrite has the appearance of good works, not the fruit. He has the gifts of God for the increase of damnation.---Therefore by the name of the rush or the flag he marks the life of the hypocrite, which indeed has the appearance of greenness, but has not the fruit of utility for human uses; which, remaining arid in the sterility of work, grows green by the color of sanctity alone. But neither does the rush profit without mire, nor the flag without water, because the life of hypocrites perceives indeed the infusion of the heavenly gift for good works, but, seeking exterior praises in all things which it acts, it becomes empty from the fruit of the perceived infusion.

For often they perform wonderful works of signs, they drive away spirits from obsessed bodies, and through the gift of prophecy they anticipate by knowing whatever things are about to come, but yet they are divided from the giver of so many gifts by the intention of thought, because through His gifts they seek not His glory, but their own favors; and when through the received goods they lift themselves up in their own praise, they fight with those very gifts against the giver. For from thence indeed they are proud against the giver, from whence they ought to have been more humble to Him.

But a more strict sentence strikes them afterwards by so much the more, by how much more largely heavenly goodness now pours into even the ungrateful. And the amplitude of the gift becomes to them an increase of damnation, because being irrigated they bear not fruit, but under the color of greenness they grow into the height empty. Whom the Truth well expresses through the Gospel, saying: Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matt. 7:22-23). Therefore the rush or the flag does not live without water, because truly hypocrites do not receive the greenness of good operation except from the heavenly gift; but because they snatch this into the use of their own praise, they grow indeed green in the water, but yet empty.

68. The hypocrite does not persevere in good works.

Among these things it is to be known that the goods of the righteous, because they begin from the heart, grow even to the term of the present life; but the works of hypocrites, because they are by no means rooted in secret, often fail before the present life is finished. For for the most part they insist on the study of sacred erudition; and because they seek this not for preparing merits, but for deserving favors, immediately as they snatch the judgment of human praise, and through this attain the grace of transitory progress, they

serve secular cares with their whole mind, and are thoroughly emptied of sacred erudition; and by acting afterwards they indicate how much they love temporal things, who alone previously preached eternal things. But for the most part they show the appearance of an assumed maturity; they are adorned with the quiet of silence, the long-suffering of patience, the virtue of continence; but when through these they have reached the summit of sought honor, and when reverence is now paid to them by all, they immediately pour themselves out into the lewdness of pleasure, and they themselves are witnesses to themselves that they did not hold good things from the heart, who quickly dismissed these. But sometimes some give what they possess, and bestow all things on the indigent; but yet before the term of life, being kindled with the itch of avarice, they seek the things of others, who seemed to bestow their own, and afterwards they go about with pertinacious cruelty for what they previously left with feigned piety. [Vet. XXVIII.] Whence also it is rightly said now: While it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. For according to the flesh even the righteous are an herb, the Prophet attesting, who says: All flesh is grass (Isai. 40:6). But the rush is said to wither before all other herbs, because, the righteous remaining in their good, the life of hypocrites is dried up from the greenness of assumed rectitude. The other herbs also wither, because the works of the righteous fail with the life of the flesh. But the rush antici-

pates the aridity of the herbs, because before the hypocrite passes from the flesh, he leaves the deeds of virtues which he had shown in himself. Of whom it is well said also through the Psalmist: Let them be as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it be plucked up (Psal. 129:6). For the grass of the building is born on high, but it is by no means solidified with a fat root, because the hypocrite also is discerned to act high things indeed, but is not strengthened in them from the purity of the heart. Which truly grass even not plucked up withers more quickly, because forsooth the hypocrite both still subsists in the present life, and already loses the works of sanctity as the appearance of greenness. For because he studied to act good things without the intention of right thought, losing these, he indicates that he has flourished without a root.

69. The hypocrite cannot enjoy his hope for long.

But Bildad, as we have said before, to whom he compares the rush or the flag, immediately opens when he subjoins: So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish. For what does the hypocrite hope for by all his works, except the reverence of honor, the glory of praise, to be feared by the better sort, to be called holy by all? But the hope of the hypocrite cannot remain, because, not seeking eternity, he flees what he holds. For by no means is the intention of his mind fixed on that glory which is possessed without end, but when he gapes after transitory favors, he loses in receiving

it what he labors for, the Truth attesting, who says: Verily I say unto you, They have their reward (Matt. 6:2, 5). But this hope of receiving a reward cannot be held long, because honor is bestowed for showed works, but life is urged to the term; praises resound, but times hasten to the end with the praises; and because by no means is the mind rooted in the love of eternity, it surely falls with those very things which it loves. For no one is able to love movable things and stand himself immovable. For he who embraces passing things is by that very thing led to the course, by which he is implicated with the running things. Let him say therefore: And the hypocrite's hope shall perish, because human praise which he seeks with great labors runs down, impelled by the moments of times. Well moreover is it subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 14. His senselessness shall not please him.

70. The hypocrite sells a thing of great price for a vile one. He is similar to a fertile and neglected vine.---For it is a great senselessness to act laborious things, and to gape after the breeze of praise; to serve heavenly precepts with strong work, but to seek the reward of earthly retribution. For so to speak, he who desires human favors for the virtue which he acts, carries a thing of great merit for sale at a vile price; whence he could have merited the kingdom of heaven, from thence he seeks

the coin of transitory speech. Therefore he sells the work at a vile price, because he spends great things, but receives very small things. [Vet. XXIX.] To whom therefore are hypocrites similar, except to fertile and neglected vines, which bring forth fruit through abundance, but are by no means raised from the earth through study? What the fat shoots germinate, the wandering beasts trample; and by how much more richly they behold this, being cast down in the lowest parts they consume it more greedily, because truly the works of hypocrites, while they are shown clear, come forth as if fat, but while they seek human praises they are as if left on the earth. Which the beasts of this world, namely the malignant spirits, eat, because they bend these to the use of perdition; and they snatch them so much more ardently, by how much also the great things become more clearly known. Whence it is well said through the prophet: The standing stalk, there is no bud in them, and they shall make no meal; if so be they yield it, the strangers shall swallow it up (Hosea 8:7). For the stalk has no bud when life lacks the merits of virtues. The stalk makes no meal when he who profits in the present world understands nothing of subtlety, renders no fruit of good work.

71. The hypocrite satiates malignant spirits with his fruits. He himself is also fed now, otherwise after death.---But often even when he has made it, strangers eat this, because also when hypocrites show good works, the vows of malignant spirits are satiated by these. For they who

through these do not seek to please God, by no means feed the lord of the field, but strangers. Therefore the hypocrite, similar to a fertile and neglected shoot, is not able to keep the fruit, because the cluster of good work lies on the earth. But yet he is fed by this very senselessness of his, because for a good work he is honored by all; he pre-eminently stands above others, he holds the subject minds of men, he is lifted up in greater places, he is nourished by favors. But these things his senselessness pleases him meanwhile, but it will not please him, because when the time of retribution shall have come, that which was senseless displeases in punishment. Then he will understand that he has acted foolishly, when for the delectation of praise he shall have received the sentence of divine rebuke. Then he considers that he has been senseless, when perpetual torments chastise him for the temporal glory which he perceived. Then punishments open true knowledge, because through these surely it is gathered that all things were nothing which were able to pass away. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIV

[Rec. XXVI].

IBID.---And his trust is as a spider's web.

72. The hypocrite's trust is vain, no goods before God, unfruitful preaching, empty abstinence.---Well is the trust of hypocrites said to be similar to spiders' webs, because the wind

of mortal life dissipates everything which they sweat out for obtaining glory. For since they do not seek eternal things, they lose temporal goods with time. It is also to be thought that spiders lead their threads by order, because hypocrites dispose their works as if under discretion. The spider's web is studiously woven, but is dissipated by a sudden blast, because whatever the hypocrite performs with labor, the breeze of human favor takes away; and while the work fails in the appetite for praise, the labor vanishes as if into the wind. For often the deeds of hypocrites endure even to the term of the present life, but because through these they do not seek the praise of the author, they were never good before the eyes of God. For for the most part, as we have said before, they are supported by the erudition of the sacred law, they bring forth the words of doctrine, they gird everything which they feel with testimonies, and yet through these they seek not the life of the hearers, but their own favors, because they have not known how to bring forth other things, except those which may shake the hearts of the hearers to repaying praises, but not kindle them to tears. [Vet. XXX.] For the mind occupied with exterior concupiscences does not grow warm with the fire of divine love; and therefore those words which are brought forth with a cold heart are unable to inflame their hearers to heavenly desire. For neither does a thing which has not burned in itself kindle another. Whence it happens for the most part that the sayings of hypocrites both do not instruct the hearers, and

they render those same ones who bring themselves forth worse, being elated with praises. For Paul attesting, Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth (1 Cor. 8:1). Therefore when charity does not erect by edifying, knowledge perverts by puffing up. For the most part hypocrites afflict themselves with wonderful abstinence, they wear down all the strength of the body, and living in the flesh they as if thoroughly extinguish the life of the flesh, and so through abstinence they approach death, that dying they live almost daily. But for these they seek human eyes, they expect the glory of admiration, the Truth attesting, who says: They disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast (Matt. 6:16). For their faces grow pale, the body is shaken with debility, the breast is urged with interrupting sighs. But among these, the speech of admiration is sought from the mouth of neighbors, and nothing else is thought by such great labor, except human estimation. Whom truly that Simon well signifies, who at the time of the Lord's passion carried the cross in compulsion (angaria), of whom it is written: They found a man of Cyrene, coming to meet them, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21). For what we act through compulsion, this we do not perform from the study of love. Therefore to carry the cross of Jesus in compulsion is to tolerate the affliction of abstinence for another intention than is necessary. Or does he not carry the cross of Jesus in compulsion, who as if at the precept of the Lord, tames the flesh, but yet loves not the

spiritual country? Whence also that same Simon carries the cross, but by no means dies, because every hypocrite afflicts the body indeed through abstinence, but yet through the love of glory lives to the world.

[Vet. XXXI.] 73. He inflicts the cross on the flesh, but lives to the world.---On the contrary, it is well said through Paul concerning the elect: And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. For we crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, if we so restrain gluttony, that we now seek nothing of the world's glory. For he who macerates the body, but pants after honors, has inflicted the cross on the flesh, but through concupiscence lives worse to the world, because also often through the image of sanctity the unworthy one attains a place of rule, which, unless he showed something of virtue in himself, he would merit to perceive by no labor. But what he obtains delectably passes away, and what follows remains penally. Trust of sanctity is now placed in the mouths of men; but when the internal judge examines the secrets of the heart, witnesses of life are not sought exteriorly. Well therefore is it said: As the spider's web is his trust, because when the witness of the heart appears, everything passes away which trusts exteriorly in human favor. Whence also it is still aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLV

[Rec. XXVII].

VERSE 15. He shall lean upon his house, and it shall not stand; he shall prop it up, and it shall not rise.

74. The house of the hypocrite upon which he leans is human favor. It is not able to stand.---As the house of exterior conversation is the building which the body inhabits, so the house of our thought is any thing whatever which the mind inhabits through love. For every thing which we love, we inhabit as if resting in this. Whence Paul, because he had fixed his heart in the things above, placed indeed on the earth, but yet a stranger from the earth, said: Our conversation is in heaven (Philip. 3:20). Therefore the mind of the hypocrite thinks of nothing else in every thing which it acts except the glory of its own opinion, nor does it care where it is led afterwards through merit, but what may be said meanwhile. His house therefore is the delectation of favor, which he inhabits as if quiet, because through all his works he reclines himself to this within his mind. But this house is not able to stand, because praise passes away with life, and human favor does not subsist in the judgment. Whence also the foolish virgins, who had not taken oil in their vessels, because forsooth they had glory in the voices of others and not in their own consciences, being troubled by the presence of the bridegroom, say: Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out (Matt. 25:8). For to ask oil from neighbors is to implore the glory of good work from the testimony of another's mouth. For the empty mind, when by all its labors it shall have

found that it has held nothing within, seeks testimony without. As if the foolish virgins should say openly: When you behold us rejected without retribution, say what you have seen in our work.

[Vet. XXXII.] 75. Nor will the trust of the hypocrite's sanctity stand any more in the judgment.---But in vain then does the hypocrite lean upon this house of praise, because human attestation supports him nothing in the judgment; because he received that same praise as a gift before, which he afterwards exacts in testimony. Or surely the hypocrite leans upon his house, when, deceived by vain favors, he is lifted up as if from the trust of sanctity. For many hypocrites do evil things in secret, but certain good things in public. And when they receive praises from manifest goods, they turn away the eyes of consideration from occult evils; and they estimate themselves such as they hear without, not such as they have known within. Whence it happens for the most part that they come with trust also to the heavenly judgment, because they believe themselves to be such before the internal arbiter as they were held by men without. But the house of the hypocrite is not able to stand, because in the terror of the strict examination all previous trust of sanctity falls. And when he shall have known the testimonies of another's mouth to be wanting to him, he turns himself to enumerating his own works. Whence also it is still subjoined: He shall prop it up, and it shall not rise. For this, which is not able to stand by itself, is propped up that it may stand, because when the hypocrite

beholds his life to be shaken in the judgment, he contends to establish this by propping it up with an enumeration of works. Or do they not prop up the habitation of their praise on this side and that, who enumerating their deeds in the judgment, as we have mentioned before, say: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (Matt. 7:22). But the house of praise propped up by so many allegations by no means rises up, because immediately the judge says: I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Ibid. 23). And it is to be known that this which rises erects itself from the lowest to the higher things. Therefore the house of the hypocrite is not able to rise, because by everything which he was able to act according to the heavenly precepts, he never lifted his mind from the earth. Rightly therefore then is he by no means erected to the reward of retribution, who by this which he now exhibits lies in the appetite for temporal glory. [Vet. XXXIII, Rec. XXVIII.] But because we have heard how the life of the hypocrite, marked by the appellation of the rush, is reprobated in the judgment, before the strict judge appears, let us hear what sort he is held to be by men. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVI.

VERSE 16. He seemeth moist before the sun cometh.

76. Now the hypocrite is believed holy, but when Christ cometh he will appear iniquitous.---

Often in sacred eloquence the Lord is figured by the appellation of the sun, as it is said through the prophet: But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise (Mal. 4:2). And as the impious rejected in the judgment are described to say in the book of Wisdom: We have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us (Wisd. 5:6). Before the sun, therefore, the rush is discerned moist, because before the divine strictness shines forth in the judgment, every hypocrite shows himself infused with the grace of sanctity; he is beheld as if green, because he is estimated just, he obtains a place of honor, he prevails by the glory of sanctity, veneration is paid to him by all, the opinion of praise is extended. Therefore this rush is moist in the night; but when the sun cometh it is dried up, because truly the hypocrite in the darkness of the present life is believed holy by all, but when the strict judge shall have come, it will appear how iniquitous he is. Let him say therefore: He seemeth moist before the sun cometh, because he now exhibits himself green to human eyes, but then in the heat of divine judgment he will wither. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVII.

IBID.---And in his rising his bud goeth forth.

77. As soon as he acts rightly, the hypocrite wants to be praised. Having assumed the habit of sanctity, sometimes he becomes worse.---Any herb in being born is first produced from the

earth, is touched by the breeze and heats, is nourished by sun and rains, and then at last is opened to bringing forth the bud of its seed. But the rush is born with its flower, and soon as it rises from the earth, it produces the bud of its seed with itself. Well therefore by the other herbs any saints, but by the rush the hypocrite is designated, because just men, before they rise in the work of holy conversation, tolerate the winter of this life, and the heats of heavy persecutions fatigue them; but when they do right things, they by no means seek the reward of their rectitude here; but when they depart from the labors of the present world, coming to the eternal country, they enjoy the expected retribution. But on the contrary the hypocrite, because he is soon born in good work, endeavors to receive the glory of the present world. As if after the manner of the rush he rises with a bud, who for that which he begins to live well, seeks immediately to be honored by all. Therefore the bud in the rising is the reward in the beginning. For often some desert the ways of open depravity, assume the habit of sanctity; and as soon as they have touched the first thresholds of living well, forgetting who they were, they are no longer willing to be afflicted through penitence for finished iniquities; but they desire to be praised for begun justice, they covet to be over others even better ones. Whom for the most part while present prosperity follows according to their vow, they become much worse than they had been before from the habit of sanctity. For occupied with manifold things, and confused by

that very occupation, they not only by no means deplore things committed, but even exaggerate things which should be deplored.

[Vet. XXXIX. Rec. XXIV.] 78. A recent convert should not be promoted to exterior offices. Our goods perish if too quickly disclosed.---For they who desert the world ought not to be promoted to exterior offices, unless they are solidified for a long time through humility in the contempt of that same world. For those goods perish more quickly which become known to men before the time, because also shrubs planted before they coalesce with a fixed root, if a hand touching shakes them, it dries them up. But if the root is fixed in the depth, and solidified being sprinkled with the humors of the earth, this both the hand pushes, but does not hurt; these also the blasts of winds shake by bending, but do not overturn. Lest therefore the life of the begun work be rooted out, for a long time and robustly the root of the heart is to be fixed in the depth of humility, so that when the breeze of detraction or of favor shall have blown from a human mouth, although it curves it in any direction whatever, it may not root out the mind thoroughly; but it may return to its state immediately after the inflection, if it remains strong in its root within itself. What is more robust in growing things than a rising wall? Which yet if, while it is being constructed, it be pushed, it is immediately destroyed without labor; but if through a space of time it is permitted to be dried from its humor, often it is by no means shaken even by the blows of bat-

tering rams. Thus, thus forsooth our goods both perish when manifested unseasonably, and are solidified when hidden longer, because when the hand of human occupation shall have touched the beginning life of our conversation, it pushes as it were a recent wall, and easily destroys it, because it has not yet lost the humor of its own infirmity. But when the mind compresses itself in the long abjection of its quiet, it hardens as it were after the manner of a dried wall against blows, and everything which strikes a solid thing immediately leaps back broken. Hence it is that Moses prohibited the life of those beginning from being exercised in human occupations, saying: Thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep (Deut. 15:19). For to work with the firstling of a bullock is to show the beginnings of good conversation in the exercise of public action. Also to shear the firstlings of sheep is to denude our beginning goods from the covering of their occultation to human eyes. Therefore we are prohibited from working with the firstling of a bullock, and we are restrained from shearing the firstlings of sheep, because even if we begin anything robust, we ought not to exercise this in the open too quickly. And when our life begins something simple and innocent, it is worthy that it should not leave the veils of its secret, lest it show this naked to human eyes as if with the fleece withdrawn.

[Vet. XXXV.] 79. The beginnings of a good life are to be dedicated to God alone. Why they ought not to become known too quickly.---Therefore

let the firstlings of oxen and sheep profit for divine sacrifices alone, so that whatever strong and innocent we begin, we may immolate this to the honor of the intimate judge on the altar of the heart. Which is without doubt so much more willingly accepted by Him, by how much also being hidden from men it is spotted by no appetite for praise. But often the beginnings of a new conversation are as yet mixed from the carnal life; and therefore they ought not to become known too quickly, lest when the goods which please are praised, the mind deceived by its own praise should be unable to detect in them the evils which lie hid. Whence it is rightly said again through Moses: When ye shall come into the land which I shall give you, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised. Three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of (Lev. 19:23). For the trees for food are works fertile with virtues. Therefore we take away the foreskins of the trees when, being suspicious of that very infirmity of the beginning, we do not approve the firstlings of our works. But the fruits which germinate we lead as unclean, and we do not fit them for our eating, because when the firstlings of a good work are praised, it is worthy that this should not feed the mind of the worker; lest while the received praise is sweetly plucked, the fruit of the work should be eaten unseasonably. Therefore he who shall have received praise from a human mouth for begun

virtue, has as it were eaten the fruit of a planted tree before the time.

80. The hypocrite seeks witnesses of his work; if they are not present, he thinks he has lost his labor.---Hence through the Psalmist the Truth says: It is vain for you to rise up early, sit down after you have rested (Psal. 127:2). For to rise up before the light is to rejoice in the night of the present life before the clarity of eternal retribution appears. Therefore we must first sit down, that afterwards we may rightly rise, because whoever does not now spontaneously humble himself, by no means does the following glory exalt him. Therefore what is there to rise up before the light, this here is for the hypocrite to bring forth a bud in his rising, because desiring human praises, where he is born to a good work, there he soon desires to attain the glory of retribution. Had they not brought forth a bud in their rising, of whom the Truth said: They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi (Luke 20:46; Matt. 23:6)? For that which they begin to act well, because they endeavor to follow honor from men, they rise up after the manner of the rush from their rising with a bud. These truly when they desire to work right things, first with a solicitous mind seek witnesses of that same work of theirs, and handle with silent thought whether there are those who may see the things to be done, whether those who shall have seen them are able worthily to speak of these. But if it should perhaps happen that

no man beholds their deeds, they without doubt estimate that they have lost these; and they repute the eyes of the internal arbiter as if absent, because they refuse to receive from Him the turn of their work in the future. And since when the hypocrite has done anything right, he seeks to be seen by many, it is well subjoined still concerning this rush:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERSE 17. His roots shall be thickened upon a heap of stones, and he shall dwell among stones.

81. The hypocrite procures the admiration of men for himself with all his intention.---For what do we receive by the name of roots, except hidden thoughts, which come forth in secret, but rise through the open in the showing of works? as also concerning the seed of the word it is said through the prophet: And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward (Isai. 37:31). For to take root downward is to multiply good thought in hidden places. But to bear fruit upward is to show the right things which he has thought through the efficacy of work. But by the name of stones men are designated in sacred Scripture, as it is said to the holy Church through Isaiah: I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles (Isai. 54:12). Who opened what he had meant by those same stones when he subjoined: And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord (Ibid., 13). And as it is said by the admonition of Peter: Ye also, as lively stones, are

built up a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5). In this place therefore because stones are mentioned, but yet they are by no means called living, by the naked appellation of stones the reprobate and elect mixed together can be figured. [Vet. XXXVI, Rec. XXX.] Therefore this rush which dwells among stones, thickens its roots upon a heap of stones, because every hypocrite multiplies his thoughts in searching out the admiration of men. For by everything which hypocrites do, because by hidden thoughts they seek the praises of men, they as it were send the roots of the rush into a heap of stones. For about to work they think of their own praises, but being praised they revolve these with themselves silent in their thoughts. They rejoice that they have shone forth pre-eminent in human estimation. And when being puffed up with favors they swell within themselves, often they themselves even silent wonder at what they are. They desire to seem daily higher than themselves, and they grow up in work with wonderful inventions, because as virtues enervate every vice, so arrogance strengthens. For it compels the mind to grow young again, and to prevail against strength, because also what the vigor of health denies, the love of praise commands. Whence also for their deeds, as we have said, they seek arbiters. But if it should happen that witnesses are wanting to their work, they themselves relate what they have performed. And when they have begun to be carried away by favors, they often add something by lying to those same works of theirs which they report they have done. But

when they also speak true things, they make these alien by speaking them, because being rewarded with sought favors, they are emptied of their internal retribution.

VERSE 18.---If he should pluck him out of his place, his place shall deny him, and shall say: I know thee not.

82. By the place of the hypocrite, this world in which he is seen is understood; in which since he now does good works, the place seems to acknowledge him, because as he is himself, so also is the place in which he is, that is, as the hypocrite wishes to be what he is not, so his place seems to be what it is not. For the hypocrite wishes to be holy in heart, but is so in showing; therefore his place where he is called holy is that which he himself is not. But when death shall have plucked him out of his place, soon that same place denies him whom it had held. Whence also is subjoined:

VERSE 19.---For this is the joy of his way, that others may germinate again from the earth.

83. The place denies the hypocrite, because death separates him from all the brightness of the world. And because he who had lived under the appearance of religion is punished in Gehenna after death, the place is said not to have known him, because that which soon appeared as a friend to the hypocrite, soon through his damnation is shown to be an enemy. For the place has not known him who loved his place only for this purpose, that in it he might have been able to be seen as holy. Whence as soon as he is plucked out of his place, that same place denies him whom

it had held, because as soon as he who is called great in this world dies, it appears to all that they rejoice in his death, or soon his works and name are deleted by oblivion in this world. But he who is now a hypocrite, as soon as he shall have been snatched from the earth, others germinate. For the place of the earth also brings forth other hypocrites into this world soon after him. Who while they fear nothing concerning those who were before them, as they also seem to germinate in the earth, so again like those they are plucked up by the roots from the same earth. What is said of his place, I know thee not, can not absurdly be understood also concerning the recollection of that same hypocrite. Who while he shall be in torments after death, and shall have returned to the memory of the present world, finds nothing in it for his salvation. For he himself then says to himself: I know thee not, because his place where he was will not now profit him, because that which he had been in the world will not then save him. Whence also is subjoined:

VERSE 20.---God will not cast away the simple, nor will He reach out His hand to the evil.

84. The sense indeed of him who now involves himself in manifold inquiries for human praise, as soon as he shall have been plucked out of his place, is not cast away, because God does not cast away the simple. For he is simple who is what he seems to be; who by no means doubles himself in this world through hypocrisy, but he who is in heart, is in showing. But this one whom God casts away, and will not reach out His hand to the evil,

is he who doubles himself. For he who doubles himself in this world through hypocrisy, as soon as he shall have been plucked out of his place, God will not reach out His hand to him, because he who in this world sought the praises of men, as soon as he who praised him shall have been snatched from the world, receives not the hand from the Lord.

VERSE 21.---Until thy mouth be filled with laughter, and thy lips with rejoicing.

85. If God does not cast away the simple, nor will He reach out His hand to the evil, as soon as he who is simple shall have been plucked out from the tribulation of his place, he is led to joy; because his mouth is filled with laughter, and his lips with rejoicing. For when after the hardships of this life, which he shall have simply tolerated for the sole love of his Creator, he shall have been snatched away to that country of eternity, then in him all that exists is filled with laughter and rejoicing, because he who then is silent, no longer prays for himself then, but he who already possesses, rejoices in praises. Whence also is subjoined:

VERSE 22.---They that hate thee shall be clothed with confusion, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall not stand.

86. For the hypocrite hates the simple man, because while he who wishes to be seen as holy beholds him who is truly holy, he sees as it were one contrary to his own simulation. For while he who is simple dwells in the tribulation of his place, the hypocrite glories in the glory of his

place. But when the simple man is led to laughter and rejoicing, the hypocrite, who then soon in this world seemed to have existed as a friend to him, soon through his damnation is shown to be an enemy. For then they that hated him shall be clothed with confusion, because they who in this world were in the glory of the world, in that eternity again they blush. For then the tabernacle of the wicked shall not stand, because as soon as he who is called great in this world dies, it appears to all that they rejoice in his death, or soon his works and name are deleted by oblivion in this world. Since therefore this speech of Bildad designates hypocrites through the hypocrite, it is not absurdly said: The tabernacle of the wicked shall not stand. For as soon as he who was wicked shall have been snatched from the earth, others germinate. Who while they fear nothing concerning those who were before them, as they also seem to germinate in the earth, so again like those they are plucked up by the roots from the same earth.

BOOK NINE.

In which the ninth part of the book of Job, from the beginning of the ninth chapter to the end of the eleventh chapter, is explained.

CHAPTER I.

How it can be that a man compared to God is not justified.

VERSE 2.---I know indeed that it is so, and that man may not be justified compared with God.

1. Blessed Job, when he turned himself to Bildad, who was speaking under the appearance of a hypocrite, soon deflected his words to a good sense, because holy men collect fruit even from the sayings of the wicked, and they turn their words to utility then, when they are not ignorant that their mind is perverse concerning those same words which they have brought forth. For Bildad, when he said: God will not cast away the simple, nor will He reach out His hand to the evil, soon turned those words which he said to Job, because as it were he showed the holy man soon plucked out from his place to die, and soon to be cast into Gehenna, soon after his damnation to be shown, soon not to receive the hand from the Lord, soon to be shown through his damnation.

2. In which words blessed Job both captures the truth of the sayings and despises the elation of the speaker. I know indeed, he says, that it is so. As if he were to say openly: I know that God does not cast away the simple, and that He does not reach out His hand to the evil; but this which I know to be true, thou sayest is not so, because he whom thou sayest is not simple, is he who does not deny that he is simple. But this which I know to be true, thou sayest is not so, because he whom thou sayest is not simple, is he who does not deny that he is simple.

If therefore God does not cast away the simple, and I am simple, why am I cast away in this tribulation? If God does not reach out His hand to the evil, and I am evil, why does He not reach out His hand to speak? But if thou knewest what the justice of God is, thou wouldst soon see that he whom thou sayest is not simple, is he who does not deny that he is simple. Since therefore God does not cast away the simple, and I do not deny that I am simple, it remains that he whom thou sayest is not simple, is he who does not deny that he is simple. Whence also is subjoined: And that man may not be justified compared with God.

3. For every man who compares himself to God is soon emptied of the brightness of his own righteousness. For if man be compared to divine justice, all justice in him is soon said to be not justice. But when Bildad himself said: God will not cast away the simple, he soon turned those words which he said to Job, because as it were he showed the holy man soon plucked out from his

place to die, and soon to be cast into Gehenna, soon after his damnation to be shown, soon not to receive the hand from the Lord, soon to be shown through his damnation. What then does Bildad accuse in Job, except divine justice? For when he said: God will not cast away the simple, he soon wished to reprove Job of iniquity, because he was not ignorant that he had been cast away by the Lord. But soon blessed Job turned these words to divine justice, because as it were God does not cast away the simple, but yet he who in the eyes of men seems to be simple, in the eyes of God is soon said to be not simple. For he who in this world seems simple among men, compared to God is soon said to be not justified. Whence also is subjoined:

VERSE 3.---If he should wish to contend with Him, he will not be able to answer Him one for a thousand.

4. For in sacred Scripture, universality is designated by the number a thousand, as it is said by the Psalmist: The word which He commanded to a thousand generations (Psal. 105:8). For there cannot be a thousand generations until the coming of the Lord, in which that same word is said to have been commanded. What therefore is designated by a thousand generations, except the universality of generations?

CHAPTER LIII

[Rec. XXXII].

VERSE 22.---They that hate thee shall be clothed with confusion.

90. Why the reprobate shall blush in the day of judgment.---Confusion clothes the enemies of the just in the final examination, because when they behold their past evils overflowing before the eyes of their mind, their own guilt, depressing them on every side, vests them. For they then endure the memory of their deeds for punishment, who now sin rejoicing as if strangers to the sense of reason. There they see how much they ought to have fled what they loved; there they behold how mournful was that in which they now congratulate themselves in fault. Then guilt obscures the mind, and conscience itself attacks itself with the darts of its own recollection. Who, therefore, can worthily weigh how great the confusion of the iniquitous will then be, when both the eternal Judge is seen without, and fault is turned before the eyes within? Who for this reason arrive at these things, because they loved only transitory things here. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER LIV.

IBID.---And the tabernacle of the impious shall not subsist.

91. What is the affection of the reprobate concerning earthly goods. What that of the just.---A tabernacle is indeed constructed that the body may be defended from heat and cold. What therefore is expressed in this place by the name of tabernacle, except the building up of earthly happiness, through which the reprobate multiply

things about to fall upon themselves, that they may defend themselves from the necessities of the present life as if from heat and rain? For they ambition to increase in honors, lest they seem despised. By aggregating earthly things they heap them up, lest they waste away in the cold of want. They neglect to care for what follows, and with all intention they busy themselves lest anything be wanting in present things. They study to spread their name, lest they be hidden; and if all things are supplied to their desire, they think themselves protected in all things and happy. Where therefore they construct the habitation of their mind, there without doubt they have fixed their tabernacles. They endure adversities impatiently, they rejoice remissly in prosperities. They think only of those things which are present, nor do they breathe again with any recollection to the affection of the heavenly country. They rejoice that the goods which they desire are supplied to them; and where they rest in the flesh, there they also bury their mind by extinguishing it, because, slaughtered by the dart of secular care, they always carry within through thought that heap of earthly things which they multiply by seeking without.

92. [Vet. XL.] But on the contrary, the just neither receive offered goods here as great, nor do they greatly fear inflicted evils. But even when they use present goods, they fear future evils; and when they groan over present evils, they are consoled by the love of following goods. And thus they are refreshed by temporal subsidy, as a trav-

eler uses a bed in an inn: he rests, and hastens to depart; he is quiet in body, but tends to another thing in mind. Sometimes indeed they also desire to endure adversities, and they flee from prospering in transitory things, lest they be delayed from the reaching of the country by the delight of the journey, lest they fix the step of the heart in the way of pilgrimage, and at some time come to the sight of the heavenly country without remuneration. They rejoice to be despised, nor do they grieve to be afflicted by necessities. Those therefore who do not fortify themselves against present adversities, as it were do not wish to have a tabernacle against heat and rains. Whence also Peter is rightly reproved, because not yet strengthened by the perfection of the mind, the brightness of truth being known, he endeavors to fix a tabernacle on earth (Matth. XVII, 4; Mark IX, 2). The just therefore neglect to build themselves here, where they have known themselves to be pilgrims and guests. For because they desire to rejoice in their own things, they refuse to be happy in what is alien. But the unjust, by how much further they are divided from the inheritance of the eternal country, by so much deeper they fix the foundations of thought in the earth. Hence it is that from the very beginning of the human condition, in the elect offspring Enoch is born seventh. Hence it is that Cain calls his first son Enoch, and from his name calls the city which he built (Gen. IV, 17). For Enoch is called dedication. The iniquitous therefore dedicate themselves in the beginnings, because in

this life, which is before, they plant the root of the heart, that they may flourish here according to their wish, and wither away from the following country from the foundation. But to the just Enoch arises seventh, because the festive dedication of their life is reserved in the end. Hence it is that, Paul attesting, Abraham dwells in huts (Hebr. XI, 9), because he expects the city having foundations, which the heavenly architect has built. Hence it is that Jacob, following the flocks of sheep humbly, walks (Gen. XXXIII, 14), and Esau coming to meet him is elevated by the tumult of a manifold company, because indeed the elect here have no elation, and in the goods of the flesh the reprobate swell joyful. Hence the Lord says to Israel: If thou shalt choose one of the people of the land, and shalt appoint a prince over thee, he shall not make for himself horses and horsemen (Deut. XVII, 16). And yet the first king elected from the same people, as soon as he reached the summit of power, chose for himself three thousand horsemen, and immediately broke out into elation, and burst forth into the building up of the summit perceived (1 Kings XIII, 2), because he could not restrain without under equality what the mind within swelled above the rest. As if a fortified tabernacle that rich man had constructed for himself, who said: Soul, thou hast many goods laid up for many years: rest, eat and drink, and feast (Luke XII, 19). But because his tabernacle does not subsist in the foundation of truth, he immediately heard: Fool, this night they require thy soul from thee; those things which

thou hast prepared, whose shall they be (Ibid., 20)? Well therefore is it said: The tabernacle of the impious shall not subsist, because the lovers of a fleeing life, while they studiously build themselves in present things, are suddenly snatched away to eternal things.

BOOK NINE.

EXPLAINS THE NINTH CHAPTER WITH THE WHOLE TENTH.

CHAPTER I.

1. Perverse minds, if they have once broken out into the eagerness of opposition, whether they hear something wrong or right from those who contradict them, impugn it with adverse responses, because when a person is displeasing through opposition, even the right things they have brought forward do not please. But on the contrary, the hearts of the good, in whom the person does not come into hatred, but the fault, so judge perverse things that they assume the right things which are said. For they sit as most just arbiters in discerning the senses of those who contradict, and thus reject things badly brought forward, that they nevertheless approve what they know from the truth. For it is wont among a multitude of thorns, that even an ear of corn should grow up from the seed of the fruit. Therefore it must be done with the cautious hand of the worker, that while the thorn is taken away, the ear of corn may be nourished, in so far as he who studies to eradicate what pricks, may know how

to preserve what refreshes. Whence also blessed Job, because Bildad the Shuhite had rightly said through inquiry: Doth God supplant judgment, or doth the Almighty subvert that which is just (Job VIII, 3)? because he had brought forward true and robust things against hypocrites, well beholding these things brought forward generally even against the wicked, he tramples on the eagerness of his own defense, and immediately approves what he has heard, saying:

CHAPTER II

[Rec. II].

CHAP. IX, VER. 2.---Truly I know that it is so, and that man compared with God is not justified.

2. We ought to be subjected to God, not compared with Him.---For man subjected to God perceives justice, compared with Him he loses it, because whoever compares himself to the Author of goods, deprives himself of the good which he had received. For he who arrogates to himself the goods received, fights with His own gifts against God. Whence therefore he is erected by being despised, it is worthy that being erected he should be destroyed therefrom. But the holy man, because he beholds every merit of our virtue to be fault, if it be strictly judged by the internal Arbiter, rightly subjoins:

CHAPTER III.

If he should wish to contend with Him, he will not be able to answer Him one for a thousand.

3. He loses the gifts of God who is extolled by them.---In sacred Scripture the number a thousand is wont to be understood for universality. For hence the Psalmist says: Of the word which He commanded to a thousand generations (Psal. CIV, 8); since indeed it is certain, that from the very beginning of the world until the coming of the Redeemer, not more than seventy-seven generations are numbered by the Evangelist (Luke III, 38). What therefore is expressed in the number a thousand, except the perfect universality of the foreknown generation for bringing forth a new offspring? Hence also it is said by John: And they shall reign with Him a thousand years (Apoc. XX, 6), because namely the kingdom of holy Church is solidified by the perfection of universality. But because the unit multiplied is led into ten, ten led through itself is dilated into a hundred, which again led through ten tends into a thousand, when we begin from one, that we may come to a thousand, what is designated in this place by the name of one, except the beginning of living well, what by the amplitude of the number a thousand except the perfection of the same good life? But to contend with God is not to attribute to Him, but to arrogate to oneself the glory of one's own virtue. But let the holy man behold that even he who has already received the highest gifts, if he be extolled by those received, loses all things which he had received, and let him say: If he should wish to contend with Him,

he will not be able to answer Him one for a thousand. For he who contends with the Author, does not suffice to answer one for a thousand, because he who erects himself from perfection, shows himself to have not even the beginning of living well. For we cannot answer one for a thousand, because when we are extolled by the perfection of a good life, we show that we have not even begun it. But then we are more truly shaken by our infirmity, if we weigh considering how immense is the power of the Judge. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER IV

[Vet. II].

VERSE 4.---He is wise in heart, and strong in strength.

4. God as wise cannot be deceived, as strong cannot be avoided.---What wonder if we call the Founder of the wise, wise, whom we know to be wisdom itself? And what wonder that he records Him to be strong, whom no one is ignorant that He is this very strength? But the holy man, in two words brought forward in praise of the Author, intimates something to us, whence he may bring us back trembling to the knowledge of ourselves. For God is said to be wise, because He subtly acknowledges our hidden things; and that He is strong is added, because He powerfully strikes things known. Therefore He cannot be deceived by us, because He is wise; nor avoided, because He is strong. Now as wise He beholds all things

invisible, then as strong He punishes without any obstacle those whom He reprobates. Who also here ordains this with strong wisdom, that the human mind when it elevates itself against the Author, it may confound itself by its own elation. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER V.

IBID.---Who hath resisted Him, and hath had peace?

5. He who resists God, falls from peace. What it is to resist God.---For He who creates all things wonderfully, Himself ordains that created things should agree with Himself. In that therefore in which the Creator is resisted, the agreement of peace is dissipated, because things cannot be ordained, which lose the disposition of the heavenly governance. For those things which, subjected to God, would persist in tranquillity, being left to themselves confound themselves, because they do not find peace in themselves, whom they contradict in the Author when He comes from above. Thus that highest angelic spirit, who subjected to God could have stood at the summit, suffers himself being repulsed, because he wanders without through the restlessness of his nature. Thus the first parent of the human race, because he resisted the precept of the Author, immediately felt the insult of the flesh; and because he would not be under the Founder through obedience, prostrated under himself, he also immediately lost the peace of the body. Well therefore is it said: Who hath resisted

Him, and hath had peace? because the perverse mind, whence it elevates itself against the Author, thence it confounds itself in itself. But we are said to resist God, when we endeavor to fight against His dispositions. For neither does our infirmity meet His unchangeable sentence, but yet it attempts what it is not able to fulfill. For often human infirmity secretly acknowledges the force of the disposition, and yet desires this if it may be able to change it. It busies itself to go against it, but it breaks itself with the very sword of contradiction. It resists the internal order, but being conquered by its own endeavors it is bound. Therefore he who resists cannot have peace, because while confusion follows pride, what is foolishly done through fault, this is wonderfully ordained for the punishment of the agent. But the holy man, full of the virtue of the prophetic spirit, when he beholds generally the confusion of human pride, immediately tends the eyes of his mind to the special evil of the Israelitish people, and shows from the destruction of one nation what punishment awaits all the elated. For he immediately subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER VI.

VERSE 5.---Who removed mountains, and they knew not: whom He overthrew in His wrath.

6. The preaching of the word of God is foretold to be transferred from the Jews to the Gentiles.---In sacred Scripture the height of preachers is often signed by the name of mountains, of whom it is said by the Psalmist: Let the mountains

receive peace for thy people (Psal. LXXI, 3). For the elect preachers of the eternal country are not undeservedly called mountains, because through the loftiness of their life they desert the lowest parts of the earth, and become near to heaven. But Truth removed the mountains, when He withdrew the holy preachers from the obduracy of Judea. Whence also it is rightly said by the Psalmist: The mountains shall be transferred into the heart of the sea (Psal. XLV, 3). For the mountains were transferred into the heart of the sea when the preaching Apostles, being repulsed from the perfidy of Judea, came to the understanding of the Gentiles. Whence they also say in their Acts: It behoved us first to speak to you the word of God; but because you reject it, and have judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles (Acts XIII, 46). But this same removal of the mountains those very ones knew not, who were overthrown in the wrath of the Lord, because when the Hebrews drove the Apostles from their borders, they thought they had made a gain, that they lost the light of preaching. For their merits requiring it, being struck by just animadversion, they were blinded by so great an error of understanding, that what light they lost, they thought this to be joy. But the Apostles being repulsed, Judea is immediately destroyed by the Roman prince Titus, and being scattered among all nations is dissipated. Whence also to the mountains being removed it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER VII

[Vet. III].

VERS. 6.---Who shakes the earth out of its place, and the pillars thereof shall be shaken.

291 7. The dispersion of the Jews is foretold.---For the earth was shaken out of its place when the Israelite people, plucked from the borders of Judea, indeed subjected their necks to the nations, because they refused to be subjected to their Author. Which earth, to be sure, had pillars, because upon the priests and princes, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees, the structure of its falling stubbornness arose. For in them the building of the letter held firm, and in the time of its tranquility, it bore the burdens of carnal sacrifices as if of a superimposed fabric. But when the mountains were moved, the pillars were shaken, because the Apostles having been withdrawn from Judea, they themselves were not permitted to live in it, who expelled the preachers of life from it. For it was fitting that, being subdued, they should lose their earthly country, for the love of which they did not at all fear to attack the soldiers of the heavenly country. But when the holy teachers were expelled, Judea became utterly torpid, and by the just examination of the One judging, closed the eyes of its mind in the darkness of its error. Whence also it is further subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. III].

VERS. 7.---Who commands the sun, and it rises not; and shuts up the stars as under a seal.

8. Preachers being expelled, the light of Judea failed.---For sometimes in sacred eloquence by the name of the sun, the brightness of preachers is designated; as it is said through John: The sun became as sackcloth of hair (Apoc. 6:12). For in the last time the sun is shown as a sackcloth of hair, because the shining life of those preaching is shown before the eyes of the reprobate as rough and despised. Who are also figured by the brightness of stars, because while they preach right things to sinners, they illustrate the darkness of our night. Whence also, the preachers being withdrawn, it is said through the prophet: The stars of the rains were prohibited (Jerem. 3:3). But because the sun shines through the day, the stars irradiate the obscurity of the night; and mostly in sacred eloquence by the appellation of day the eternal country is signified, but by the name of night the present life: holy preachers become as the sun to our eyes when they open to us the contemplation of the true light, and like stars they shine in the darkness when through the active life they dispose earthly things to be profitable to our necessities. As if in the day they gleam as the sun when they raise the edge of our mind to contemplate the country of internal brightness; and like stars in the night they resplend, because even when they do earthly things they direct by the example of their rectitude the

foot of our work about to strike. But because, the preachers being expelled, there was not one who should show either the brightness of contemplation or open the light of the active life to the Jewish people remaining in the night of their perfidy (for the truth, which being repulsed deserted it, the light of preaching being withdrawn, by the merit of its depravity blinded it), it is rightly said: Who commands the sun, and it rises not; and shuts up the stars as under a seal. For He willed not the sun to rise for it, from which He diverted the mind of those preaching. And He shut up the stars as if under a seal, who while He retained His preachers through silence within themselves, hid the heavenly light from the blind senses of the iniquitous.

[Vet. IV.] 9. Judea is to be recalled to the faith.---But it must be weighed that for this reason we shut up something under a seal, that we may bring this forth to the middle when the time is fit. And by the attestation of sacred eloquence we have learned that Judea, which is now deserted, 292 is gathered into the bosom of faith in the end. For hence it is said through Isaiah: If the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, the remains shall be saved (Isai. 10:22). Hence Paul says: Until the fullness of the Gentiles should enter, and so all Israel should be saved (Rom. 11:25). He therefore who now withdraws His preachers from the eyes of Judea, but afterwards shows them, shut up the stars as if under a seal, so that, the rays of the spiritual stars being hidden first, and afterwards

gleaming, it may now by repulsion not see the night of its perfidy, and then being illuminated may detect it. Hence it is that those two eminent preachers were withdrawn, their death being delayed, so that they may be recalled to the use of preaching in the end. Of whom it is said through John: These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing in the sight of the Lord of the earth (Apoc. 11:4). One of whom the Truth in the Gospel promises through Himself, saying: Elias is to come, and shall restore all things (Matth. 17:11). As if therefore under a seal the stars were shut up, who both now are hidden that they may not appear, and afterwards that they may be able to be profitable they will appear. But yet the Israelite people, which will be gathered abundantly in the end, is cruelly hardened in the very beginnings of the holy Church. For it refused the preachers of truth, it despised the words of help. Which nevertheless is done by the wonderful dispensation of the Author, so that indeed the glory of those preaching, which being received in one people could lie hidden, being repulsed in all nations may be dilated. Whence also it is aptly soon subjoined:

CHAPTER IX

[Rec. IV.]

VERS. 8.---Who alone stretches out the heavens.

10. God permitted the Gospel to be repelled by the Jews, that it might be diffused among all

nations.---For what is designated by the name of the heavens but this same heavenly life of those preaching? Of whom it is said through the Psalmist: The heavens declare the glory of God (Psal. 18:1). They themselves therefore are called heavens, they themselves are mentioned as the sun; heavens, to be sure, because they protect by interceding; but the sun, because they show the force of light by preaching. The earth therefore being moved, the heavens were stretched out, because when Judea rumbled at the force of persecution, the Lord dilated the life of the Apostles into the cognition of all nations; and while that one through judgment is dispersed captive into the world, these everywhere through grace are stretched into honor. For narrow the heavens had been, when one people held so many excellent preachers. For who of the Gentiles would have known Peter, if he had remained in the preaching of the Israelite people alone? Who would recognize the virtues of Paul, unless Judea by persecuting him had transmitted him to our notice? Behold now those who were repelled with scourges and contumelies by the Israelite people are honored through the ends of the world. The Lord alone therefore stretched the heavens, who by the wonderful dispensation of a secret counsel made His preachers to be dilated from there into the hinges of the world, whence He permitted them to be oppressed in one nation. But neither this gentility itself, devoted to the present world, when the tongue of the Apostles corrected its faults, received the words of life willingly. For

immediately it swelled into the elation of contradiction, and excited itself to the cruelty of persecution. But that which strives to go against the words of preaching, is more quickly tempered by the admiration of signs. Whence aptly also in the praise of the Author it is subjoined:

CHAPTER X

[Vet. et Rec. V].

IBID.---And walks upon the waves of the sea.

293 11. The persecutions of the Gentiles are to be broken by the virtue of miracles.---For what is signified by the name of the sea but the bitterness of this world raging in the slaughter of the good? Of which also it is said through the Psalmist: Gathering as in a wineskin the waters of the sea (Psal. 32:7). For the Lord gathers the waters of the sea as in a wineskin when, disposing all things with wonderful moderation, He bridles the threats of carnal men shut up in their own hearts. Upon the waves of the sea therefore the Lord walks, because when the storms of persecution raise themselves, they are broken by the astonishment of His miracles. For He who mitigates the swellings of human madness, as it were treads upon the waves raised in a heap. For when gentility saw its custom being destroyed by the preaching of a new conversation, when the rich of this world saw the deeds of the poor going against their elation, when the wise of the age weighed that the words of the unlearned were adverse to them, they immediately swelled

into the tempest of persecution. But those who, moved by the adversity of words, leap into the storms of persecution, are tempered, as we said, by the admiration of signs. So many steps therefore the Lord placed in these waves, as miracles He showed to the proud persecutors. Whence well again it is said through the Psalmist: Wonderful are the elations of the sea, wonderful is the Lord on high (Psal. 92:4), because against the life of the elect the world wonderfully raised itself to the waves of persecution, but the Founder of the things above more wonderfully strewed these, the virtue of those preaching being raised; for He showed His ministers to be able more through miracles, than the earthly powers had swelled through wrath. Which well also the Lord through Jeremiah says, narrating exterior things, denouncing interior things: I have placed the sand as a boundary for the sea, an everlasting precept which shall not pass away; and they shall be moved, and they shall not be able, and its waves shall swell, and they shall not pass over it (Jerem. 5:22). For the Lord placed the sand as a boundary for the sea, because to break the glory of the world He chose the abject and the poor. Whose waves of the sea to be sure swell, when the powers of the age leap out to the commotion of persecution. But they are unable to pass the sand, because they are broken by the miracles and humility of the despised. But while the sea rages, while it is raised through the waves of its madness, because nevertheless it is trodden upon by the showing of internal virtue, the holy

Church profits, and rises to the state of its order through the increments of times. Whence also it is aptly soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XI

[Vet. et Rec. VI].

VERS. 9.---Who makes Arcturus, and the Orions, and the Hyades, and the inner parts of the South.

12. Why Scripture uses the words of the wise of the world.---The word of truth by no means follows the vain fables of Hesiod, Aratus, and Callimachus, so as to suspect, naming Arcturus, the extreme tail of the seven stars of the Bear, and as if Orion, an insane lover, held a sword. For these names of the stars were invented by the cultivators of carnal wisdom; but sacred Scripture therefore uses the same vocables, that the things which it desires to insinuate may be expressed by the notice of the customary appellation. For if it said the stars which it wished through names unknown to us, the man, for whom this same Scripture was made, would doubtlessly not know what he heard. Thus therefore in the sacred eloquence the wise of God draw their speech from the wise of the age, just as in it for the utility of man God Himself, the Founder of men, takes upon Himself the voice of human passion, that he may say for example: It repents me that I have made man upon the earth (Gen. 6:6, 7); when certainly it is established that He who beholds all things before they come, by no means after

He has done something repents so as to change His mind. What wonder therefore if spiritual men use the words of the carnal, when the ineffable Spirit and Creator of all Himself, that He may draw the flesh to His understanding, forms in Himself the speech of the flesh? In sacred Scripture therefore while we hear the known names of the stars, we recognize concerning which stars the speech is moved. But when we weigh what stars are narrated, it remains that from their motions we rise to the secrets of spiritual intelligence. For neither according to the letter is anything wonderful said, that God made Arcturus, the Orions, and the Hyades, concerning which to be sure it is established that there is absolutely nothing in the world which He Himself did not make. But the holy man says the Lord made these: through which he understands to be signified properly those things which are spiritually managed.

13. Arcturus signifies the Church.---For what is expressed by the name of Arcturus, which, constituted in the axis of heaven, shines with the rays of seven stars, but the universal Church, which in the Apocalypse of John is figured by seven Churches and seven candlesticks (Apoc. 1:12, 20)? Which while it contains in itself the gifts of the sevenfold grace of the Spirit, irradiating with the clarity of the highest virtue, shines as if from the axis of truth. It must also be considered that Arcturus is always turned, and never merged, because the holy Church also tolerates the persecutions of the iniquitous without cessation, but

nevertheless endures without defect until the end of the world. For often the reprobate, because they persecuted her even to internecion, believed themselves to have utterly extinguished her; but by so much more manifoldly she returned to the state of her progress, by how much she labored by dying in the hands of the persecutors. Arcturus therefore while it is turned is raised, because then the holy Church is more powerfully refreshed in the truth, when she is more ardently fatigued for the truth.

14. The Orions are martyrs.---Whence aptly also after Arcturus he immediately subjoins the Orions. For the Orions arise in the very weight of the winter time, and by their rising excite tempests, and perturb the seas and the lands. What therefore is designated by the Orions after Arcturus but the martyrs? Who, while the holy Church is raised to the state of preaching, about to suffer the weight of the persecutors and troubles, came to the face of heaven as if in winter. For these being born, the sea and the land was troubled, because while gentility grieved that its customs were destroyed, the fortitude of those appearing, it raised to their slaughter not only the wrathful and turbid, but even the placid. From the Orions therefore winter became rough, because, the constancy of the saints becoming clear, the cold mind of the infidels excited itself to the tempest of persecution. Heaven therefore produced the Orions, when the holy Church sent the martyrs. Who while they dared to speak right

things to the rude, bore every weight from the adversity of the cold.

15. The Hyades are teachers.---After the Orions he also adds the Hyades. For the Hyades, clearing in the heaven in the spring time, excite rains. What therefore are expressed by the Hyades but the teachers of sacred Scripture? Who, produced to the face of heaven, that is, to the grace of preaching, then watered the world with the rains of words, when in them, the winter of persecution having passed, the grace of spring grew warm from the rising of the heavenly light. For the cold of the martyrs being over, the preachers of the world soon followed in them their turn, as if in spring time. Who then began to clear, when now gentility, by the propitious divinity, was open to the light of truth. But these are called Hyades, because they took their name from rain in a Greek vocable, from that which is hyen, which to be sure is said to rain. Rightly therefore are they called Hyades, who by their advent into the face of the world carry showers of doctrine. Who while they are stretched into the high, and are turned in the axis of heaven, relax our earth, dry with thirst, into the offspring of fruits, the shower of doctrine being infused. For if the shower of doctrine were lacking, by no means would the parched hearts in our lands grow green. Whence also it is said through Moses: Let my speech be expected as the rain (Deut. 32:2). Concerning these rains also it is said through the Psalmist: Thou, O God, hast set apart a voluntary rain for Thine inheritance (Psal. 68:9). By

the Hyades therefore the teachers are expressed, because while the spring face of the world grew warm by their advent, from their preaching the earth of our minds profited to germinating.

16. The Hyades are seven.---These same Hyades are also said to be seven. Because to be sure the teachers of the holy Church, while they receive the plenitude of the sevenfold Spirit, are diffused through the universal world to preaching in the septenary number. But because the Hyades are placed in the forehead of the Bull, we must very much inquire into this order. For what is taken by the Bull but either our Redeemer Himself, or any preacher in His body? Because to be sure He deigned to be slain as a victim for us; and these, undergoing the labor of the contest with much labor, as it were in the manner of oxen, gather the fruits of virtues from the plowed minds. Whence it is said through the law: Thou shalt not bind the mouth of the ox treading (Deut. 25:4). And Paul says: Is God concerned about oxen? (1 Cor. 9:9.) What therefore is designated by the head of the Bull but our Author Himself? But what by the forehead but the presumption and confidence of our same Author? The Hyades therefore are placed in the forehead of the Bull, because the holy teachers clear in the presumption and confidence of our Author. For unless they were fortified by His grace, and strengthened themselves in the presumption of Him, by no means would they have been able then to resist the vain glory of the world, and to dilate the rain of their doctrine to us. They them-

selves also shine in His forehead, through whom the precept of His faith and rectitude is demonstrated to us. Whom while we hear speaking, we recognize in whose confidence they shine.

17. The inner parts of the South, who is the South?---But to all these he subjoins the inner parts of the South. For what is figured by the name of the South but the grace of the Holy Spirit? Who while He has touched the hearts of men with His heat, relaxes from them the torpor of cold. Whence it is said through the Psalmist: Turn our captivity, O Lord, as a torrent in the South (Psal. 126:4). For the South is a warm wind, and from its place dissolves the sluggish waters. So, so the advent of the Holy Spirit relaxes in us the cold of iniquity, and dissolves into the torrents of penitence the tears of strictness. Who again is called South through Solomon: Arise, O North wind, and come, O South wind, blow through my garden, and let its aromatics flow (Cant. 4:16). For the North wind is the malignant spirit, who constrains our hearts, and by no means permits them to flower to the fruits of a good work. But the North wind is ordered to recede from the garden of the Lord, and the South wind to come, that while the Spirit of heavenly grace has possessed the mind, through His love the aromatics of virtues may flow. Because therefore the Holy Spirit is called the South, what are designated by its inner parts but His secrets and occult judgments? Which as they cannot be seen by us, so in those things which are done without the virtue of the same Spirit is wonderfully or-

dained. After Arcturus therefore, after the Orions, after the Hyades, he subjoins the inner parts of the South; because after the state of the Church, after the contests of the martyrs, after the rains of the teachers, he shows the wonderful and occult judgments of the same Spirit, by which these very things are dispensed. For while many come to the faith, many are left in their perfidy; while some return to penitence from depraved acts, others persevere in their iniquities; while some are crowned with the palm of martyrdom, others, led to punishment, are turned by broken fragility to abnegation; while the Hyades pour out doctrine, some receive this into the increase of fruit, others, the heart being closed, are silent in their own sterility. What are these but the inner parts of the South, that is, the hidden judgments of the Holy Spirit? Which to be sure, by how much they are more occult, by so much more they are to be admired in His praises. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

VERS. 10.---Who makes great and incomprehensible things, and wonderful things, of which there is no number.

18. Every creature is nothing before its Creator.---That according to the letter God both made all these things before, and makes them daily, who doubts? But the holy man, as we said, wonders at the deeds of God, through which he understands another thing to be designated. For he wonders at the state of the Church, the contests of the martyrs, and the showers of the teachers, and what else does he stupify at in

them but the Lord doing them? But because these things are great through themselves, but to Him who made them, compared, they are by no means great, it is rightly subjoined: Who makes great and incomprehensible things, and wonderful things, of which there is no number. For the things which are created, although incomprehensible to us, yet to Him who made them, are comprehensible. Whence also John says: What was made, in Him was life (John 1:3). For in itself a created thing is not life, but in its Author it is life, because in His disposition it lives eternally. Those things therefore which are incomprehensible to man, are comprehended in God; and those which in themselves are numerable, in Him are innumerable, because of His wisdom there is no number. For those things which are numerable, unless they were in themselves innumerable, would make a number for His wisdom. But because to Him all things are finished, but He is finished by none, those very things also which have an end in themselves, are without end in His incomprehensibility. Rightly therefore it is said: Who makes great and incomprehensible things, and wonderful things, of which there is no number. As if he should say openly: What wonder if we believe these things to be made by Him, whom nothing comprehended shuts in, nothing completed finishes? Who since He is Himself incomprehensible, also rules incomprehensibly those things which He made. Whence also Job returning to himself, and wondering in himself at the incomprehensibility of the Creator, adds:

VERS. 11.---If He comes to me, I shall not see Him; if He goes away, I shall not understand.

19. God, although He be seen, is not seen.---Blessed Job considers the power of God not only in the government of the world, but also in himself. For while he notices in what order he was founded, and in what order again he is ruled, he feels these very things by which he is ruled, but how he is ruled he does not see. For as we said, the spirit of the creature above is middle between God and the flesh; which in this that it is vivified by God, is below God; but in this that it vivifies the flesh, is above the flesh. He therefore who is above the flesh, well sees all things which are below him; but because he is below God, he is not able to comprehend that which is above him. For how should he who is himself comprehended, comprehend that by which he is comprehended? God therefore beholds all things which are, and can by no means be seen by those things which are. Of whom it is said through John: No man has seen God at any time (John 1:18). And again it is written: No man shall see my face, and live (Exod. 33:20); because to be sure in this life whoever sees God, dies to it, lest by seeing he should live. For unless he die utterly to the delectation of the present age, he is by no means raised to the vision of eternity. Whence also Job says: If He comes to me, I shall not see Him. For the Lord comes to us, when He illustrates our minds with the grace of His visitation. Which while it is done, because His virtue is soon felt in us, He is said to come. But because His essence itself is seen by no creature,

it is rightly subjoined: I shall not see Him. For man feels His visitation, but does not see Himself. Who then raises the mind into itself, when he evacuates the forms of human thoughts, and through intention is stretched to that which is beyond man. But when that inaccessible brightness strikes back the intention of the mind, its own infirmity, struck back to that which it can understand, relapses as it were into itself. Since therefore the grace of His visitation is present, but who it is that comes is not seen, it is rightly said: If He comes to me, I shall not see Him.

20. How God comes, how He goes away.--- Because truly this same grace is sometimes withdrawn, that the mind remitted into itself may know what itself is, it is rightly subjoined: If He goes away, I shall not understand. For when He comes, His virtue is felt; but when He departs, it is ignored whence He comes, or whither He goes. Because to be sure we are by no means able to know the beginning and the end of His visitation. Whence also it is said to Nicodemus: The Spirit breathes where He will, and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He comes, or whither He goes (John 3:8). For we hear the voice of the Spirit, when through His grace we are pricked by His aspiration. But whence He comes, or whither He goes we know not, because we neither see the beginnings of His visitation through prescience, nor hold the perseverance through comprehension. Rightly therefore it is said: If He goes away, I shall not understand. For the Lord is said to come to us then, as it

were, when He pricks our minds with grateful visitation; but then to go away, when after the grace of His compunction He deserts our minds. Because to be sure if He always held our minds in this grace of His visitation, we would already see in this life the joys of the heavenly country. But this same grace is granted for an hour, and is immediately withdrawn, that it may snatch us to itself through desire, but lest it retain us to itself through satiety. To Himself therefore He makes us to come, but permits us by no means to be presented to Himself in this life.

VERS. 12.---If He questions suddenly, who will answer Him? or who can say: Why dost Thou so?

21. What the questioning of God is.---Often the questioning of God is the very striking of man. For the Lord questions when He strikes, because through the pain which He inflicts from without, He bends the mind within to the knowledge of itself. And when the stricken man recognizes his faults, which he has done, he answers the Lord as if questioning. But if He questions suddenly, who will answer Him? For striking if it is foreknown, is sustained more tolerably by the mind. But if it be sudden, it disturbs all the secrets of the heart. Because therefore God for the most part then questions, when He strikes; and then especially He strikes, when the prescient mind suspects nothing such, it is rightly said: If He questions suddenly, who will answer Him? As if he should say: If the Lord then especially strikes, when we fear nothing such, who prepares the voice of

reason against His striking, which the unforeseen ferocity of the stricken mind disturbs?

22. In the judgments of God, one must not ask concerning the cause.---Whence also it is soon rightly subjoined: Or who can say: Why dost Thou so? Because to be sure in His occult judgments, even if the cause why anything is done is by no means open, yet it is not necessary that anyone should inquire of Him concerning the cause. For when he who is stricken does not know the law of God, he ought to be reflected to this alone, that he may know that He who strikes is not unjust. And Job reducing us to this, what we ought to feel concerning His omnipotence, adds:

VERS. 13.---God, whose wrath no man can resist, and under whom are curved they who bear the world.

23. What the wrath of God is.---The wrath of God is not a perturbation of mind, as in man, but it is the face of a just judge moved to the vengeance of sin. Which is drawn also from the very custom of men, so that on account of vengeance anyone is said to be wrathful. His wrath can therefore be felt, but it by no means avails to be resisted by him by whom it is felt. Whence also it is rightly subjoined: And under whom are curved they who bear the world. For they bear the world who preside over its mundane administration. But these also are curved under Him, because at whose beck all things are ruled, they also who rule, are without doubt humbled. Or certainly they bear the world, who carry the weight of mundane wisdom. These

therefore are curved under Him, because compared to His omnipotence, what else are they but abject? Who are by so much more curved, by how much less they raise themselves to eternal stability through humility. Or certainly they bear the world who rule others in their own favor. But they are curved under Him, because those who are highest among men, are then especially damned by the Lord, when they are caught in His wrath. But blessed Job, when he considers His omnipotence, returning to himself, and comparing his fragility with His so great virtue, says:

VERS. 14.---How great then am I that I should answer Him, and speak with my words with Him?

24. Sinners dare not speak with God.---As if he should say: If they are curved under Him who bear the world, what shall I do, who against Him have not so great virtue? But it is to be known that he who works good things, is said to answer the Lord, when from His precepts he instructs his life. But he who does not suffice for good works, and yet raises against Him the voice of his defense, seems to speak with Him with words. But the holy man considering himself by no means to suffice for the divine precepts, confesses not only that he does not answer Him, but not even to be able to speak with Him with words. Because to be sure he who is yet in sin, since he does not answer the Lord with deeds, ought not even to burst forth into his own defense, so that he may by no means become tumid through words against Him, whom he is not able to placate through deeds. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

VERS. 15.---Who although I shall have anything just, I will not answer, but I will deprecate my judge.

25. Our justice is injustice before the divine.---In whose voice, but the humility of the whole human race is expressed? For all human justice is convinced to be injustice, if it be strictly judged. Therefore after justice it needs prayer, that what being discussed could succumb, may grow strong from the mercy of the judge alone. Whence also it is rightly said: Who although I shall have anything just, I will not answer, but I will deprecate my judge. As if he should say openly: Although I shall have germinated to right works, I will strive for life not through merit, but through pardon. For the good things which we do, are His; and from there we are debtors to Him, whence for our merits we hope for rewards. It is His therefore what we do, His the sacrifice by which He is placated. Just men therefore, while they see their justice, do not trust in their merits, but in the mercy of the Author alone. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

VERS. 16.---When I shall have invoked, and He shall have heard me, I do not believe that He has heard my voice.

26. Prayer is not believed from hearing.---As if he should say: If the Lord is then especially wrathful, when He strikes our sins, who may trust in His wrath? For when we convert ourselves to Him through penitence, and believe ourselves to be heard, yet in our very conversion we tremble. Because to be sure he who beholds

himself to be yet in sins, ought not to trust in hearing alone, but ought to tremble at that which is yet remaining of sin in himself. Whence also it is rightly said: When I shall have invoked, and He shall have heard me, I do not believe that He has heard my voice. Because to be sure he who returns to the Lord through penitence, and beholds himself to be heard, ought not to rejoice in hearing alone, but ought to fear concerning the still remaining stain of sin. For neither ought he to believe himself to be heard, who knows himself to be yet in sins. But these things blessed Job speaks from humility, who confesses himself to be heard not from his merits, but from the mercy of the Lord alone. Who while he sees His omnipotence, is reflected to this alone, that he may know himself to be nothing. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

VERS. 17.---For in a whirlwind He will crush me, and will multiply my wounds, even without cause.

27. Why is Job said to have been struck without cause?---By the name of a whirlwind, what is expressed but the force of a sudden striking? Which while it invades us unexpected, draws the mind as if in a whirlwind to the knowledge of itself. But it is to be known that Job, while he says he is struck without cause, does not speak concerning the injustice of the Founder, but wonders concerning His occult judgments. For as we said above, he who knows himself to be yet in sins, ought not to trust in hearing alone. But blessed Job, who sees himself cleansed from his

iniquities, ought not to presume from his justice alone. Because to be sure he who sees himself just, but yet beholds himself to be struck, then especially stupifies at the occult judgments of the Founder, when he sees no cause of striking in himself. Which well also is said through Eliu: For Job justified himself before God (Job 32:2). Because to be sure while he asserts his justice, he yet submits himself to His occult judgments. Whence also it is rightly said: For in a whirlwind He will crush me, and will multiply my wounds, even without cause. As if he should say openly: If the Lord then especially strikes, when we merit nothing such, who may not tremble in His occult judgments, who even without cause does not fear to wound us? But this striking without cause is referred not to the injustice of the Judge, but to His secret dispensation. Who while He strikes His elect without cause, is reflected to this alone, that through their patience He may instruct others, and through their wounds heal others. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

VERS. 18.---He suffers not my spirit to rest, and fills me with bitterness.

28. What the bitterness of the mind is.---For it often happens that the mind, while it is snatched to contemplation, in its very snatching feels bitterness. Because to be sure while it raises itself into God, and yet still relapses into itself, in its very elevation it grieves, because it by no means yet holds that which it desires. And because in this life it is by no means permitted to arrive at His vision, remitted to itself, it follows bitterness.

Whence also it is rightly said: And fills me with bitterness. Because to be sure he who is stretched to the eternal country through desire, wandering in this world, suffers bitterness. Who as we said above, by so much more grieves, by how much more he is snatched to the vision of eternity through desire. Because to be sure while he sees that which he desires, and yet still feels that which he is, in his very snatching he is tortured. But this bitterness is not of sin, but of desire. Which to be sure especially fills the minds of the elect, when He snatches them to Himself through love. Whence also Job reducing us to this, what we ought to feel concerning His omnipotence, adds:

VERS. 19.---If strength is sought, He is the strongest; if equity of judgment, no man dares to say testimony for me.

29. What the strength of God is.---As if he should say: If strength is opposed against Him, He is the strongest; if equity of judgment, who prepares the voice of reason against His judgment? Because to be sure no man avails to resist His omnipotence, and no man can compare himself to His equity. His strength therefore is His very fortitude, by which He rules all things; but the equity of judgment is His very justice, by which He disposes all things. Because therefore no man resists His fortitude, and no man equals himself to His justice, it is rightly said: If strength is sought, He is the strongest; if equity of judgment, no man dares to say testimony for me. As if he should say openly: Who prepares

his strength against His fortitude, or who against His justice dares to say testimony for me, when he himself who seems to speak for me, compared to His equity, is convinced to be unjust? But these things the holy man speaks concerning His incomprehensibility, who confesses himself to be saved not from his merits, but from the mercy of the Founder alone. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

VERS. 20.---If I shall wish to justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me; if I shall show myself innocent, it will argue me depraved.

30. Human justice before God is injustice.--- In whose voice, but the humility of the whole human race is expressed? For all human justice is convinced to be injustice, if it be strictly judged. For if we open our mouth to our justification, our own mouth itself condemns us, because in our very speaking, what else do we show but our pride? But if we show ourselves to be innocent, our own innocence itself argues us depraved, because while we believe ourselves to be innocent, we deviate from the very rectitude of humility. Whence also it is rightly said: If I shall wish to justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me; if I shall show myself innocent, it will argue me depraved. As if he should say openly: Although I shall have germinated to right works, I will strive for life not through merit, but through pardon. For even if I shall have said myself to be innocent, in my very elation I am argued depraved. Blessed Job therefore, while he sees His equity, reflects

himself to this alone, that he may know himself to be nothing. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

24. The virtue of prayer for enemies.---In which matter it can usefully be asked why, leaving aside so many older fathers, only Moses and Samuel are named more excellently and elegantly for pouring forth prayer?

Which, however, we easily recognize, if we weigh the merits of that charity which is commanded to love even enemies. [Old XIII.] For that prayer is especially commended to the ears of the Creator, which strives to intercede for enemies also. Whence also Truth says through itself: Pray for those who persecute and calumniate you (Matth. 5:44). And again: When you shall stand to pray, forgive if you have anything against another (Mark 11:25). But when we revolve the deeds of the prior fathers as sacred eloquence describes them, we find that Moses and Samuel prayed for their adversaries. For one of them fled the persecution of a raging people, and yet intervened for the life of his persecutor; the other, cast down from the leadership of the people, says to those very adversaries of his: Far be it from me this sin in the Lord, that I should cease to pray for you (1 Sam. 12:23). What is it then to bring down Moses and Samuel in the difficulty of praying, unless to indicate more clearly that not even they, if they stood, would withstand His wrath, who for that reason could more quickly intervene for friends, because they were accustomed to intercede with Him even for enemies? Hence it is said to that same Judea: I have struck you with the

wound of an enemy, with a cruel chastisement (Jer. 30:14). And again: Why do you cry to me over your contrition? Your pain is incurable (Ibid., 15). Let the holy man therefore behold that by no man's intervention is the divine wrath restrained when it is implacably excited, and let him say: God, whose wrath no man can resist. Which we well lead also to a special understanding, if we weigh the losses of the same Israelite people, whom the Redeemer, shown through the mystery of His dispensation, deserted in their pride, and called the Gentiles to the grace of His knowledge. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: Under whom are curved they who bear the world.

[Rec. X.] 25. They bear the world who rule.--- For they themselves bear the world who tolerate the cares of the present age. For indeed each one is compelled to sustain as many weights as he rules over in this world. Whence also the prince of the earth is not incongruously called basileus in the Greek eloquence. For laos is interpreted as people. Basileus therefore is called basis laou, because in the Latin language it is said to be the basis of the people, because to be sure he himself sustains the people upon himself, who rules, fixed by the weight of that power of movement. For in that he tolerates the burdens of his subjects, in that the basis bears, as it were, a column placed upon it. Let blessed Job therefore, full of the virtue of the prophetic spirit, behold that Judea is deserted, and the princes of the Gentiles are inclined to the worship of the Divinity, and let him say: God, whose wrath no man can resist,

under whom are curved they who bear the world. As if he should openly confess saying: And you desert those formerly subject to strictness, and you mercifully bend the upright powers of the Gentiles.

[Old XIV.] 26. Such angels sent into ministry.---Although by that which is said, "under whom are curved they who bear the world," angelic virtues also can be understood. For they themselves bear the world, who administer the cares of ruling the world, as Paul witnesses, who says: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent into ministry for the sake of those who receive the inheritance of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14). He says therefore: "God, whose wrath no man can resist, under whom are curved they who bear the world." As if he should behold the humility of every creature, and being struck with trembling should say: "Who of weak men withstands your nods, to whose fortitude even the angelic virtues incline?" Or certainly, because when we are curved, we do not discern higher things: those most subtle spirits would be upright, if they fully reached the power of His majesty. But they who bear the world are curved under God, because although they see the highness of His divinity raised up, yet the angelic virtues do not comprehend it. Which the just man, not penetrating it because of his infirmity, but weighing it however from the subject ministries of the highest spirits, recollects himself to his own consideration with solicitous humility, and becomes vile to himself

in his own presence before the power of the heavenly magnitude, saying:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 14.---How great then am I, that I should answer Him, and speak with my words with Him?

27. They cannot dispute concerning the judgments of God, who are pressed by the weight of corruption.---As if he should openly say: If that creature does not suffice to consider Him, which is not pressed by the flesh, with what mind do I dispute concerning His judgments, who am narrowed by the weight of corruption? For as the words of God are often to us His judgments, which speak the sentence of our acts, so our words to God are the works which we show. But man is not able to speak with God with his words, because before His subtle judgment he holds no confidence concerning his own acts. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. XI].

VERSE 15.---Who although I shall have anything just, I will not answer, but I will deprecate my judge.

28. Our justice needs the deprecation of pardon.---For as we have often said, all human justice is convinced to be injustice, if it be strictly judged. Therefore after justice it needs prayer,

that what being discussed could succumb, may grow strong from the mercy of the judge alone. Which when it is fully possessed by the more perfect, it is said that "anything" of it is possessed, because the human mind scarcely performs even what is understood, and those things which it understands are very much at the extreme. Let him say therefore: "Who although I shall have anything just, I will not answer, but I will deprecate my judge." As if he should more openly confess, saying: "Even if I shall have grown to the work of virtue, I grow strong for life not by merits, but from pardon." Therefore prayer is to be leaned upon when we do right things, so that everything which we live justly, we may season from humility. [Old XV.] But for the most part our very deprecation is shaken by so many temptations, that it seems almost repulsed from the sight of the judge. And often the merciful Creator perceives this; but because it is not able to exert itself unblemished as it wishes, it dreads the judgment of reprobation upon itself. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 16.---And when He shall have heard me invoking, I do not believe that He has heard my voice.

29. Alternating motions of the mind during prayer.---For for the most part the mind is kindled by the fire of divine love, and is raised up to the beholding of celestial and secret things; it is now snatched to the highest things, and, being

pierced by a perfect desire, is alienated from the lowest; but being struck by a sudden temptation, that which had been upright in God with a strong intention, being transfixed by rising thoughts, is curved; so that it is not able to discern itself, and being caught between vices and virtues, it does not recognize on which part it is more powerful. For it is often led even to this, that it wonders how it comprehends such high things, which an illicit thought pollutes; and again how it receives illicit thoughts, while the fervor of the spirit is strong upon it. Which alternating motions of thoughts in the mind the Psalmist well beholding, says: "They ascend even to the heavens, and they descend even to the abysses" (Ps. 107:26). For we ascend even to the heavens when we penetrate the highest things; but we descend even to the abysses when we are suddenly cast down from the summit of contemplation through shameful temptations. The motions of the mind therefore, while they alternate between vows and vices, to be sure cloud for themselves the certainty of hearing. Rightly therefore it is said: "And when He shall have heard me invoking, I do not believe that He has heard my voice," because the mind from its very mutability becomes fearful; and through that which it suffers unwillingly, it suspects itself repulsed and abject.

30. The severity of the last judgment. Especially upon those whom the patience of God has long tolerated.---It is pleasant to behold with what subtlety the holy man judges himself, lest the divine judgments should find anything to

reprehend in him. For beholding his own infirmity, he says: "How great then am I who should answer Him, and speak with my words with Him?" [Rec. XII.] Not trusting in the merits of his own justice, but betaking himself to the sole hope of petition, he subjoins: "Who even if I shall have anything just, I will not answer, but I will deprecate my judge." But fearful concerning the petition itself also, he adds: "And when He shall have heard me invoking, I do not believe that He has heard my voice." Why does he tremble with so much circumspection, why does he fear with so much solicitude, unless because he considers the terror of the judge in the extreme strictness, and, not bearing the force of that discussion, he weighs that all that he does is insufficient for himself? Whence also he immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER XX

[Old XVI].

VERSE 17.---For in a whirlwind He will crush me.

31. Every sinner is bruised in a whirlwind, who seemed upright in tranquility, because him whom the heavenly long-suffering tolerates for a long time, the extreme severity of judgment kills; which is rightly called a whirlwind, because it is revealed in the commotion of the elements, as the Psalmist witnesses, who says: "God our God will come manifest, and will not be silent. Fire will burn in His sight, and a strong tempest in His circuit" (Ps. 50:3). Whence also another prophet

says: "The Lord in the tempest and whirlwind is His way" (Nahum 1:3). In which whirlwind to be sure the just man is by no means crushed, because he always here solicitously fears lest he be crushed. For he weighs, still being set in the journey of the present life, how strict the exactor of works appears to human acts, who then damns some bound by the guilt of original sin even without works. Whence rightly the holy man from the voice of the human race immediately adds:

CHAPTER XXI.

IBID.---And He will multiply my wounds even without cause.

32. Little ones are damned from original guilt alone.---For some are withdrawn from the present light before they arrive at producing good or evil merits of active life. Whom because the sacraments of salvation do not liberate from the guilt of origin, they both have done nothing of their own here, and they arrive there to torments. To whom one wound is to be born corruptibly, another to die carnally. But because after death also eternal death follows, by an occult and just judgment wounds are multiplied to them even without cause. For indeed they receive perpetual torments even who have sinned nothing from their own will. For hence it is written: "Man is not pure in His sight, nor an infant of one day upon the earth" (Job 15:14). Hence Truth says through itself: "Unless one shall be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Hence Paul says:

"We were by nature children of wrath, as also the rest" (Eph. 2:3). He therefore who, adding nothing of his own, is destroyed from the sole guilt of origin, what is he in that extreme examination, as to the estimation of human sense, but wounded without cause? But yet under divine strictness it is just that a mortal offspring, like an unfruitful tree, should preserve in its branches the bitterness which it drew from the root. He says therefore: "For in a whirlwind He will crush me, and will multiply my wounds even without cause." As if, openly considering the losses of the human race, he should say: With what animadversion does the strict judge slay those whom the guilt of their own action damns, if He also strikes for eternity those whom the guilt of the will does not condemn?

33. Job fears the judgment of God. He was struck so that merit might be increased, not that vice might be wiped away.---Which words to be sure we recognize not to differ from blessed Job specially, if we investigate how truly they were brought forth. For subtly weighing himself, and judging himself in every action, he insinuates with how much solicitude he greatly fears the force of the heavenly strictness, subjoining: "For in a whirlwind He will crush me." As if he should openly say: For that reason I always fear Him even in tranquility, because through scourges I am not ignorant what kind He comes in a whirlwind. Which scourges to be sure both fearing he foresaw, and foreseeing he bore. Whence he subjoins: "And He will multiply my wounds even

without cause." For as we have already often said, by no means was blessed Job struck so that in him the striking might wipe away vice, but so that it might increase merit. Therefore asserting himself wounded without cause, he speaks this of himself outwardly, which Truth witnesses of him in secret, saying: "You have moved me against him, that I might afflict him in vain" (Job 2:3). The holy man therefore does not say proudly what he says truly, nor through these words does he differ from rectitude, through which he does not discord from the judge. Who immediately expresses the continuation of those same wounds, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XXII

[Old XVII].

VERSE 18.---He does not grant my spirit to rest, and He fills me with bitternesses.

34. Job is afflicted within and without.--- Often for the just it is an exercise of virtue alone to tolerate adversities outwardly. But so that the conflict of full probation may instruct their strengths, sometimes both torments lacerate them outwardly, and temptations chastise them inwardly. Whence the holy man asserts himself filled with bitternesses, because while he tolerates scourges outwardly, that is more heavy which he bears in his inmost parts from the temptation of the adversary. But among these things the considered equity and power of the

striker mitigates the force of the pain. Whence he subjoins:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERSE 19.---If strength is sought, He is most robust; if equity of judgment, no man dares to say testimony for me.

35. The equity of the judgment of God.---For He examines the causes of life, who does not explore these through the testimony of another, because He who is shown at some time to be the strict inflictor of punishment, Himself existed for a long time as the silent witness of the fault. For hence it is said through the prophet: "I am judge and witness" (Jer. 29:23). Hence again He says: "I have been silent, I have always been still, I have been patient, I will speak like a woman in labor" (Isa. 42:14). For a woman in labor with pain casts out what she has long carried with weight in hidden places. After a long silence, therefore, like a woman in labor, the Lord speaks, because what He now tolerates silent in Himself, in the vengeance of judgment He at some time manifests, as it were, with pain. But it is to be sought by us, whether that just man, if anyone presumed to say testimony for him, would it liberate him from guilt? And if another does not impart testimony to this man, does he himself at least grow strong to bring forth testimony for himself? It follows.

VERSE 20.---If I shall wish to justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me; if I shall show myself innocent, it will prove me depraved.

36. No man knows himself to be certainly innocent.---As if he should openly say: What should I speak of others, who myself am not able to bear testimony concerning me? But because you do not suffice to testify to your innocence, do you know this very thing, that you have innocence? He subjoins:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XIII].

VERSE 21.---Even if I shall have been simple, my soul will be ignorant of this very thing.

37. The utility and inconvenience of our ignorance. [Old XVIII]. Vice often performs what virtue began.---For the most part if we know the good things which we do, we are led to elation; if we do not know them, we by no means preserve them. For who does not pride himself, however little, on the consciousness of his own virtue? Or who again would preserve the good in himself which he is ignorant of; but against both what remains, but that we should be ignorant in knowing the right things which we do, so that we may estimate these both as right, and as minimal, in order that the knowledge of rectitude may sensitize the mind for guarding, and the estimation of minoration may not raise it into swelling? But there are some things which cannot easily be known by us, even when they are being done. For often we are kindled with a right zeal against the faults of delinquents; and when we are snatched by anger beyond the bounds of equity, we esti-

mate this as the zeal of just strictness. Often we assume the office of preaching, so that through this we may serve fraternal utility; but unless we please him to whom we speak, that which we preach is by no means freely received. And when the mind usefully strives to please, it foully flows down to the love of its own praise; and that which was caring to rescue others from the captivity of vices, itself begins to serve being captured by its own favors. For the desire of human praise is like a little thief, who joins himself from the side to those walking on the right journey, so that, the sword being drawn from hidden places, the life of those walking may be slain. And when the intention of proposed utility is led down to private studies, in a horrendous way one and the same work vice performs, which virtue began. Often also from the very beginnings the thought seeks one thing, the action shows another.

[Old XIX.] 38. Otherwise the action is right, not the mind.---Often not even the thought itself exhibits itself faithful to itself, because it turns one thing before the eyes of the mind, and from intention hastens far to another. For for the most part some seek earthly rewards, and defend justice, and estimate themselves innocent, and exult to be defenders of rectitude. From whom if the hope of money is withdrawn, they immediately cease from the defense of justice; and yet they think themselves defenders of justice, and assert themselves right to themselves, who by no means seek rectitude, but money. Against whom it is well said through Moses: "Justly that which

is just you shall follow" (Deut. 16:20). For he follows unjustly that which is just, who is excited to the defense of justice not by the emulation of virtue, but by the love of temporal reward. He follows unjustly that which is just, who does not at all fear to sell that very justice which he pretends. To follow justly what is just, therefore, is to seek that same justice in the assertion of justice. Often we do right things, and by no means expect rewards, by no means praises from men; but yet the mind, upright in its own confidence, contemns pleasing those from whom it seeks nothing, despises their judgments, and snatches itself evilly free through the precipices of elation; and from there it is more heavily overwhelmed under vice, whence, as if vices being conquered, it glories that it is subject to no desires.

39. There is a danger for us from either too much or no discussion of ourselves. Often while we discuss ourselves more than is right, we err more indiscreetly from the very study of discretion; and the sharpness of our mind, the more it strives to discern, is darkened, because he also who gazes importunately at the rays of the sun, grows dark; and from there he is compelled to see nothing, from whence he endeavors to see more. Because, therefore, we are entirely ignorant of ourselves when sluggish in our inquiry, or if we seek ourselves with subtle discussion, we are for the most part in a mist between vices and virtues, it is now rightly said: Although I should be simple, my soul shall be ignorant of this very thing. As if it were plainly said: With what temerity

do I refute the judgments of the Creator against me, who am ignorant of my very self from the darkness of weakness? Whence it is well said by the prophet: The abyss gave its voice from the height of its phantasy (Hab. 3:10). For the abyss carries the height of phantasy when the human mind, darkened by immense thought, does not penetrate even itself by discussing. But to give a voice from this height is because while it cannot apprehend itself, it is compelled to rise up in admiration, so that it may not dare to scrutinize that which is above it, in that, thinking upon its own incomprehensibility, it is not able to find what it is. But the hearts of the just, because they cannot examine themselves to perfection, bear with difficulty this exile of blindness.

Whence it is also added,---IBID.:---And I shall be weary of my life. It wearies the just man to live, because even in working he does not cease to seek life, and yet he is not able to find the merit of that same life of his. For he draws the balance of examination from the bosom of inward equity; and from there he fails in himself toward the effect of discovery, from whence, snatched above himself, he grows to the force of inquiry. But there is a consolation for our darkness brought back to the mind in the just and incomprehensible power of the Creator, which neither leaves the wicked without vengeance, and transcends the justice of the upright by the immensity of incomprehensibility. Whence it is also aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 22.---It is one thing that I have spoken, He consumes both the innocent and the impious.

40. Human purity compared to the divine vanishes. The impious does not escape God's vengeance. Death invades all.---The innocent is consumed by the Creator, because however great his simplicity may have been, it is devoured by the simplicity of the divine magnitude. For although we may studiously preserve simplicity, yet from the consideration of inward purity it is shown that this very simplicity which we practice is not simplicity. The impious also is consumed by the Creator, because, God wonderfully ordaining all things, his impiety is bound by his very craftinesses. For from that place he entangles himself in punishments even unknowingly, from whence he exults that he does something knowingly. Because, therefore, almighty God both surpasses the innocence of the good by simplicity, and, penetrating the astuteness of the evil, condemns it, it is now rightly said: It is one thing that I have spoken, He consumes both the innocent and the impious. As if it were plainly said: I have brought forth this word of thought within myself, because neither shall I, being innocent, if I am strictly discussed, appear innocent; nor shall I, being impious, if I should wish to lie hid within myself, be concealed from the sharpness of the heavenly examination, since the strict Judge, comprehending all things, wonderfully penetrates the secrets of malice, and,

well ordering this by His discoveries, condemns it. Or certainly He is said to consume both the innocent and the impious, because although they are divided in the life of the mind, yet by the merit of the first fault they are equally drawn to the destruction of the flesh. Whence it is also said by Solomon: The learned dies in like manner as the unlearned (Eccl. 2:16). And again: All things are subject to vanity, and all things go to one place; they were made of the earth, and to the earth they return together (Eccl. 3:19). It follows:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XV].

VERSE 23.---If he scourges, let him kill once, and let him not laugh at the punishments of the innocent.

41. Job desires a Mediator who might free us by His death.---Who would not believe these things were brought forth through pride, unless he heard the sentence of the Judge, who says: You have not spoken right before me, as my servant Job (Job 42:7)? It remains, therefore, that no one dare to reprehend the words of the author, which it is certain that the Judge praises. But they are to be scrutinized in their inward parts with more caution and subtlety, the more harshly they sound outwardly. For the holy man, considering the losses of the human race, weighing whence and whither they have come; that man, the adversary promising, desiring to know the knowledge of good and evil, lost even himself, so

that he truly says: Although I should be simple, my soul shall be ignorant of this very thing; that after the punishment of expulsion he sustains also the scourges of corruption, and still tends to the destruction of the flesh, or certainly of the mind, even after torment, so that he rightly says: He consumes both the innocent and the impious; he seeks the grace of the Mediator against these things, saying: If he scourges, let him kill once. For we, because we have both receded in mind from God and return in flesh to dust, are bound by the punishment of a double death. But He came to us who would die in the flesh alone for us, who would join His single (death) to our double (death), and free us from both deaths. Of which it is said by Paul: 307 But in that he died to sin, he died once (Rom. 6:10). Let the holy man, therefore, look upon the losses of our corruption, and seek the one death of the Mediator which may destroy our two, and desiring this let him say: If he scourges, let him kill once.

42. He desires that his longing not be deferred.---But behold, as if he resists humility, that which is immediately subjoined: And let him not laugh at the punishments of the innocent. Yet we know this to be most humble without difficulty, if we weigh it with a humble mind. For it is clear to all that every desire is a punishment when it is deferred, Solomon also attesting, who says: Hope which is deferred afflicts the soul (Prov. 13:12). But to laugh, for God, is to be unwilling to have mercy on human affliction. Whence again by Solomon the Lord says to the reprobate remain-

ing in fault: I also will laugh in your destruction (Prov. 1:26); that is, I will compassionate your affliction with no piety. Before the coming of the Redeemer, therefore, all the elect had their punishment, because, with burning desire, they longed to see the mystery of His incarnation, He Himself attesting, who says: Many, I say to you, just men and prophets have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them (Luke 10:24). The punishments of the innocent, therefore, are the desires of the just. As long, then, as the Lord, not compassionating, deferred the vows of His elect, what else did He do but laugh at the punishments of the innocent? Therefore let the holy man, considering the gifts of the future Redeemer, and bearing heavily the delay of his vows, say: If he scourges, let him kill once, and let him not laugh at the punishments of the innocent. As if he were openly praying, saying: Because our life is daily worn away by the scourge of vengeance for fault, let Him now come who may die for us once without fault, so that God may no longer laugh at the punishments of the innocent, if He Himself appears passible in the flesh, in whose desires our mind chastens itself.

[Vet. XXI.] 43. God laughs at the punishments of the innocent when He is delighted with their tears. Or certainly if he calls the laughter of God His joy, the Lord is said to laugh at the punishments of the innocent because the more ardently He is sought by us, the more sweetly He rejoices over us. For we make a kind of joy for Him out of punishment, when through holy desires

we chasten ourselves for the love of Him. Hence the Psalmist says: Appoint a solemn day in thick crowds, even to the horn of the altar (Ps. 118:27). For he appoints a solemn day to the Lord in a thick crowd, whoever assidiously afflicts himself in desire for Him. Which day of solemnity is commanded to be extended even to the horn of the altar, because it is necessary that each one afflict himself for so long, until he reaches the height of the heavenly sacrifice, that is, to eternal joys.

The just man, therefore, because he desires his longing to be fulfilled, not deferred, humbly says: Let him not laugh at the punishments of the innocent. As if he were saying: Receiving our vows willingly, let Him not defer further, but let Him exhibit by showing Him who chastens us in expectation of Him. But because blessed Job specifically asked for Him to be killed once who endured the death of the flesh alone for us in the end of the world, he immediately opens (the matter), who also joins the very order of His passion, saying:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERSE 24.---The earth is given into the hands of the impious, he covers the face of its judges.

44. Christ's flesh delivered to the impious devil. Christ's slayers blinded by the devil. The wicked and the devil are one person, than which nothing is more impious.---For what is expressed by the name of earth but the flesh? Who is designated by the appellation of the impious but the devil? The hands of this impious one were those

who raged in the death of our Redeemer. The earth, therefore, was given into the hands of the impious, because the ancient enemy was not able to corrupt the mind of the Redeemer by tempting Him himself (Matt. 4:10, 11), but he was permitted to extinguish His flesh through his satellites for three days (Matt. 27:45), and unknowingly served the dispensation of heavenly piety from this very permission. For striking our Redeemer with three temptations, he was not able to violate the heart of God. But when he excited the mind of Judas to the death of His flesh (Matt. 26:14), and when he delivered to him the cohort and ministers from the chief priests and Pharisees, that impious one certainly stretched his hands toward the earth. The judges of this earth were the priests and princes, Pilate and the mocking soldiers. This impious one, therefore, covered the face of its judges, because he veiled the hearts of the persecutors with the cloud of malice, lest they should know their Author. Whence it is said by Paul: Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart (2 Cor. 3:15). Who says again: For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). The face of the judges, therefore, stood covered, because the mind of those persecuting Him did not recognize Him as God even through miracles, whom it was able to hold in the flesh. But because the ancient enemy is one person with all the wicked, so for the most part Sacred Scripture speaks of the head of the wicked, that is, the devil, that it is suddenly derived to his body, that is,

to his followers. [Vet. XXII.] By the name of the impious, therefore, the unfaithful and persecuting people can be designated, to whom also this which is subjoined entirely agrees:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID.---But if it is not he, who then is it?

45. As if it were plainly said: Who is ever to be thought impious, if that people, which persecuted piety itself, is not impious? But the holy man, having considered the perfidy of the Jewish people, recalls the eyes of his mind to himself; he grieves because he cannot see Him whom he loves; he is affected with sorrow, because he is withdrawn from the present world before the salvation of the world is revealed. Whence also he adds:

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XVI].

VERSE 25.---My days were swifter than a runner; they fled, and they saw not good.

46. The ancient just men grieve that they did not arrive at the times of Christ.---For it is the office of a runner to announce things to follow. All the elect, therefore, who were born before the advent of the Redeemer, because they announced Him either by living only, or also by speaking, were as it were certain runners in the world. But because they foresee that they are withdrawn before the waited-for time of redemption, they

grieve that they pass away swifter than a runner; and they groan that their days are short, because they are by no means extended as far as seeing the light of the Redeemer. Whence it is aptly said: They fled, and they saw not good. All things that were created are good, as Moses attests, who says: God saw all things that He had made, and behold, they were very good (Gen. I, 31). But this good alone is principally good, through which all these things are good, which are not principally good. Of which good Truth says through the Gospel: None is good save God alone (Luke XVIII, 19). Because, therefore, the days of the ancient fathers were finished before God was shown in the flesh to the world, it is rightly said of those same days: They fled, and they saw not good. As if it were plainly said: They elapsed before the expected time, because they were unable to arrive at the presence of the Redeemer. Whence it is further added:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERSE 26.---They passed through as ships carrying fruit.

47. We are satisfied by the sight and fruit of Him whom they smelled by expecting. They brought to us the hidden fruit of the Spirit.--- Those who cross the seas carrying fruit, they indeed enjoy the odor of the fruits, but they bring the foods of the same fruits to others. What, therefore, were the ancient fathers but ships carrying fruit? Who, prophesying the mystery of the divine incarnation, were themselves possessed

of the odor of hope, but they brought to us the fruit of the perfection of the same hope. For what they smelled by expecting, this we are satisfied with by discerning and perceiving. Whence also the Redeemer says to those same disciples: Others have labored, and you have entered into their labors (John IV, 38). Whose days, namely, are compared to ships, because they run down; and rightly to those carrying fruit, because all the elect whom they bore before the presence of the Redeemer, they were able to refresh by expectation through the spirit of prophecy, but not to restore by manifest exhibition. Or certainly because ships, when they carry fruit, mix these with chaff, that they may bring them unharmed to land, rightly the days of the preceding fathers are described as similar to ships carrying fruit, because the words of the ancients, in that they announce the mysteries of spiritual life, preserve these through the straw of history interspersed, and bring to us the hidden fruit of the Spirit when they speak carnal things. For often while they narrate certain proper things, they are elevated to the secrets of Divinity. Who frequently also, when they behold the height of Divinity, are suddenly poured out to the mystery of His incarnation. [Vet. XXIII.] Whence it is still aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXII.

IBID.---As an eagle flying to its prey.

48. Like eagles they descend from the highest to the lowest, to be fed with the flesh of Christ.---

For it is the custom of the eagle to behold the rays of the sun with an unreverberated gaze; but when the need for refreshment urges, it inclines the same gaze of the eyes, which it had fixed on the rays of the sun, to the respect of a carcass; and although it flies to the heights, yet for the sake of taking flesh it seeks the earth. So namely, so were the ancient fathers, who, as far as the infirmity of humanity admitted, contemplated the light of the Creator with an erect mind; but foreknowing Him to be incarnated in the end of the world, they deflected their eyes as it were from the rays of the sun to the earth. And they come as it were from the highest to the lowest, while they acknowledge Him as God above all things and man within all things. Whom, while they behold Him about to suffer and die for the human race, by which death namely they knew themselves to be refreshed and reformed to life, as if in the manner of an eagle after the contemplated rays of the sun they seek food in a carcass. It is pleasing to look at the eagle intuiting the rays of the sun, which says: Mighty God, Father of the world to come, Prince of Peace (Isai. IX, 6). But let it come to the earth from the high flight of loftiness, let it inquire for the food of a carcass below. For a little after it adds, saying: The discipline of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruise we are healed (Isai. LIII, 5). And again: And He is a man, and who shall know Him (Jer. XVII, 10, sec. LXX)? The mind of the just man, therefore, lifted up to divinity, when it considers the grace of dispensation from His flesh, flies suddenly as it were from

the highest, like an eagle to its prey. But behold, that Israelite people, long ago infused with the immense spirit of prophecy, lost the gifts of the same prophecy, and did not remain in that faith which it had announced by foreseeing; and by denying it repelled from itself the presence of the Redeemer, which it declared by foreannouncing to all following. Whence also aptly the discourse is immediately turned through compassion to their hardness also, and it is indicated how the grace of prophecy is withdrawn from them. For it is added:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERSE 27.---When I have said: I will by no means speak so, I change my face, and I am tormented with grief.

49. The perfidy and reprobation of the Jews.--- For the Jewish people was unwilling to speak as before, which denied Him whom it had foretold. But having changed its face, it is tormented with grief, because while it polluted the aspect of its internal man, by which it could have been acknowledged by its Creator, with the filthiness of perfidy, beginning from present evils, it condemned itself under eternal vengeance. For as if with a changed face, it is not acknowledged by the Author, which, having lost the faith of a good conscience, is reproved. But certainly it remains that the grief of punishments should torment her, whom her Creator, not acknowledging, knows not. Because, therefore, we have run through these things under the signification

of our Redeemer, let us now repeat them by discussing morally.

MORAL SENSE.---50. CHAP. IX, VERSE 25.---My days were swifter than a runner; they fled, and they saw not good.---Of what goods man was spoiled by sinning, to what evils he was obnoxious.---As we have often said already, so the first man was so created, that his life could only be extended through the increases of times, not evolved. But because he fell spontaneously into fault, in that he touched the forbidden thing, he bore a down-course, which now man, oppressed by the desire of the present life, incessantly both tolerates and wishes for. For lest he should be finished, he desires to live, but through the increases of life he tends daily to the end. Nor does he perceive how very small the increments of times are, unless when suddenly those things are done which seemed long when coming. [Vet. XXIV.] Let the holy man, therefore, behold the state of his condition, and let him groan for the damages of the down-course from the voice of the human race, saying: My days were swifter than a runner; they fled, and they saw not good. As if he should say plainly: Man was created for this, that he might have been able to see the good, which is God; but he who was unwilling to stand at the light, lost his eyes by fleeing, because in that he began to run down to the lowest through fault, in that he bore blindness, lest he should see the internal light. Of which days it is still aptly subjoined: They passed through as ships carrying fruit. Ships when they carry fruit,

namely, carry the fruits of the earth through the waves. But the earth of man was paradise, which was able to hold him unshaken, if he had been willing to stand through innocence. But because he fell to the waves of mutability through fault, he came to the seas of the present life after the earth. The fruits also of this earth were the word of the command, the granted possibility of work, the intelligence of the Creator implanted in nature. But these fruits which we refused to eat in the earth, we carry through the seas, because we were unwilling to keep unshaken in paradise the granted goods of so many gifts, and we now endeavor to preserve them in temptations. Tending to the limit, we are impelled by the breeze of the present life, we are fatigued by the wave of our mutability. But because we are restricted to the inborn goods of nature through the mystery of the cross, we carry fruit as if through wood. Which however can be understood also in another way. For ships when they carry fruit, they have the sweetness of odor, but they have not the gravity of weight. And the human race, expelled from the joys of paradise, lost the power of contemplation, lost the strength of created fortitude; and when it raises itself to repeat the supernal things, it smells indeed with the odor of memory, but it does not worthily exert the weight of life. It is filled therefore with the odors of fruits, and yet the ship of our mind is impelled lightly hither and thither, because we both remember the loftiness of paradise with the record of odor, and we tolerate the importunate waves of temptations from

the flesh. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: As an eagle flying to its prey. [Vet. XXV.] For the eagle is suspended with a very high flight, and is poised to the ethers with a swift effort; but through the appetite of the belly it seeks the lands, and suddenly pours itself downwards from the heights. So so the human race fell to the lowest from the heights in the first parent, which namely the dignity of its condition had suspended in the loftiness of reason as if in the liberty of the air; but because, against the precept, it touched the forbidden food, it came to the lands through the concupiscence of the belly; and as if after flight it is fed with flesh, because it lost those free inspirations of contemplation, and below is delighted with corporeal pleasures. As therefore an eagle flying to its prey, our days pass swiftly, because in that we seek the lowest, in that we are prohibited from subsisting in life.

51. Hard questions about man's fall that must be restrained. The mind's blindness, though just, is still hard.---But when we revolve these things before the eyes of our mind with continuous thought, we are urged by hard silent questions: why did almighty God create him whom He foreknew would perish? why did He who is supremely powerful and supremely good by no means wish to make man such as could not perish? But when the silent mind asks these things, it fears lest by the very daring of the interrogation it should break out into pride, and it humbly compresses itself, and restrains its thoughts. But it is afflicted all the more heavily, because among

the evils which it sustains it is also tortured concerning the hidden understanding of its own condition. Whence here also it is aptly subjoined: When I shall say, By no means will I speak so, I change my face, and am tortured with grief. For we say that we ought by no means to speak so when, passing beyond the measure of our infirmity out of inquiry, we reprehend ourselves with fear, and restrain ourselves by the consideration of heavenly reverence. In which restraint surely the face of our mind is changed, because that which before, not comprehending, daringly required the highest things, afterwards recognizing its own infirmity, begins to venerate what it is ignorant of. But in that very change there is grief, because it is greatly afflicted, since by the merit of the first fault it is blinded to understanding those things which are about itself. It considers that what it suffers is just; it fears lest in grief it should exceed through license of speech; it imposes silence on its mouth, but the excited grief is increased by that very thing by which it is restrained. Let him say therefore: When I shall say, By no means will I speak so, I change my face, and am tortured with grief, because then we are generally more heavily afflicted, when as it were through the study of consolation we endeavor to lighten for ourselves the evils of our affliction. But whoever, now that the damnation of the first parent has been subtly propagated, considers the losses of the human race, it remains that he should fear to add his own to these. Whence the

holy man, after he brought in common things, suddenly subjoins special ones, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 28.---I feared all my works, knowing that Thou wouldest not spare the offender.

52. Job teaches that even good works are to be feared.---What works blessed Job exercised, the text of this sacred history shows. For he studied to appease the Author by manifold burnt offerings, because according to the number of his sons, as it is written, rising up at dawn, he offered burnt offerings for each one; and he cleansed them not only from unclean acts, but also from perverse thought. Of whom, Scripture being witness, it is related: For he said: Lest perchance my sons should have sinned, and blessed God in their hearts (Job 1:5). He exercised therefore the affection of compassion, because he himself, being exacted by the questions of his friends, says of himself: I wept once over him who was afflicted (Job 30:25). He bestowed the ministry of piety, who says: I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame (Job 29:15). He kept the purity of chastity in his heart, who opens himself by protesting, saying: If my heart has been deceived over a woman (Job 31:9). He held the summit of humility from his very marrow, who says: If I have despised to undergo judgment with my servant and my handmaid, when they disputed against me (Ibid., 13). He bestowed the benefits

of largess, who says: If I have eaten my morsel alone, and the ward has not eaten of it (Ibid., 17). And again: If his sides have not blessed me, and he has been warmed from the fleeces of my sheep (Ibid., 20). He exhibited the grace of hospitality, who says: The stranger did not remain without, my door was open to the traveler (Ibid., 32). And among these, to the heap of virtues through the more excellent way of charity, he loved even his enemies, who says: If I have rejoiced at the ruin of him who hated me (Ibid., 29). And again: For I have not given my throat to sinning, that I should seek his soul by cursing (Ibid., 30). Why therefore did the holy man fear his own works, who always exhibited those from which God is wont to be appeased towards iniquities? What is it then that, doing wonderful works, he also fears these very ones with trembling, when he says: I feared all my works, except what we gather in the acts and words of the holy man, that if we truly desire to please God, after we subdue perverse things, we should fear even those things well done in us?

[Vet. XXVI.] 53. Sloth and fraud are to be feared in those.---For there are two things which in good works it is necessary should be studiously dreaded, namely, sloth and fraud. Whence also it is said by the prophet in the ancient translation: Cursed is everyone who does the work of God fraudulently and slothfully (Jer. 48:10). But it is to be known greatly, that sloth is born through torpor, fraud through private love. For a smaller love of God exaggerates the former, but a private love evilly possessing the mind creates

the latter. For whoever, inordinately loving himself, through that which he has acted rightly, hastens to the transitory goods of remuneration, perpetrates fraud in the work of God. It is to be known also that fraud itself is committed in three ways, because through it, without doubt, either the silent grace of the human heart, or the breeze of favor, or any exterior thing whatever is desired. Against which it is rightly said of the just man by the prophet: Blessed is he who shakes his hands from every gift (Isa. 33:15). For because fraud is not only in the acceptance of money, a gift without doubt is not one. But there are three acceptances of gifts, to which one hastens from fraud. For a gift from the heart is grace caught by thought. A gift from the mouth is glory through favor. A gift from the hand is a reward through giving. But 313 every just man shakes his hands from every gift, because in that which he does rightly, he seeks neither to receive vain glory from the human heart, nor praise from the mouth, nor a giving from the hand. He alone, therefore, does not commit fraud in the work of God, who when he watches for the studies of good action, pants neither for the rewards of a corporeal thing, nor for the words of praise, nor for the grace of human judgment. Therefore our very goods, because they cannot escape the sword of waylaying fault, unless they be fortified daily by solicitous fear, it is now rightly said through the holy man: I feared all my works. As if it were said by humble confession: What things I have acted openly I see, but what I have endured latently in these I

am ignorant of. [Vet. XXVII]. For often our goods perish by robbing fraud, because earthly concupiscence subjoins itself to our right acts. Often they fail by intervening sloth, because they waste away from the fervor in which they were begun, as love grows cold. Because therefore the subreption of fault is with difficulty conquered even in the very act of virtue, what remains for security, except that fear should be studiously always even in virtue?

54. No offense is unavenged.---But after these things something very scrupulous objects itself to the heart which he subjoins: Knowing that Thou wouldest not spare the offender. For if the offender is not spared, who is snatched from eternal death, since no one is found pure from offense? Or does He spare the penitent and not spare the offender? Because when we bewail our offenses, we are by no means any longer offenders. But what of the fact that Peter, when he denies, is looked upon, and by the look of the denied Redeemer is called to tears? What of the fact that Paul, when he endeavored to extinguish the name of the Redeemer on earth, merited to hear His words from heaven? But nevertheless the fault in both was punished, because both of Peter, the Gospel being witness, it is written: Peter remembered the word of Jesus, and having gone out, he wept bitterly (Luke 22:61). And of Paul this same Truth, which called him, says: I will show him how great things it behoves him to suffer for My name (Acts 9:16). Therefore the Lord by no means spares the offender, because

He does not leave the offense without vengeance. For either man himself being penitent punishes this in himself, or God, vindicating this with man, strikes it. By no means therefore is sin spared, because it is in no way released without vindication. Thus David merited to hear after confession: The Lord has transferred thy sin (2 Sam. 12:13). And yet, being afflicted and fleeing after many tortures, he paid the guilt of the fault which he had perpetrated. Thus we are absolved by the wave of salvation from the fault of our first parent; but nevertheless, washing away the guilt of the same fault, being absolved also we still die carnally. Well therefore is it said: Knowing that Thou wouldest not spare the offender, because He cuts off our offenses either through us, or through Himself, even when He releases them. For He studies to wipe away the stains of iniquities from His elect by temporal affliction, which He does not wish to see in them forever. But often the mind, while it trembles more than is just, while it is shaken by fear, while it is urged by sinister suspicions, it tires her to live, who doubts that she will arrive at life even through labors. Whence also it is subsequently subjoined: VERSE 29.---But if I be also thus impious, why have I labored in vain?

CHAPTER XXXV

[Rec. XVIII].

314 55. The saints are so uncertain that they trust, they so trust that they are not sluggish.---

For if we are discussed with piety removed, our work is worthy of punishment, which we expect to be remunerated with rewards. Therefore the holy man, trembling under the hidden judgments, says: But if I be also thus impious, why have I labored in vain? not that it repents him to have labored, but that he is uncertain about rewards even among labors, and grieves. But it is to be known that holy men are so uncertain that they trust, and they so trust that nevertheless they are not sluggish from security. Because therefore generally the mind, even when expended in right acts, trembles, it remains that after a good work is acted, the tears of deprecation should be sought, so far as the humility of postulation may carry up the merit of the right work to eternal rewards. [Vet. XXVIII, Rec. XIX.] But nevertheless it is to be known that neither life nor tears are able to render us pure to perfection as long as the mortality of our corruption holds us. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSES 30, 31.---If I be washed as if with the waters of snow, and my hands shall shine as if most clean; yet Thou shalt dip me in filth, and my garments shall abominate me.

56. Tears cleanse, if they flow with humility. If not on account of earthly, but heavenly goods.--- For the waters of snow are the lamentations of humility. Which humility indeed, because it stands out before other virtues before the eyes of the strict Judge, shines as if by the color of

great merit. For there are some who have lamentations, but have not humility, because being afflicted they bewail, but nevertheless in those very weepings they are proud either against the life of their neighbors, or are erected against the ordination of the Creator. These namely have waters, but have not the waters of snow, and they cannot be clean, because they are by no means washed by the weepings of humility. But he had washed himself from fault with the waters of snow who confidently said: A contrite and humbled heart God does not despise (Ps. 50:19). For those who are afflicted with lamentations, but are rebellious by murmuring, indeed bruise the mind, but despise to be humbled. Although the waters of snow can be understood otherwise also. For the water of a fount and a river arises from the earth, but the water of snow falls forth from the air. And there are very many who torture themselves through the lamentations of prayers, but nevertheless through all the labors of lamentations they sweat out for earthly desires alone; they are pricked in prayers, but they seek the joys of transitory felicity. Therefore the water of snow does not wash these, because their weeping comes from the lowest things. For they are as it were drenched from the water of the earth, who are pricked in prayers for earthly goods. But those who therefore weep, because they desire heavenly rewards, the water of snow washes them, because heavenly compunction infuses them. For when they seek the perennial fatherland through lamentations, and being kindled by desires of it

they bewail, they receive from the highest things whence they may be cleansed. But by hands what else than works are designated? Whence it is said to some through the prophet: Your hands are full of blood (Isa. 1:15); that is, works with cruelty.

57. We do not attain perfect cleanness here.---It is to be noted indeed that the holy man does not say: My most clean hands have shone; but, as if my most clean hands, because as long as we are bound by the penalty of corruption, by whatever right works, we by no means apprehend true cleanness, but imitate it. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: Yet Thou shalt 315 dip me in filth. God is said to dip us in filth, to show us dipped in filth, because the more truly we rise to Him through good works, the more subtly we recognize the filths of our life, by which we discord from His cleanness. He says therefore: If I be washed as if with the waters of snow, and my hands shall shine as if most clean, yet Thou shalt dip me in filth. As if he were more plainly saying: Although I be infused with the lamentations of heavenly compunction, although I be exercised through the studies of right operation, yet in Thy cleanness I see that I am not clean. For the corruptible flesh still beats back the soul intent on God, and fouls the beauty of His love with obscene and illicit motions of thoughts.

[Vet. XXIX.] 58. The garment of the soul is the body.---Whence also it is added: And my garments shall abominate me. For what is expressed by the name of garment except this earthly body, with which the soul being clothed is covered,

lest it should appear naked in the subtlety of its substance? For hence Solomon says: At all times let thy garments be white (Eccles. 9:8); that is, the members of the body clean from sordid acts. Hence Isaiah says: The garment mixed with blood shall be for burning (Isa. 9:5). For to mix the garment with blood is to stain the body with carnal desires. With which indeed the Psalmist had feared to be polluted, when he said: Deliver me from bloods, O God, Thou God of my salvation (Ps. 50:16). Hence by the voice of the angel it is said to John: Thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments (Rev. 3:4). But after the manner of sacred eloquence our garments are related to abominate us, because they render us abominable; as also through Peter it is said of Judas: This man possessed a field from the reward of iniquity (Acts 1:18). For neither could Judas possess the field of the potter bought with the price of blood, who, the thirty pieces of silver being returned, immediately punished the crime of betrayal with a more criminal death in himself; but he possessed is said for he made to possess. So in this place: My garments shall abominate me is said for they shall make me abominable, because indeed while the members are proud against the mind, while they interrupt the studies of holy desire with the tumults of their temptations, the soul placed in its very conflict recognizes how much it is still despised by the Divinity, which fully desiring to pass over its correction, but not being able, is defiled by the dust of foul thought. He had felt this abomi-

nation of garments who said: I see another law in my members repugnant to the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members (Rom. 7:23). These garments also, in which he could not perfectly please, he desired to lay down quickly, to be resumed better at some time, saying: Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death (Rom. 7:24)? Let the just man say therefore: If I be washed as if with the waters of snow, and my hands shall shine as if most clean; yet Thou shalt dip me in filth, and my garments shall abominate me, because however much he shall have ascended to the highest things from the compunction of contemplation, however much he shall have girded himself in work through the exercise of labor, yet he still feels something unworthy from the body of death, and considers himself to be abominable in many things, which he carries from the weight of corruption.

[Vet. XXX, Rec. XX.] To whom this also becomes more heavy, that often he does not even understand this whence he offends. He receives scourges, but he does not recognize towards the strict Judge what 316 in himself may displease more, or what less. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERSE 32.---For neither will I answer to a man, who is like me, nor who can be heard with me in judgment on an equal footing.

59. How heavy it is for a just man to be ignorant whence he offends.---While we contend

with anyone in judgment on an equal footing, we both recognize what is said against us, and in those things which we say we are heard, and by how much we patently apprehend the things objected, by so much we daringly answer to the things proposed. Because therefore the invisible Judge sees what we do, He as it were hears what we say; but because we by no means fully know that which displeases Him, we as it were are ignorant of what He Himself says. The holy man therefore, considering the abomination of his garments, fears all the more, because he is not able to be heard on an equal footing in judgment, because as long as he is pressed by the weight of his corruption, he tolerates this more heavily in his penalty, that he also is ignorant of the sense of his Reprehender. As if he were plainly saying: In this I am not heard on an equal footing, because both all things which I do are patent, and yet I myself do not know through how many things I am reprehended. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VERSE 33.---There is none who may be able to rebuke both, and to lay his hand upon both.

60. What it is to rebuke God.---It sounds harsh that one should be sought who may rebuke God; but it will not be harsh if it recurs to the memory what He Himself says through another prophet. For through Isaiah He admonishes, saying: Cease to do perversely, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, defend the widow; and come, and rebuke me,

saith the Lord (Isai. I, 16). For we oppose with the authority of reason him whom we rebuke. And what is it that the Lord, admonishing us to do holy things, adds: Come, and rebuke me, unless that He openly suggests how much confidence He bestows on good actions? As if He were plainly saying: Do right things, and meet the movements of my animadversion no longer through the groan of deprecation, but through the confidence of authority. Hence for indeed John says: If our heart does not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God (I John III, 21). Hence it is that Moses, because he pleases while serving, is heard while silent, when it is said to him while silent: Why criest thou to me (Exod. XIV, 15)? Hence it is that he restrains Him when angry, when he hears: Let me alone, that my fury may be kindled against this people (Exod. XXXII, 10). Hence it is that the Lord complains that He had not one who rebuked, when it is said through the prophet: I sought for a man who should set up a hedge, and stand in the gap against me, lest I should destroy it, and I found none (Ezek. XXII, 30). Hence it is that Isaiah heavily deplores, saying: We all have fallen as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away; there is none who calleth upon thy name, who riseth up and holdeth thee (Isai. LXIV, 6, 7).

61. Christ alone could liberate us from death. By suffering He corrected the fault of man, and appeased the wrath of God. ---But any of the upright are able through the merit of received innocence sometimes to meet the movements of

present animadversion, but they are not able by their own virtue to expel from the human race the punishments of the death that is to follow. Let the holy man therefore consider the human race whither it has flowed down; let him behold the losses of eternal death; against which it is certainly evident that human justice by no means contradicts, let him see how perversely man has offended; let him see how strictly the Creator is angry against man, and let him seek a mediator of God and man, God and man. [Vet. XXXI, Rec. XXI.] Whom because he considers as to come long after, deploring let him say: There is none who may be able to rebuke both, and to lay his hand upon both. For the Redeemer of the human race, made a mediator of God and man through the flesh, because He alone appeared just among men, and yet reached the penalty of fault even without fault, both rebuked man lest he should offend, and withstood God lest He should strike, provided examples of innocence, and underwent the penalty of malice. By suffering therefore He rebuked both, who both corrected the fault of man, by breathing in justice, and tempered the wrath of the judge by dying; and He laid His hand on both, because He both provided examples for men which they might imitate, and showed to God in Himself works by which He might be appeased towards men. For none existed before Him, who should so intercede for the guilts of others, as not to have His own. Therefore one was not able to meet eternal death in others by so much as the guilt of his own bound him. There

came therefore a new man to men, a contradictor to fault, a friend to penalty; He showed wonderful things, He bore cruel things. He therefore laid His hand on both, because whence He taught the guilty right things, thence He appeased the angry judge. Who also provided this more wonderfully than His very miracles, because He corrected the hearts of the delinquent by mildness rather than by terror. Whence also is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Rec. XXII].

VERSE 34.---Let Him take away His rod from me, and let not His dread terrify me.

62. He corrected us by mildness rather than by terror. ---For through the law God had held a rod, when He said: If anyone shall do this or that, let him die the death. But being incarnate He took away the rod, because He showed the ways of life through mildness. Whence it is said to Him through the Psalmist: Aim, proceed prosperously, and reign, because of truth and mildness and justice (Psal. XLIV, 5). [Vet. XXXII.] For He willed not to be feared as God, but He inspired that He should be loved as a father. Which Paul clearly says: For you have not received the spirit of servitude again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba Father (Rom. VIII, 15). Whence here also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XL.

VERSE 35.---I will speak, and I will not fear Him.

63. Fear was not able to raise us from sin.---For the holy man, because he beholds the Redeemer of the human race coming mild, takes up not fear towards the Lord, but affection towards the father; and he despises fear, because through the grace of adoption he rises to love. Hence John says: Fear is not in charity, but perfect charity casteth out fear (I John IV, 18). Hence Zacharias says: That being delivered from the hand of our enemies we may serve Him without fear (Luke I, 74). Fear therefore was not able to raise us from the death of sin, but the breathed-in grace of mildness raised us to the state of life. Which is well signified by Elisha raising the son of the Sunamite (IV Kings IV, 30, 34), who when sending the boy with a staff, by no means restored life to the dead son; but coming by himself, and stretching himself upon the dead, and collecting himself to his members, walking hither and thither, and breathing seven times into the mouth of the dead, he immediately animated him to a revived light through the ministry of compassion. For God, the Author of the human race, grieved for as it were a dead boy, when He looked with pity upon us extinguished by the sting of iniquity. And because through Moses He brought forth the terror of the law, He as it were sent a rod through the boy. But the boy with the staff was not able to raise the dead, because, Paul attesting: The law brought nothing to perfection (Hebr. VII, 19). But He Himself coming by Himself,

and humbly stretching Himself upon the corpse, collected Himself to equal the members of the dead to Himself: Because when He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal to God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man (Philip. II, 6). He walks hither and thither, because He calls both Judea that is near, and the nations placed far off. He breathes seven times upon the dead, because through the opening of the divine gift He bestows the spirit of sevenfold grace upon those lying in the death of sin. And soon he is raised up living, because he, whom the rod of terror could not raise, through the spirit of love the boy returned to life. Let him say therefore from his own, let him say from the voice of the human race: Let Him take away His rod from me, and let not His dread terrify me; I will speak, and I will not fear Him. Where also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLI.

IBID.---For I am not able to answer while fearing.

64. Fear does not render to God obedience worthy of Him for His gifts.---For we are said to answer to anyone when we repay his deeds with worthy works. To answer to God therefore is to render our obediences to His preceding gifts. Whence also certain psalms, in which holy operation is proposed to be imitated, are prenoted for answering. For God created man upright, and He has tolerated with long-suffering him flowing

down to perverse things. Daily He beholds fault, and yet He does not sooner cut off the spaces of living; He bestows gifts by His benignity, and uses His patience towards the evil. Man ought to answer to so many benefits; but yet while fearing he is not able to answer, because he who still servilely dreads the Creator of the human race, beyond doubt does not love Him. For then only do we render true obediences to God, when we do not fear Him because of the confidence of love; when affection, not fear, directs us to good works; when evil no longer pleases our mind, even if it be allowed. For he who is restrained from the work of perversity out of fear, would freely do perverse things, if it were allowed. By no means therefore is he truly upright, who is not yet free from the desire of depravity. Well therefore is it said: For I am not able to answer while fearing, because we do not render true obediences to God, if we serve His commands out of fear, and not rather out of love. But when the love of His sweetness is kindled in our mind, all desire of the present life is lightened, delight is turned into weariness, and the mind tolerates with sorrow this life, which it formerly served, conquered by a reprobate love. Whence also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLII

[Vet. XXXIII, Rec. XXIII].

BOOK X, VERSE 1.---My soul is weary of my life.

65. The love of God brings forth weariness of this life, and leads to the confession of errors. ---But when the present life begins to become vile, when the love of the Creator begins to grow sweet, the mind kindles itself against itself, that it ought to accuse itself of the faults, in which it formerly defended itself, being ignorant of heavenly things. Whence still rightly he adds:

CHAPTER XLIII.

IBID.---I will let loose my speech against myself.

66. He as it were uses his speech for himself, who endeavors to defend the evil things which he has done with excuses. But he lets loose his speech against himself, who begins to accuse in himself that in which he has erred. But often even when we offend we also judge those things which we do. The mind itself accuses what it perpetrates; but because it by no means deserts this from desire, it is ashamed to confess what it has done. But when already with its whole judgment it presses down the delight of the flesh, it raises itself with a daring voice to the confession of its own accusation. Whence rightly it is now said: I will let loose my speech against myself, because the strong mind begins to relax against itself words of detestation, which it formerly weakly retained out of shame within itself. But there are some who with open voices confess their faults, but yet know not how to groan in confession, and say things to be lamented while rejoicing. Whence still is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIV

[Rec. XXIV].

IBID.---I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

67. Let confession be made in bitterness of soul.---He who speaks detesting his faults, it remains that it is necessary that he speak them in bitterness of soul, so that this very bitterness may punish whatever the tongue accuses through the judgment of the mind. For it is to be known that from the penalty of penitence, which the mind imposes on itself, it in some measure perceives security, and rises more confident to the interrogation of the heavenly Judge, so that it may find itself more subtly, and recognize how everything is disposed towards itself. Whence also immediately is added:

CHAPTER XLV.

VERSE 2.---I will say to God: Do not condemn me; indicate to me why thou judgest me so.

68. God judges us here and punishes in two ways.---Because he asserts himself a sinner in bitterness of soul, what else does he say to God than that he may not be condemned? because the bitterness of present penitence extinguishes the punishments of the following wrath. For in two ways in this life God judges man, because either through present evils He already begins to impose the following torments, or He extinguishes the following torments by present scourges. For

unless the just Judge, the offenses requiring it, should strike some both now and afterwards, Jude would by no means have said: He destroyed the second time those who did not believe (Jude 5); and of the iniquitous the Psalmist would not say: Let them be covered with their confusion as with a double cloak (Psal. CVIII, 29). For we call a double cloak (diploide) a double garment. They therefore are clothed with confusion as with a double cloak who according to the merit of their guilt are struck with both temporal and perpetual animadversion. For only the penalty from punishment liberates those whom it changes. For those whom present evils do not correct, they lead through to following ones. But if by no means present penalty defended some from eternal punishment, Paul would by no means have said: When we are judged, we are rebuked by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with this world (I Cor. XI, 32). Hence by an angelic voice it is said to John: Those whom I love I rebuke and chastise (Apoc. III, 19). Hence also it is written: Whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth, he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (Hebr. XII, 6):

[Vet. XXXIV.] 69. The mind of the just man trembles that it may be secure.---Therefore often the mind of the just man, that it may be more secure, trembles more deeply; and when it is girt with scourges, it is troubled by the uncertainty of the heavenly judgment. It dreads lest all that it suffers be the beginning of following damnation; and through thought it interrogates the judge,

because it doubts concerning the merits of its life in the smiting. But when the virtue of life is brought back to the eyes of the mind, as it were a consolation is answered by the judge, because He by no means smites to destroy him whom He guards while smiting in the innocence of action. Well therefore is it now said: Indicate to me why thou judgest me so. As if it were openly said: Because by scourging Thou judgest me, show that which Thou renderest secure through scourges for judgment. Which however can be understood also otherwise. For very often the just man perceives scourges for testing, and discussing his life with most subtle inquisition, although he both feels and confesses himself a sinner, for what special fault however he is smitten, he by no means knows; and he trembles all the more in the smiting, as he is ignorant of the causes of his smiting. He petitions that the judge indicate himself to him, so that what he smites by noticing, this he himself also may chastise in himself by weeping. For he knows that the most equitable Avenger in no way afflicts any of us unjustly, and he is shaken by great fear, because he both grieves in the lash, and is not able to apprehend perfectly in himself what he may deplore. Whence still is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVI

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 3.---Doth it seem good to thee, if thou shouldst calumniate and oppress the poor man,

the work of thy hands, and help the counsel of the impious?

70. The anxiety of the just man ignorant of why he is scourged.---This is certainly said through interrogation in such a way that it is denied. As if it were openly said: Thou who art supremely good, I know that Thou dost not judge it good, that Thou shouldst press the poor man through calumny. And I know therefore that it is not unjust what I suffer, and I grieve all the more as I am ignorant of the causes of justice. It is to be noted however that he does not say That thou shouldst oppress the innocent, but the poor man. For he who objects by no means innocence, but his poverty, to the strictness of the judge, no longer takes up daring from his life, but shows how weak he beholds himself. Where also he congruously subjoins: The work of thy hands. As if he should plainly say: Thou canst not impiously oppress him, whom Thou rememberest to have made gratuitously.

71. God does not permit us to be tempted above our strength.---But well is it subjoined: And help the counsel of the impious? For whom does he call impious in this place, unless the malignant spirits? Who since they are not able to return themselves to life, cruelly seek companions for death. Whose counsel certainly was that the divine rebuke should touch blessed Job, and that he who had existed just in tranquility, should at least through scourges sin. But the Lord did not help the counsel of the impious, because for their temptations He gave up the flesh of the

just man, but denied his soul. This counsel the malignant spirits incessantly enter into against the good, that these whom they behold to serve God innocently in tranquility, being vexed by adversities may be snatched away to the whirlpool of fault. But the sharpness of their counsel is destroyed, because the pious Creator moderates the scourges with their strengths, lest the penalty should surpass virtue, and through the craftiness of the strong human infirmity should fail. Whence also it is well said through Paul: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make also with temptation a way out, that you may be able to bear it (I Cor. X, 13). For unless the merciful God should modify the temptations with their strengths, there is surely no one who should not bear the snares of the malignant spirits by falling, because if the judge does not provide a measure for temptations, by that very thing he immediately casts down him who is standing, by which he imposes burdens beyond strength. Thus however blessed Job by denying sought those things which he brought forth, as also by seeking he denies those things which he immediately subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XLVII

[Rec. XXVI].

VERSES 4-7.---Hast thou carnal eyes, or as man seeth shalt thou also see? Are thy days as the days of man, or thy years as the times of men, that

thou shouldst seek my iniquity, and search my sin? and shouldst know that I have done nothing impious.

72. The difference of human and divine sight, of our days and of eternity.---Carnal eyes recognize the deeds of times only in time, because they themselves also come forth for seeing with time, and are closed with time; and human sight follows any work, it does not precede it, because it scarcely beholds existing things, and in no way recognizes future things. [Vet. XXXV.] The days also and years of man differ from the days and years of eternity, because our life, which is begun in time, is finished in time; while it forms within the breadth of its bosom, eternity devours it. Whose immensity, because it is stretched above us on both sides, without beginning and end its eternal being is dilated; and to it neither past things pass by, nor as yet future things, as if they should not appear, are wanting, because He who has to be always, beholds all things present to Himself; and since in beholding He is not stretched after and before, He is varied by no mutation of look. Let him say therefore: Hast thou carnal eyes; or as man seeth, shalt thou also see? Are thy days as the days of man, and thy years as human times, that thou shouldst seek my iniquity, and search my sin? and shouldst know that I have done nothing impious. As if humbly inquiring, he should say: Why dost Thou examine me in time through scourges, whom Thou hast known perfectly with Thee even before times? Why dost Thou interrogate my faults with lashes, whom

through the power of Thy eternity Thou art not ignorant of even before Thou shouldst create? Of which power certainly he soon expresses the weight, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

IBID.---Since there is no one who can rescue from your hand.

73. The humble prayer of the scourged.---As if he should say openly: What remains for you, but to spare, whose power no one is able to oppose? For since there is no one who may restrain your animadversion by the merit of his own virtue, by so much the more easily may your piety require of itself that it spare. But because we, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquities, either harmfully perpetrate wicked things, or even in doing right things incautiously fail, we have nothing by which the strict judge may become appeasable to us. But when we cannot exhibit our work as worthy to his sight, it remains that for his appeasement we offer to him his own work. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIX

[Rec. XXVII].

VERSE 8.---Your hands have fashioned me, and made me all together round about, and do you thus suddenly cast me down?

74. The Manichaean dogma is destroyed.---As if he should humbly say to Him: Because

under a just examination what I have done is not worthy of your appeasement, weigh it mercifully, lest what You have made should perish. By which words also the perverse Manichaean dogma is destroyed, which, lying that there are two principles, endeavors to assert that the spirit was created by God, but the flesh by Satan. For the holy man, full of the grace of the prophetic spirit, considers things to come long after, and foreseeing the seeds of errors tramples on them, saying: Your hands have fashioned me, and made me all together round about. For he who asserts that he was both fashioned and made all together round about by God, leaves nothing to the nation of darkness either in his spirit or in his flesh. For he referred to himself as fashioned because of the internal image; but as made all together round about, in that which consists in the garment of the flesh, he made mention.

[Vet. XXXVI.] 75. The prerogative of man in the condition of things.---But it is to be noted that because he asserts that he was fashioned by the hands of God, he opposes the dignity of his condition to the mercy of the judge. For although all things were created through the Word coeternal with the Father, yet in that very relation of creation it is shown how much man is preferred to all animals, how much to things even celestial, but yet insensible. For He spoke all things and they were made (Psal. CXLVIII, 5). But when He decrees to make man, He premises this which is to be reverently weighed, saying: Let us make man in our image and likeness (Gen. I, 26). For it

is not written of him as of other things, Let it be made, and it was made (Ibid., 3); nor did the earth bring forth man as the waters the flying things; but before he should be made, Let us make is said, so that clearly because a rational creature was being created, he might seem to be made as if with counsel. He is fashioned as if through study from the earth, and by the inspiration of the Creator is raised up in the virtue of the vital spirit, so that clearly he might exist not through the voice of command, but through the dignity of operation, who was being made in the image of the Creator. What therefore man through his condition received more elegantly than the rest of the creatures on earth, this, placed in the scourge, he opposes to the piety of his Maker, saying: Your hands have fashioned me, and made me all together round about, and do you thus suddenly cast me down? As if he should say openly: Why do you despise with such vileness him whom you created with such dignity? And him whom by reason you prefer to other things, why do you subject to pain? But yet this same dignity of ours shines through the image, and is far distant from the perfection of blessedness through the flesh, because while the spirit is mixed with the dust, it is in a certain way connected to infirmity. Which infirmity clearly blessed Job objects to the piety of the judge, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER L

[Rec. XXVIII].

VERSE 9.---Remember, I beseech you, that you have made me as the clay.

76. Why the angel sinned unpardonably, but not man.---The spirits of the angels sinned unpardonably for this reason, because they could stand so much more robustly, as the admixture of flesh did not hold them. But man for this reason merited pardon after his fault, because through the carnal body he received something by which he might be less than himself. Whence also in the sight of the judge this same infirmity of the flesh is an argument of piety; as is said by the Psalmist: But he is merciful, and will become propitious to their sins, and will not destroy them. And he multiplied so as to turn away his anger from them, and did not kindle all his wrath, and remembered that they are flesh (Psal. LXXVII, 38). Man therefore was made as clay, because he was taken from the slime for his condition. For it becomes clay, when water sprinkles itself upon the earth. As clay therefore man was created, because as it were water pours upon the dust, when the soul moistens the flesh. Which the holy man well objects to the piety of the judge, when praying he says: Remember, I beseech you, that you have made me as the clay. As if he should say openly: Consider the infirmity of the flesh, and release the guilt of iniquity. Where openly also the death of the same flesh is added, when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER LI.

IBID.---And You will reduce me into dust.

77. The infirmity of the flesh excuses man.---As if he should openly pray, saying: Remember, I beseech You, that through the flesh I come from the earth, and through its destruction I tend toward the earth. Behold therefore the matter of my origin, and the penalty of my end, and spare the fault that passes away more quickly. [Vet. XXXVII, Rec. XXIX.] But because he brought forward the quality of man as created, now he subjoins the order of man as propagated, saying:

CHAPTER LII.

VERSES 10, 11.---Have you not drawn me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? You have clothed me with skin and flesh, and have knit me together with bones and sinews.

78. A description of the origin of man.---For man, when fashioned, was made as clay, but when propagated, he is both drawn out as milk from seed, and curdled like cheese in the flesh. He is clothed with flesh and skin, and solidified with bones and sinews. Through clay, therefore, the quality of the first condition is expressed; through milk, however, the order of the following conception; because he is led through the increases of coagulation, that he may be strengthened by degrees into bones. But the description of the created body is a narrow praise of God, unless there be also subsequently expressed the wonderful aspiration of vivification. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER LIII.

VERSE 12.---You have granted me life and mercy.

79. The inspiration and preservation of life.---But in vain the Creator grants us good things, if He Himself does not keep everything He has granted. It follows,---IBID:---And Your visitation has kept my spirit. But these things which we have said about the exterior man, we like briefly to show by repeating how they can also agree with the interior man.

80. Man is clay, he becomes dust when grace is withdrawn. He suffers the wars of the flesh, but is strengthened by grace.---Remember, I beseech You, that You have made me as the clay. For our interior man exists as clay, because the grace of the Holy Spirit is infused into the earthly mind, so that it may be raised up to the understanding of its Creator. For human thought, which had dried up by the sterility of its sin, through the power of the Holy Spirit, like irrigated land, becomes green. But often while we use without interruption the virtues of the heavenly gift we have received, we are elevated to private confidence by the use of continuous prosperity. Whence it happens for the most part that the same Spirit who had lifted him up deserts him for a little while, in order to show the man himself to himself. Which the holy man immediately expresses, when he subjoins: And You will reduce me into dust. For because through the subtraction of the Spirit the mind is somewhat deserted in temptation, the earth is dried up as if from its former moisture, so that, being left behind, it may feel its own infir-

mity, and without the infusion of heavenly grace may know how much man has dried up. Who also is fitly said to be reduced to dust, because, being left to himself, he is carried away by the breeze of any temptation. But while, being left behind, we are shaken, we now think more subtly upon those gifts which we knew when inspired. Whence he subjoins: Have You not drawn me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? For our mind, when through the grace of the Holy Spirit it is drawn away from the use of the old conversation, is drawn out as milk, because it is formed in a certain tenderness and subtlety of a new beginning; and it is curdled like cheese, because it is bound together in the thickening of a growing thought, so that it may no longer flow away through desires, but collecting itself in one love, it may rise to a solid reformation. [Vet. XXXVIII.] But for the most part against these same spiritual rudiments the flesh murmurs from old use, and the mind endures wars from the man whom it carries without. Whence he subjoins: You have clothed me with skin and flesh. For with skin and flesh the interior man is clothed, because in that he is raised up to heavenly things, he is hedged in by the siege of carnal motions. But the Creator in no way deserts in temptation him who tends to righteousness, He who through the infusion of grace prevents even the sinner; but he both looses the lifted-up mind to wars without, and strengthens it within. Whence still it is fitly subjoined: You have knit me together with bones and sinews. We are clothed with flesh and skin,

but we are knit together with bones and sinews, because although we are shaken by temptation rushing in from without, yet within the hand of the Creator strengthens us, lest we be broken. By the motions of the flesh, therefore, He humbles us toward gifts, but through the bones of virtues He strengthens us against temptations. He says therefore: You have clothed me with flesh and skin, and have knit me together with bones and sinews. As if he should say openly: You desert me without for trial, but yet You keep me within by binding me with virtues, lest I perish. Who for this reason grants us the rectitude of living well, because He kindly spares the past things in which we have failed. Whence also still it is fitly subjoined: You have granted me life and mercy.

81. He receives and keeps life from the preventing and subsequent mercy of God.---Life indeed is granted when kindness is breathed into malignant minds. But life can in no way be received without mercy, because the Lord does not help to obtain the goods of justice, if He does not first mercifully release past iniquities. Or certainly He grants us life and mercy, because that mercy by which He prevents us for living well, He also keeps by that which is subsequent. For unless He should substitute mercy, the life which He provides cannot be kept. For by the very daily use of human life we grow old, and by the impulse of the exterior man through slippery thought we go out from interior things. And unless heavenly visitation should either vivify us by compuncting us to love, or restore us by scourging us to fear, by a

sudden fall the mind is entirely destroyed from its foundation, which seemed to have been renewed by a long study of virtue. Whence he subjoins: And Your visitation has kept my spirit. For heavenly visitation keeps the human spirit, when it does not cease to either strike with a scourge or compunct with love this spirit enriched with virtues. For if He bestows gifts, but does not lift up this spirit by continually restoring it, the good is more quickly lost which is not kept by the Giver. But behold, the holy man, while he humbly acknowledges himself, discovers the secrets of divine mercy to be conferred generally; and when he truthfully confesses his infirmity, suddenly he is sublimely carried away to know the calling of the Gentiles. For he immediately adds:

CHAPTER LIV

[Rec. XXX].

VERSE 13.---Although you conceal these things in your heart, yet I know that you remember all things.

82. The calling of the Gentiles hidden in the counsel of God.---As if he should say openly: Why do I tremble for myself, I who know that You also collect all the Gentiles? Which however You conceal in Your heart, because You do not yet indicate this by open speech. But You who remember all things, undoubtedly make me certain of pardon. [Vet. XXXIX.] But it is to be known that in certain deeds we are both made certain of pardon, and after the commission of faults we are strength-

ened to the confidence of our absolution by subsequent correction and penitence; yet we are still touched by the memory of our perpetrated iniquities, and being turned away and unwilling, we are struck by unlawful thought. Whence also it is fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER LV

[Rec. XXXI].

VERSE 14.---If I have sinned, and You have spared me for an hour, why do You not suffer me to be clean from my iniquity?

83. How sins once deleted infect the memory and renew the war. What is then to be done.--- The Lord spares sin for an hour, when He washes away the guilt of the fault by the tears immediately granted. But He does not suffer us to be clean from our iniquity, because we indeed committed the fault willingly, but sometimes we endure its memory with delight unwillingly. For often that which has already been deleted from the sight of the judge by intervening weeping returns to the soul, and the conquered fault strives to creep in again toward delight, and is renewed in the ancient contest by a revived pulsation; so that what it did before in the body, this it afterwards revolves in the mind by importunate thought. Which that spiritual athlete knew how to cautiously behold, who said: My scars have become putrid and have deteriorated, from the face of my foolishness (Psal. XXXVII, 6). For what are scars but the healings of wounds? [Vet. XL.] He

had therefore beheld released iniquities returning to the delight of memory, who was bewailing his scars. For scars to become putrid is for the already healed wounds of sins to creep again into temptation, and from their suggestions, after the skin of penitence has been drawn over, to feel again the stench and the pain of the fault. In which matter clearly nothing is done without by work, and it is sinned only within by thought; and the mind binds itself with strict guilt, unless it wipes this away by solicitous laments.

84. Whence it is well said by Moses: If there shall be among you a man who is polluted by a nocturnal dream, he shall go out without the camp; and he shall not return before he is washed with water at evening, and after the setting of the sun he shall return into the camp (Deut. XXIII, 10). For a nocturnal dream is an occult temptation, through which by a dark thought something base is conceived in the heart, which however is not fulfilled by the work of the body. But he who is polluted by a nocturnal dream is commanded to go out without the camp, because clearly it is worthy that he who is polluted by an unclean thought should judge himself unworthy of the societies of all the faithful, should place the merit of his fault before his eyes, and should despise himself from the estimation of the good. Therefore, for the polluted one to go out without the camp is for one laboring under a base impulse to despise himself from the comparison of the continent. He who is washed with water at evening, when beholding his defect he is converted to the

laments of penitence, so that by tears he may wash away everything which the occult pollution accuses in his soul. But let him return to the camp after the setting of the sun, because, the heat of temptation cooling down, it is necessary that he again take up confidence toward the society of the good. For after the washing of water, the sun setting, he returns to the camp, who after the laments of penitence, the flame of unlawful thought growing cold, is restored to presume the merits of the faithful; so that he may no longer estimate himself to be far from the rest, who rejoices that he is clean through the death of the inward heat. But among these things it is to be known that for this reason we are sometimes afflicted by the impulse of unlawful thought, because in certain acts of earthly conversation, although lawful, we are willingly occupied. And when even in the least things an earthly action is touched through desire, the strength of the ancient enemy growing against us, our mind is polluted by no small importunity of temptation. Whence also the priest of the law is commanded to burn with fires the members of the victim cut into pieces, the head and those things which are about the liver, but first to wash with water the feet and the intestines of the victim (Levit. I, 7, 12). For we ourselves offer a sacrifice to God when we dedicate our life to divine worship. We who place the members of the victim cut into pieces upon the fire, when distinguishing the works of our life in virtues we offer them. We burn the head and those things which are contained near

the liver, when in our sense, by which the whole body is ruled, and in occult desires we burn with the flame of divine love. And yet it is commanded that the feet and the intestines of the victim be washed. For by the feet the earth is touched, but in the intestines dung is carried, because for the most part we are already kindled toward eternity from desire, already with our whole sense of devotion we pant for the appetite of our mortification; but because we still do something earthly because of infirmity, we tolerate in the heart some unlawful things even which we have already subdued. And when an unclean temptation pollutes our thoughts, what else do the intestines of the victim carry but dung? But so that they ought to be burned, let them be washed, because certainly it is necessary that the weeping of fear should wash away the unclean thoughts, which heavenly love may kindle in the acceptance of the sacrifice. And whatever the mind suffers either from an unexperienced contest or from the memory of its former conversation, let it be washed, that it may burn so much more sweetly in the sight of its Beholder, as when it has begun to assist Him it places nothing earthly with itself, nothing slippery on the altar of its prayer. Let the holy man therefore behold the losses of the human mind, that for the most part it pollutes itself by unlawful thought; and after the judge releases the guilt of the work, let him, bewailing his own, open ours which we should bewail, saying: If I have sinned, and You have spared me for an hour, why do You not suffer me to be clean from

my iniquity? As if he should say openly: If pardon has taken away the fault, why does it not also wipe it from the memory? [Vet. XLI, Rec. XXXII.] But often the mind is so shaken in the record of a fault, that it is urged toward the commission of it far more heavily than it had been captured before; and being caught it trembles, and being impelled by various motions it disturbs itself. It fears indeed lest it be overcome by temptations, but resisting it dreads this very thing that it is afflicted by the long labor of the contest. Whence also it is fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER LVI.

VERSE 15.---And if I be impious, woe is me; and if just, I shall not lift up my head, filled with affliction and misery.

85. The distinction between one resisting and one yielding to vices.---For the impious has woe, the just misery, because both eternal damnation follows the reprobate, and every elect person is expiated by the pains of transitory adversity. The impious raises his head, but being elated he is not able to escape the woe which follows. The just, afflicted by the labor of his contest, is not permitted to lift up his head, but being pressed down he is delivered from perpetual affliction. The former lifts himself up in pleasures, but is submerged by the following punishments. The latter depresses himself in pain, but yet hides himself from the weight of eternal animadversion. Let the holy man therefore consider that either a man resisting vices is affected by present labor,

or succumbing he is delivered over to perpetual affliction, and let him say: And if I be impious, woe is me; and if just, I shall not lift up my head, filled with affliction and misery. As if he should openly deplore, saying: Either prostrate under the desires of the flesh, I am subjected to eternal punishment; or repugnant to unlawful motions, I am tortured by present penalty, because I am not free from the labor of the contest. But the heavenly dispensation for this reason permits us, serving it with our whole intention, to be shaken by the impulses of our flesh, lest our mind should dare to be lifted up into pride by the presumption of its own security, so that while being struck it trembles, it may fix the foot of hope more robustly in the aid of its Author alone. Whence also it is still fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER LVII

[Rec. XXXIII].

VERSE 16.---And on account of pride You shall catch me as a lioness.

86. By what art a lioness may be caught. In the same way we also have fallen and been restored.---For a lioness, when she seeks food for her cubs, rushes greedily into the pit of capture. For as it is reported from certain regions, a pit is made in her path, in which a beast is placed, so that the lioness may be provoked to cast herself thither by the appetite for it: which is prepared narrow and at the same time deep, so that she may be able to fall into it by going around, but

may by no means escape it by leaping. Another pit also, which coexists with the former, is dug out, which however is joined to that in which the beast is, by the opening of the extreme part. In which indeed a cage is placed, so that the falling lioness, because she is urged from above by terrors, when she desires to hide herself as if in a more secret part of the pit, may enter the cage willingly; whose ferocity is now by no means feared, because she is lifted up closed in the cage. For she who of her own accord fell into the pit, returns to the upper parts surrounded by bars. Thus, thus indeed the human mind was captured, which, established in the liberty of choice, while it desired to nourish the desires of the flesh, sought food as if for a lioness's cubs, and fell into the pit of its own deception, which, at the persuasion of the enemy, stretched out its hand to the forbidden food. But in the pit it straightway found a cage, because coming spontaneously to death it soon endured the prison of its own corruption; and it is led back to the free airs, grace intervening. But when it endeavors to do many things, and is not able, it is bound by the obstacles of its own corruption as if by the bars of a cage. Already indeed it has escaped that pit of damnation into which it had fallen, because it has overcome the punishment of the following death, aided by the hand of redemption, by returning to pardon. But yet being straightened it tolerates the cage, because it is also girded by the bonds of heavenly discipline, lest it should wander through the desires of the flesh. She,

therefore, who of her own accord fell into the pit, returns closed to the free airs, because both through the liberty of choice it fell into fault, and yet the grace of the Creator constrains this from its own motions, being forced and unwilling. After the pit, therefore, it suffers the cage, which, being snatched from eternal punishment, is bound from the motions of depraved liberty under the dispensation of the heavenly Artificer. Rightly therefore he says: And on account of pride You shall catch me as a lioness, because both the free man brought death upon himself through food, and being led back to pardon he lives better closed under discipline. As a lioness therefore on account of pride he was captured, because from that now the discipline of his corruption depresses him, from which not fearing the transgression of the precept, he boldly gave a leap into the pit.

[Vet. XLII.] 87. Thus also one elated by virtue is permitted to fall, that he may be healed from pride.---But if for a little while we avert the gaze of the mind from the fault of our first parent, we still daily find ourselves caught as a lioness through the vice of elation. For often a man, having received virtues, is lifted up into the audacity of his own presumption, but by a wonderful dispensation of piety any matter whatever in which he may fall is ordained before his eyes. And while he seeks something through fault, what else does he covet but the prey in the pit? Of his own accord gaping he falls, but he is not able to rise by his own strength. Who, when he considers that he is

nothing of himself, learns without doubt whose aid he should seek. Whom however heavenly mercy carries away when captured as if from the pit, because it leads him back to pardon, his infirmity being known. In the manner of a lioness, therefore, on account of pride he returns to the upper parts in a cage, who when he is extolled from virtue, having fallen to desires, is bound in humility. For because he had first perished by his own presumption, it is acted by wonderful piety, that he may now live closed by the knowledge of his own infirmity. Which because the holy man beholds frequently happen to men, he takes up the voice of our danger in himself; so that when we recognize his wailing, we may learn the things which are to be wailed in us. But when elation lifts up our mind, the compunction of the highest love straightway recedes from us; but when heavenly grace visits us, it straightway instigates us by tears to its own desires. Whence also it is fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER LVIII

[Rec. XXXIV].

IBID.---And returning You wonderfully torture me.

88. The hardening of the mind deserted by God, the compunction of the one visited.---When we are relinquished by our Author, we do not at all feel even the losses of our destitution. For by as much as the Creator deserts us far off, by so much our mind hardens more insensibly, loves

none of the things which are of God, by no means covets heavenly things; and because it does not have the heat of inward love, it lies cold below, and in a miserable way becomes daily so much more secure as it is worse; and when it does not remember whence it has fallen, and does not fear the punishments to follow, it does not know how much it is to be bewailed. But if it is touched by the breath of the Holy Spirit, it straightway awakes to the consideration of its own perdition, shakes itself in the inquiry of celestial things, is kindled with the heats of the highest love, considers the losses which press it around, and wailing makes progress, who before was perishing joyful. Well therefore it is said to the Creator: And returning You wonderfully torture me, because the almighty God, whence visiting our mind He lifts it up to His love, thence He afflicts it more heavily through tears. As if he should openly say: By relinquishing me You by no means affect me, because You render me insensible; but when You return You torture me, because while You insinuate Yourself to me, You show me how much I am to be bewailed. Whence also he asserts that he is by no means painfully, but wonderfully tortured, because while through weeping the mind is snatched to the highest things, rejoicing it wonders at the penalty of its own compunction; and it is pleasing to be affected, because by its own affliction it beholds itself to be raised to the heights. [Vet. XLIII.] But often when the heavenly piety sees us to be sluggish from the exercise of holy desire, it objects the examples of those fol-

lowing it to our gazes, so that the mind relaxed through leisure, by as much as it considers in others the progress of the vigilant, by so much it may blush in itself at the laziness of its torpor. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER LIX

[Rec. XXXV].

VERSE 17.---You renew Your witnesses against me, and You multiply Your wrath, and punishments war in me.

89. By the examples of the good God recalls us to Himself.---For the witnesses of God are those who, through the exercise of holy work, testify what rewards of truth shall follow the elect. Whence also those whom we recognize to have suffered for the truth we call in the Greek eloquence martyrs, that is, witnesses. And through John, the Lord shall say by an angelic voice: In the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was slain among you (Rev. 2:13). But the Lord renews His witnesses against us when He multiplies the life of the elect, contrary to our depravity, for our reproof and instruction. Therefore His witnesses are renewed against us, because all things which they do are adverse to the pursuits of our depravity. Whence also the word of truth is called an adversary, when it is said by the voice of the Mediator through the Gospel: Be agreeing with your adversary quickly, while you are with him in the way (Matt. 5:25). And of this same Redeemer the reprobate persecuting Him say: He is contrary

to our works (Wisd. 2:12); and a little after: And his life is unlike others (Ibid., 15). Therefore the Lord renews His witnesses against us, because those good things which we ourselves neglect to do, He demonstrates to be done by others for our correction; so that we who are not kindled by precepts, may at least be excited by examples, and in the appetite for rectitude our mind may estimate nothing to be difficult for itself which it sees to be perfectly performed by others. And it happens for the most part that when we behold the good things of another's life, we more solicitously fear the losses of our own; and by so much it may be open by how great a weight of animadversion we are afterwards affected, as we now differ far from the morals of the good.

90. Their labor indicates what punishment awaits the reprobate. What motions of the mind the goods seen in others ought to excite.--- Whence also, the renewal of the witnesses being mentioned, it is straightway fitly subjoined: And You multiply Your wrath. The wrath of God is said to be multiplied to us in this, that it is indicated to be manifold, because from the very life and labor of the good we now know, if we will not be amended while there is time, with how great animadversion we shall afterwards be struck. For we behold the elect of God both to act piously and to tolerate many cruel things. From this therefore it is gathered with how great strictness the strict Judge shall there strike those whom He reprobates, if here He so tortures those whom He loves; Peter attesting, who says: It is time that judgment

begin from the house of God; but if first from us, what is the end of those who do not believe the Gospel of God (1 Pet. 4:17)? The almighty God therefore, when He renews witnesses against us, multiplies wrath, because by as much as He objects the life of the good to our eyes, by so much He shows with what strictness He shall strike in judgment the hardness of the depravity committed. For when He exaggerates gifts to those alone following Him, He demonstrates that He has already relinquished the sluggish. When therefore we behold good things in others, it is very necessary that we mix both exultation with our fear, and fear with our exultation, so that both charity may rejoice at the progress of others, and conscience may tremble at its own infirmities. But when we are refreshed by fraternal progress, when we weigh the strictness of the internal Judge over us from our very sluggishness, what remains but that the soul return to discuss itself, and whatever it finds reprobate in itself, whatever depraved, it should afflict? Whence also it is fitly subjoined: And punishments war in me. For the witnesses of God being considered, punishments war in us, because while we behold their wonderful deeds, we torture our own life, which from the comparison of them displeases us, with studious affliction; so that whatever the works have polluted in us, laments may wash away; and if anything still the fault of delight pollutes, the punishment of sorrow may wipe it away. Blessed Job therefore, because he beholds the life of the preceding fathers, knows more subtly

what he ought to groan for in himself. But by the mastery of great grief, while he bewails his own, he instructs us to laments: so that by as much as we behold virtues in others, by so much we may solicitously fear our own sins before the strict Judge. It follows:

CHAPTER LX.

VERSE 18.---Why did You bring me out of the womb? O that I had been consumed, that no eye might see me.

91. Which indeed he already brought forth in his first speech, saying: Why did I not die in the womb? Who also this which he here adds, subjoining,---VERSE 19.---I should have been as if I were not, translated from the uterus to the tomb, there joins by other words not otherwise, saying: As a hidden abortion I should not have subsisted, or as those who being conceived have not seen the light (Job 3:16). But because we have discussed these things extensively above (Book IV, n. 48 et seq.), for the sake of avoiding the reader's fastidiousness, we decline to repeat the things already explained. It follows:

CHAPTER LXI

[Vet. XLIV, Rec. XXXVI].

VERSE 20.---Will not the fewness of my days be ended shortly?

92. The end of life is to be especially considered. He shows that he lives cautiously and

solicitously, who, considering the brevity of the present life, looks not at its use but its end, so that he may gather from the end that nothing which passes away is delightful. For hence it is said through Solomon: If a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, he must remember the dark time and the many days; which when they come, the past shall be accused of vanity (Eccles. 11:8). Hence again it is written: In all your works remember your last end, and you shall never sin (Ecclus. 7:40). Therefore when guilt tempts the soul, the mind must necessarily look at the brevity of its delight, lest iniquity snatch it away to a living death (vivacem mortem), since it is certain that mortal life runs more swiftly to its end. But often the eye of our contemplation is confounded while our grief is aggravated by multiplying scourges. It is pleasant to groan for the exile of the present life, but because of that very affliction the mind is not able to estimate the losses of its own blindness. Whence he immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER LXII.

[Rec. XXXVII].

IBID.---Spare me then, that I may lament my sorrow a little.

93. Excessive sorrow takes away tears and the sense of pain. The force of habit does not allow us to weep for our evils. For as moderate affliction expresses tears, so immoderate affliction withdraws them, because the sorrow itself becomes

as it were without sorrow, which, devouring the mind of the afflicted, takes away the sense of pain.

The holy man therefore fears to be struck more than is sufficient, saying: Spare me then, that I may lament my sorrow a little.

As if he should say openly: Temper the scourges of Your striking, so that, with moderate pains, I may recover strength to estimate by weeping the evils which I suffer. Which however can be understood in another way. For often the sinner is so bound by the chains of his iniquity, that he indeed bears the weight of his sins, but yet because he bears it he is ignorant of it. Often even if he knows with how great guilt he is pressed, he tries to break out, and cannot, so as to pursue this in himself with a free mind and entire conversion. Therefore he is not able to weep for his sorrow, because he both considers the guilt of his iniquity, and yet because of the weight of earthly occupation he by no means has leisure to groan for it. He is not able to weep for his sorrow, who indeed strives to go against evil custom, but yet is still burdened by the increasing desires of the flesh. The presence of this sorrow had tortured the mind of the Prophet, when he said: My sorrow is always before me, because I will declare my iniquity, and I will think for my sin (Psal. 38:17-18). But he knew himself released, the chains of iniquity being loosed, who exulted saying: You have broken my bonds, I will sacrifice to You the host of praise (Psal. 116:16-17).

94. Unless God helps us to it. Then therefore the Lord dismisses us to bewail our sorrow, when He both shows to us the evils which we have done, and helps us to weep for these same things which we know. He places our faults before our eyes, and with the pious hand of grace looses the bonds of the heart, so that our mind may raise itself to the vacancy of penitence, and, loosed from the fetters of the flesh, may tend the step of love freely toward its Author. [Vet. XLV.] For very often we ourselves reprehend our own life, but yet we willingly do that which we rightly reprove in ourselves. The spirit raises us to justice, the flesh restricts us to custom. The mind resists its own love, but immediately being delighted is captivated. Well therefore it is said: Spare me then, that I may lament my sorrow a little, because unless we are mercifully released from the guilt of the fault with which we have bound ourselves, we cannot perfectly weep for that which we grieve in ourselves against ourselves. But then the sorrow of our guilt is truly bewailed, when that dark retribution of hell is foreseen with intent fear. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER LXIII

[Rec. XXXVIII].

VERSE 21.---Before I go, and shall not return, to the dark land and covered with the darkness of death.

95. The punishments of hell are neither transitory nor fantastical. Why hell is called a land,

why a lake. For what is signified by the name of the dark land, but the foul enclosures of Tartarus? Which the darkness of eternal death covers, because it separates all the damned forever from the light of life. Nor is hell undeservedly called a land, because whoever have been captured by it are firmly held. For it is written: A generation passes away, and a generation comes, but the earth stands forever (Eccles. 1:4). Rightly therefore are the dark enclosures of hell called a land, because those whom they receive for punishment, they by no means torture with a transitory punishment or a fantastical imagination, but preserve with the solid vengeance of perpetual damnation. Which nevertheless are sometimes signified by the appellation of a lake, the prophet attesting, who says: They have borne their ignominy with those who go down into the lake (Ezek. 32:24-25). Hell therefore is both called a land, because it firmly holds those received; and is called a lake, because those whom it has once taken it always absorbs, fluctuating and trembling in the surrounding torments. But the holy man, either by his own voice or that of the human race, asks to be released before he goes, not because he who bewails his fault is about to go to the dark land, but because he who neglects to weep undoubtedly goes to it; as a creditor says to his debtor: Pay the debt before you are bound for the debt; who nevertheless is not bound, if he does not delay to pay what he owes. Where also it is rightly subjoined: And I shall not return, because the mercy of the Spreader by no means further

delivers those whom the justice of the Judge once damns in the penal places [Vet. XLVI]. Which penal places are yet more subtly described, when it is said:

CHAPTER LXIV.

VERSE 22.---A land of misery and darkness.

96. Those whom it holds are tortured without and blinded within. Misery pertains to pain, darkness to blindness. That land, therefore, which holds those expelled from the sight of the strict Judge, is shown to be a land of misery and darkness, because pain tortures without those whom blindness obscures within, being divided from the true light. Although the land of misery and darkness can be understood in another way. For this land also in which we are born is indeed one of misery, but it is not one of darkness, because we suffer many evils of our corruption here, but yet we still return to the light in it through the grace of conversion, the Truth persuading us, Who says: Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you (John 12:35). But that land is at once of misery and of darkness, because whoever descends to endure its evils, by no means returns further to the light. In the description of which it is further subjoined:

CHAPTER LXV.

IBID.---Where the shadow of death is, and no order.

97. It has vengeance, not light. How just these punishments are. As exterior death divides the flesh from the soul, so interior death separates the soul from God. The shadow of death, therefore, is the obscurity of division, because every damned person, while he is burned with eternal fire, is darkened from the internal light. The nature of fire indeed is such, that of itself it exhibits both light and burning; but that avenging flame of past vices has burning, and has not light. For hence it is that the Truth says to the reprobate: Depart from me, you cursed, into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). Again, signifying the body of all these in the person of one, He says: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into outer darkness (Matt. 22:13). If, therefore, the fire which tortures the reprobate could have had light, he who is repelled would by no means be said to be cast into darkness. Hence also the Psalmist says: Fire fell upon them and they saw not the sun (Psal. 58:8). For fire falls upon the impious, but the sun is not perceived while the fire falls, because where the flame of Gehenna devours them, it blinds them from the vision of the true light; so that both the pain of combustion tortures them without, and the punishment of blindness obscures them within; so that those who have offended their Author both with body and heart, may be punished both with body and heart together; and they may feel punishments on both sides, who while they lived here served their depraved delights from both. Whence it is well said through the

prophet: They went down into hell with their weapons (Ezek. 32:27). The weapons of sinners are indeed the members of the body, with which they execute the perverse desires they conceive. Whence it is rightly said through Paul: Neither yield your members as weapons of uniquity to sin (Rom. 6:13). To go down into hell with weapons, therefore, is to endure the torments of eternal judgment with those same members with which they fulfilled the desires of pleasure, so that then pain may absorb them on every side, who now, subjected to their delights, fight on every side against the justice of the one judging justly.

[Vet. XLVII. Rec. XXXIX]. 98. They are ordered, as being commensurate with crimes by an equitable Judge.

But it is very wonderful what is said: Where there is no order. For neither does Almighty God, Who punishes evils well, allow even torments to be in any way unordered, because those same punishments which proceed from the balance of justice can by no means be inflicted without order. For how will there not be order in the punishments, while the retribution of vengeance follows each damned person according to the measure of his crime? For hence it is written: The mighty shall be mightily tormented, and a stronger torture is at hand for the stronger (Wisd. 6:6). Hence in the damnation of Babylon it is said: As much as she has glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much give her torment and sorrow (Apoc. 18:7). If therefore punishment is distinguished according to the measure of the

fault, it is certain indeed that order is observed in the punishments. And unless the acts of merits separated the sum of torments, the coming Judge would by no means be said to say to the reapers: Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles to be burned (Matt. 13:30). For if no order shall be observed in the punishments, why are the tares to be burned bound in bundles? But indeed to bind bundles to be burned is to associate equals with equals who are to be delivered to eternal fire, so that the same punishment may bind those whom a similar fault defiles, and those who are polluted by no unequal iniquity may be tortured by no unequal torment; so that damnation may crush at once those whom elation at once raised up; and no dissimilar affliction may straiten those whom ambition no dissimilarly dilated, and a equal flame of punishment may torture those whom a equal flame of sin kindled in the fire of luxury. For as in the Father's house there are many mansions for the diversity of virtue (John 14:2), so the disparity of crime subjects the damned to the fires of Gehenna with diverse punishment. Which Gehenna indeed, although it is one for all, yet does not burn all with one and the same quality. For as we are all touched by one sun, yet we do not all burn under it in one order, because the weight of heat is felt according to the quality of the body, so to the damned there is both one Gehenna which affects them, and yet it does not burn all with one quality, because what disparity of bodies does here, there disparity of merits exhibits. How then is there said to be no order in the

punishments, in which certainly each is tortured according to the measure of his fault?

[Vet. XLVIII.] 99. But they are not ordered in the heart of the damned. But the holy man, after he introduced the shadow of death, subjoins how great is the confusion in the mind of the damned, because those same punishments, which come ordered through justice, are undoubtedly not ordered in the heart of those dying. For as we said a little above, while each damned person is burned without by flame, he is devoured within by the fire of blindness, and being placed in pain, he is confounded outwardly and inwardly, so that he may be more miserably tortured by his own confusion. In the punishment of the rejected, therefore, there will be no order, because in their death that same confusion of mind rages more fiercely. Which nevertheless the equity of the one judging orders with wonderful power, so that punishment may confound the soul as if unordered. Or certainly order is said to be absent from the punishments, because the proper quality is not preserved to whatever things rise up for punishment. Whence also it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER LXVI.

IBID.---And eternal horror inhabits it.

100. Description of the punishments of hell. In the torments of this life fear has pain, pain has not fear, because by no means does fear torture the mind when it has already begun to suffer what it feared. But hell is both obscured by the

shadow of death, and eternal horror inhabits it, because those delivered to its fires both feel pain in the punishments, and in the anguish of pain are struck by a fear always knocking at them, so that they both endure what they fear, and again fear without ceasing what they endure. For of these it is written: Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be extinguished (Isai. 66:24). Here the flame which burns illuminates; there, as we taught above by the words of the Psalmist, the fire which tortures obscures. Here fear is lost when what was feared has already begun to be endured; there both pain mangles and fear straitens. In a horrible way, therefore, there will then be to the reprobate pain with dread, flame with obscurity. So indeed, forsooth, the weight of the highest equity ought to be felt by the damned, that they who did not at all fear to differ from the will of the Creator while they lived, in their eventual destruction even the torments themselves may differ from their own qualities, so that by that which they fight against each other, they may increase the tortures, and as they proceed variously they may be felt manifoldly. Which punishments nevertheless both torture those immersed in them beyond their strength, and preserve in them the support of life while extinguishing it, so that thus the end may punish life; so that torture may always live without end, because it both hastens to the end through torments, and lasts without end while failing. There is made therefore to the miserable a death without death, an end without end, a failing without

failing, because both death lives, and the end always begins, and failing knows not how to fail. Because therefore death both kills and does not extinguish, pain tortures but in no way puts fear to flight, flame burns but by no means dispels the darkness; as much as is gathered through the knowledge of the present life, the punishments have no order, which do not hold their own quality in all things.

[Vet. XLIX.] 101. The fire there denies light for consolation, preserves it for torment. Although the fire there does not shine for consolation, yet it shines for something so as to torture more. For the reprobate are about to see each of their followers with them in torment by the illuminating flame, for whose love they sinned, so that they who had loved their life carnally against the precepts of the Creator, the destruction of these also may afflict them unto the increase of their own damnation. Which indeed we gather by the witness of the Gospel (Luke 16:23), in which, the Truth announcing, that rich man whom it happened to descend to the torments of eternal fire is described to have remembered five brothers, who asked of Abraham that he would send to their instruction, lest a like punishment should torture them coming there some time. He therefore who for the heap of his own pain remembered absent relatives, it is certain undoubtedly that he was able also to see them present shortly after for the increase of punishment. But what wonder if he should behold the reprobate also burned with him, who, for the heap of his own pain, saw him

whom he had despised, Lazarus, in the bosom of Abraham? He therefore, to whom both an elect man appeared so that pain might increase, why should it not be believed that he could see in punishment those also whom he had loved against God? From which thing it is gathered that those whom the reprobate now love inordinately, they will then see with them in torments by a wonderful order of judgment, so that that carnal relationship preferred to the Author, being damned with a like vengeance before their eyes, may exaggerate the pain of their own punishment. The fire therefore which tortures in obscurity is to be believed because it preserves light for torment. Which if we cannot approve by testimonies in its own expression, it remains therefore that we should teach from the opposite.

102. Light and obscurity can be together in fire. Indeed three boys of the Hebrew nation, by the command of the Chaldean king, the fires of the furnace being kindled, were cast in with bound hands and feet: whom nevertheless when the same king explored, pitying them in the burning of the furnace, he saw walking with unhurt garments. Where it is openly gathered that by a wonderful dispensation of the Creator the quality of the fire, tempered in diverse virtue, both did not touch the garments and burned the bonds, and for the holy men the flame was cool for inflicting torment, and flared up for the ministry of release. As therefore the fire knew how to burn for the elect unto solace, and yet knew not how to burn for punishment; so from the

opposite the flame of Gehenna for the reprobate both does not shine at all for the grace of consolation, and yet shines for punishment; so that the fire of punishment may both glow with no clarity for the eyes of the damned, and, for the heap of pain, show how the beloved are tortured. But what wonder if we believe the fire of Gehenna to have punishment at once of obscurity and of light, when we know by experience that even the flame of torches shines obscurely? Then the devouring flame burns those whom carnal delight now defiles, then the infinitely open abyss of hell devours those whom vain elation now exalts; and those who from whatever vice have here fulfilled the will of the crafty persuader, then with their leader the reprobate come to torments.

[Vet. L.] 103. One punishment involves reprobate angels and men. The evil man is the sepulchre of the devil. And although the nature of angels and men is far dissimilar, yet one punishment involves those whom one guilt binds in crime. Which the prophet well and briefly insinuates, who says: There is Assyria and all her multitude, and round about her her sepulchres (Ezek. 32:22). For who is expressed by the name of the proud king Assyria but that ancient enemy falling through elation, who for that reason that he draws many to fault, descends with all his multitude to the enclosures of hell? Moreover, sepulchres cover the dead. And who else has endured death more sharply than he who, despising his Creator, left life? Whom indeed when human hearts receive him dead, they undoubt-

edly become his sepulchres. But round about him are his sepulchres, because in whose minds he now buries himself through desires, these he afterwards joins to himself through torments. And since now in themselves the reprobate receive malignant spirits by perpetrating unlawful things, then the sepulchres will burn with the dead.

[Rec. XL.] 104. It does not profit to foreknow the punishments of hell, but to evade them. Behold what punishment remains for the damned we have known; and sacred eloquence instructing us, how great the fire in damnation, how great the obscurity in the fire, and how great the fear in the obscurity may be, we in no way doubt. But what does it profit to foreknow these things, if it does not happen to evade them? Therefore with all intention it must be cared for that, when we receive time of leisure, by the study of living well, we may flee the avenging torments of evils. For hence it is said through Solomon: Whatever your hand can do, work instantly, because neither work, nor reason, nor science, nor wisdom will be in hell, whither you hasten (Eccles. 9:10). Hence Isaiah says: Seek the Lord while He can be found, call upon Him while He is near (Isai. 55:6). Hence Paul says: Behold now the acceptable time, behold now the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). Hence again he says: While we have time, let us work good to all (Gal. 6:10).

[Vet. LI.] 105. Care of the flesh stands in the way of the mind striving for this. But very often the mind girds itself for the way of rectitude,

shakes off torpor; and is snatched by so great a desire for heavenly things, that almost nothing of it seems to have remained below. And yet when it is brought back to the care of the flesh, without which the way of the present life is in no way completed, it so holds it depressed below, as if nothing of the highest things had yet happened. Having heard the words of the heavenly oracle, it is raised to the love of the heavenly country; but the study of the present life rising again, it is buried under the heap of earthly care; and the seed of heavenly hope in no way profits in the earth of the heart, because the thorn of lowest thought becomes thick. Which thorn indeed the Truth through Itself eradicates with the hand of holy exhortation, saying: Do not be solicitous for tomorrow (Matt. 6:34). Against this also it is said through Paul: Make not care for the flesh in concupiscences (Rom. 13:14). But in these words of the leader and the soldier we recognize indeed that then the mind is pricked by it with a deadly wound, when the equity of measure is not held in it.

106. This is not to be cut off entirely, but to be moderated. For neither is care of the flesh fundamentally cut off for those still living in mortal flesh, but it is tempered so that it may discreetly serve the mind. For because the Truth prohibits us to be solicitous for tomorrow, He does not deny that we should have care in some way for present things, which He forbids to be extended to the time which follows. And indeed Paul, when he does not allow care of the flesh to be made in

concupiscences, undoubtedly still concedes it in necessity. By the discretion of great moderation, therefore, care of the flesh is to be bridled, so that it may serve and by no means rule, lest as a mistress it overcome the mind, but, subjected to the dominion of the mind, it may serve as a handmaid, so that being ordered it may be present, and being repulsed at the nod of the heart it may leap away, so that it may hardly appear behind the back of holy thought, and never stand against the face of one thinking right things. Which is well hinted to us by the history of the sacred reading, when Abraham is remembered to have met three angels (Gen. 18:2, seq.). He indeed met those coming outside the door, but Sarah stood behind the door, because forsooth as the man and master of the spiritual house, namely our intellect, ought to exceed the enclosures of the flesh in the knowledge of the Trinity, and as it were go out of the door of the lowest habitation; but care of the flesh, like a woman, should not appear outside, and should blush to be seen boastfully, so that as if behind the back of the man under the discretion of the spirit, intent on necessaries alone, it may in no way know how to be uncovered procaciously, but to be moderated modestly. To which nevertheless when it is often said that she should by no means presume of herself, but transfer herself entirely into the confidence of divine hope, she despises it, and, study ceasing, she distrusts that supports of life can be present to her. Whence also this same Sarah hearing the promises of God laughs, but laugh-

ing she is corrected, and being corrected she is immediately made fruitful; and she who being vigorous in youth could not be made fruitful, broken by senile years, with a withering womb, conceived, because when care of the flesh shall have ceased to have confidence in itself, against hope it receives from the divine promise what it doubted it would have from human reason. Whence also well is Isaac, that is laughter, said to be he who is generated, because when the mind conceives the confidence of heavenly hope, what else does our mind bring forth than joy? It must be cared for therefore lest either care of the flesh pass the bounds of necessity, or in that which it executes moderately, it presume of itself. But often the mind is deceived, so that what it appetites voluptuously, it suspects to be necessary, so that it thinks everything which pleases to be a due utility of life. And often because effect follows providence, the mind is lifted up in confidence of itself. And when that is present to it which it sees to be lacking to others, by silent thought it becomes cheerful concerning the magnitude of its own provision; and it becomes so far from true provision, as much as it knows not the very elation which it suffers. Whence with the intention of skillful custody it must always be weighed either what we do in work, or what we turn over in the heart, lest either impeding the mind, earthly care multiply itself without, or at least from its moderation thought exalt itself within; so that when we fear divine judgments with temporal

circumspection, we may evade the punishments of eternal horror.

BOOK TEN.

With the whole eleventh chapter of the book of Job and the first five verses of the twelfth being explained, it closes the second part of this work.

CHAPTER ONE.

1. The fortitude of Job, who is not overcome even by the successive change of adversaries. As often as a strong athlete descends into the spectacle of the arena, those who exist unequal in strength subject themselves in turn to his expugnation: and one being conquered, another is immediately raised up against him; and this one being subdued, another is substituted; so that they may find the strengths of the wrestler some time softer which his own multiplying victory fatigues; so that when each new one joins battle, he who is not able to be conquered by the quality of strengths, may at least be overcome by the change of persons. So indeed in this spectacle of men and angels blessed Job came forth a strong athlete, and showed how much he is able against the changes of adversaries by the continuation of untiring strength. To whom first Eliphaz, second indeed Bildad opposed himself, and at the last Zophar subjects himself in his expugnation: who raise themselves with all efforts to inflict blows,

but yet do not reach to strike the depth of the robust breast. For their very words plainly insinuate that they cast blows into the air, because since they do not rightly rebuke the holy man, they lose the expressed words of striking in a vacuum. Which is clearly shown when the response of Zophar the Naamathite is begun from contumelies, who says:

CHAPTER II.

JOB XI, VER. 2.---Shall not he that speaketh much hear also? or shall a talkative man be justified?

2. The forward always respond to things rightly said from the opposite side. Zophar's sentence is true, but badly delivered. It is usually the custom of the forward to always respond to things rightly said from the opposite side, lest if they consent to what has been put forth, they should seem to be inferior. To whom the words of the righteous, however few they may sound, are many, because in the degree that they cut away their vices, they burden their hearing. Whence also that which is brought forth by right preaching against crimes is drawn into a crime. For Zophar, rebuking him who had spoken strong sentences out of the truth, calls him talkative, because when wisdom from the mouth of the righteous rebukes faults, the superfluity of loquacity sounds in the ears of fools. For the wicked think nothing right, except what they themselves have felt; and they esteem the words of the righteous as idle, in the degree that they find these diverse

from their own senses. Nor indeed did Zophar bring forth a deceptive sentence, that a talkative man (vir verbosus) can by no means be justified, because while everyone flows away through words, the gravity of silence being lost, he loses the custody of the mind. Hence indeed it is written: The work of justice, silence (Isa. XXXII, 17). Hence Solomon says: As a city that lieth open and without compass of walls, so is a man that cannot restrain his spirit in speaking (Prov. XXV, 28). Hence again he says: In loquacity (multiloquio) sin shall not be wanting (Prov. X, 19). Hence the Psalmist testifies, saying: A talkative man shall not be directed upon the earth (Psal. CXL, 11). But the virtue of a true sentence is lost, which is not brought forth under the custody of discretion (discretionis). It is certain, therefore, that a talkative man cannot be justified. But a good thing is not well said, because it is not intended for the one to whom it is said. For a true sentence against the wicked, if it attacks the rectitude of the good, loses its own [virtue], and in that degree, being blunted, it recoils, in which that which it strikes is strong. But because the wicked are unable to hear good things patiently, and while they neglect the amendment of life, they gird themselves to words of response, Zophar openly insinuates, who subjoins:

CHAPTER III.

VER. 3.---Shall men hold their peace to thee alone? and when thou hast mocked others, shalt thou be confuted by no one?

3. How differently the wicked and the righteous are affected toward correction. An unskilled mind, as we have said, tolerates the sentences of truth with difficulty, and thinks silence a punishment, and judges everything that is rightly said to be the disgrace of its own derision (irrisionis), because when the true voice moves itself to the ears of the wicked, guilt bites the memory, and in the refutation (redargutione) of vices, in the degree that the mind is touched within by knowledge, it is excited without to the study of contradiction. It is not able to bear the voice, because it grieves being touched in the wound of its own guilt, and through that which is said generally against the perverse, it suspects itself to be attacked specially. For what it remembers to have done within, it blushes to hear without. Whence it soon prepares itself for defense, that it may cover the shame of its guilt through words of perverse refutation. For as the righteous judge the voice of correction (correptionis) concerning certain things which have not been rightly done by them to be a ministry of charity, so the perverse think it a contumely (contumeliam) of derision. The former immediately prostrate themselves to obedience, the latter are raised up to the madness of their own defense. The former reckon the aid of correction to be the protection of their life, through which while the fault of the present life is corrected, the wrath of the future judge is tempered; the latter, when they see themselves attacked by refutation, believe it a sword of striking, because while through the

voice of correction the fault is detected, the opinion of present glory is defiled. Hence indeed in the praise of the righteous through Solomon Truth says: Teach a righteous man, and he will hasten to receive (Prov. IX, 9). Hence he despises the contumacy of the wicked, saying: He that instructeth a scorner, doth an injury to himself (Ibid. 7). For it happens for the most part that when they are not able to defend the evils corrected in themselves, they become worse out of shame; and thus they grow proud in their defense, that they seek out certain vices against the life of the one correcting; and in that degree they do not judge themselves criminal, if they also impose crimes on others. Which when they are not able to find true, they feign, so that they also may have that which they may seem to rebuke with no unequal justice. Whence also Zophar, because he grieved as if to be mocked through rebuke, immediately subjoins by lying:

For how could he say that he was clean, who said: If I would justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me (Job IX, 20)?

CHAPTER IV.

VER. 4.---For thou hast said, My speech is pure, and I am clean in thy sight.

4. The wicked refuse to weep for true evils in themselves, and they impinge false ones on others. He who remembers the words of blessed Job recognizes how falsely this is impinged upon his voice. But the malice of the wicked has this [trait], that when it refuses to weep for true evils

in itself, it feigns those of others. For it uses as it were a solace of crime (solatio facinoris), if the life of the one correcting is also defiled by false voices. But it must be known that for the most part the perverse wish for good things in word, that they may show that those which are had in present things are evil; and as if favoring, they seek prosperous things, that they may seem benign. Whence Zophar also immediately subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER V.

VER. 5.---And would that God would speak with thee, and would open His lips to thee!

5. When God speaks to man, and when man speaks to himself. For man speaks to himself when he is by no means separated from the understanding of carnal prudence (carnalis prudentiae intellectu) by the spirit of Divinity through that which he feels; when the flesh exerts its sense, and sends the mind without, as if provoking it to intelligence. Whence also to Peter still savoring earthly things Truth says: For thou savorest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men (Mark VIII, 33). To whom, however, confessing right things, it is said: Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven (Matt. XVI, 17). But what do we take the lips of God (Dei labia) to be but His judgments (judicia)? For with closed lips the voice is suppressed, and the sense of the silent one is not known; but with open [lips], while speech is brought forth,

the mind of the speaker is found. Therefore God opens His lips when He shows His will to men through open judgments. For He speaks as if with unbolted mouth, when, the obscurity of the inward disposition being removed, He refuses to hide what He wills. For as if with closed lips He does not indicate His sense to us, when through occult judgments He conceals why He does what He does. Zophar, therefore, that he may rebuke blessed Job concerning carnal understanding, and may show of how great benignity he himself is, wishes him good things, which he is ignorant of even when they are had, saying: And would that God would speak with thee, and would open His lips to thee! As if he were to say plainly: I have compassion on thy ignorance (imperitiae) rather than thy punishment, because, I recognize thee as endowed with carnal prudence alone, and void of the spirit of truth. For if thou didst know the occult judgments of God, thou wouldst not sound such forward sentences against Him. And because almighty God, when He raises us to consider His judgments, immediately puts to flight the blindness of our ignorance, what instruction may come forth to us from His open lips, he immediately manifests by adding:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. IV].

VERSE 6.---That He might show thee the secrets of wisdom, and that His law is manifold.

6. The works of wisdom which are public. Which are secret.---The public works of supernal wisdom are when Almighty God rules those whom He creates, perfects the good things which He begins, and by aspiring aids those whom He illustrates with the light of His visitation. For it is clear to all that those whom He created freely He disposes kindly. And when He bestows spiritual gifts, He Himself perfects what He Himself began from the gift of His kindness. But the secret works of supernal wisdom are when God deserts those whom He created; when He by no means consummates the good things which He had begun by preventing; when He illuminates us with the clarity of His illustration, and yet, by permitted temptations of the flesh, strikes us with the darkness of blindness; when He by no means guards the gifts which He conferred; when He both excites the desires of our mind towards Himself, and yet by a hidden judgment narrows us with the difficulty of our imbecility.

[Vet. V.] 7. He finds these by not finding, who has learned that they cannot be comprehended. The law of God and the charity of Christ.---Which secrets of His wisdom namely few are able to inquire into, but none to find, because what is disposed concerning us above us by immortal wisdom not unjustly, it is surely just that it should still be ignored by us mortals. But to behold these very secrets of that wisdom in any way is already to see the power of His incomprehensibility, because although we fail in the inquiry into His counsels itself, yet by failing we more truly

learn whom we should fear. To these secrets of that wisdom Paul had stretched himself, when he said: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God, how incomprehensible are His judgments, and His ways unsearchable! For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has been His counselor (Rom. XI, 33)? Who also above, tiring from the inquiry itself, but yet profiting by tiring to the knowledge of his own infirmity, premised saying: O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Does the thing formed say to him that formed it: Why hast thou made me thus (Rom. IX, 20)? He therefore who, not being able to reach to the hidden things of God, returned to the knowledge of his own infirmity, and recalled himself to his own instruction by failing, as I may so say, found the secrets of wisdom by not finding them, because when he tired in searching for the supernal counsels, he learned to fear more humbly; and Him whom his own infirmity repelled from intimate knowledge, humility joined to him more truly. Sophar therefore, both skilled through the study of knowledge, and ignorant through the audacity of swollen speech, because he himself has not gravity, wishes for the better man what he has, saying: And O that God would speak with thee, and would open His lips to thee, that He might show thee the secrets of wisdom! Who also shows off that wisdom, by which he esteems himself to excel above his friend, in wishing, when he immediately adds: And that His law is manifold. What should be understood by the law of God in this place but

charity, through which it is always read in the mind how the precepts of life should be held in action? For concerning this law it is said by the voice of Truth: This is My commandment, that you love one another (John XV, 12). Concerning this Paul says: Love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. XIII, 10). Concerning this he says again: Bear one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ (Galat. VI, 2). For what more congruously can be understood as the law of Christ than charity, which we then truly perfect when we tolerate fraternal burdens out of love.

8. Charity begins from two precepts, and extends itself to innumerable ones. Love of neighbor avoids hurting, takes care to do good. These two are performed in how many ways.---But this same law is called manifold, because by studious solicitude charity is dilated to all the deeds of virtues. Which indeed begins from two precepts, but extends itself to innumerable ones. For the beginning of this law is the love of God and the love of neighbor. [Vet. VI.] But the love of God is distinguished by three, because the Creator is commanded to be loved with the whole heart, and with the whole soul, and with the whole strength. In which thing it is to be noted that the divine discourse, when it commands God to be loved, not only relates from what, but also informs from how much, when it subjoins "with the whole," so that namely he who desires to please God perfectly should leave nothing of himself to himself. But the love of neighbor is derived to two precepts, when also by a certain

just man it is said: What thou hatest to be done to thee by another, see that thou do not to another (Tob. IV, 16). And through itself Truth says: What things you will that men should do to you, do you also to them (Matth. VII, 12). By which two mandates namely of both Testaments, by one malice is restrained, by the other kindness is reached out, so that not doing the evil which each one does not wish to suffer, he may cease from the work of hurting; and again bestowing the good which he desires to be done to himself, he may exercise himself towards the utility of his neighbor out of kindness. But these two namely, while they are thought with solicitous intention, the heart is stretched to innumerable ministries of virtues, lest the restless mind should either boil with desires for bringing in what it ought not, or grow sluggish, resolved in idleness, towards exhibiting what it ought. For when it takes care to do to another what it by no means wishes to tolerate from another, it looks around itself with solicitous intention, lest pride should elevate it, and by casting down the mind to the contempt of neighbor should exalt it; lest ambition should tear the thought, and when it dilates this to desiring alien things, should narrow it; lest luxury should pollute the heart, and corrupt the subject to desires through illicit things; lest wrath should exasperate, and inflame as far as uttering contumely; lest envy should bite, and emulous of alien happiness, should consume itself with its own torch; lest loquacity should draw the tongue immoderately, and extend it as far as the lasciviousness of

detraction; lest malice should excite hatred, and irritate the mouth as far as the javelin of malediction. Again when it thinks that it should do those things to another which it expects to be done to itself by another, it weighs namely that it should answer with good things to evils, and with better things to good ones; that it should exhibit the gentleness of long-suffering towards the bold; that it should bestow the grace of kindness upon those languishing with the plague of malice; that it should unite the discordant with peace, and gird the concordant to the concupiscence of true peace; that it should give necessary things to the indigent; that it should show the way of rectitude to those erring; that it should soothe the afflicted with word and compassion; that it should extinguish with rebuke those kindled in the desires of this world; that it should mitigate the threats of the powerful with reasoning; that it should lift the narrows of the oppressed with as much help as it prevails; that it should oppose patience to those resisting from without; that it should exhibit discipline with patience to those priding themselves from within; that towards the errors of subjects gentleness should so temper zeal, as not to enervate from the study of justice; zeal should so boil for vengeance, that yet it should not transcend the limit of piety by boiling; that it should provoke the ungrateful to love by benefits; that it should keep all the grateful in love by ministries; that it should be silent when it cannot correct the evils of neighbors, and that when they can be corrected by speaking, it should fear that

silence should be consent; that it should so tolerate those things which it is silent about, that yet it should not hide the poison of grief in the soul; that it should so exhibit the gift of kindness to the malevolent, that yet it should not exceed through grace from the right of rectitude; that it should bestow all things which it prevails upon neighbors, but should not swell by bestowing these; that it should so fear the precipice of tumor in the good things which it exhibits, that yet it should not grow sluggish from the exercise of good; that it should so give what it possesses, as it attends how great the largess of the remunerator is; lest when it bestows earthly things, it should think of its own want more than is necessary, and in the oblation of the gift sadness should obscure the light of hilarity.

9. Multiform charity (charitas) is shown by the examples of the saints. Well therefore is the law of God called manifold, because indeed since charity is one and the same, if it has fully taken the mind, it inflames this multiformly to innumerable works. Whose diversity we briefly express, if we number its good things in individual elect [persons] by touching upon them. For this [charity] through Abel both offered elect gifts to God, and tolerated the sword of his brother by not resisting (Gen. IV, 4, 8). This taught Enoch both to live spiritually among men, and even corporally abstracted him from men to a sublime life (Gen. V, 24). This showed Noah alone placable to God, all others being despised, and exercised him in the building of the ark by the study of long

labor, and saved him as a survivor to the world by exercising him in a pious work (Gen. VII, 6). This through Shem and Japheth was humbly ashamed of the nakedness of the father, and with a cloak cast over their backs, hid what they did not see (Gen. IX, 23). This, because it lifted up the right hand of Abraham in obeying even to the death of his son, made him the father of innumerable offspring, of nations (Gen. XXII, 10). This dilated the mind of Isaac, because it always held it to purity, even with eyes dim with age, to seeing things coming long after (Gen. XXVII, 1). This compelled Jacob both to groan from his inmost heart for his lost good son, and to tolerate the presence of perverse sons under equanimity (Gen. XXXVII, 34). This taught Joseph, sold by his brothers, both to endure service with uninfracted liberty of soul, and afterwards to rule over those same brothers with a mind not elated (Gen. XLII, 33). This, the people being delinquent, both prostrated Moses in prayers even to the petition of death, and raised him up through the study of zeal even to the slaying of the people, so that he both opposed himself to death for the perishing plebs, and immediately raged against the sinning [people] in the stead of the wrathful Lord (Exod. XXXII, 33). This raised the arm of Phinehas in vengeance of the sinning, so that, the sword being snatched up, he transfixed those coming together, and being angry appeased the wrath of the Lord (Num. XXV, 8, 9). This taught Joshua (Jesum) the explorer, so that he both first defended the truth by word against false-speaking citizens, and afterwards

alleged this by the sword against enemies (Josh. I, 2, seq.; Num. XIV, 6, 7, seq.). This SAMUEL both showed humble in principality, and kept whole in dejection, who since he loved the plebs persecuting him, was himself a testimony to himself, because he did not love the height from which he was cast down (I Sam. III, 4, seq.). This before an iniquitous king both moved David by humility to flight, and filled him by piety toward pardon; who both fled his persecutor by fearing him as a lord, and yet when he found the power of striking, did not recognize an enemy (I Sam. XXIV, 6, 18). This both lifted up Nathan against a sinning king into the authority of free rebuke, and when the king's guilt was wanting, prostrated him humbly in petition (II Sam. XII, 1, seq.). This through Isaiah was not ashamed of the nakedness of the flesh in preaching, and the carnal veil being withdrawn, penetrated heavenly mysteries (Isa. XX, 2). This Elijah, because it taught him to live spiritually by the zeal of fervor, also abstracted him to life corporally (IV Kings II, 11). This Elisha, because it instituted him to love his master simply, filled him doubly with the spirit of the master (Ibid. 10). Through this Jeremiah resisted lest the people should descend into Egypt; but yet also loving the disobedient, where he prohibited to descend, there he himself also descended (Jerem. XLII, 18). This Ezekiel, because it first lifted him from earthly desires, afterwards balanced him in the air by a lock of his head (Ezek. VIII, 3). This in Daniel, because it restrained the throat from royal dainties, also closed the mouths of

the hungering lions for him (Dan. XIV, 40). This for the three youths, because it subjected the burnings of vices while placed in tranquility, in the time of tribulation also tempered the flames in the furnace (Dan. III, 50). This in Peter both strongly resisted the threats of terrifying princes, and in removing circumcision humbly heard the words of inferiors. This in Paul both humbly bore the hands of the persecuting, and yet in the business of circumcision boldly rebuked the sense of the prior [one] far unequal to himself (Acts XV). Therefore manifold (multiplex) is that law of God, which fits individual articles of things not being changed, and conjoins itself to varying causes without being varied.

10. The offices of charity from Paul. Whose multiplicity of the law indeed Paul well enumerates, saying: Charity (charitas) is patient, is benign; envieth not, is not puffed up, dealeth not perversely, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity (iniquitate), but rejoiceth with the truth (I Cor. XIII, 4). For charity is patient (patiens), because it tolerates inflicted evils with equanimity. But it is benign (benigna), because it largely ministers good for evils. It envieth not (non aemulatur), because through this that it desires nothing in the present world, it knows not how to envy earthly successes. It is not puffed up (non inflatur), because while it anxiously desires the reward of internal retribution, it does not exalt itself concerning exterior goods. It dealeth not perversely, because in that

it dilates itself into the love of God and neighbor alone, it is ignorant of whatever descreps from rectitude. It is not ambitious, because in that it ardently bestirs itself within for its own things, it by no means covets those of others without. It seeketh not her own, because all things which it possesses here transitorily it neglects as if alien, since it recognizes nothing to be its own property except what remains with itself. It is not provoked to anger, because even when provoked by injuries it excites itself to no motions of its own vengeance, while for great labors it expects greater rewards afterwards. It thinketh no evil, because solidating the mind in the love of purity, while it roots out all hatred, it knows not how to revolve in the soul what defiles. It rejoiceth not in iniquity, because in that it gasps toward all with love alone, it does not exult even concerning the perdition of adversaries. But it rejoiceth with the truth, because loving others as itself, through that which it beholds right in others, it becomes hilarious as if concerning the increase of its own progress. Therefore manifold (multiplex) is this law of God, which against the dart of each one's fault, which attacks the mind to be destroyed, meets it with the muniment of its own instruction, so that because the ancient enemy besieges us with varied circumfusion, [charity] itself may multiformly expugn him from us. Which law indeed if we weigh with solicitous consideration, we recognize how much we daily delinquent to our Creator. But if we perpendicular [weigh] our faults, we surely tolerate scourges with equanim-

ity; nor does [the mind] rush forth to impatience from grief, when the conscience adjudges itself by its own judgment. Whence Zophar, knowing what he said, but not knowing to whom he said it, after he premised saying, That he might show thee the secrets of wisdom, and that his law is manifold, immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER VII.

IBID.---And that thou shouldst understand that thou art required of God much less than thy iniquity (iniquitas) deserveth.

11. The knowledge of our faults tempers the pain of scourges (flagellorum). The pain of the scourge is indeed tempered, as we have said, when the fault is recognized, because also everyone tolerates the iron tool of the physician the more patiently, the more he sees that to be putrid which he cuts. He therefore who understands the multiplicity of the law, weighs how much less are all the things which he suffers, because through this that the weight of the fault is recognized, the punishment of the affliction is lightened.

12. They sin venially, who by the fervor of zeal exceed the mode of correction (correptionis). But among these things it must be known that it was not without great iniquity that Zophar rebuked the righteous man even to the objection of iniquity. Whence also Truth justly refutes their audacity, but benignly brings them back to grace; because with a merciful Judge a fault is by no means left without pardon, when it is sinned through the fervor of zeal (zeli) out of His love.

For it often happens to great and wonderful doctors, that in that they are fervent with high charity, they exaggerate the mode of correction, and the tongue says something which it ought not, because love inflames the mind as much as it ought. But the word of uttered contumely is the more quickly spared, the more it is weighed also from what root it comes forth. Whence well through Moses the Lord commanded, saying: If any man shall go with his friend simply into the forest (silvam) to cut wood, and the wood of the axe (securis) shall fly from his hand, and the iron slipping from the handle shall strike his friend, and kill him, he shall flee to one of the aforesaid cities, and live, lest perhaps the next of kin of him whose blood was shed, pursued by the sting of grief, should overtake him, and strike his soul (Deut. XIX, 5). For we go to the forest with a friend as often as we turn with any neighbor to behold our delicts, and we simply cut down wood when we cut away the vices of the delinquent with a pious intention. But the axe flies from the hand when the rebuke draws itself into harshness more than is necessary. And the iron leaps forth from the handle when a harder word exceeds from the correction; and striking the friend it kills him, because the uttered contumely kills its hearer from the spirit of love. For the mind of the corrected one suddenly rushes forth to hatred, if an immoderate rebuke adjudges it more than it ought. But he who incautiously strikes the wood, and extinguishes his neighbor, must flee to three cities, that he may live defended in one of

them, because if, being converted to the laments of penitence, he is hidden in the unity of the sacrament under hope, faith, and charity, he is not held guilty of the perpetrated homicide; and the neighbor of the extinguished one does not kill him even when he has found him, because when the strict Judge shall come, who joined Himself to us through the consortium of our nature, He will without doubt not seek from him vengeance for the guilt of the fault whom hope, faith, and charity hide under His pardon. Therefore a fault is more quickly dismissed which is by no means perpetrated by the study of malice. Whence Zophar also calls him iniquitous whom the heavenly sentence had praised; nor yet being reprobated is he excluded from pardon, because he is moved to the words of contumely by the zeal of divine love. Who because he does not recognize the merits of blessed Job, from an unskilled derision still subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER VIII.

VER. 7.---Peradventure thou wilt comprehend the footsteps of God, and wilt find the Almighty even to perfection?

13. The footsteps of God (vestigia Dei) are His gifts by which we are provoked to heavenly things. God is not seen manifestly here. The power of contemplation. The angelic or human mind does not fully behold the essence of God. What does he call the footsteps of God but the benignity of His visitation? By which indeed we are provoked to proceed to heavenly things when

we are touched by the breath of His Spirit, and, being raised up outside the straits of the flesh, we recognize through love the contemplatable species of our Author, which we may follow. For when the love of the spiritual country inflames our mind, it as it were insinuates a way to those following, and upon the substrate heart as it were a certain footstep of God walking is impressed, so that by it the way of life may be held by right steps of thoughts. For him whom we do not yet discern, it remains necessary that we track through the footsteps of His love, so that even to the species of contemplation (contemplationis) the mind may sometimes find him whom now, as if following from behind, it explores through holy desires. The Psalmist well knew how to follow these footsteps of our Author when he said: My soul hath cleaved after thee (Psal. LXIII, 8). Whom he also bestirred himself to find even to the vision of His highness, saying: My soul hath thirsted for the living God; when shall I come, and appear before the face of God (Psal. XLII, 2)? For then indeed almighty God (Omnipotens) is found by manifest thought, when, the corruption of our mortality being thoroughly trodden down, He is beheld by us being assumed into the clarity of His divinity. but now the grace of the infused Spirit raises the soul from carnal thought, and exalts it into the contempt of passing things; and the mind despises all that it desired in the lowest things, and takes fire toward heavenly desires, and by the power of its own contemplation is lifted outside the flesh, which by the weight of its own corrup-

tion is still retained in the flesh. It tries to behold the ray of the uncircumscribed light, and is not able; which the mind pressed by infirmity by no means penetrates, and yet being repelled loves. For already the Creator shows from Himself that by which He may be loved, but withdraws the species of His vision from those loving Him. Therefore we walk beholding His footsteps alone, who follow Him through the signs of His gifts, whom we do not yet see.

Which footsteps indeed cannot be comprehended, because whence, where, or in what ways the gifts of His Spirit come, is not known, Truth attesting, who says: The Spirit breatheth where he will, and thou hearest his voice, and knowest not whence he cometh, and whither he goeth (John III, 8). But in the height of retribution the Almighty (Omnipotens) can be found through the species of contemplation, but yet not to perfection, because although we sometimes behold Him in His clarity, yet we do not fully behold His essence (essentiam). For the angelic or human mind, when it gasps toward the uncircumscribed light, by that very [fact] that it is a creature, it coarcts itself; and it is indeed stretched above itself by progress, but yet even being dilated it does not suffice to comprehend His fulness, who both by transcending and by carrying and by filling concludes all things. Whence also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

VERS. 8, 9.---It is higher than heaven, and what wilt thou do? deeper than hell, and whence wilt thou know? Its measure is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

14. How God transcends all things.---That God is described as being higher than heaven, deeper than hell, longer than the earth, and broader than the sea, must be understood spiritually in proportion as it is unlawful to think anything concerning Him according to bodily lineaments. But He is higher than heaven, because by the uncircumscription of His Spirit He transcends all things; deeper than hell, because by transcending He supports [them]; longer than the earth, because He exceeds the measure of the creature by the perennity of His eternity; broader than the sea, because He so possesses the waves of temporal things while ruling them, that He surrounds them by coarcting them under the all-mode presence of His power. Although by the name of heaven the angels can be designated, and by the word of hell the demons; but by the earth just men, and by the sea sinners can be understood. He is therefore higher than heaven, because even the elect spirits themselves do not perfectly penetrate the vision of so great a loftiness. He is deeper than hell, because judging He condemns the astuteness of the malignant spirits much more subtly than they themselves had thought. Longer than the earth, because the patience of divine long-suffering (longanimitatis) surpasses our long-suffering, which both tolerates us when sinning, and awaits us when converted for the

rewards of remuneration. Broader than the sea, because everywhere the presence of His retribution occupies the deeds of sinners, so that even when He is not discerned as present through species, He may be felt as present through judgment.

15. Yet all things can be referred to man alone, so that he himself is heaven when he now cleaves to the highest things through desire; he himself hell, when, disturbed by the darkness of his temptations, he lies in the lowest things; he himself earth, because he bears fruit in the abundance of fixed hope in good work; he himself sea, because in some things he is shaken trembling, and is agitated by the breeze of his mutability. But God is higher than heaven, because we are overcome by the magnitude of His power, even when we are elevated above ourselves; deeper than hell, because indeed He judges more than the human mind itself investigates itself in temptations; longer than the earth, because our hope by no means now comprehends the fruits of life which He retributes in the end; broader than the sea, because the fluctuating human mind conjectures many things concerning those that are to come, but when it has already begun to discern what it had estimated, it knows that it was narrow in its own estimation.

[Vet. XI.] Therefore He becomes higher than heaven when our very contemplation of Him fails. Whence also the Psalmist had placed his heart on high, but did not yet feel that he had touched Him, saying: Thy knowledge is become

wonderful to me; it is strengthened, and I cannot [reach] to it (Psal. CXXXVIII, 6). He knew Him as deeper than hell, who discussing himself, but greatly fearing His more subtle judgments, said: I am conscious to myself of nothing, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me, is the Lord (I Cor. IV, 4). He had seen Him as longer than the earth, when he weighed that the vows of the human mind were smaller than He, saying: Who is able to do all things more abundantly than we ask or understand (Ephes. III, 20). He had beheld Him as broader than the sea, who weighing by fearing that by no means would the human mind acknowledge the immensity of His strictness, however much it might fluctuate by inquiring, saying: Who knoweth the power of thy anger, or to number thy anger for fear (Psal. LXXXIX, 11)? Whose power the excellent teacher well suggests to us, when he briefly relates: That you may be able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and loftiness, and depth (Ephes. III, 18). For God has breadth, because He stretches His love even to the gathering of those that persecute Him. He has length, because He leads us to the country of life by tolerating us longanimously. He has loftiness, because He transcends the intelligence even of those who shall have been received into the heavenly congregation. He has depth, because He incomprehensibly exerts the judgment of His strictness on those damned below. Which four things indeed He exercises for each of us placed in this life, because He exhibits both breadth by

loving, and length by tolerating, and loftiness, by surpassing not only our intelligence but even our vows, and His depth, by strictly judging the hidden and illicit movements of thoughts. But how uninvestigable His loftiness and depth may be, no one acknowledges, unless he who has begun either to be carried by contemplation to the highest things, or, resisting hidden movements, to be disturbed by the importunity of temptations. Whence also it is said to blessed Job: It is higher than heaven, and what wilt thou do? deeper than hell, and whence wilt thou know? As if it were said to him in open contempt: When dost thou suffice to know His depth and excellence, who knowest not either to be carried by virtue to the highest things, or to reprove thyself in temptations. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

[Rec. VIII].

VERS. 10.---If he subvert all things, or coarct them into one, who shall contradict him? or who can say to him, Why dost thou so?

16. How God subverts heaven, hell, earth, [and] sea in us.---The Lord subverts heaven when by a terrible and hidden dispensation He destroys the loftiness of human contemplation. He subverts hell when He permits the mind of anyone, fearful in its own temptations, to fall even to worse things. He subverts the earth when He cuts off the fructification of good work by intervening adversities. He subverts the sea when He

confounds the fluctuation of our wavering by a suddenly emerging fear. For by its own doubt the anxious heart greatly dreads this very [fact] that it wavers, and is as it were a subverted sea when our very trepidation toward God is disturbed, the terror of His judgment being considered. [Vet. XII.] Because therefore we have briefly said how heaven or hell, earth or sea, is subverted, it now remains that we demonstrate somewhat more laboriously how these may be able to be coarcted into one.

17. Heaven and hell together, in one mind contemplation and the temptation of the flesh.---For it often happens that the spirit already elevates the mind to the highest things, but yet the flesh impugns this with importunate temptations. And when the soul is led to contemplate heavenly things, it is reverberated by the objects of illicit action [presented to] the imaginations. For suddenly the stimulus of the flesh wounds him whom holy contemplation was snatching outside the flesh. Heaven therefore and hell are together coarcted when both the lifting up of contemplation illuminates one and the same mind, and the importunity of temptation obscures [it]; so that it both sees by intending what it may desire, and by succumbing in thought it may tolerate what it may blush at. For from heaven light arises, but hell is possessed by darkness. Heaven and hell are therefore reduced into one when the mind, which already considers the light of the heavenly country, also carries the darkness of hidden temptation from the war of the flesh.

Certainly Paul had already ascended the summit of the third heaven, already he had known the secrets of paradise, and yet he still groaned tolerating the wars of the flesh, saying: I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members (Rom. VII, 23). What therefore in the breast of this so great a preacher had God coarcted except heaven and hell, who had both already received the light of inward vision, and yet still tolerated darkness from the flesh? He had seen above himself what he might joyfully desire, he beheld in himself what he might fearfully grieve at. Already the light of the heavenly country had irradiated [him], but still the obscurity of temptation confounded the soul. Together with heaven therefore he bore hell, because both security raised him up illuminated, and groaning prostrated him tempted.

18. Earth and sea together, certainty of faith with some little doubt.---And it often happens that faith already flourishes in the mind, but yet in some small part it withers in doubt; so that both certain it may elevate itself from visible things, and from certain [things] it may disturb itself uncertain. For mostly it raises itself to desire eternal things, and agitated by the arising stimuli of thoughts, it contradicts itself. [Vet. XIII.] Earth and sea are therefore coarcted into one when both the certainty of solid faith strengthens one and the same mind, and yet from some small mutability of perfidy the breeze of doubt turns it. Or had he not known that earth and sea were

coarcted in his own breast, who both hoping through faith, and fluctuating through infidelity, said: I believe, Lord, help my unbelief (Mark IX, 23)? What is it therefore, that he both asserts that he believes, and seeks to be helped in the unbelief in himself, except that he had apprehended that earth was coarcted with sea in his thoughts, who both certain had already begun to pray through faith, and still uncertain tolerated the waves of perfidy from unbelief?

19. Why God permits the mind rising to right things to be impugned.---Which, however, is permitted to be done by a hidden dispensation, so that when the mind has already begun to rise to rectitude, it may be impugned by the remains of its own depravity; so that this very impugnation may either exercise the one resisting, or break the one seduced by delights. Rightly therefore is it now said: If he subvert all things, or coarct them into one, who shall contradict him? or who can say to him: Why dost thou so? because indeed the divine judgment can neither be diminished by adversity, nor known by inquisition, when He either withdraws the virtues which He had bestowed, or not entirely taking these away, permits [the mind] to be shaken by the impugnation of vices. For often the heart is lifted up into elation when it is strengthened in virtue by joyful successes, but while the Creator beholds the latent movements of audacity in thought, He leaves man to himself by showing [him to] himself, so that his mind, being left, may find what it is, which was wickedly rejoicing

secure in itself. Whence when all things were said to be subverted, or coarcted into one, it is immediately added:

CAPUT XI

[Rec. IX].

VERS. 11.---For he knoweth the vanity of men, and seeing iniquity, does he not consider?

20. The difference between vanity and iniquity.---As if by laying open the premises he subjoined, saying: Because He beholds vices increase by tolerating [them], He confounds gifts by judging [them]. But a right order is preserved in the description, since vanity is first to be known, and afterward iniquity is said to be considered. For every iniquity is vanity, but yet not all vanity is wont to be iniquity. For we act vain things as often as we think transitory things. Whence also that is said to vanish which is suddenly withdrawn from the eyes of beholders. Hence the Psalmist says: Every man living is universal vanity (Psal. XXXVIII, 6); since by this that he tends to destruction by living, he is rightly indeed called vanity, but by no means rightly also called iniquity, because even if it is from the punishment of fault that he fails, yet this very [fact] is not a fault, that he runs through life. Vain therefore are the things which pass away. Whence also it is said by Solomon: All is vanity (Eccles. I, 2).

21. Vanity leads to iniquity. Vanity clouds the mind, iniquity blinds it.---But aptly after vanity is iniquity immediately subjoined, because while

we are led through certain transitory things, we are nocuously bound in certain [others]; and when the mind does not hold the state of immutability, flowing down from itself, it breaks forth to vices. Therefore it slides by vanity to iniquity, which being accustomed to mutable things, while it is always impelled from some to others, is defiled by arising faults. [Vet. XIV.] Yet vanity can also be understood as fault, and a heavier guilt be demonstrated by the name of iniquity. For if vanity were sometimes not a fault, the Psalmist would not say: Although man walks in the image of God, yet is he vainly disquieted; he treasures up, and knows not for whom he gathers them (Psal. XXXVIII, 8); because although we preserve the image of the Trinity in nature, yet perturbed by vain movements of delight, we fail in our conversation; so that a desire may shake us with always alternating modes, fear break us, joy soothe us, grief afflict us. From vanity therefore, as was also said above, we are led to iniquity when first we flow down through light offenses, so that, use levelling all things, we by no means afterward fear to commit even heavier things.

CHAPTER XII

[Rec. XV, Rec. X].

VERS. 12.---A vain man is lifted up into pride.

22. Vanity makes [one] audacious from fault, and unbridled in the movements of nature.---For the end of vanity is, that when it wounds the mind with sin, it renders it audacious from fault;

so that, having forgotten its own guilt, since it does not grieve that it has lost its innocence, blinded by a just judgment, it may at the same time lose humility. And it mostly happens that, serving depraved desires, it shakes itself from the yoke of divine fear, and, as if now free for the perpetration of evils, contends to fulfill all that pleasure suggests. Whence when a vain man is said to lift himself up into pride, there is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XIII.

IBID.---And as the colt of a wild ass he thinks himself born free.

23. For by the colt of a wild ass every kind of wild [creatures] is expressed, which, being left to the movements of nature, is not held by the reins of those who rule [them]. For the animals of the field have it in their liberty both to go where they desire, and to rest when they are weary. And although man is far better than senseless animals; yet this is mostly not allowed to man which is allowed to brute animals. For those which are by no means kept for anything else, their movement without doubt is by no means restricted under discipline. But man who is led to the following life, it is indeed necessary that he be bound in all his movements under the disposition of discipline, and as a domestic animal serve bound by reins, and live restricted by eternal dispositions. He therefore who seeks to fulfill all things which he desires through unbridled liberty, what else does he covet than to be like the colt of a wild ass,

so that the reins of discipline may not hold him, but he may run audaciously wandering through the forest of desires?

24. The reins with which God coerces and rules us.---But often divine mercy breaks those whom it beholds go forth into the unbridling of illicit liberty, by the opposition of sudden adversity, so that being struck they may learn how they had swollen with reprobate loftiness; so that now being tamed by the experiences of the scourge, they may subject the necks of the mind to the reins of the precepts as domestic beasts of burden, and proceed on the journeys of the present life at the nod of the one presiding. By which reins he well knew himself to be bound, who said: I am become as a beast of burden before thee, and I am always with thee (Psal. LXXII, 23). Whence also that savage persecutor, led from the field of perfidious pleasure to the house of faith, being pricked by the spurs of his Ruler, heard: It is hard for thee to kick against the goad (Acts IX, 5). It remains therefore that if we no longer wish to be like the colt of a wild ass, we should first seek the nod of the inward dispensation in all things which we desire, so that our mind in all that it strives for, may be held by the rein of the heavenly government; and may thence rather fulfill its vows unto life, whence it treads down the studies of its life even against its own will. Zophar brought forth many strong [things], but he knows not that he speaks these to one better than himself. Whence still rebuking he subjoins:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERS. 13.---But thou hast firmed thy heart, and hast spread out thy hands to him.

25. Zophar argues that Job is of an obdurate and proud mind. In this the wicked and heretics imitate him against the good and Catholics.--- To have firmed the heart is not said in this place for virtue, but for insensibility. For every one within who subjects himself to the consideration of inward strictness, immediately softens from the fear of it; and the arrow of divine dread penetrates him, because he carries weak vitals through humility. But whoever becomes obdurate by the pertinacity of insensibility, as it were firms his heart, lest the darts of heavenly fear should transfix it. Whence to some through the prophet the Lord mercifully says: I will take away from you the heart of stone, and I will give you a heart of flesh (Ezek. XXXVI, 26). For He takes away the heart of stone when He withdraws from us the hardness of pride, and He bestows a heart of flesh when He turns that same hardness of ours immediately to sensibility. But by the hands, as we have already frequently taught, works are designated. To spread out hands to God with fault, therefore, is to be proud of the virtue of works against the grace of the Giver. For he who, speaking in the sight of the eternal Judge, attributes to himself the good things which he does, stretches out proud hands to God. Thus indeed the reprobate are always unbridled against the elect, thus heretics against Catholics, so that

when they cannot rebuke their deeds, they may strive to reprove the good concerning the elation of their deeds, so that they may accuse those whom they are not able to refute from the infirmity of action, of the crime of swelling. Whence also those good things which are done outwardly, they by no means now judge to be good, which are exhibited as it were through the study of a turgid thought. Who often being swollen rebuke the humble, and know not that they strike themselves by their words. But because Zophar has hitherto corrected the just man by rebuking [him], he now subjoins as if by teaching:

CHAPTER XV

[Vet. XVI, Rec. XI].

VERS. 14, 15.---If iniquity which is in thy hand thou shalt take away from thee, and injustice shall not remain in thy tabernacle, then thou shalt be able to lift up thy face without spot, and thou shalt be stable, and shalt not fear.

26. That the mind may be clean, first the iniquity of work, then of the heart is to be cut off.---Every sin is committed either by thought alone, or is perpetrated by thought and work together. Iniquity therefore in the hand is fault in work, but injustice in the tabernacle is iniquity in the mind. For our mind is not incongruously called a tabernacle, in which we are hidden with ourselves, when we are not seen abroad in work. Zophar therefore, because he is a friend of the just man, knows what he says; but because he rebukes the

just, holding the likeness of heretics, he is ignorant of how to bring forth rightly even what he knows. But we, treading upon this which is said by him swollenly, let us weigh his words, how true they would be if they were said rightly. For he first admonishes that iniquity be withdrawn from the hand, and afterward that injustice be cut off from the tabernacle, because whoever already cuts off depraved works from himself outwardly, it is indeed necessary that, returning to himself, he should skillfully discern himself in the intention of the mind; lest fault, which he no longer has in action, should still endure in thought. Whence also it is well said by Solomon: Prepare thy work abroad, and diligently exercise thy field, that afterward thou mayest build thy house (Prov. XXIV, 27). For what is it, work being prepared, to exercise the field diligently outwardly, except, the thorns of iniquity being plucked up, to cultivate our action for the fruit of retribution? And what is it after the exercise of the field to return to the building of the house, except that we mostly learn from good works how much cleanness of life we should construct in thought? For almost all good works proceed from thought, but there are some sharpnesses of thought which are born from operation; for as work is taken up from the soul, so again the soul is instructed by work. For the mind, taking the beginnings of divine love, commands good things to be done; but after they have begun to be done as commanded, being exercised by those very actions of its own, it learns, when it had begun to command good

things, how much less it saw. Abroad therefore the field is cultivated, that the house may be afterward built, because we mostly take from the exterior work how much subtlety of rectitude we may hold in the heart. Which order Zophar studied well to preserve, when he first said iniquity was to be taken away from the hands, and afterward injustice from the tabernacle, because by no means is the soul fully erected in thought, when error is still committed by it outwardly in work.

[Vet. XVII.] 27. This cleanness affords confidence in prayer; otherwise, if it be lacking.--- Which if we perfectly wipe away these two, we immediately lift up our face without spot to God. For the internal face of man is the mind, in which indeed we are recognized, that we may be directed by our Author. Which face indeed to lift up is to raise the soul to God through the studies of prayer. But a spot defiles the lifted-up face, if the consciousness of its own guilt accuses the soul while intending [to pray], because it is immediately broken from the confidence of hope, if the memory of a fault not yet overcome bites [the mind] intent on prayers. For it distrusts that it can receive what it desires, which indeed remembers that it is still unwilling to do what it has heard from heaven. Hence it is said by John: If our heart reprove us not, we have confidence toward God, and whatever we shall ask of him we shall receive (I John III, 21). Hence Solomon says: He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, his prayer shall be an abomination (Prov. XXVIII, 9). For the heart reproves us in petition

when it remembers that it resists the precepts of Him whom it asks, and prayer becomes an abomination when it is turned away from the censure of the law, because it is indeed worthy that each should be a stranger to His benefits to whose commands indeed he will not be subject.

28. When [cleanness] is not present, what is to be done.---In which matter this is the salutary remedy, that when the mind reproves itself from the memory of fault, it should first bewail this in prayer, that it has erred; so that the spot of error being wiped away with tears, in its petition the face of the heart may be seen clean by its Author. But it is to be greatly cared for lest it should again break forth into that which it exults to have cleansed with tears, lest while the bewailed fault is committed again, even the lamentations themselves should be made light of in the sight of the just Judge. For we ought skillfully to remember what is said: Do not repeat a word in thy prayer (Ecclus. VII, 15). By which saying indeed the wise man by no means prohibits us to ask for pardon often, but to repeat faults. As if he should say openly: When thou hast bewailed things wickedly done, by no means do again what thou mayest again lament in prayers.

29. Before prayer, impure and earthly thoughts are to be dismissed.---Therefore, that the face may be lifted up without spot to prayer, before the times of prayer whatever can be reproved in prayer ought always to be solicitously looked into; and the mind should hasten to exhibit itself such even when it ceases from

prayer, as it desires to appear to the Judge in the very time of prayer. For often we revolve certain impure or illicit things in the soul, as often as we are vacant from prayers. But when the mind has erected itself to the studies of prayer, it suffers the images of those things being reverberated, with which it was previously willingly pressed when idle; and as it were the soul no longer suffices to lift up its face to God, because indeed in its defiled mind it blushes at the spots of polluted thought. Often we are willingly occupied with the cares of the world. And when after these we intend the study of prayer, the mind by no means raises itself to heavenly things, because the weight of earthly solicitude has merged it into the depth; and in prayer the face is not shown clean, because it is spotted with the mud of the lowest thought.

[Vet. XVIII.] 30. Other's offenses against us are to be released. Who is free from fear.---But sometimes we shake out the heart from all [things], and we meet illicit motions even when it is vacant from prayer; but yet because we commit faults more rarely, we release other's offenses more sluggishly; and as much as our soul more solicitously fears to sin, so much more strictly it abhors that which is committed against itself by another. Whence it happens that everyone is found slow to pardon, in proportion as by progressing he has been made cautious against fault; and in as much as he himself fears to exceed against another, he seeks to punish more harshly that which is exceeded against himself. But what can be found worse than this spot of pain, which in

the sight of the Judge does not defile charity, but kills it? For any fault indeed pollutes the life of the soul, but pain kept against a neighbor kills it. For it is fixed in the mind like a sword, and by its point the very secrets of the bowels are pierced. Which indeed from the transfixed heart, if it is not first drawn out, nothing of divine aid is obtained in prayers, because neither can the medicines of health be applied to wounded members, unless the iron is first withdrawn from the wound. For hence it is that Truth says through itself: If you will not forgive men their sins, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive you your sins (Matt. VI, 15). Hence He admonishes, saying: When you shall stand to pray, forgive if you have anything against another (Mark XI, 25). Hence again He says: Give, and it shall be given to you; forgive, and it shall be forgiven to you (Luke VI, 38). Hence He placed the condition of piety to the constitution of postulation, saying: Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors (Matt. VI, 12); so that indeed the good which we, being moved to compunction, ask from God, we may first do this, being turned, with our neighbor. Then therefore we truly lift up our face without spot, when neither do we commit prohibited evils, nor do we retain those which have been committed against us from our own zeal. For our mind is depressed by heavy confusion at the time of its prayer, if either its own operation still defiles it, or pain kept from another's malice accuses it. Which two while everyone shall have wiped away, he rises up free straightway to those things

which are subjoined. And thou shalt be stable, and shalt not fear; because indeed he so much less trembles at the Judge, as much as he stands more solidly in good acts. For he overcomes fear, who keeps stability, because while he solicitously studies to perform what the Creator mildly commands, he also thinks secure of what He terribly threatens.

31. It is easier to persevere in the active life than in the contemplative. Who may be thought to persist in contemplation.---It is to be known besides that there are some goods in which we persist unwearied, and again there are some from which failing continually we fall, and to these we are reformed by great efforts through intervals of times. [Vet. XIX.] For in the active life the mind is fixed without failing, but from the contemplative, conquered by the weight of its own infirmity, it is wearied. For the former lasts so much more firmly, as much as it dilates itself towards its neighbors for their utility; the latter falls so much more quickly, as much as also transgressing the barriers of the flesh, it tries to go above itself. The former directs itself through level places, and therefore fixes the foot of work more robustly; but the latter, in proportion as it seeks high things above itself, descends more quickly exhausted to itself. Which Ezekiel well and briefly insinuates, when he relates the motions of those living creatures which he had seen, saying: They returned not when they went. And a little after he subjoins, adding: And the living creatures went and returned (Ezek. I, 9, 14). For

the holy living creatures sometimes go, and by no means return; sometimes they go, and straightway return, because the minds of the elect when they desert the ways of error through the grace of the active life bestowed on them, know not how to return to the evils of the world which they have left; but when through the edge of contemplation they suspend themselves from this same active life, they go and return, because by this that they by no means suffice to persist long in contemplation, they pour themselves again into operation; so that in those things which are near to them they may refresh themselves by exercising themselves, and by contemplating they may grow strong to rise again above themselves. But while this same contemplation is repeated in the due manner through intervals of times, without failing no doubt it is also persisted in its solidity, because even if the mind conquered by the weight of its infirmity fails, yet being repaired by continual efforts it apprehends it again. Nor is it to be said to have lost its stability in it, from which even if it always fails, it always seeks it even when it has lost it. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. XII].

VERSE 16.---354 Thou shalt also forget misery, and as of waters that have passed away, thou shalt not remember.

32. The heavy evils of this life are not eternal to one thinking on good things.---The mind feels

the evils of the present life so much more harshly, as much as it neglects to weigh the good which follows; and in as much as it does not wish to consider the rewards which remain, it esteems those things which it suffers to be heavy. Whence also against the stroke of the scourge the blind thought complains, and it is believed as if an infinite calamity, which by the daily course of days is finished. But if anyone once should raise himself to eternal things, and in those things which remain unchangeably should fix the eye of the heart, he perceives that whatever runs to an end is almost nothing here. He suffers the adversities of the present life, but he weighs as if almost nothing all that which passes away. For by how much more robustly he inserts himself into internal joys, by so much less he feels pains externally. Whence Zophar by no means fearing with rash daring to teach a better [man], exhorts to justice, and demonstrates how no punishment seems to be in the eyes of the just. As if he should say openly: If thou tastest the joy which remains within, all that which pains without becomes straightway light. But well he compares the miseries of the present life to waters passing away, because a passing calamity by no means overwhelms the mind of the elect by the force of its concussion, but yet it infuses it with the touch of sorrow. For it is wet indeed by the blood of the wound, even if it is not broken from the certainty of its own health. [Vet. XX.] But often not only do scourges wear [them] down, but in the mind of every just man the temptations of malignant

spirits also range, so that he may pain externally from the stroke, and internally cool down to some extent from the temptation. But by no means does grace desert [him], which by how much more harshly it strikes us by dispensation, by so much more abundantly it keeps [us] by piety. For when it has begun to grow dark through temptation, the internal light enkindles itself again. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 17.---And as the midday brightness it shall rise up to thee in the evening.

33. Virtue is renewed in temptation.---For the midday brightness in the evening is the renewal of virtue in temptation, so that the mind may flourish with sudden fervor of charity, which even now was fearing that the light of grace had set for itself. Which yet Zophar opens more subtly, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XVIII.

IBID.---And when thou shalt think thyself consumed, thou shalt rise as the morning star.

34. Sorrow from temptation prays to God's mercy for us. The just man, a morning star.---For often so many temptations beset us, that their very number almost inclines us to the fall of despair. Whence for the most part when the mind is turned into weariness, it scarcely considers the losses of its own virtue; and being all in pain, but as if already alienated even from the sense of

pain, it is broken, and is not able to enumerate with how great a tumult of thoughts it is wasted. It perceives itself about to fall by moments, and even sorrow itself more heavily contradicts it, lest it should take up the arms of repugnance. Darkness besets the eyes turned about in any direction, and since shadows always hinder the sight, the mournful mind sees nothing other than shadows. But with the merciful Judge often this itself, which also burdens the effort of prayer, more subtly prays for us as sorrow. For then the Creator perceives the darkness of our sorrow, and pours back the rays of withdrawn light, so that straightway the mind may flourish through gifts, which a little before the contending vices were depressing with the heel of pride. Soon it shakes off the weight of torpor, and breaks forth to the light of contemplation after the shadows of its own disturbance. Soon in progress it is raised into joy, which among temptations was being thought to fall worse from despair. Without the contest of thought it despises present things, without the obstacle of doubt it confides concerning future retribution. Therefore the just man when he shall think himself consumed, rises as the morning star, because as soon as he shall have begun to grow dark with the darkness of temptations, he is reformed to the light of grace, and in himself he shows the day of righteousness, who a little before feared that the night of fault was about to fall. But rightly the life of the just is compared to the morning star. [Vet. XXI.] For preceding the sun, the morning star announces the

day. And what does the innocence of the saints cry to us but the brightness of the following Judge? For in the admiration of them we perceive what we should estimate concerning the majesty of the true light. We do not yet see the power of our Redeemer, but yet we admire His virtue in the morals of His elect. Because therefore the life of the good in its consideration objects the force of truth to our eyes, the bright morning star comes to us before the sun.

35. The just man suffers hard things here, but it shall be well with him in the end. Falling already from hence without, he is renewed within. ---It is to be known indeed that these things which we have discussed from the adversity of spiritual temptations, nothing hinders to be understood also according to external evils. For holy men because they love the highest things from the marrow, suffer hard things in the lowest; but in the end of joy they find the light, which they despise to have in this space of a running life. Whence it is now said through Zophar: And as the midday brightness it shall rise up to thee in the evening. For the light of the sinner in the day is darkness in the evening, because in the present life he is raised by prosperity, but is devoured by the shadows of adversity in the end. But to the just man the midday brightness rises in the evening, because he recognizes how great a brightness remains for him when he has already begun to set. For hence it is written: To him that feareth God it shall be well in the end (Ecclus. I, 13). Hence it is said through the Psalmist: When

he hath given sleep to his beloved, this is the inheritance of the Lord (Psal. CXXVI, 2). Who being placed still in the contest of this life, when he shall think himself consumed, rises as the morning star, because falling without, he is renewed within; and by how much more he tolerates adversities externally, by so much more abundantly he sparkles internally with the light of virtues, Paul attesting, who says: But though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh in us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory (II Cor. IV, 16). And it is to be noted that he by no means says when thou shalt be consumed, but when thou shalt think thyself consumed, because both that which we see is in doubt, and that which we hope for is in certainty. Whence also the same Paul did not know himself consumed, but thought it, who also falling into the adversities of tribulations was resplendent as the morning star, saying: As dying, and behold we live; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as needy, yet enriching many (II Cor. VI, 9). [Vet. XXII.] It is to be known also that the mind of the good by how much harder things it tolerates for the truth, by so much more certainly it hopes for the rewards of eternity. Whence also it is fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 18.---And thou shalt have confidence, hope being set before thee.

36. He hopes so much more certainly in God, by how much harder things he suffers for Him.---For hope in God rises so much more solidly, as much as everyone shall have borne more heavy things for Him, because the joy of retribution is by no means gathered from eternity, which is not first sown here by pious tribulation. 356 For hence it is said through the Psalmist: Going, they went and wept, casting their seeds; but coming, they shall come in exultation, carrying their sheaves (Psal. CXXV, 6). Hence Paul says: If we die together, we shall also live together; if we sustain, we shall also reign together (II Tim. II, 11). Hence he admonishes the disciples, saying: Through many tribulations it behoves us to enter into the kingdom of God (Acts XIV, 21). Hence the angel indicating the glory of the saints to John, says: These are they who have come from great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Apoc. VII, 14). Because therefore it is sown now through tribulation, so that afterwards it may be reaped through the fruits of joy, so much greater confidence strengthens the mind, as much as stronger affliction for the truth straitens it. Whence it is fitly subjoined straightway:

CHAPTER XX.

IBID.---And having dug out, thou shalt sleep secure.

37. To the wicked present security brings labor, to the good present labor brings security.---For just as present security brings labor to the

wicked, so present labor brings perpetual security to the good. Whence also he already knew himself, being dug out, to sleep secure, who was saying: For I am already being sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; for the rest there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day (II Tim. IV, 6). For because he had fought without failing against passing evils, he was presuming without doubt concerning the remaining joys.

38. The rest and work of those free from earthly cares.---Although "dug out" can be understood also in another way. For often, being occupied with transitory things, we neglect to weigh through how great things we sin; but if, the eye of consideration being brought back, the heap of earthly thought is shaken out from the bosom of the heart, whatever was lying hidden in the mind is found. Whence holy men do not cease to search the hiding-places of souls, subtly searching themselves, they cast away the cares of earthly things, and, their thoughts being fully dug out, when they find themselves bitten by no guilt of crime, they rest as it were in the bed of the heart secure within themselves. They also desire to lie hidden from the acts of this world, they always consider their own things, and when they are by no means constrained by the thong of government, they refuse to judge those things which are another's. Being dug out therefore they sleep secure, because while they vigilantly

penetrate their own internal things, they hide themselves from the laborious burdens of this world under the leisure of rest. Whence also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 19.---Thou shalt rest, and there shall not be one who shall terrify thee.

39. One gasping after eternal things fears nothing from the world.---Whoever seeks present glory, certainly fears contempt. He who always gasps after gains, always forsooth dreads losses. For by the perception of which he is refreshed, by the loss of that thing no doubt he is also wounded; and by how much being bound he adheres to mutable and perishing things, by so much he lies far in the lowest things from the citadel of security. But on the contrary whoever is fixed in the sole desire of eternity, is neither raised by prosperity, nor shaken by adversity; while he has nothing in the world which he may desire, there is nothing which he may greatly fear from the world. For hence Solomon says: Whatever shall happen to the just, it shall not make him sad (Prov. XII, 21). Hence again he says: The just as a confident lion shall be without terror (Prov. XXVIII, 1). Well therefore is it now said: Thou shalt rest, and there shall not be one who shall terrify thee (Job XI, 19), because everyone so much more fully casts away from himself the fear which is from the world, by how much more truly in himself he overcomes the concupiscence of the world. Or had not 357 Paul rested without

terror in the heart, who was saying: For I am certain that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor fortitude, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the charity of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. VIII, 38)? The fortitude of whose charity indeed is praised by the true voice of the holy Church, when it is said through the Song of Songs (Cant. VIII, 6): Love is strong as death. For to the virtue of death love is compared, because no doubt the mind, which it shall have once taken, it kills thoroughly from the delight of the world; and it raises it so much more valiantly into authority, as much as it also renders it insensible against terrors. [Vet. XXIII.] But among these things it is to be known that when the wicked preach right things, it is very difficult that they should not break forth to that which they silently aim at. Whence also Zophar straightway subjoins:

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID.---And very many shall pray to thy face.

40. The upright do not aim to be seen as intercessors for others.---For neither do just men therefore keep themselves through the narrow paths of innocence, that they may be prayed to by others. But either heretics, or any perverse [men], through this that they live as if innocently among men, wish to be seen as intercessors for men; and when speaking they insinuate holy things, what they themselves aim at, this they promise

to others for a great thing; and while they preach heavenly things, in their sudden promises they show what they love. But lest by promising earthly things they should for long be open as to what they are, they run back more quickly to words of rectitude. Whence it is soon subjoined.

CHAPTER XXIII

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 20.---But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and escape shall perish from them.

41. For the wicked there is some escape from misery here; after death, none.---That the power of intention is expressed by the name of the eyes, the Truth attests through the Gospel, saying: If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome (Matth. VI, 22); because, namely, if a pure intention precedes our operation, however it may otherwise appear to men, yet the body of the following action is shown pure in the eyes of the internal Judge. The eyes of the wicked, therefore, are the intentions of carnal desires in them. Which therefore fail, because they neglect eternal things, and always look only for transitory things. For they think to obtain earthly glory, they long to be multiplied by temporal things, they tend daily to death by the course of sliding things; but they know not how to think of mortal things mortally. The life of the flesh fails by moments, and yet carnal desire grows. A thing possessed is shortened by an instant end, and the anxiety of having is not ended. But when death withdraws the

wicked, their desires are surely terminated with life. Whose eyes, namely, then fail by heavenly vengeance, because they would not fail by their own judgment here from earthly delight. That these eyes of theirs were closed from their former pleasantness the Psalmist had beheld, when he said: In that day all their thoughts shall perish (Psal. CXLV, 4); because they both find eternal evils never thought of, and suddenly lose temporal goods which they held after long treatment. From whom also all escape perishes, because their malice finds not where it may be able to hide itself from the animadversion of the strict Judge. For now the iniquitous, when they suffer any sadness or adversities, find lurking-places of escape, because they run back straightway to the pleasure of carnal desires. For lest poverty should torture them, they soothe the mind with riches. Lest the contempt of neighbors should depress them, they exalt themselves with dignities. If the body is worn out by loathing, it is nourished by the diversities of feasts set before it. If the mind is cast down by any impulse of sadness, it is soon relieved through the soothing allurements of jests interposed. So many escapes, therefore, they have here, as they prepare delights for themselves. But sometime escape perishes to them, because their mind, having lost all things, beholds only itself and the Judge. Then pleasure is withdrawn, but the guilt of pleasure is kept, and suddenly the wretched learn by perishing because they held perishing things. Who yet as

long as they live corporally do not cease to seek hurtful things. Whence it is yet subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV.

IBID.---And their hope is the abomination of the soul.

42. What is pleasure to the iniquitous, this is punishment to the just. Whence the flesh is refreshed, thence the spirit fails.---What does the sinner here hope for with all his thoughts, except that he may surpass others in power, transcend all in the multiplicity of things, subject opponents by dominating them, become known as wonderful to those who obey, satisfy his wrath according to his wish, show himself benign when he is praised; whatever gluttony desires, he may offer; and to that which pleasure commands, he may run with the completion of work? Well, therefore, is their hope called the abomination of the soul, because those things which the carnal aim at, all the spiritual also by the judgment of rectitude are averse to. For what sinners estimate as pleasure, this the just without doubt think a punishment. [Vet. XXIV.] The hope of the wicked, therefore, is the abomination of the soul, because doubtless the spirit fails where the flesh rests. For as the flesh is nourished by soft things, so the soul by hard things: the former bland things refresh, the latter rough things exercise; the former is fed by delights, the latter is quickened by bitterness. And as hard things wound the flesh, so soft things kill the spirit; as laborious things destroy the former, so delectable things extinguish the

latter. The hope of the carnal, therefore, is called the abomination of the soul, because thence the spirit perishes forever, whence for a time the flesh lives sweetly.

43. Indiscretion in the speaker often corrupts things rightly said.---But Zophar would say these things rightly, unless blessed Job had preached all things even more largely by living. But after he strives to warn the holier one about life, and endeavors to instruct the more learned one by the mastery of wisdom, he himself lightens the weight of his own words, who, by interposing indiscretion, destroys all that he speaks, because he pours the liquid of knowledge over a full vessel. For so the riches of knowledge are possessed by the indiscreet, as the riches of corporal substance are often possessed by fools. For some, who are supported by a multiplicity of earthly things, sometimes give much even to those who have, that they themselves may be seen to have these things more largely than all. So the perverse, when they know true things, speak certain right things even to the more upright; not that they may teach those who hear, but that they themselves may be known how much doctrine they possess. For they think that they precede all in wisdom, and therefore they think that they say nothing to anyone beyond the measures of their own greatness. So any perverse men, so all heretics, fear not to teach better men with a proud voice, because they think all to be inferior to themselves. [Vet. XXIV.] But holy Church recalls all the elated from the summit of their own

estimation, and by the hand of discretion reforms them to the structure of equality. Whence blessed Job, who is a member of the same holy Church, seeing that the mind of his friends has swelled through the words of the instruction brought forth, immediately replied, saying:

CHAPTER XXV

[Vet. XXV].

CAP. XII, VERS. 2.---Are you then the only men, and shall wisdom die with you?

44. The fatuity of the proudly wise.---Whoever thinks that he precedes all in reason, what else does he exult in than that he is the only man? And it often happens that when the mind is led on high through tumor, it is raised up to the contempt of all and the admiration of itself. For in thought its own favors arise, and fatuity itself flatters itself about the singularity of wisdom. It weighs those things which it has heard, and the words which it brings forth; and it admires its own, it laughs at those of others. He, therefore, who estimates that he alone is wise, what else does he think than that this same wisdom will die with him? For that which he denies to be present in others, attributing it to himself alone, he surely shuts up within the times of his own brevity. But it must be considered with how great discretion the holy man uses, that the arrogance of his proud friends may be repressed, when he straightway adds:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERS. 3.---And I have a heart, as well as you, and I am not inferior to you.

45. The arrogance of this one must be modestly repressed.---For who does not know how much the life and knowledge of blessed Job exceed the knowledge of his friends? But that he may correct their pride, he denies that he is inferior; and lest he should cross the limit of his own humility, he is silent about being superior: not by preferring himself, but by comparing himself, he indicates what those who are far unequal to him may learn from him, so that while the wisdom which is eminent is spontaneously bent, the knowledge which lies low may by no means raise itself against its powers. Whom he well recalls soon to the sense of equality, because he weighs it as great to swell as if with the singularity of greatness, when he subsequently adds:

CHAPTER XXVII.

IBID.---For who is ignorant of these things which you know?

46. By showing that those things which he glories in knowing are ignorant to no one.---As if he should openly say: Since those things which you say are known to all, why do you uniquely swell concerning the knowledge of the things said? Because, therefore, recalling the elation of the arrogant to the communion of equality, he refuted them with perfect correction, he now breaks out into the sentences of doctrine, so that

his friends, being humbled, might first learn the weights of truth before they reverently heard. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Vet. XXVI, Rec. XV].

VERS. 4.---He that is derided by his friend as I am, shall invoke God, and he will hear him.

47. How praise hurts and derision helps one who acts rightly. Derision helps where there is no merit of fault.---Often a weak mind, when it is received by the air of human favor for its good actions, is derived to exterior joys, so that it postpones what it desires within, and lies loosened willingly in that which it hears without; so that it rejoices not so much that it is blessed as that it is called so. And when it gapes for the voices of its own praise, it leaves what it had begun to be. Thence, therefore, it is disjoined from God, whence it seemed laudable in God. But sometimes the mind constantly leans upon a right work, and yet is urged by human derisions: it does wonderful things, and receives reproaches; and he who was able to go forth through praises, being repulsed by contumelies, returns to himself; and he solidifies himself the more robustly within in God, as he finds not without where he may rest. For all hope is fixed in the Author, and among the insults of derisions the internal witness alone is implored; and the mind of the afflicted becomes so much closer to God, as it is alien from the grace of human favor:

it is straightway poured forth in prayer, and being pressed externally, it is more purely refined to penetrate those things which are within. Well, therefore, is it now said: He that is derided by his friend as I am, shall invoke God, and he will hear him, because while the perverse reproach the mind of the good, they show whom they should seek as a witness of their acts. Which, while being compunct it girds itself in prayers, is joined thence within to the heavenly hearing, whence it is separated without from human praise. [Vet. XXVII.] But it must be noted how providently is interposed As I am, because there are some whom also human derisions depress, and yet they are not exaudible to divine ears. For when derision is born against a fault, surely no merit of virtue is generated in the derision. For the priests of Baal, imploring him with clamorous voices, had been derided by Elijah, when he said: Cry with a louder voice, for he is a God, and perhaps he is talking, or is in an inn (III Kings XVIII, 27). But this derision was not for them to the use of virtue, because it came through the merit of a fault. Providently, therefore, is it now said: He that is derided by his friend, as I am, shall invoke God, and he will hear him, because human derision makes him close to God, whom innocence of life keeps alien from human perversities. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XVI].

IBID.---For the simplicity of the just man is derided.

48. What is the wisdom of this world. What is the wisdom of the just. Why it is laughed at by the world.---The wisdom of this world is to cover the heart with machinations, to veil sense with words, to show things which are false as true, to demonstrate things which are true as fallacious. This prudence, forsooth, is known by use to the young, this is learned by a price by boys; those who know it, being proud, despise others; those who know it not, being subject and timid, admire it in others, because by them this same duplicity of iniquity, cloaked with a name, is loved, while perversity of mind is called urbanity. This commands those who obey it to seek the summits of honors, to rejoice in the vanity of temporal glory attained, to return in a more multiplied way the evils inflicted by others, to yield to none who resist when forces are at hand, and when the possibility of virtue is lacking, whatever it is not able to fulfill through malice, to simulate this in peaceful goodness. But on the contrary, the wisdom of the just is to feign nothing by ostentation, to open the sense with words, to love true things as they are, to avoid false things, to exhibit good things freely, to tolerate evil things more willingly than to do them; to seek no vengeance for injury, to think contumely for the truth as gain. But this simplicity of the just is derided, because by the wise of this world the virtue of purity is believed to be fatuity. For everything that is acted innocently is without doubt thought

foolish by them; and whatever truth approves in work, sounds fatuous to carnal wisdom. For what seems more foolish to the world than to show the mind with words, to simulate nothing by a cunning machination, to return no contumelies for injuries, to pray for those who speak evil, to seek poverty, to leave things possessed, not to resist him who takes away, to offer the other cheek to him who strikes? Whence well to the lovers of this world that eminent wise man of God says: We will sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians to the Lord our God (Exod. VIII, 26). For the Egyptians disdain to eat sheep; but what the Egyptians abominate, this the Israelites offer to God, because the simplicity of conscience, which all the unjust despise as if lowest and abject, this the just turn into a sacrifice of virtue; and the upright, cultivating purity and gentleness, sacrifice to God what the reprobate, abominating it, think fatuity. Which simplicity of the just, namely, is briefly but sufficiently expressed, when it is straightway subjoined.

CHAPTER XXX

[Vet. XXVIII, Rec. XVII].

VERS. 5.---A lamp despised in the thoughts of the rich.

49. That the possession of riches is not in crime, but cupidity.---What is signaled in this place by the name of the rich, except the elation of the proud, who have no regard for the coming Judge, while they swell with proud thoughts in

themselves? For there are some whom wealth does not lift up through tumor, but exalts through works of mercy. And there are some who, while they behold themselves to abound in earthly riches, do not seek the true riches of God, and do not love the eternal country, because they think this to suffice for them, that they are supported by temporal things. Census is not, therefore, in crime, but affect. For all things which God created are good; but he who uses good things badly surely acts so that, as if through the gluttony of edacity, he dies by that bread through which he ought to live. Poor Lazarus had come to rest, but the proud rich man the torments were torturing (Luke XVI, 26). But yet rich had been Abraham, who was holding Lazarus in his bosom; who yet communing with his Author, says: I will speak to my Lord, since I am dust and ashes (Gen. XVIII, 27). What therefore did he know to estimate his riches, who weighed himself as dust and ashes? Or when would things possessed extol him, who felt such abject things of himself also, namely, the possessor of them?

50. Those are to be accounted rich who are in need, and swell with pride. To these the contemners of the world are for contempt.--- And again there are some to whom also earthly things are not supplied, and yet in themselves they are raised up through the pride of tumor. These census by no means conveys to the ostentation of power, and yet the protervity of manners adjudges them among the reprobate rich. Whomever therefore the love of the follow-

ing life does not humble, in this place the sacred speech calls rich, because also in the vengeance of judgment they do not differ whether they swell with things or with manners alone. Who when they behold the life of the simple in this world humble and abject; they straightway laugh with elated contempts. For they by no means consider that to be present to them exteriorly, for which they themselves pant with all endeavors. They despise therefore as if fools those who namely have not those things which they surely either by having, or only by loving, die; and they depute as if dead those whom they by no means weigh to live carnally with them. For he who dies from the appetite of this world, by earthly minds is surely estimated extinguished in every way. Which well the miracle of our Redeemer signals, when he liberates a man from an unclean spirit, concerning whom namely it is written: Crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him; and he became as dead, so that many said that he is dead. But Jesus taking him by the hand, lifted him up, and he arose (Mark IX, 25). For he is shown as if dead who is liberated from the power of the malignant spirit, because whoever now subdues earthly desires, extinguishes the life of carnal conversation in himself; and he appears dead to the world, because he lacks the perverse possessor, who was driving him through unclean desires. Whom many call dead, because those who know not how to live spiritually think him who does not follow carnal goods to be utterly extinguished.

[Vet. XXIX.] 51. The just, without light in the eyes of the carnal, burn and shine before God.--- But because these deriders of the simple are also themselves accounted by the name of Christianity, being pressed by the reverence of religion, they are ashamed to exhibit the evil of public derision. Whence it happens that being tumid and silent they deride among themselves those whom they think very abject and lowest through simplicity. Well therefore is it said: A lamp despised in the thoughts of the rich, because all the proud, while they know not how to weigh following goods, as we said above, estimate as almost nothing him whom they see not to have what they love. For it often happens that every elect, who is led to eternal happiness, is depressed here by continual adversity, the abundance of things does not support him, the glory of dignities does not show him honorable, no frequency of those obeying him is supplied to him, no pomp of garments composes him to human eyes; but he is seen as despicable by all, and is estimated unworthy of the grace of this world. But yet before the eyes of the occult Judge he flashes with virtues, he shines with the merits of life, he fears to be honored, he does not fly from being despised; he affects the body with continence, he grows fat in the soul with love alone, he always prepares the mind for patience, and being erect for justice, he exults concerning the contumelies received, he compassions the afflicted from the heart, he rejoices concerning the prosperities of the good as if concerning his own, he solicitously ruminates

the foods of the sacred word in the mind, and being inquired he is doubly ignorant to speak anything. Well therefore the simplicity of the just is said both to be a lamp, and despised. A lamp, because it shines interiorly; despised, because it does not shine exteriorly. Within burns the flame of charity, without no glory of beauty resplends. He shines therefore and is despised who, flaming with virtues, is estimated abject. For the minds of the carnal are not able to weigh goods, except those which they see carnally. Hence it is that David the holy his father himself had despised, whom he refused to present to the eyes of the prophet Samuel. Who when he had led seven sons to the grace of unction, being inquired by the prophet whether he had filled the number of offspring, with great desperation replied: There is a little boy who feeds the sheep (I Kings XVI, 10, 11). Who being led and elected, he straightway heard: Man sees in the face, but God searches the heart (Ibid., 7). A lamp therefore David had been through innocence; but yet greatly despised, because he did not shine to those beholding exterior things. But it must be known that every just man either has not temporal glory, or breaks it under himself, if he has it, that he may stand out free for his own honor, lest being conquered by delight he should succumb to it. For hence it is that that eminent preacher had humbled the glory of his apostolate before human eyes, who said: We have not used this power, when we might have been a burden as the apostles of Christ, but we became little ones in the midst of you (I Thess. II, 7). But

to his auditors surely the tumor of the rich had still remained in the heart, when they said: The epistles are weighty and strong, but the presence of the body weak, and the speech contemptible (II Cor. X, 10). For him whom they had known to be able to say such things, they judged not to be able to live commonly with them. And when they saw him both humble in living, and weighed him high in speech, their elation compelled them that him whom they had feared through writings they should despise through the words of his presence. What therefore was Paul, except a despised lamp in the thoughts of the rich, who whence he exhibited the mastery of humility, thence from the rude disciples he received the contumelies of pride? For in a horrendous way the languor of the proud increased whence it ought to have detumesced, while the elated mind of the carnal repelled as if disdainable this which the master showed as imitable. Or was he not a despised lamp, who, flashing with so many virtues, tolerated so many adversities from persecutors (Ephes. VI, 20)? He performs a legation in a chain, and his bonds are made manifest in every pretorium, he is beaten with rods, and is urged by many dangers from his race, from the gentiles (Philip. I, 13), he is pounded with stones at Lystra, he is dragged by the feet outside the city, because he is estimated extinguished (II Cor. XI, 26). But how long is this lamp despised? How long is it held despicable? Does it by no means exert its brightness, and never show with how great clarity it glows? It shows plainly. For when

it was said a lamp despised in the thoughts of the rich, it is straightway added:

CHAPTER XXXI.

IBID.---Prepared for the set time.

52. The just here spurned will shine in the day of judgment.---The set time of the despised lamp is surely the predestined day of the extreme judgment, in which every just man, who is now despised, is shown with how great power he shines. [Vet. XXX.] For then judges come with God, who now are unjustly judged for God. Then their light flashes so much more widely, as the hand of the persecuting now narrows them more harshly. Then to the eyes of the reprobate it will lie open that those are supported by heavenly power who spontaneously left all earthly things. Whence to his elect the Truth says: You who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matth. XIX, 28). For neither will that court of the internal session not have more than twelve judges; but doubtless in the duodenary number the quantity of the university is expressed, because whoever, excited by the stimulus of divine love, has left things possessed here, there without doubt will obtain the summit of judiciary power, so that the judge may come then together with the Judge, who now chastises himself with spontaneous poverty by the consideration of judgment. For hence it is that concerning the spouse of holy Church it is said through

Solomon: Her husband is noble in the gates, when he shall sit with the senators of the earth (Prov. XXXI, 23). Hence Isaiah says: The Lord will come to judgment with the ancients of his people (Isai. III, 14). Hence the Truth announces those same ancients no longer as servants, but as friends, saying: I will no longer call you servants, but my friends (John XV, 15). Whom namely the Psalmist beholding, says: But to me thy friends are made exceedingly honorable, O God (Psal. CXXXVIII, 17). Whose highness of heart while he beheld, he straightway added the glory of the world which they would tread with the heel: Their principality is exceedingly strengthened. And lest we should believe them to be few, whom we recognize to profit as far as the sum of so great perfection, he immediately added: I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand. As many therefore as now spontaneously humble themselves for the love of truth, so many lamps then flash in judgment. Let it be said therefore rightly: A lamp despised in the thoughts of the rich, prepared for the set time, because the soul of each just man is despised as if abject when living below it has not glory, but it is seen as admirable while it shines from above.

53. Christ the lamp here despised.---It is pleasing among these things to lift up the eyes of the mind to the ways of the Redeemer, and gradually to come from the members to the head. For he himself truly stood out as a lamp to us, who, dying on the cross for our redemption, poured light through the wood to our dark minds. By

this lamp John had beheld us to be illuminated, when he said: He was the true light which illuminates every man coming into this world (John I, 9). Which yet he saw despised in the thoughts of the rich, when a little after he subjoined: He came into his own and his own received him not (Ibid., 11). Herod wished to explore the flames of this lamp, when he desired to see his miracles, as it is written: For he was for a long time desiring to see him, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to see some sign done by him (Luke XXIII, 8). But this lamp flashed with no ray of light before his eyes, because to him who had sought him not piously but curiously he showed nothing wonderful of himself. For the Redeemer being inquired was silent, being expected he despised to exhibit miracles, and retaining himself within in occult things, those whom he found to seek exterior things, he left ungrateful without: rather choosing to be openly despised by the proud, than to be praised by the non-believing with a void voice. Whence also straightway this lamp was despised, as it is subjoined there: But Herod with his army despised him, and mocked him put in a white garment (Ibid. 11).

[Vet. XXXI.] 54. In the last day it will flash forth.---But the despised lamp, which on earth endures mockeries, flashes judgment from heaven. Whence here it is aptly subjoined: Prepared for the set time. Concerning which time namely He says through the Psalmist: When I shall have received the time, I will judge justices (Psal. LXXIV, 3). Hence in the Gospel the Truth

announces through itself, saying: My time has not yet come (John VII, 6). Hence Peter says: Whom heaven must receive, until the times of restitution (Acts III, 21). The lamp therefore which is now despised is prepared to come at the set time, because He Himself judges sins in the last day, who now bears the derisions of sinners. And so much more harshly does He then exert strictness (districtionem), as He now more gently spreads out His patience to the sinners who are to be called. For He who long awaits those to be converted, tortures the unconverted without retractation. Which namely He briefly hints through the prophet, saying: I have been silent, I have always been still, I have been patient, I will speak as a woman in travail (Isai. XLII, 14). For as we have already said, she that is in travail casts out with pain that which she has carried within for a long time. He therefore who has always been silent speaks as a woman in travail, because the Judge who is to come, who for a long time has borne the deeds of men without vengeance, at some time with the fervor of the examination, as if with pain of mind, shows how great a sentence of animadversion (animadversionis) He has kept within. Let no one therefore despise this lamp while it is hidden, lest it burn up its contemners when it shall have flashed from heaven. For to whom it does not now burn for pardon, then without doubt it will burn for punishment. Since therefore through heavenly grace we receive a time of vocation, while license still remains, let us flee the wrath of Him who is everywhere, by

changing our ways for the better. For surely that animadversion does not find him whom correction hides.

55. Let it suffice that we, the Lord granting it, have now run through these things in two volumes (corporibus). For because we cannot compendiously explain the following parts of the sacred book, extended by the virtues of mysteries, it is necessary that we reserve them for other volumes, so that the reader may return so much more fervent to the study of reading, as he breathes again from the interruption of the reading.

THIRD PART, CONSISTING OF SIX BOOKS.

BOOK ELEVEN.

In which the twelfth chapter, from the sixth verse, the thirteenth, and the first four verses of the fourteenth, the style being changed for a while, are explained.

CHAPTER I.

1. What things are to be explained in this whole third part and in what style.---Although in a prolix work the mutability of style ought not to be blameworthy, yet lest any one should reprove me for the change of my speech, in the letter prefixed to the books I have given the reason why I have brought the third part of this work to the likeness of the others by minimal emending. Which being excluded, this also is added, that from that verse in which it is said: The tabernacles of robbers abound, the exposition of the same part begins, and reaches by discoursing as far as that which is written: Their sweetness is a worm. Which surely are so many, that they could not be comprehended in one volume (corpore), unless they were spoken under great brevity. He therefore who is free from other acts, let him read the other things spoken manifoldly. But to him

who is not free to read studiously, let the brevity of this part please him, in which we do not so much say what we feel as we sign those things which are to be said. Therefore since in it many things, as they were taken down while I was speaking, so I have left them, my reader, receive with equanimity the change of style, because even to those eating the same foods, diversity of cooking is pleasing. But as often as you take the single parts to read, study to bring back always to memory that origin of the cause which I proposed, because both through blessed Job, who is called grieving, the passions of the Lord and of His body, that is, holy Church, are designated, and his friends hold the figure of heretics, who, as we have already often said (Chiefly Pref., c. 6, n. 15), while they strive to defend God, offend Him. Who while they consult feignedly, strongly afflict the mind of the holy; yet they do not fall away from the knowledge of truth through all things which they speak, but for the most part they mingle prudence with foolish things, and true things with feigned ones, so that while they arrogate something from truth, they easily draw to falsehood. Whence the friends also of blessed Job sometimes speak despicable things, sometimes wonderful ones; which yet the holy man sometimes convicts by reproving, sometimes indeed receives by approving, and draws to the use of rectitude even those things which are brought forth by them right, but not rightly. Therefore despising those who despise his poverty, and being placed in body on the dunghill, he shows in how

great a summit of virtues he sits within himself, when he mentions that the riches of the present life are nothing, which he relates to abound even to the reprobate, saying:

CHAPTER II

[Vet. I, Rec. II].

CHAP. 12, VERS. 6.---The tabernacles of robbers abound, and they boldly provoke God, when He Himself has given all things into their hands.

2. How great a contempt of riches shines forth in Job.---It is easy for a man then to despise riches, when he has them; but it is difficult to esteem them as vile when he has them not. Whence it is patently shown how great a contempt of earthly things there was in the thought of blessed Job, who then says that those things which abound to the reprobate are nothing, when he has lost all. He says therefore: The tabernacles of robbers abound, and they boldly provoke God, because for the most part the wicked are so much more proud against God, as they are enriched by His largess and against merit; and they who ought to have been provoked by goods to better things, become worse by gifts.

3. What things the wicked do unjustly, God justly permits to be done.---But we must understand how they are called robbers, while it is straightway subjoined: When He Himself has given all things into their hands. For if they are robbers, they have taken away violently, and there is no doubt that God is not the helper of

the violent. How therefore does He Himself give what these who are robbers wickedly take away? But it must be known that it is one thing which almighty God mercifully bestows, and another thing which being angry He suffers to be had. For what robbers do perversely, this the most equitable Dispenser permits to be done only justly; so that both he who is suffered to seize, being blinded in mind, may increase his fault, and he who suffers the rapine may now be struck in the loss of the same rapine for another fault than he perpetrated before. For behold, a certain one being placed in the throat of a mountain lies in wait for travelers; but he who makes the journey perhaps perpetrated some unjust things at some time, and almighty God retributing his evil to him in the present life, and delivering him into the hands of the waylayer, permits him either to be spoiled of his things, or even to be slain. What therefore the robber unjustly desired, this the most equitable Judge justly permitted to be done; so that both that one might receive what he had unjustly done, and this one might be struck more heavily at some time, through whose most wicked will almighty God justly vindicated the fault upon the other. He is purged who is oppressed; in this one the guilt is increased, who oppresses, so that either from the depth of wickedness he may return at some time to penitence, or not returning he may be struck so much more heavily by eternal damnation, as he has been long tolerated in his iniquity. With that one therefore it is dealt mercifully that he may end

sin, with this one strictly that he may multiply it, unless he runs back to penitence. In that one evils are purged while he sustains violence, in this one they are heaped up while he does it. Almighty God therefore justly permits to be done what He prohibits to be done, so that whence He now expects, and long tolerates the unconverted, thence He may at some time strike more. Well therefore it is said: The tabernacles of robbers abound, and they boldly provoke God, when He Himself has given all things into their hands, because what the iniquitous take away, He Himself gives this to them, who could have resisted them in rapine, if He had willed to have mercy.

[Vet. II.] 4. They are robbers who are proud of the gifts conferred on them by God.---Which yet can be understood of spiritual things also. For for the most part some receive gifts of doctrine, but they swell from the same gifts, and wish to seem great before others. And to provoke almighty God is to be proud concerning His gifts among neighbors. Who also are not undeservedly called robbers, because while they speak what they do not do, they take the words of the just into the use of their speech. But because heavenly grace bestows these same words on them, whose life yet it leaves in depraved manners, through themselves indeed they are robbers, but yet they have received the good things which they have from God. It follows: VERS. 7 and 8.---Doubtless ask the beasts, and they shall teach thee; the fowls of the air, and they shall indicate to thee. Speak to

the earth, and it shall answer thee, and the fishes of the sea shall tell.

CHAPTER III.

5. What is signified by the beasts and the fowls of the air, what by the earth and the fishes of the sea.---What ought we to understand by the beasts, but the slow of sense? What by the fowls of the air, but those wise in high and sublime things? Concerning the beasts namely, that is, the slow of sense, it is written: Thy animals shall dwell therein (Psal. LXVII, 11). And because those wise in sublime things fly away in the words of our Redeemer, it is written: So that the birds of the air come, and dwell in the branches thereof (Matth. XIII, 32). But what by the earth, but those wise in earthly things? Whence also it was said to the first man deserting heavenly things: Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go (Gen. III, 19). What by the fishes of the sea ought we to receive, but the curious of this world? Of whom the Psalmist says: The fishes of the sea, that pass through the paths of the sea (Psal. VIII, 9). Who in great inquisitions of things lie hidden as if in secret waves. But what all these things being inquired teach, he joins, saying:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 9.---Who is ignorant that the hand of the Lord hath made all these things?

6. All things preach God as the creator of all.---As if he should say openly: Whether you require

those slower of sense, or those wise in sublime things, or those given to earthly acts, or those occupied in the inquisitions of this world, all these confess God as the creator of all, and they feel concordantly concerning His power, although they do not live concordantly under it. For what every just man speaks even by living, this the unjust man for the most part is compelled to confess concerning God even by voice alone; and it comes to pass that the wicked serve the Author of all by attestation, whom they resist by works, because Him whom they have dared to impugn by manners, they cannot deny as the creator of all. Which yet can be understood usefully even according to the sole appearance of the letter, because every creature being respected gives as it were a voice of its own attestation, by that very appearance which it has. We require the beasts, or the fowls, the earth, or the fishes, while we consider those things which respond to us concordantly, that the Lord has made all things; because while they present their appearances to our eyes, they testify that they are not from themselves. For by that very fact that they are created, through the appearance shown they render as it were a voice of confession to their Creator, who, because He established all things, disposed also how they ought to be administered. Whence it is subjoined:

CHAPTER V

[Vet. and Rec. III].

VERS. 10.---In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the spirit of all flesh of man.

7. He who granted to be what was not, provided how that which now exists should be. The spirit of man is understood in two ways.---By the hand namely power is expressed. The soul therefore of every living thing, and the spirit of all flesh of man, is in His power from whom it is; that He Himself may provide how it should be, who granted it to be what it was not. The life of beasts indeed can be signified by the soul of every living thing. For almighty God vivifies the soul of beasts as far as the bodily senses, but He extends the spirit of men as far as spiritual intellect. In His hand therefore is the soul of every living thing, and the spirit of all flesh of man, while both in that one He grants this to the soul that it may vivify the flesh, and in this one He vivifies the soul to this end, that it may arrive at understanding eternity. But it must be known that in sacred eloquence the spirit of man is accustomed to be put in two ways. For sometimes spirit is put for the soul, sometimes for a spiritual effect. For spirit is said for the soul, as it is written of our Head Himself: Bowing His head, He gave up the spirit (John XIX, 30). For if the evangelist had called the spirit something other than the soul, surely the spirit going out, the soul would have remained. Spirit is also said for a spiritual effect, as it is written: Who makest Thy angels spirits, and Thy ministers a burning fire (Psal. CIII, 4). For angels, that is, messengers, in sacred eloquence are sometimes called preachers, as it is said through the prophet:

The lips of the priest keep knowledge, and they seek the law from his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts (Mal. II, 7). Almighty God therefore makes His angels spirits, because He makes His preachers spiritual. But in this place, if the soul of every living thing is signified as the life of the body itself, by the spirit of all flesh of man the effect of spiritual intelligence is expressed. It follows:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. IV].

VERS. 11.---Doth not the ear judge words, and the throat of him that eateth the taste?

8. How diverse are the gifts and modes of inhabitation of one and the same Wisdom.--- It is hidden from almost no one that the five senses of our body, namely sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch, in all that they feel and discern, draw the virtue of discretion and sense from the brain. And while the sense of the brain is the one judge which presides within, yet it discerns the five senses through their own passages, God working wonderfully, so that neither the eye hears, nor the ear sees, nor the mouth smells, nor the nostrils taste, nor the hands smell. And while all things are disposed through one sense of the brain, yet any of these senses cannot do other than that which it received from the disposition of the Creator. From these bodily and exterior things, therefore, interior and spiritual things are to be collected, that through that which is public

in us we ought to pass to the secret which is in us and is hidden from ourselves. [Vet. IV.] It must be considered namely that while Wisdom is one, she inhabits one less, another more; she grants this to one, that to another, and, as if after the manner of the brain, she uses ourselves as if for certain senses, so that although she is never unlike herself, yet through us she always works diverse and dissimilar things, to the end that this one may receive the gift of wisdom, that one the gift of knowledge; this one kinds of tongues, that one the grace of healings.

9. The reprobate only hear the words of wisdom, the elect also taste them.---But in these words in which blessed Job says: The ear judges words, and the throat of him that eateth, the taste, he seems also to hint something concerning the elect and the reprobate, because the words of wisdom, which the reprobate hear, the elect not only hear, but also taste, so that that may taste in their heart which sounds not to the minds, but only to the ears of the reprobate. For it is one thing only to hear of a food named, but another thing also to taste it. The elect therefore so hear the food of wisdom, that they taste it, because this which they hear tastes to them inwardly through love. But the knowledge of the reprobate is extended as far as the cognition of the sound, so that they indeed hear virtues, but yet with a cold heart they are ignorant of how they taste. By which words namely blessed Job reproves the unskillfulness of his friends, and the arrogance of those who are puffed up concerning

the doctrine of wisdom, because it is one thing to know something of God, but another thing to taste this which is known with the throat of intelligence. Rightly therefore it is said: Doth not the ear judge words, and the throat of him that eateth, the taste? As if it were said openly to the arrogant: The words of doctrine, which come as far as the ear to you, touch the throats of intelligence to me also through an intimate taste. But because weak age, even when it is rightly wise, ought not to leap forth incautiously to preaching, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 12.---In the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days prudence. 10. Wisdom is confirmed by the use of living and by experience.---For those sayings are solidified in the root of wisdom, which through the use of living also grow strong by the experiment of acts. But because to many both a longer life is granted, and the grace of wisdom is not conferred, it is rightly still shown in whose judgment those same gifts depend, while it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 13.---With him is wisdom and strength; he hath counsel and understanding.

11. Christ is the wisdom and strength of God.---These things we receive not incongruously concerning the Only-begotten of the supreme Father, so that we may perceive him

to be the wisdom and strength of God. For Paul also bears witness to our understanding, saying: Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24); who is always with him, because in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). Moreover, God hath counsel and understanding: counsel, namely, because he disposes his own things; understanding, because he knows ours. [Vet. V.] Also, by the name of counsel, the very delay of hidden judgment may be signified, so that the fact that he sometimes strikes delinquents more slowly is not because the fault of the wicked is not seen, but so that the sentence of their damnation, which is deferred for the sake of doing penance, may seem to proceed as if slowly from counsel. What, therefore, is sometimes indicated outwardly by an open sentence, this was hidden in counsel with the Almighty Lord before the ages. It follows:

CHAPTER IX

[Rec. V].

VERS. 14.---If he break down, there is none that can build up; if he shut up a man, there is none that can open.

12. God destroys the human mind by receding from it. He who acts evilly makes a prison for himself in his conscience.---Almighty God destroys the human heart when he leaves it, he builds it up while he fills it. For he does not destroy the human mind by fighting against it,

but by receding, because it is sufficient for its own perdition when left to itself. Whence it often happens that when the heart of the listener is not filled by the grace of Almighty God because of the exigency of faults, he is admonished in vain from without by the preacher, because every mouth that speaks is mute, if he who inspires the words that are heard does not cry out within in the heart. Hence the Prophet says: Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it (Psal. 126:1). Hence Solomon says: Consider the works of God, that no man can correct whom he hath despised (Eccl. 7:14). Nor is it a wonder if the preacher is heard very little by a reprobate heart, while sometimes the Lord himself is also impugned in those things which he speaks by the morals of those resisting. For hence it is that Cain could be admonished even by the divine voice, and could not be changed, because the fault of malice demanding it, God had already left the heart within, to which he spoke words without for a testimony. But it is well added: If he shut up a man, there is none that can open. Because every man, through that which he acts evilly, what else does he make for himself but a prison of his own conscience, so that the guilt of his mind may press upon him, even if no one accuses him from without? Who, when he is left, God judging him, in the blindness of his malice, is as it were shut up within himself, lest he find a place of escaping, which he by no means deserves to find. For often some desire to go out from depraved acts; but because they are pressed by the weight of the same

acts, shut up in the prison of evil habit, they cannot go out from themselves. And some, desiring to punish their own faults, turn that which they think they act rightly into more grievous faults; and it happens in a miserable way that what they think an exit, this they find an inclusion. Thus, namely, the reprobate Judas (Matth. 27:5), when he brought death upon himself against sin, came to the punishments of eternal death, and repented worse of the sin than he had sinned.

13. No one resists God calling, no one meets him leaving.---Let it be said, therefore: If he shut up a man, there is none that can open, because as no one resists the largess of him calling, so no one meets the justice of him leaving. To shut up, therefore, is of God not to open to those shut. Whence also it is said to Moses concerning Pharaoh: I will harden his heart (Exod. 4:21; 7:3). For God is said to harden through justice, when he does not soften a reprobate heart through grace. He shuts up, therefore, the man whom he leaves in the darkness of his own works. [Vet. VI.] For Isaac wished, as it were, to open this inclusion to his first-born son, when he endeavored to prefer him to his brother by blessing him (Gen. 27:5). But the son whom the father wished, the Lord reprobated, and whom the Lord wished, the father also blessed even against his will (Ibid., 25:34), so that he who had already sold his birthright to his brother for food should not receive the blessing of the first-born, which he had left from the greed of his belly: who, seeking earthly things, following fleeting things,

desiring to inherit the blessing, was reprobated. For he found no place of repentance, although he had sought it with tears, because namely those lamentations have no fruit, which study to desire with groaning things about to perish. Isaac, therefore, could not open even to his son, whom Almighty God by a just judgment shut up in the prison of his malice. It follows:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. VI].

VERS. 15.---If he withhold the waters, all things dry up; if he send them forth, they subvert the earth.

14. When preaching or grace is withdrawn, the heart withers.---If by water is understood the knowledge of preaching, as it is written: Deep water are the words from the mouth of a man, and a bubbling brook is the fountain of wisdom (Prov. 18:4), when the water is withheld, all things dry up; because if the knowledge of preachers is withdrawn, the hearts of those who could have flourished in eternal hope immediately wither away; so that they remain in a desperate dryness, while, loving fleeting things, they know not how to hope for those that remain. But if by the name of water the grace of the Holy Spirit is designated, as it is said by the voice of the Truth in the Gospel: He that believeth in me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water (John 7:38, 39); where the evangelist immediately added: But this he spake of

the Spirit, whom they that believe in him should receive; a suitable understanding is evident in these words, by which he says: If he withhold the waters, all things dry up, because if the grace of the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from the mind of the hearer, the understanding immediately withers, which already through hope seemed to flourish in the hearer. Moreover, that he mentions not water, but waters, by the name of plurality, he recurs to the sevenfold grace of spiritual gifts, because each one is as it were poured upon by as many waters as the gifts with which he is filled. Concerning which it is fitly subjoined: If he send them forth, they subvert the earth.

15. When grace breathes upon it, the heart that savors of earthly things is subverted and changed.---For what is understood by earth, but the sinner, to whom it was said by sentence: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Gen. 3:19)? The earth, therefore, remains immovable, when the sinner contemns to obey the lordly precepts; when he raises the neck of pride, and closes the eyes of the mind from the light of truth. But because it is written: His feet stood, and the earth was moved (Habak. 3:6, according to the LXX), because when truth is fixed in the heart, the immobility of the mind is shaken, if the grace of the Holy Spirit is poured in by a heavenly gift according to the voice of the preacher, immediately the earth is subverted, because the hardness of the sinful mind is changed from the obstinacy of its own immobility 372, so that afterwards it subjects itself to the lordly precepts by

weeping, as much as by being proud it formerly raised the neck of the heart against the Lord. For you may see that the earth of the human heart, when the water of the divine gift is poured in, afterwards willingly bears injuries, which before it vehemently inflicted; afterwards it even gives its own things, which before it snatched even the things of others; afterwards it torments the flesh by abstaining, which before flowed down through the deadly delights of baseness by the satiety of the flesh; afterwards it even loves its persecutors, which before was unwilling to love even those loving itself. [Vet. VII.] When therefore the human mind, poured upon by a divine gift, begins to act against that which it was accustomed to do, the earth is subverted, because that which before was eminent is sent downwards, and the face which before was pressed into the depths is raised upwards.

16. This shines forth wonderfully in the converted Paul.---It is pleasing, as an example of this matter, to call Paul from among the many to the midst; who, when he was going to Damascus, having received letters against Christ, being poured upon by the grace of the Holy Spirit on the way, was immediately changed from that cruelty of his; and afterwards he received stripes for Christ, which he was coming to inflict upon Christians; and he who before, living carnally, endeavored to deliver the saints of the Lord to death, afterwards rejoices to offer the sacrifice of his own flesh for the life of the saints (1 Tim. 1:13). Those cold thoughts of his cruelty were turned

into the ardor of piety; and he who before was a blasphemer and a persecutor, afterwards became a humble and pious preacher (Acts 9:1). He who thought it the greatest gain to kill Christ in his disciples, now esteems his own life to be Christ, and to die to be gain (Phil. 1:21). The water, therefore, being sent forth, the earth was subverted, because Paul's mind, as soon as it received the grace of the Holy Spirit, changed the state of its own immobility and cruelty. On the contrary, the Lord complains through the prophet against Ephraim, saying: Ephraim is become bread baked under the ashes, which is not turned (Hosea 7:8). For bread baked under the ashes, carrying ashes upon itself, presses the cleaner part downwards, and has the upper part so much the filthier as it tolerates the ashes upon it. What else does the mind that thinks on earthly things carry upon itself but a mass of ashes? But if it wishes to be turned, it brings back to the top the clean face which it had pressed downwards, when it has shaken off the ashes which it was carrying. If, therefore, we shake off from the mind the ashes of earthly thoughts, we as it were turn the bread baked under the ashes, so that that intention of ours should now be postponed, which before the ash of the lowest thought was pressing down; and the clean face should come to the higher things, so that our right intention may no longer be pressed down by the mass of earthly desire. Which we can by no means do, unless we are poured upon by the grace of the Holy Spirit,

because namely, if Almighty God sends forth the waters, they subvert the earth. It follows:

CHAPTER XI

[Vet. VIII].

VERS. 16.---With him is strength and wisdom.

17. In the judgment the reprobate will be condemned before the elect are gifted with glory.---It had been said a little above: With him is wisdom and strength; but now it is said: With him is strength and wisdom. For because Almighty God, when by the mystery of his piety he was made man, first brought forth the doctrine of gentleness, and afterwards in the judgment shows of how great strength he is, rightly above is wisdom mentioned before strength, when it is said of the Only-begotten of the Father 373: With him is wisdom and strength. But because, coming to judge, he will appear in the terror of his power, and, the reprobate being repulsed, he will indicate to his elect in the perpetual kingdom how he is the wisdom of the Father, rightly in the subsequent sentence it is said that with him is first strength, and afterwards wisdom. In the former words, therefore, in which he says: With him is wisdom and strength, he openly indicates that this which he gently taught as to how it was to be believed, he will show as terrible in the power of judgment. But in the subsequent words, in which he says: With him is strength and wisdom, he demonstrates more clearly than light that he first destroys the reprobate by power

in the judgment, and afterwards shines upon the minds of the elect with the perfect light of the eternal kingdom. But because, before the day of the last judgment, he does not cease to judge daily the deeds of mortals by hidden dispositions, he returns to that which is now being done, when it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XII

[Rec. VII].

VERS. 16, 17.---He knoweth both the deceiver, and him that is deceived. He bringeth counsellors to a foolish end, and judges to astonishment.

18. God both knows the guiles of the iniquitous in his examination, and knows them not in his love.---Since every one who endeavors to deceive his neighbor is iniquitous, and the Truth says to the iniquitous: I know you not, depart from me, all ye that work iniquity (Matt. 7:23), how is it said in this place that the Lord knows the deceiver? But because God's "knowing" is sometimes said to be perceiving, sometimes approving; and he knows the iniquitous man, because by perceiving he judges him (for he would by no means have judged anyone iniquitous if he did not perceive him), and yet he knows not the iniquitous man, because he does not approve his deeds. He knows him, therefore, because he detects him; and he knows him not, because he does not recognize him in the beauty of his own wisdom: just as it is said of any truthful man that he knows not falsehood, not because

he is ignorant of how to reprehend it when it is spoken by himself or others, but he knows that same fallacy in his examination, and knows it not in his love, so that, namely, he does not do it himself, though he condemns it when done by others. And it often happens that some, being at leisure for snares, spread the nets of their own perversity for the life of another; and when someone is seen being caught unknowingly in those same nets, it is perhaps doubted whether these things are seen divinely; and men wonder, if God sees these things, why he permits them to be done; but he himself knoweth the deceiver and him that is deceived. For he knows the deceiver, because he often beholds his previous deeds, and permits him by a just judgment to fall even into other sins. He knows the deceiver, because, having left him in the hand of his own works, he deserts him so that he may rush into worse things, as it is written: He that is unjust, let him be still unjust; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still (Rev. 22:11). He also knows him who is deceived, because men often commit evils which they know, and for that reason they are permitted to be deceived, so that they may fall into evils which they know not. Which, however, is accustomed to happen to the deceived sometimes for purgation, and sometimes for the beginning of vengeance.

19. The foolish end of those who do good not with a good intention.---But he bringeth counsellors to a foolish end, when they do any good thing whatever not with a good intention, but

tend toward the retribution of a temporal gift. For if the Only-begotten of the supreme Father himself, because by the fact that he was made man he announced eternal things, was called the Angel of Great Counsel, we rightly understand counsellors to be preachers, who offer the counsel of life to their hearers. But when any preacher preaches eternal things for this reason, that he may obtain temporal gains, he is surely led to a foolish end 374, because he tends through labor to that place from which he ought to have fled through rectitude of mind.

[Vet. IX, rec. VIII.] 20. The astonishment of those who preside over others and do not watch.---But it is well subjoined: And judges to astonishment. For all who preside over examining the characters of others are rightly called judges. But when he who presides by no means anxiously discusses the life of his subjects, nor recognizes whom or how he should correct, the judge is led into astonishment, because he who ought to have judged evil deeds by no means detects those things which are to be judged. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 18.---He looseth the belt of kings, and girdeth their loins with a rope.

21. God punishes the elation of the mind with carnal sins.---Those who know how to rule well the motions of their members are not undeservedly called kings. But when the mind is touched by elation concerning that same con-

tinence, Almighty God, deserting its pride, often permits it to fall into the uncleanness of work. Therefore, he looseth the belt of kings, when in those who seemed to rule their members well, on account of the fault of elation, he destroys the girdle of chastity in them. But what is understood by the rope, except sin? As it is said by Solomon: His own iniquities shall catch the wicked, and he shall be bound with the ropes of his own sins (Prov. 5:22). And because the delight of the flesh holds sway in the loins, the strict judge of consciences, who looseth the belt of kings, girdeth their loins with a rope, so that, the girdle of chastity being loosed, the delight of sin may dominate their members, so that he may show even in public how detestable those are whom pride pollutes in secret. It follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. IX].

VERS. 19.---He leadeth priests away inglorious, and overthroweth the mighty.

22. Those who either neglect the care of their subjects, or seek after something other than eternal rewards, are inglorious.---The great glory of a priest is the rectitude of his subjects. Whence the eminent preacher well says to his disciples: For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glory? are not even ye in the presence of the Lord? (1 Thess. 2:19). But when priests neglect the life of their disciples, and bear no fruit before the Lord from their progress, what else are they called but

inglorious? because before the strict judge they will then surely not find glory, which they do not now seek in the characters of their subjects by the study of preaching. But it is well said: And he overthroweth the mighty, because when by a just judgment he deserts the mind of those ruling, it does not seek the internal reward of retribution; and it is overthrown in that by which it is deceived, so that instead of eternal glory it congratulates itself on temporal sovereignty. The mighty, therefore, are overthrown, because while they neglect the true rewards of the heavenly country, they fall here in their own pleasures. It follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 20.---He changeth the lip of the true, and taketh away the doctrine of the aged.

23. God gives the word of truth to those doing it, and takes it away from those not doing it.--- When the priest does not do the good things which he speaks, speech is also withdrawn from him, lest he dare to speak what he does not work, as it is said by the Prophet: But unto the sinner God said: Why dost thou declare my justices, and take my testament through thy mouth (Psal. 49:16)? Whence also he prays, saying: And take not away out of my mouth the word of truth utterly (Psal. 118:43). For he weighed that Almighty God gives the word of truth to those doing it, and takes it away from those not doing it. He, therefore, who sought that this should not be taken away from his mouth, what else did he seek but

the grace of good operation? As if he were openly saying: Permit me not to err from good work, lest while I lose the order of living well, I lose the rectitude of speaking. [Vet. X.] And often the teacher who dares to teach what he neglects to do, when he has ceased to speak the good things which he contemned to work, begins to teach his subjects the depraved things which he does, so that by the just judgment of Almighty God, he may no longer have even a tongue in what is good, who refuses to have a good life, so that when his mind is inflamed with the love of earthly things, he may always speak of earthly things. Whence in the Gospel Truth says: Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: A good man out of a good treasure bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of an evil treasure bringeth forth evil things (Matth. 12:34; Luc. 6:45). Hence also John says: They are of the world, therefore of the world they speak (1 John 4:5). Well, therefore, is it said: Changing the lip of the true, and taking away the doctrine of the aged, because those who before were true in preaching celestial things, while loving temporal things they fall away to earthly things, the lip of the true is changed, and the doctrine of the aged is taken away, because loving temporal things they very little follow the precepts of their predecessors, so that they may hold the place of government as it were for the fruit of pleasure, not for the use of labor.

24. The Jews denied Christ present, whom they had said was to come.---Which, however, is more clearly understood of the Jews, who

before the incarnation of the Lord were true, because they believed that he was to come, and announced it; but after he appeared in the flesh, they denied that he was he. The lip of the true, therefore, was changed, because they denied him present whom they had said was to come. And the doctrine of the aged was taken away, because they by no means followed in believing those things which they remembered their fathers had foretold. Whence also, Elias coming, it is promised that he shall turn the hearts of the children to their fathers (Mal. 4:6), so that the doctrine of the aged, which is now taken away from the heart of the Jews, may then return, the Lord pitying them, when the children shall begin to understand concerning the Lord this which the fathers preached. But if we receive as the aged those same Jews also, who, perfidy persuading them, endeavored to go against the word of Truth, the doctrine of the aged was taken away after the Church from the Gentiles, namely the young one, received it, which says through the Psalmist: I have understood more than the ancients (Psal. 118:100). Which because she held by working, she showed how she understood more than the ancients, while she immediately subjoins, saying: Because I have sought thy commandments. For because she studied to fulfill by working what she learned, she received to understand what she should teach. Whence still aptly is subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 21.---He poureth contempt upon princes, and relieving those who had been oppressed.

25. The Jews despised on account of infidelity. The Gentiles raised from their fall on account of faith.---For when the people of the Jews remained in the commandment of the law, and all Gentility knew no precepts of God, both those seemed to hold princedom through faith, and these lay pressed in the depths through infidelity. But when Judea denied the mystery of the Lord's incarnation, and Gentility believed, both the princes fell into contempt, and those who had been oppressed in the fault of perfidy were raised to the liberty of true faith. Long before, Jeremiah, beholding this fall of the Israelites, said: The Lord is become as an enemy, he hath cast down Israel, he hath cast down all his walls, he hath destroyed his strongholds (Lam. 2:5). For walls in cities are for ornament, but strongholds are for defense. [Vet. XI.] And some are the gifts which defend us, others which adorn us. For prophetic doctrine, kinds of tongues, the power of healings, are as it were certain walls of the mind. Which even if one does not have, he can stand defended through faith and justice 376, although he may seem by no means to be adorned by the height of virtues. But hope, faith, and charity are not our walls, but our strongholds; which if we neglect to have, we lie open to hostile snares. From Judea, therefore, because he took away prophecy and doctrine, or the signs of miracles, he cast down the walls. But because he permitted hope, faith, and charity to

be taken away on account of her hardness, he studied to destroy her strongholds. A right order, however, was preserved, so that first the walls, and afterwards the strongholds should be said to be destroyed, because when a sinful soul is deserted, first from it the gifts of virtues, which are given for the manifestation of the spirit, and afterwards the foundations of hope, faith, and charity are destroyed. All which things the Lord, having taken them from the perfidious, gave to Gentility, and from those things which he took from the infidels he adorned the minds of the faithful. Whence it is written: And to the beauty of the house to divide the spoils (Psalm 67:13). For when he took the spoils of virtues from the Jews, he gave the beauty of gifts to the house of the heart of the Gentiles, which he deigned to inhabit through faith. Which was namely done, when both the people of the Jews received the words of God according to the letter alone which killeth, and the converted Gentility penetrated them through the spirit which vivifieth. Whence it is presently subjoined:

CHAPTER XVII

[Rec. X].

VERS. 22.---Who revealeth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

26. Christ revealed hidden things, and changed the shadow of death into light.---For when any mystical things from the hidden words

of the prophets are acknowledged by believers, what else are they than deep things revealed out of darkness? Whence also Truth itself, speaking to the disciples in parables, saith: That which I tell you in darkness, speak ye in light (Matth. 10:27). For when we loose the mystical knots of allegories through explanation, we speak in light what we heard in darkness. But the shadow of death was the hardness of the law, which ordained that every one sinning should be punished with the death of the body. But after our Redeemer tempered the asperity of the legal sanction through mildness, and no longer appointed the death of the flesh to be inflicted for fault, but indicated how much the death of the spirit was to be feared, He undoubtedly brought out the shadow of death into light. [Vet. XXII.] For that death in which the flesh is separated from the soul is the shadow of that death in which the soul is separated from God. Therefore the shadow of death is brought out into light when, the death of the spirit being understood, the death of the flesh is by no means feared. Which, however, can also be understood in another way. For they are not undeservedly called princes who always rule over their own thoughts with great judgment of counsel, and suppress all foolish motions by the power of wisdom. But it often happens that in secret the mind is raised up into the pride of elation concerning its very own wisdom, and falls under those vices over which it rejoiced to have been victor. Rightly therefore is it said: He poureth contempt upon princes. But because sometimes

those who seem to lie in vices run to the lamentations of penance, and raise themselves up against the faults to which they were subject, it is aptly subjoined: And relieving those who had been oppressed. For some, enlightened by a heavenly gift, behold in how great turpitude of their sins they lie, wash the stains of their deeds with tears, and afterwards suppress under themselves the motions of their flesh, by which they were before pressed.

377 27. By a great dispensation of God all things are here held uncertain.---Which indeed is done by a great dispensation of Almighty God, namely, that in this life all things should be held uncertain, and no one should grow proud from possessed chastity, because He poureth contempt upon princes. Let no one despair from the depression of his vices, because He relieveth those who had been oppressed. And because when these things are done, an open sentence is brought out from the hidden counsels of God upon every one, it is rightly subjoined: And he revealeth deep things out of darkness.

28. God in His hidden judgments seeth all things and is not seen.---For the Lord revealeth deep things out of darkness when He indicateth an open sentence from His hidden counsels, that He may show what He feels concerning every one. For because the Creator now seeth all things, and He Himself is not seen in His counsels, it is rightly said of Him by the Psalmist: He made darkness His secret place (Psalm 18:11). But He as it were goeth out from this darkness to light

when He showeth what He feels concerning the acts of each one. And because when he who was pressed by the weight of his sins is led to the state of rectitude, he first beholdeth that very death in which he had also been accustomed to fail, and knew not how to consider this, it is rightly added: And bringeth out into light the shadow of death. For the shadow of death is wicked operation, which is expressed from the imitation of the ancient enemy, as it were from the lineaments of the body. Of whom also it is said under a certain signification: And his name was Death (Rev. 6:8). And for the most part his malignant thought lies hid from the minds of men, and by this, that it is not known, it prevaileth the more. Therefore the shadow of death is brought out into light while the malignant operation of the ancient enemy is opened to the minds of the saints, that it may be able to be destroyed. It follows:

VERS. 23.---Who multiplieth the nations, and destroyeth them, and restoreth the overturned to the whole.

29. By the hidden judgments of God some fall, others rise again.---It can perhaps be understood that the Lord multiplieth the nations and destroyeth them, because those are born daily who are to die; and He restoreth the overturned to the whole, because those who have been dead shall rise again. Which, however, we receive better if we perceive how this is done in their mind. For He multiplieth the nations and destroyeth them, because He both extendeth them through the fecundity of offspring, and yet leaveth them in their

own infidelity. But He restoreth the overturned to the whole, because those whom He had left in the fall of infidelity He at some time leadeth back to the state of faith. Which being restored in integrity of mind, that ancient people, who seemed to be faithful to God, being reprobated, was repulsed in heart, so that being deceived by their own perfidy, they afterwards rose up against Him whom they before preached. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 24, 25.---Who changeth the heart of the princes of the people of the earth, and deceiveth them, that they walk in vain through the pathless way. They shall grope as in darkness, and not in light, and He shall make them to err like drunken men.

30. The blindness of the Jews towards Christ suffering human things indeed, but showing divine things.---For the heart of the princes of the earth was changed when in Judea the chief priests and the elders of the people endeavored to resist by their counsel Him whom they before preached was to come. And when they strove to extinguish His name by persecuting Him, being deceived by their own malice, they endeavored to walk through the pathless way in vain, because the way could not lie open to their cruelty against the Author of all; they beheld miracles, they were terrified by His power; but, refusing to believe, they still sought signs, saying: What sign 378 therefore dost Thou show, that we may see and believe Thee? what dost Thou work (John 6:30)?

Rightly therefore is it said: They shall grope as in darkness, and not in light. For he who trembles amidst so many open miracles, gropes as if in darkness, because what he touches he sees not. But every one who errs is led now hither, now thither. And because sometimes they were shown to believe, saying: Unless this man were of God, He could do nothing (John 9:33); but at other times they denied that He was from God, saying with contempt: Is not this the carpenter's son? is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Jude, and His sisters are they not all with us (Matth. 13:55)? rightly is it subjoined: And He shall make them to err like drunken men. [Vet. XIV.] For they saw Him both raise the dead, and yet be mortal. Who would not believe Him God, whom they beheld raise the dead? But again, when they beheld Him mortal, they despised to believe that He was the immortal God. Therefore, by this that Almighty God exhibited Himself such to their eyes, who was able both to show divine things and to suffer human things, He made them to err like drunken men, so that their pride, which preferred to despise the mystery of His incarnation rather than to follow it, both extolled itself against His humanity, and wondered at the power of His Divinity shining within. All which things, because they were made present to the eyes of blessed Job through the spirit of prophecy, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XX

[Rec. XII].

JOB CHAP. XIII. VERS. 1.---Lo, all things.

31. Job was strong in the spirit of prophecy.---For he saw in Him as present those things which were to follow, to whom neither future things come, nor past things depart, but all things stand at once before His eyes. And because he saw those very things which were to come, some to be in works, others in words, it is rightly subjoined,---IBID.:---Mine eye hath seen, and mine ear hath heard. But words have no utility if they lack understanding. Whence it is aptly subjoined,---IBID.:---And I have understood each thing. For when anything is shown or heard, if understanding is not granted, it is by no means prophecy. For Pharaoh saw in a dream those things which were to come to Egypt (Gen. 41:2, etc.); but because he was unable to understand what he saw, he was not a prophet. King Belshazzar beheld the fingers of the hand writing on the wall (Dan. 5:5); but he was not a prophet, because he received not the understanding of the thing which he had seen. Therefore, that blessed Job may testify that he has the spirit of prophecy, he asserts not only that he saw and heard, but also that he understood all things. Concerning which understanding, that he is not puffed up, his subjoined words testify when he saith:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 2.---According to your knowledge I also know, nor am I inferior to you.

32. He was not puffed up by this received gift.---By which words namely it was made known of how great humility he was, who denies that he is inferior to those whose life he had far transcended by living holily. For he also confirms that he knows according to their knowledge, who, by knowing heavenly things, passed beyond their earthly thoughts by the spirit of prophecy also. It follows:

CHAPTER XXII

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 3.---But yet I will speak to the Almighty, and I desire to dispute with God.

33. He who is now familiar with God in prayer, shall afterwards judge with Him.---We speak with the Almighty while we entreat His mercy; but we dispute with Him while, joining ourselves to His justice, we discuss our deeds with subtle investigation. Or certainly 379 to dispute with God is for him who here obeyed His precepts to come afterwards with Him as a judge to judge the peoples, as is said to the preachers who leave all things: Ye who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His majesty, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matth. 19:28). Whence also the Lord saith through Isaiah: Relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, and plead for the widow, and come, let us dispute (Isai. 1:17-18). For it is right that they should dispute with God concerning

the fatherless in judgment, who perfectly desert the present world at the words of God. To speak, therefore, pertains to prayer, to dispute to judgment. Therefore the holy man now speaks to the Almighty, that he may afterwards dispute with the Almighty, because he afterwards comes with God as a judge, who has here been familiar with Him in prayer. But holy Church, of which we have already often said that blessed Job holds the type (especially in the Preface, ch. 6, etc.), not only then judges concerning the wicked when the day of the last judgment shall have come, but even now ceases not to judge concerning all who act wickedly, or think foolishly. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XV].

VERS. 4.---Showing you first to be fabricators of lies, and cultivators of perverse dogmas.

34. Heretics are fabricators of lies.---By which words namely it is openly shown that his friends, as if of the species of heretics, oppose the judgments of the holy man. For it is clear that they do not hold the figure of Catholics who are called cultivators of perverse dogmas. In which matter this also ought to be considered, that they are called fabricators of lies. For as an edifice is fabricated with stones, so a lie is fabricated with words. For where there is not a deceitful speech, but the sense of truth, it rises up as a fortified

mass, not from fabrication, but from nature. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERS. 5.---And would that you would be silent, that you might be thought to be wise.

35. Silence is useful for hiding folly.---As when a door is closed in a house it is unknown what members lie hid within, so for the most part a fool, if he be silent, is hidden whether he be wise or a fool, if however no other works come forth which speak the sense even of one who is silent. Therefore the holy man, beholding his friends wishing to appear what they were not, admonished them to be silent, lest they should be able to appear what they were. Whence also it is said through Solomon: A fool, if he be silent, shall be thought wise (Prov. 17:28). But because a fool, when he speaks, by this that he brings in his own things is not sufficient to weigh the words of the wise, rightly still, after he has commanded silence, he adds:

CHAPTER XXV.

VERS. 6.---Hear therefore my corrections, and attend to the judgment of my lips.

36. Correction is necessary for fools.---He rightly brought in correction first, and afterwards judgment, because unless the tumor of a fool be first depressed by correction, the judgment of a just man is by no means recognized by understanding. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERS. 7.---Does God need your lie, that you should speak deceits for Him?

37. Truth seeks not to be supported by the aid of falsehood.---God needs not a lie, because truth seeks not to be supported by the aid of falsehood. But heretics, because they cannot defend from the truth those things which they wickedly understand concerning God, as if for the proving of a ray of light, require the shadow of falsehood. And they speak deceits for Him 380, while they deceive weak minds in the understanding of Him by foolish seduction. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERS. 8.---Will you accept His person, and do you strive to judge for God?

38. Fools judge others the more severely, as they are the more profoundly ignorant of their own.---When fools behold the deeds of the prudent, all these things seem to them to be reprehensible; who, forgetting their own unskilfulness and infirmity, judge others the more intently, as they are the more profoundly ignorant of their own. At the same time, on the other hand, the righteous, when they rebuke the deeds of the wicked, always conscious of their own infirmity, reprove them, though by raging outwardly, yet by compassionating inwardly; because it belongs to Him alone to discuss the sins of men without compassion, Who from the omnipotence of His nature knows not how to sin. Since, therefore, the

friends of blessed Job had so reproved his deeds as if they had nothing reprehensible in themselves, it is now rightly said: Will you accept His person, and do you strive to judge for God? For to accept His person is to take His authority in judgment; and he strives to judge as if for God, who, while he reproves whatever is weak in another, is not weakened within himself by compassion. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERS. 9.---Either will it please Him Whom nothing can be hidden from; or will He be deceived, as a man, by your deceitfulness?

39. Heretics, while they pretend to defend God, offend Him.---Heretics exhibit deceit to God, because they assert those things which in no way please Him for Whom they speak; and while they strive to defend Him, as it were, they offend Him, while they fall in the adversity of Him Whom they seem to serve by their preaching. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: That Thou mayest destroy the enemy and the defender (Psal. viii. 3). For every heretic is an enemy and a defender to Almighty God, because from whence he strives to defend Him as it were, from thence he opposes His truth. But because nothing can be hidden from God, He judges that in them which they feel within, not that which they seem to serve without. Because therefore God is not deceived by their deceitfulness as a man, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERS. 10, 11.---He will surely reprove you, because you accept His person in secret. As soon as He shall move Himself, He will trouble you, and His terror shall fall upon you.

40. What punishment they deserve who oppose the known truth.---This, which he asserts that the person of God is accepted in secret, is able to be understood in two ways. For there are some who both feel the truth in their heart, and yet speak those things which are false concerning God without. For lest they should seem to be overcome, they both know the truth within, and yet oppose it without. Whence it is now well said: He will surely reprove you, because you accept His person in secret. As if it were plainly said: You are the more reprehensible for falsehood before Him, as you see even with yourselves that which is true. And there are some who when they return to their mind, contemplate the justice and rectitude of God, and tremble with praying and weeping; but after the hour of contemplation has passed, they so return boldly to iniquities as if, being placed behind His back, they were not at all seen by the light of His justice. These therefore in secret within themselves receive the person of God as if seeing Him corporally, because they both flatter Him with weepings when they are present, and detract from Him by their manners when they recede as if from His sight. Who are to be struck the more for their evils, as they also know in the secret of their thought the right judg-

ments of God. Whence also it is added: As soon as He shall move Himself, He will trouble you; and His terror shall fall upon you.

41. The righteous fear God before they experience Him angry.---Since Almighty God is of an unchangeable nature, in the wrath of judgment He is not perturbable. But by a human word the motion of God is called that very strictness of His rectitude, by which human depravity is struck. But righteous men fear God before His wrath is moved against them; and lest they should feel Him moved, they fear Him when tranquil. But on the contrary, the perverse only then dread being struck when they are struck; and then His terror awakens them from the sleep of their torpor, when vengeance troubles them. Whence also it is said by the prophet: And vexation alone shall give understanding to the hearing (Isai. xxviii. 19). For when they have begun to be beaten by vengeance for the precepts of God contemned and despised, then they understand what they heard. And the Psalmist says: When He slew them, then they sought Him (Psal. lxxvii. 34). It is well said therefore: As soon as He shall move Himself, He will trouble you; and His terror shall fall upon you, because to the hearts of the reprobate not fear produces rest, but punishment fear. It follows:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERS. 12.---Your memory shall be compared to ashes.

42. The memory of the proud is compared to ashes snatched by the wind, and to clay.---All

who by earthly thought are conformed to this world strive by everything which they do to leave their memory to this world. Some by titles of wars, others by high walls of buildings, others by eloquent books of secular doctrines, labor instantly, and build for themselves a name of memory. But since life itself runs more swiftly to the end, what shall stand fixed in it, when it also swiftly mobile passes by? For a breeze snatches the ashes, as it is written: Not so the wicked, not so, but as the dust, which the wind casts away from the face of the earth (Psal. i. 4). Rightly therefore the memory of fools is compared to ashes, because it is placed there, where it may be snatched by a breeze. For however much anyone labors for the fulfilling of the glory of his name, he has placed his memory as if ashes, because the wind of mortality snatches it more quickly. Against which it is written of the righteous: The righteous shall be in eternal memory (Psal. cxi. 4). For by that very fact, by which he impresses his deeds on the eyes of God alone, he fixes the name of his memory in eternity. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXI.

IBID.---And your necks shall be brought to clay.

43. As by the eye sight, so by the neck pride is wont to be designated. The neck therefore is brought to clay, when every proud man is humbled in death, and the exalted flesh wastes away in rottenness. For let us behold what kind of corpses of the rich lie in the sepulchers, what

image of death is in that extinguished flesh, what wasting of corruption. And certainly they were those who were extolled with honors, swelled with the things they possessed, despised others, and rejoiced as if they were alone; and while they did not weigh where they were tending, they knew not what they were. But the neck is brought to clay, because they lie despised in rottenness, who were swelled in vanity. The neck is brought into clay, because the wasting of corruption proves how much the power of the flesh is worth. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERS. 13.---Be silent for a little while, that I may speak whatever my mind shall suggest to me.

44. Those who speak carnally are to be recalled to silence.---He indicates that those who had spoken by the sense of the flesh, whom he therefore restrains to silence, that he may say those things which his mind shall suggest to him. As if he should say plainly: I do not speak carnally, but spiritually, because by the sense of the spirit I hear what I bring forth through the ministry of the body. Whence he presently ascends to high things, and elevates himself in mysteries, and changes the rebuke which he had brought forth into mystical words, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERS. 14.---Why do I tear my flesh with my teeth, and carry my soul in my hands?

45. The righteous punish their lighter faults in themselves with great torments.---In Sacred Scripture by teeth sometimes holy preachers, and sometimes indeed internal senses, are wont to be understood. For concerning holy preachers, it is said to the spouse: Your teeth are like flocks of shorn sheep, which have come up from the washing (Cant. iv. 2). Whence also it is said to one of them, when the Gentiles were shown in a figure: Kill and eat (Acts x. 13); that is, crush their oldness, and convert them into the body of the Church, namely into your members. Again, because teeth are wont to be understood as internal senses, the prophet Jeremiah testifies, saying: He has broken my teeth to the number (Lam. iii. 10). For by the teeth food is broken, that it may be swallowed. Whence not undeservedly do we understand internal senses by teeth, which chew and crumble, as it were, the individual things which they think, and transmit them to the belly of the memory. Which the prophet says are broken to the number, because according to the measure of each one's sin, a blindness of understanding is generated in the senses, and according to what each one has done outwardly, in that he becomes dull as to what he could understand of internal and invisible things. Whence also it is rightly written: Every man who shall eat a sour grape, his teeth shall become dull (Ezek. xviii. 2; Jer. xxxi. 30). For what is a sour grape but sin? For a sour grape is fruit before

its time. For whoever desires to be satiated with the delights of the present life, hastens to eat fruit before its time, as it were. He therefore who eats a sour grape, his teeth become dull, because he who is fed with the delight of the present world, his internal senses are bound, so that they can no longer chew, that is, understand, spiritual things, because from whence they have been delighted in exterior things, from thence they become dull in the inmost things. And while the soul is fed with sin, it is not able to eat the bread of justice, because the teeth, being bound from the custom of sin, can by no means eat the just thing which tastes within. In this place, therefore, because we understand teeth, as we have said, as internal senses, we ought greatly to consider what the righteous are wont to do. Who for the most part, if they detect any carnal things in themselves however slightly, retracting these in their internal senses, vehemently pursue them in themselves, crush themselves with affliction, and with great torments judge even the least evil things in themselves, and damn these by penitence. Which they do for this reason, that in the sight of the eternal Judge they also may be found, as far as is possible, irreprehensible, and that those who behold them thus judging themselves may be inflamed to amend themselves from more grievous faults. Which indeed blessed Job had done before his friends who held temporal glory and praised passing goods; but yet he was not able to lead their sense to the knowledge of the utility of his scourge, so that namely they might

be able to weigh that Almighty God would not only bestow prosperous things, but sometimes also mercifully inflict adverse things. Whence he now well says: Why do I tear my flesh with my teeth? As if he should say plainly: Why do I discuss carnal things with my internal senses, if any deeds have been done in me, if I cannot profit my spectators? Where also it is aptly added: And I carry my soul in my hands.

46. They seek not only their own progress, but the edification of their neighbor in all things.---To carry the soul in the hands is to show the intention of the heart in operation. For the righteous have this peculiar to them, that in everything they say and everything they do, they seek not only their own progress, but also the edification of their neighbors. And sometimes in certain things they judge themselves, that they may recall sluggish hearers to consider themselves. Sometimes they show good works, that those who behold them may be ashamed not to imitate what they see. For it is written: Let them see your good works, and glorify your Father, Who is in heaven (Matt. v. 16). He therefore who insinuates his intention through works, carries his soul in his hands. But when any righteous man profits neither by judging himself, nor by showing good works, for the utility of his neighbors, he returns by that which he has done to words of grief. Whence it is now rightly said: Why do I tear my flesh with my teeth, and carry my soul in my hands? That is, why do I either strictly judge myself before men, or show what I aim at in work,

if I profit not the utility of my neighbors either by judging evil things, or by showing good things? But yet the righteous, even when they say these things, never fail from offering a good example to their neighbors. Whence blessed Job, still exhibiting and showing the virtue of patience before his friends, says:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERS. 15.---Even if He shall kill me, in Him will I hope.

47. The righteous praises God even in adversities.---The virtue of patience is never in prosperous things. But he truly is patient, who is both worn by adversities, and yet is not curved from the rectitude of his hope. For concerning the sense of the reprobate it is written: And he will confess to Thee when Thou shalt do good to him (Psal. xlviii. 19). In this, therefore, the just mind is discerned from the unjust, that it confesses the praise of Almighty God even among adversities, that it is not broken with things, it falls not with the fall of exterior glory, but in this it rather demonstrates what kind of thing it was with things, which stands more robust even without things. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERS. 15, 16.---But yet I will reprove my ways in His sight, and He shall be my savior.

48. He knows not how to spare his own faults, that God may spare him.---Since the Apostle Paul

says: If we would judge ourselves, we should not indeed be judged (1 Cor. xi. 31), the Lord is then found a savior, when now for the fear of God our sin is reproved by ourselves. Whence all the elect never know how to spare their own faults, that they may be able to find the Judge of faults appeased. And they truly believe that they shall afterwards find Him a savior, Whom they now fear as a strict Judge. For he who now spares himself in fault, is not spared afterwards in punishment. Let him say therefore: But yet I will reprove my ways in His sight. And let him add what utility follows from this reproof: And He shall be my savior. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Rec. XVIII].

IBID.---For every hypocrite shall not come into His sight.

49. The hypocrite flees the sight of God, while he desires to please human eyes.---Since it is certain that the coming Judge will place the lambs on the right hand, but the goats on the left (Matth. xxv. 33), for what reason is it now said that the hypocrite shall not come into His sight, who surely, if he be among the goats, will appear at the left hand of the Judge? [Vet. XX.] But it must be known that we come into the sight of the Lord in two ways. In one way, indeed, by which here, subtly weighing our sins, we punish them in His sight, and distinguish them by weeping. For as often as we bring the power of our Creator

to our sense, so often do we stand in His sight. Whence also it is rightly said by the man of God Elijah: The Lord God of Israel lives, in whose sight I stand (1 Kings xvii. 1). In another way also we come into the sight of the Lord, when in the last judgment we assist before His tribunal. The hypocrite, therefore, through the last examination comes before the sight of the Judge; but because he now dissembles considering and bewailing his faults, he refuses to come into the sight of the Lord. For as just men, when they contemplate the strictness of the coming Judge, bring their sins to memory, bewail what they have committed, and strictly judge themselves, lest they be judged; so hypocrites, by as much as they please men outwardly, by so much do they neglect to behold themselves inwardly; and they pour themselves out entirely in the words of their neighbors, and estimate themselves to be holy, because they think they are so held by men. And when they have scattered their mind through the words of their own praise, they never bring this back to the knowledge of fault, they never consider where they offend the internal Judge, they fear nothing of His strictness, because they believe that they have pleased Him just as they have men. Who, if they brought His terror to their mind, would the more fear this very thing, that being placed in an evil intention they please men. Well, therefore, is it said: For every hypocrite shall not come into His sight, because he does not place the strictness of God before his eyes, while he covets to please human eyes. Who if, discussing his mind, he placed

himself in the sight of God, he surely would not now be a hypocrite. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERS. 17.---Hear my speech, and receive my riddles with your ears.

50. The figurative speech of Job.---By the fact that he names riddles, he demonstrates that he has figurative speeches. Whence also it is aptly added in the voice of the faithful people:

CHAPTER XXXVIII

[Rec. XIX].

VERS. 18.---If I shall be judged, I know that I shall be found just.

51. The humility of Job even in praising himself. He attributes iniquity to himself, but his purgation to God.---Which does not disagree with the person of the same blessed Job, when he himself speaks this outwardly of himself, which the Truth had said inwardly of him to his enemy: Hast thou seen my servant Job, that there is none like him upon the earth? (Job i. 8). And indeed the same man is much lower in what he records of himself than what the Lord said of him. For it is one thing to be just, another to have none like him. He felt humbly, therefore, of himself, who while he stood forth just without comparison, did not mention that he could be found just above others, but only just. [Vet. XXI.] This, however, seems to have a question in his words,

that he who said above: I will reprove my ways in His sight (Verse 15); and says below: Thou wilt consume me with the sins of my youth; and subtly acknowledging his sins, still further below adds: Thou hast sealed up my offences as in a bag; now says: If I shall be judged, I know that I shall be found just. For sin and justice cannot come together at the same time. But the holy man attributing iniquity to himself, and his purgation to the almighty Lord, both knows himself a sinner from himself, and is not ignorant that he has been made just from a gift. Who, being placed also in a right work, deserved by abundant grace to sustain scourges. And now he rejoices that he is found just in judgment, who saw himself smitten before judgment. Whence also when he says long after: Thou hast sealed up my offences as in a bag, he immediately adds: IBID.---But Thou hast healed my iniquity. He, therefore, who records that he is found just in judgment, by no means denies that he was justly scourged; although by his scourge the Lord did not study to wipe away sins, but to increase merits. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VERS. 19.---Who is he that will be judged with me? let him come.

52. No one can be devoid of the thought of sin.---Holy men so keep themselves in their works, by the author God, that there is found nothing at all of which they are accused outwardly; but inwardly in their thoughts they watch around themselves with such caution,

that, if it may be done, they may always assist irreproachable in the eyes of the internal Judge. But as much as they are able to act, lest they slip outwardly in work, so much they are by no means able to act inwardly, that they never slip in thought. For the human conscience, by the very fact that it recedes from the most intimate things, is always on slippery ground. Whence it happens that even holy men frequently slip in heart. Let the blessed Job, therefore, speaking as much from his own voice as from the voice of the elect, say: Who is he that will be judged with me? let him come. For because in exterior acts he has not that for which he may be reproved, he freely seeks an accuser. But because even the hearts of the just sometimes reprove themselves of foolish thought, perhaps on account of this it is added:

CHAPTER XL.

IBID.---Why being silent am I consumed?

53. He whose penance is to be done in secret.---For he being silent is consumed who, reproving himself of foolish thought, is bitten within himself by the tooth of conscience. As if he should say openly: Just as I lived so that I feared no accuser outwardly, would that I had so lived that I had no accusing conscience within myself! For he being silent is consumed, who finds within himself that by which he is burned. It follows:

VERS. 20.---Only do not two things to me, and then I will not hide myself from Thy face.

54. No one secure from the animadversion of God.---In this place what ought we to accept

as the face of God but animadversion, in which while He regards sins He punishes them? From which surely not even any just man is hidden, if the two things which he asks are not removed; concerning which he adds:

CHAPTER XLI

[Vet. XXII, Rec. XX].

VERS. 21.---Withdraw Thy hand far from me, and let not Thy dread terrify me.

55. The saints before Christ desired that law, in which they should serve not by fear, but by love.---In which two things, surely, what else does he seek through the voice of prophecy than the time of grace and redemption? For the Law held the people under the stroke of vengeance, so that whoever sinned under it was immediately punished by death. Nor did the Israelitish people serve the Lord from love, but from fear. But justice can never be fulfilled through fear, because, according to the voice of John: Perfect charity casts out fear (1 John iv. 18). And Paul also consoles the sons of adoption, saying: You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba, Father (Rom. viii. 15). From the voice of the human race, therefore, desiring to pass the hardness of legal smiting, and appetising to arrive from dread to love, he prays that the almighty God may make these two things far from him, saying: Withdraw Thy hand far from me, and let not Thy dread terrify me; that

is, remove the hardness of smiting from me, take away the weight of dread, but by the irradiating grace of love, infuse the spirit of security, because if I shall not be far from smiting and dread, I know that I shall not be hidden from the strictness of Thy examination, since in Thy sight he cannot be just who serves Thee not through love, but through fear. Whence also he seeks the very presence of his Creator as if familiarly and corporally, that through this he may both hear what he is ignorant of, and be heard in those things which he knows. For he immediately adds:

VERS. 22.---Call me, and I will answer Thee; or certainly I will speak, and Thou answer me.

56. Christus manifested sins which were hidden.---Who while He appeared to human eyes through the assumed flesh, opened to men their sins, which they both perpetrated and knew not. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER XLII

[Rec. XXI].

VERS. 23.---How many iniquities and sins have I, show me my crimes and offences.

57. God calls when He regards us by loving and choosing us. We answer by obeying Him. What is the difference between sin and iniquity, between crimes and offences.---Although to call and to answer can also be understood otherwise. For to call is of God, to regard us by loving and choosing us. But to answer is ours, to obey His love by good works. Where it is aptly added: Or certainly

I will speak, and Thou answer me. For we speak when we ask for His face through desire. But God answers those speaking when He appears to us who love Him. But because whoever pants for the desire of eternity, subtly reproving himself, discusses his deeds, and asks lest there be anything in him in which he may offend the face of his Creator, he rightly subjoins: How many iniquities and sins have I, show me my crimes and offences. This in this life is the labor of the just, that they may find themselves, and finding themselves by weeping and correcting lead themselves to better things. And although the Apostle John asserts that there is no difference between iniquity and sin, who says: Iniquity is sin (1 John iii. 4), yet by the very use of speaking iniquity sounds more than sin, and every man freely confesses himself a sinner, but sometimes blushes to say he is iniquitous. [Vet. XXIII.] But between crimes (scelera) and offences (delicta) this is the difference, that crime even exceeds the weight of sin, but offence does not exceed the weight of sin, because even when a sacrifice is commanded to be offered by the Law, it is certainly prescribed for offence just as for sin. And crime is never except in work, but offence is frequently in thought alone. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: Who understands offences? (Psal. xviii. 13). Because surely sins of work are the more quickly known, as they are seen outwardly; but sins of thought are so much difficult to be understood, as they are perpetrated invisibly. Whoever therefore, anxious with the desire of eternity, desires to appear pure to the

coming Judge, examines himself the more subtly now, as he surely considers, that then he may assist free from His terror, and prays that it be shown to him where he displeases, that he may punish this in himself through penance, and judging himself here he may become unjudgable.

58. We have come into that blindness through sin, that we are ignorant of ourselves.---But among these things it is necessary to behold what a great punishment of our pilgrimage has smitten us, who have come into that blindness, that we are ignorant of ourselves. We perpetrate evils, and yet we do not very quickly detect these even when perpetrated. For the mind, excluded from the light of truth, finds nothing in itself except darkness, and frequently stretches out its foot into the pit of sin, and knows it not. Which surely it suffers from the blindness of its exile alone, because, repulsed from the illumination of the Lord, it has also lost seeing itself, who did not love the face of its Creator. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER XLIII.

VERS. 24.---Why dost Thou hide Thy face, and think me Thy enemy?

59. From penal fear we must return to love.---The human race had the contemplation of the inward light in paradise; but pleasing itself, by as much as it receded from itself, it lost the light of the Creator, and His face; it fled to the trees of paradise, because after fault it feared to see Him whom it had been accustomed to love. But behold, after fault it comes into punishment, and

from punishment it returns to love, because it finds what was the fruit of fault; and that face which it feared in fault, being awakened it seeks from punishment, so that it may now flee the darkness of its blindness, and may greatly dread this very thing, that it sees not its Creator. With which desire being smitten the holy man cries out: Why dost Thou hide Thy face, and think me Thy enemy? because if Thou didst regard me as a friend, Thou wouldst not deprive me of the light of Thy vision. Who, following the mobility also of the human heart, adds:

CHAPTER XLIV.

VERS. 25.---Against a leaf, which is snatched by the wind, dost Thou show Thy power, and dost Thou pursue dry stubble?

60. Man is like a leaf and stubble, he is moved by the wind of temptation.---For what is man, but a leaf, who surely in paradise fell from the tree? What is he but a leaf, who is snatched by the wind of temptation, and is raised by the blasts of desires? [Vet. XXIV.] For as many temptations as the human mind suffers, by so many blasts it is moved. For this, for the most part, wrath disturbs; when wrath recedes, inept joy succeeds. It is urged by the stings of luxury, by the heat of avarice it is stretched far and wide to encompass things which are earthly. Sometimes pride raises this; but sometimes inordinate fear deposits it in the lowest things. Because therefore it is raised and led by so many blasts of temptations, man is rightly compared to a leaf. Whence well also is it

said by Isaiah: We all have fallen as a leaf, and our iniquities as a wind have taken us away (Isai. lxiv. 6). For iniquity has taken us away as a wind, because it has raised us, fixed by no weight of virtue, into vain elation. But well after a leaf is man also called stubble. For he who was a tree in condition, became a leaf from himself in temptation, but afterwards appeared stubble in dejection. For because he fell from on high, he is a leaf; but because through the flesh he was next to the earth, even when he seemed to stand, he is recorded to be stubble. But because he has lost the greenness of intimate love, he is now dry stubble. Let the holy man, therefore, consider, both man of how great vileness he is, and God of how great strictness, and let him say: Against a leaf, which is snatched by the wind, dost Thou show Thy power, and dost Thou pursue dry stubble? As if he should openly deplore, saying: Why with such rectitude dost Thou assail him whom Thou knowest to be so weak in temptation? It follows:

CHAPTER XLV.

[Rec. XXIII].

VERS. 26.---For Thou writest bitterness against me.

61. The sentence of death written concerning the sinful man cannot be changed.---Because everything which we speak passes away, but what we write remains, God is said not to speak, but to write bitterness, when His scourges endure long over us. For once to the sinning man it was

said: Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go (Gen. iii. 19). And often appearing angels gave precepts to men. Moses the lawgiver through strictness coerced sins. The only-begotten of the supreme Father Himself came to redeem us, by dying He swallowed up death; He announced to us perpetual life, which He showed in Himself. But nevertheless that sentence which was given in paradise concerning the death of our flesh from the very beginning of the human race even to the end of the world is not changed. For who is the man that lives, and shall not see death? (Psal. lxxxviii. 49). Which the Psalmist again well beholding says: Thou art terrible, and who shall resist Thee? from then Thy wrath (Psal. lxxv. 8). Who surely being angry with the sinning man in paradise once fixed the sentence concerning the mortality of our flesh, which now and even to the last can in no way be changed. Let him say therefore: Thou writest bitterness against me. Whence still it is added:

CHAPTER XLVI.

[Vet. XXV, Rec. XXIV].

IBID.---And Thou wilt consume me with the sins of my youth.

62. As there are different ages of the body, so also of the mind.---Behold the just man, because he finds not that he has sinned in his youth, dreads the deeds of his adolescence. But it must be known that just as in the body, so there are also increments of age in the mind. For the first

age of man is infancy, when although he lives innocently, he knows not how to speak the innocence which he has. And then childhood follows, in which he is already able to say what he wishes; to which succeeds adolescence, which is clearly the first age in operation; which youth follows, namely fit for fortitude; and afterwards old age, also by time now suitable for maturity. Because therefore we called the first age fit for good acts adolescence, and just men, when they profit in great maturity of mind, sometimes bring back to memory the beginning of their actions, and reprehend themselves for their beginnings as much as they have profited more deeply from the gravity of their mind, because they find themselves to have been so much indiscreet as they afterwards more fully attain the citadel of discretion, rightly now through the voice of the holy man the sins of adolescence are dreaded. But if it is to be held to the letter itself, hence it must be considered how grave are the sins of youths and old men, if even that which they committed in a weak age the just thus fear. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVII

[Rec. XXV].

VERS. 27.---Thou hast put my foot in the stocks, and hast watched all my paths, and hast considered the steps of my feet.

63. The severity of Divine judgment in punishing even evil thoughts.---In the stocks God has put the foot of man, because He has bound

his crookedness with the strong sentence of His strictness. All whose paths He watches, because He subtly judges each of his individual acts. For a path is wont to be narrower than a way. But because we take ways as actions, not unworthily we receive the paths themselves as the thoughts of actions. God therefore watches all paths, because in each and every one of our acts He also weighs the thoughts. And He considers the steps of the feet, because He examines how rightly the intentions of our works are placed, lest even that which is done well be not done with a right desire. Certain evil deeds can also be signified through the steps of the feet. For the foot in the body is the track in the way. For the most part while we do certain crooked things, to the brethren beholding this, we provide an evil example; and, as if with the foot turned outside the way, we leave distorted tracks to those following, while through our works we provoke other hearts to scandal. But it is very laborious to guard lest a man dare to do evil things, lest in good acts he waver through intention, and among right works a sinister thought mock him. All which things nevertheless the Almighty God subtly examines, and in judgment repays each one. But when can a man, who is constrained by the infirmity of his flesh, subtly rise up against all things, and hold rectitude with an unshaken thought? Whence fitly it is added:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERS. 28.---Who am to be consumed as rottenness, and as a garment that is eaten by the moth.

64. Man is consumed by the rottenness innate in him.---For as a garment is eaten by a moth arising from itself, so man has in himself rottenness, by which he may be consumed; and this is what he is from which he is consumed so as not to be. Which can also be understood otherwise, if it is said from the voice of a tempted man: Who am to be consumed as rottenness, and as a garment that is eaten by the moth. For man is consumed as rottenness, while he is worn away by the corruption of his flesh. To whom, because unclean temptation arises not from elsewhere, but from himself, after the manner of a moth temptation consumes the flesh, as it were the garment from which it goes out. For man has in himself that from which he may be tempted. As therefore a moth consumes a garment, which proceeded from the same garment. It must also be known that the moth pierces the garment without sound; and for the most part thought so transfixes the mind, that the mind itself does not feel it, except after it has been transfixed by its sting. Well therefore it is said, that man is consumed as a garment by the moth, because sometimes we do not know the wounds of our temptations, except after we have been pierced by them in the mind. Which clearly our infirmity the holy man still well considering, adds:

CHAPTER XLIX

[Vet. et Rec. XXVI].

CHAP. XIV, VERS. 1.---Man born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries.

65. Man born of infirmity, because sprung from a woman.---In sacred eloquence a woman is put either for the sex, or for infirmity. For the sex, indeed, as it is written: God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law (Gal. iv. 4). But for infirmity, as it is said by a certain wise man: Better is the iniquity of a man, than a woman doing a good turn (Ecclus. xlii. 14). For any strong and discreet person is called a man, but an infirm or indiscreet mind is received as a woman. And it often happens that even any discreet person suddenly falls into a fault, and another indiscreet and infirm one exhibits a good operation. But he who is indiscreet and infirm is sometimes more lifted up because of that which he has done well, and falls more gravely into a fault; but every discreet person, even from that which he understands himself to have done ill, reduces himself more closely to the rule of strictness; and thence profits more deeply unto justice, whence for a time he seemed to have fallen from justice. In which matter it is rightly said: Better is the iniquity of a man, than a woman doing a good turn, because sometimes even the fault of the strong becomes an occasion of virtue, and the virtue of the weak an occasion of sin. In this place, therefore, what is designated by the name of woman but infirmity, when it is said: Man born of a woman? As if

it were more plainly said: What strength will he have in himself, who is born of infirmity?

66. He is narrowed as to life, dilated as to misery.---Living for a short time, he is filled with many miseries. Behold in the voices of the holy man the punishment of man is briefly expressed, because he is both narrowed as to life, and dilated as to misery. For if everything which is done here be subtly considered, it is punishment and misery. For to serve the very corruption of the flesh for things necessary and allowed is misery, as that against cold garments, against hunger food, against heat cold things should be sought. That the health of the body is guarded with much caution; that even when guarded it is lost, and when lost is repaired with grave labor, and yet when repaired is always in doubt; what is this other than the misery of mortal life? That we love friends, being suspicious lest they be able to be offended; we dread enemies, and clearly are not secure concerning those whom we dread; that for the most part we speak to enemies as confidently as to friends, and sometimes we receive pure words of neighbors, and perhaps those much loving us, as if words of enemies, and we who never wish to be deceived or to deceive, from our caution err more gravely; what then is this but the misery of human life? That, having lost the heavenly country, man being repulsed is delighted with exile, is weighed down with cares, and yet dissembles to think how grave it is that many things are thought; that he is deprived of internal light, and yet in this life wishes to endure his blindness for

a long time; what is this other than misery born from our punishment? But although he desires to stay here for a long time, nevertheless he is impelled by the very course of mortal life to go out. Whence the holy man rightly subjoins:

CAPUT L

[Vet. XXVII].

VERS. 2.---Who comes forth like a flower and is crushed, and flees as a shadow, and never remains in the same state.

67. The world is filled with as many flowers soon to be dried up, as names.---For he comes forth as a flower, because he shines in the flesh; but he is crushed, because he is reduced to rottenness. For what are born men in the world, but certain flowers in the field? Let us stretch the eyes of our heart into this breadth of the present world, and behold it is full of as many flowers as men. Life therefore in the flesh, is a flower in the grass. Whence well it is said by the Psalmist: Man, as grass are his days; and as a flower of the field, so shall he flourish (Psal. cii. 15). Isaiah also says: All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as a flower of the field (Isa. xl. 6). For man after the manner of a flower proceeds from secret, and suddenly appears in public, who immediately from public through death is withdrawn to secret. The greenness of the flesh shows us, but the dryness of dust withdraws us from sights. As a flower we appeared, who were not; as a flower we wither, who appeared temporally.

68. Man in every single moment of life proceeds to death. Thence he fails whence he profits.---And because by moments man daily is impelled to death, rightly is subjoined: And flees as a shadow, and never remains in the same state. But when the sun also unceasingly performs its course, and never fixes itself in stability; why is the course of the life of man compared to a shadow rather than to the sun, unless because, having lost the love of the Creator, he has lost the heat of his heart, and has remained in the cold of his iniquity alone? Because according to the voice of Truth: Iniquity shall abound, and the charity of many shall wax cold (Matth. xxiv. 12). He therefore who in the love of God has not the heat of his heart, and yet does not hold the life which he loves, clearly flees as a shadow. Whence rightly also of him it is written: Because he has followed a shadow (Ecclus. xxxiv). But well it is said: And never remains in the same state, because while infancy passes to childhood, childhood to adolescence, adolescence to youth, youth to old age, old age to death, in the course of the present life by its very increments it is impelled to detriments; and thence it always fails, whence it believes itself to profit in the space of life. For we cannot have a fixed state here, where we have come about to pass away: and this itself our living, is daily to pass from life. Which clearly that lapse the first man before his fault could not have, because times, while he stood, were passing. But after he sinned, he placed himself in a certain as it were slippery state of temporal-

ity; and because he ate the forbidden food, he straightway found the defect of his state. Which mutability nevertheless not only outwardly, but inwardly also man suffers, while he endeavors to rise up to better works. For the mind by the weight of its mutability is always impelled to something other than it is, and unless it be held in its state by the strict discipline of guarding, it always slips into worse things. For that which always left him standing, has lost the state which it was able to have. Whence now when it strives for better things, it endeavors as it were against the stroke of a river. But when it is relaxed from the intention of ascending, without labor it is reduced to the lowest things. For because in the ascent there is labor, in the descent ease, the Lord admonishes those about to enter through the narrow gate, saying: Strive to enter through the narrow gate (Luke xiii. 24). Clearly about to say the entrance of the narrow gate, he premised, strive, because unless the contention of the mind be fervent, the wave of the world is not overcome, through which the soul is always recalled to the lowest things. Because therefore man as a flower is born and is crushed, because as a shadow he flees, and in his state never remains, what in this consideration he subjoins let us hear. It follows:

CHAPTER LI.

VERS. 3.---And dost Thou think it worthy to open Thine eyes upon such a one, and to bring him into judgment with Thee?

69. Two extremes, man and Creator, dust and God.---For he considered above both the power of the Almighty God, and his own infirmity; he brought before his eyes himself and God, he weighed who comes with whom to judgment. He saw on this side man, on that side the Creator, that is, dust and God; and rightly he says: And dost Thou think it worthy to open Thine eyes upon such a one? To open the eyes for the Almighty God is to exercise judgments, to see whom He may strike. For as if with closed eyes He does not wish to behold whom He does not wish to strike. Whence straightway concerning that same judgment it is subjoined: And to bring him into judgment with Thee? But because he has contemplated God coming to judgment, again he considers his own infirmity. He sees that the world cannot be through itself, which that it might be, proceeded from uncleanness, and subjoins:

CHAPTER LII.

VERS. 4.---Who can make clean a thing conceived of unclean seed? Is it not Thou, who alone art?

70. Man on account of a vitiated origin suffers unclean things even unwillingly.---He who through Himself alone is clean is able to cleanse unclean things. For man living in corruptible flesh has uncleannesses of temptations impressed in himself, because forsooth he drew them from his origin. For his very conception on account of the delight of the flesh is unclean-

ness. Whence also the Psalmist says: For behold I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me (Psal. l. 7). Hence it is therefore that for the most part he is tempted even unwillingly. Hence it is that he suffers certain unclean things in the mind, although he resists from judgment, because conceived of uncleanness, while he tends to cleanness, he endeavors to overcome this which he is. But whoever shall have overcome the motions of secret temptation and the uncleanness of thought, let him by no means attribute his cleanness to himself, because no one can make clean a thing conceived of unclean seed, except He who alone is clean through Himself. He therefore who has already come in mind to the place of cleanness, let him look back at the way of his conception, through which he came, and thence let him gather that he has not from his own virtue cleanness of living, to whom there was made a beginning of subsisting from uncleanness. But this can truly be understood in this place, because blessed Job having intuited the incarnation of the Redeemer, saw that He alone in the world was not conceived of unclean seed, who so came into the world from the Virgin, that He had nothing of unclean conception. For He proceeded not from man and woman, but from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. He alone therefore in His flesh stood truly clean, who could not be touched by the delight of the flesh, because neither did He come hither through carnal delight.

BOOK TWELVE.

In which, Chapter XIV of the book of Job being explained from the fifth verse, Chapter XV is for the most part morally explained in its entirety.

[Vet. et Rec. I.] It is the custom of the just to think so much more solicitously how fleeting the present life is, as they more studiously know how to weigh the eternal goods of the heavenly country. For from those things which they behold as remaining within, they more subtly attend to the flight of falling things without. Whence blessed Job, when he had brought forth a sentence concerning the lapse of human time, saying: Man born of a woman, living for a short time. And again: And he flees as a shadow, and never remains in the same state, still adds concerning the brevity of his life:

CAPUT PRIMUM.

CHAP. XIV, VERS. 5.---Short are the days of man, the number of his months is with Thee.

1. That which passes with such velocity is as if it were not.---For he considers that as if it were not with us, which passes with such velocity. But because with the Almighty God even falling things stand, he declares the number of our months to be with Him. Or certainly in days the

brevity of time is designated, but in months as it were the multiplied spaces of days. To us therefore the days are short. But because our life is afterwards extended, the number of our months is mentioned to be with God. Whence also it is said through Solomon: Length of days is in His right hand. It follows:

CAPUT II

[Rec. II].

IBID.---Thou hast appointed his bounds, which cannot be passed.

2. Nothing happens to men without the counsel of God, although secret. Nothing which happens to men in this world comes without the secret counsel of the Almighty God. For God prescient of all things about to follow, decreed before the worlds how they should be disposed through the worlds. For it is already appointed to man, either how much the prosperity of this world follows him, or how much adversity strikes him, lest either immoderate prosperity lift up His elect, or too much adversity weigh them down. It is also appointed how much he should temporally live in mortal life itself. For although the Almighty God added fifteen years to the life of King Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 1), when He permitted him to die, then He foreknew him to be about to die. In which matter a question arises, how it is said to him through the prophet: Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live; to whom when the sentence of death was said, straightway

at his tears life was added. But through the prophet the Lord said at what time he himself deserved to die; but through the largess of mercy at that time He deferred him to death, which He Himself foreknew before the worlds. Neither therefore was the prophet fallacious, because he made known the time of death, at which that man deserved to die; nor were the Lord's appointments convulsed, because that from the largess of God the years of life should increase, this also was prefixed before the worlds; and the space of life which unexpectedly without was added, was appointed within without increment of prescience. Well therefore it is said: [Vet. II.] Thou hast appointed his bounds, which cannot be passed.

3. God sets a limit to spiritual progress.--- Which nevertheless to be understood even according to the spirit is valid, because sometimes we endeavor to profit in virtues, and we perceive certain gifts, but from some being repulsed we lie in the lowest things. For there is no one who apprehends as much of virtue as he desires, because the Almighty God, discerning interior things, sets a limit to the spiritual progresses themselves, so that from this which a man endeavors to apprehend, and is not able, he may not lift himself up in those which he is able. Whence that also eminent preacher, who had been snatched to the third heaven, had penetrated the secrets of paradise, was not able to be tranquil and untempted after the revelation (2 Cor. xii. 3). But because the Almighty God appointed bounds to man,

which cannot be passed, He both lifted him up to know sublime things, and brought him back again to tolerate infirm things, so that beholding the measure of his limit, while he endeavored to comprehend security, and was not able, lest through elation he should go outside himself, he might be compelled through humility to return always within his bounds. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSE 6.---Depart a little from him, that he may rest, until his longed-for day comes, like that of a hireling.

4. The saints, through weariness of the present life, always pant for eternal rest.---In this place, "depart" is said to mean "remove the force of the scourge." For who is able to rest if God departs, since He alone is rest, and from whomsoever anyone is far off, he becomes so much the more unquiet? Therefore "depart from him" is so said that you may understand "from smiting." For it is aptly subjoined: "Until his longed-for day comes, like that of a hireling." As far as a hireling (mercenarius) is from the end of his work, so far is he also from the retribution of his reward (mercedis). So every holy man placed in this life, while he beholds himself to be far from the end of the present life, groans that he is far from eternal joys. What is it, therefore, to say: "Depart a little from him, that he may rest," but: "withdraw now the scourges of the present life,

and show the goods of eternal rest"? Whence also regarding that rest it is added: "Until his longed-for day comes, like that of a hireling." For then the longed-for day comes to a man like that of a hireling, when he shall have received eternal rest as the recompense for his labor. But as far as pertains to the appearance of the present life, blessed Job still suggests how despicable the human race is, filled with many miseries, and relates how much even insensible things seem to surpass it, when he says:

CHAPTER IV

[Vet. III, Rec. IV].

VERSES 7-10.---A tree hath hope; if it be cut down, it groweth green again, and its branches sprout. If its root grow old in the earth, and its trunk be dead in the dust, at the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth foliage as when it was first planted. But man, when he is dead, and stripped, and consumed, where, I pray, is he?

5. By the name of a tree many things are signified: the Cross, the righteous man, the incarnate Wisdom of God. From the smiting of the righteous, men are kindled to the love of the heavenly country.---But because this is plain according to the letter, we ought to reduce the sense to interior things, and search out how these things ought to be understood according to the spirit. For in Sacred Scripture, by the name of a tree (ligni), sometimes the Cross, sometimes a righteous man, or even an unrighteous one, and sometimes

the incarnate Wisdom of God is figured. For the Cross is signified by a tree, when it is said: "Let us put wood (lignum) into his bread" (Jer. xi. 19). For to put wood into bread is to apply the Cross to the Lord's body. Again, by the name of a tree, a righteous or even an unrighteous man is expressed, as the Lord says through the prophet: "I the Lord have brought down the high tree, and have exalted the low tree" (Ezek. xvii. 24). Because, according to the voice of the same Truth: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke xiv. 11). Solomon also says: "If the tree fall toward the South, or toward the North, in what place soever it shall fall, there it shall be" (Eccles. xi. 3). For in the day of his death the righteous falls toward the South, the sinner toward the North, because both the righteous is led to joys through the fervor of the spirit, and the sinner is rejected in his cold heart with the apostate angel, who said: "I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the North" (Isa. xiv. 13). Again, by a tree the incarnate Wisdom of God is figured, as it is written of it: "It is a tree of life to them that shall lay hold upon it" (Prov. iii. 18); and as He Himself says: "If they do these things in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke xxiii. 31). In this place, therefore, when a tree is preferred to man, what is understood by man but every carnal person? And what is designated by the name of a tree but the life of every righteous man? "For a tree hath hope; if it be cut down, it groweth green again," because when the righteous is af-

flicted in the death of passion for the truth, he is recovered in the greenness of eternal life. And he who flourished here through faith, flourishes there through sight (speciem). And its branches sprout, because frequently from the passion of the righteous, the faithful are multiplied to the love of the heavenly country, and receive the greenness of spiritual life, while they rejoice that he acted bravely for God here. It follows:

CHAPTER V.

VERSES 8, 9.---If its root grow old in the earth, and its trunk be dead in the dust, at the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth foliage as when it was first planted.

6. The righteous, by their death, beget abundant fruits in us.---What is the root of the righteous but holy preaching, because from it he arises, and in it he subsists? And what is understood by the name of earth or dust but the sinner? to whom it is said by the voice of the Creator: "Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go," or certainly, as our translation has it: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. iii. 19). The root of the righteous, therefore, grows old in the earth, and the trunk dies in the dust, because among the hearts of the wicked his preaching is believed to be despicable and exhausted of all strength. And the trunk dies in the dust, because between the hands of persecutors his body is deprived of life. For according to the voice of Wisdom: "They seemed in the eyes of the foolish to die, and their affliction was esteemed a depar-

ture" (Wisd. iii. 2). But he whose root grew old in the earth, and whose trunk died in the dust, buds at the scent of water, because through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he produces the germ of virtue in the hearts of the elect by the example of his work. For by the appellation of water, the irrigation of the Holy Spirit is sometimes wont to be designated, as it is written: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. But whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John vii. 37; iv. 13). It follows: "And it shall bring forth foliage as when it was first planted." To bring forth foliage when the trunk is cut down, is, when the righteous man is corporally extinct, to rouse the hearts of many by the very example of his passion, and to show the greenness of truth from a right faith. But it is well said: "As when it was first planted." Everything which is done here by the righteous is a second planting, because the first planting, forsooth, is not in the work of the righteous, but in the prescience of the Creator. And because all things which the elect do, as they are first seen and disposed within, so are they afterwards perfected without, it is well said: "It shall bring forth foliage as when it was first planted"; that is, it shows its greenness in the effect of the work, which it previously had in the prescience of the Creator.

[Vet. IV.] 7. Man fails of himself, but on the arrival of the Holy Spirit he is renewed.---The root of the righteous can also be understood as the very nature of humanity, from which he subsists. Which root, forsooth, grows old in the

earth when the nature of the flesh fails, being reduced to dust. Whose trunk dies in the dust, because the extinct body is dissipated from its form (specie). But it buds at the scent of water, because through the arrival of the Holy Spirit it rises again: "And it shall bring forth foliage as when it was first planted," because it returns to that form (speciem) for receiving which it had been created, if, being placed in paradise, it had been unwilling to sin.

8. Christ is the tree cut down in His passion, multiplied in His resurrection.---Which perhaps can also be understood of the Lord Himself, to wit, the Head of all good men; according to that, forsooth, which we said before, because He says of Himself: "If they do these things in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke xxiii. 31). He said that He was the green wood, and we the dry wood, because He Himself had in Himself the force of Divinity; but we, who are pure men, are called dry wood. A tree (lignum) therefore hath hope, if it be cut down, because it groweth green again, since even if He could be slain through passion, through the glory of resurrection He came again to the greenness of life. His branches sprout, because, being multiplied by His resurrection, the faithful have grown far and wide. His root in the earth, as it were, grew old, because His preaching was despicable to the perfidy of the Jews. And the trunk died in the dust, because in the heart of the persecutors, which was lifted up by the wind of their own perfidy, He was held contemptible and despicable, because

He could be slain in the flesh. But at the scent of water He budded, because through the power of God His extinct flesh returned to life, according to that which is written: "Whom God raised from the dead" (Acts iii. 15). For because God is a Trinity, the Holy Trinity, that is, the Father, and the same Son, and the Holy Spirit, raised up the extinct flesh of the only-begotten Son. And He brought forth foliage as when He was first planted, because that weakness of the Apostles, which at His death trembled, and denied, and by denying withered, through the glory of His resurrection flourished again to faith. In comparison with which tree, what is every man but dust? Whence it is also added:

CHAPTER VI

[Vet. V].

VERSE 10.---But man, when he is dead, and stripped, and consumed, where, I pray, is he?

9. The sinner man dies in guilt, is stripped of righteousness, and is consumed in punishment.---No man is without sin, except He who came not into this world from sin. And because we are all bound in guilt, we die by the very loss of righteousness (justitiae); we are stripped of the garment of innocence previously granted in paradise; we are also consumed by the subsequent destruction of the flesh. The sinner man, therefore, dies in guilt, is stripped of righteousness, and is consumed in punishment. The Father deigned to cover this nakedness of the sinning

son, who upon his return said: "Bring forth quickly the first robe" (Luke xv. 22). For the first robe is the garment of innocence, which man, being well created, received, but being evilly persuaded by the serpent, lost. Against this nakedness again it is said: "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked" (Rev. xvi. 15). For we keep our garments when we preserve the precepts of innocence in the mind, so that when guilt strips us before the Judge, penance may cover us as we return to our lost innocence. But it is well said: "Where, I pray, is he?" because the sinner man was unwilling to stand there where he was created; but here, where he fell, he is forbidden to be for long. He lost his country willingly, but from his pilgrimage which he loves he is expelled unwillingly. Where, therefore, is he, who in the love of Him is not where true being is? It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

VERSES 11, 12.---As if the waters should depart from the sea, and the river emptied should dry up, so man, when he hath fallen asleep, shall not rise again.

10. The human mind is like to the surging sea.---The sea is the mind of man, and the thoughts of the mind are as it were the waves of the sea, which sometimes swell through wrath (iram), are made tranquil through grace (gratiam), and flow away with bitterness through hatred. But when man dies, the waters of the sea depart, because, according to the voice of

the Psalmist: "In that day all their thoughts shall perish" (Ps. cxlvi. 4). And again it is written of the dying: "Their love also and hatred shall perish together" (Eccles. ix. 6). Therefore the river emptied dries up, because, the soul being withdrawn, the body remains empty. For a lifeless body is as it were the empty bed of a river. In which matter it is to be vigilantly considered that the present life, to wit, as long as the soul dwells in the body, is compared to the sea and a river. For the water of the sea is bitter, that of the river sweet. And because we who live here are sometimes affected by certain bitterness (amaritudinibus), and sometimes are found tranquil and mild in sweetness, the course of the present life is expressed by the comparison of the sea and the river.

11. [Vet. VI, Rec. V.] Job does not absolutely deny the resurrection, but only that it will be before the end of the world.---But in these things it seems very hard which is subjoined: "So man, when he hath fallen asleep, shall not rise again." Why therefore do we labor, if we do not tend toward the retribution (retributionem) of resurrection? But how is it said: "He shall not rise again," when it is written: "We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51)? And again: "If in this life only we are hoping in Christ, we are more miserable than all men" (1 Cor. xv. 19). And Truth Himself says: "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and they that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life" (John v. 28). But the sen-

tence subjoined indicates what distinction lies hidden in the one premises. For it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 12.---Until the heaven be worn away, he shall not awake, nor rise up out of his sleep.

12. For it is clear that he shall not rise, to wit, until the heaven be worn away, because unless the end of this world arrive, the human race will not awake to life from the sleep of death. He does not therefore suggest that he will not rise at all, but that the human race will by no means rise before the wearing away (contritionem) of the heaven. It is also to be noted why, after he called man dead above, below he names him not dead, but sleeping, and relates that he by no means rises from his sleep until the heaven be worn away; except that it is plainly given to be understood that, in comparison with the reviving tree, he calls the dead man a sinner, to wit, one extinct from the life of righteousness (justitiae). But where he speaks of the death of the flesh, he preferred to call this not death, but sleep, suggesting beyond doubt the hope of resurrection, because just as a man quickly awakes from sleep, so he may speedily rise from the death of the body at the nod of the Creator. For the name of death is vehemently dreaded by weak minds, but the word for sleep is not feared. Whence Paul also, admonishing the disciples, says: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe

that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thess. iv. 13). What is it that the eminent preacher calls the death of the Lord "death," but the death of the servants of the Lord he names not death, but "sleep," except that, looking back at the weak hearts of the hearers, he composes the medicine of his preaching with wonderful art, and doubts not to suggest to them as "dead" Him whom they already knew to have risen; but those who had not yet risen, in order to suggest the hope of resurrection, he calls not dead, but "sleeping"? For he was not afraid to call "dead" Him whom the hearers already knew to have risen, and he was afraid to call "dead" those whom they scarcely believed would rise. Blessed Job, therefore, because he doubts not that those dead in the flesh will awake again to life, calls them sleeping rather than dead. It follows:

CHAPTER IX

[Vet. VII, Rec. VI].

VERSE 13.---Who will grant me this, that Thou mayest protect me in hell?

13. A twofold hell: one lower, for the punishment of the wicked; the other higher, destined for the reception of the righteous until the coming of Christ.---Because before the coming of the Mediator of God and man (mediatoris Dei et hominis), every man, although he were of a pure and approved life, descended to the enclosures of hell, there is no doubt, since man, who fell by himself,

could not by himself return to the rest of paradise (paradisi), unless He should come who by the mystery of His incarnation might open to us the way to that same paradise. Whence also after the fault of the first man, a flaming sword (romphaea flammea) is recorded to have been placed at the entrance of paradise (Gen. iii. 24), which is also said to be turning every way, for the reason that a time would at length come when it might even be removed. Yet we do not say that the souls of the righteous so descended to hell as to be held in penal places. But it is to be believed that there are higher places of hell, and that there are others lower, so that in the higher the righteous might rest, and in the lower the unrighteous might be tormented. Whence also the Psalmist, on account of the grace of God preventing him, says: "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lower hell" (Ps. lxxxvi. 13). Blessed Job, therefore, knowing that he would descend to hell before the arrival of the Mediator, asks for the protection of his Creator there, that he may exist far from the penal places, where, while he is led to rest, he may be hidden from torments. Whence he subjoins:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. VII].

IBID.---And that Thou wouldst hide me until Thy wrath be passed.

14. The wrath of God is free from perturbation, and is consummated in the end of the world.--- The wrath also of the Almighty God daily carries

out the force of His strictness (districtionis) in this, that He plunges those living unworthily into worthy punishments. Which wrath indeed passes now, but in the end it passes through, because it is now being carried out, but in the term of the world it is consummated. Which wrath nevertheless, as far as pertains to the souls of the elect, passed through in the arrival of our Redeemer, because He, the Mediator of God and men (mediator Dei et hominum), while He Himself piously descended thither, led them back from the enclosures of hell to the joys of paradise. But among these things it is to be known that the name of wrath (furoris) does not agree with the Divinity, because no perturbation confounds the simple nature of God. Whence it is said to Him: "But Thou, Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity, and with great reverence disposest of us" (Wisd. xii. 18). But because the souls of the righteous were at some time to be delivered from the places of hell, although not penal, through the arrival of the Mediator, the righteous man also foresees this, and subjoins by entreating:

CHAPTER XI

[Vet. and Rec. VIII].

IBID.---And that Thou wouldst appoint me a time, in which Thou mayest remember me?

15. Christ led out from hell only those whom He foreknew had cleaved to Him.---But when the fullness of time was come, God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to

redeem them that were under the law (Gal. iv. 4). The man of the Lord, therefore, foreknowing this redemption, in which many even from the Gentiles were to be delivered, as He Himself says: "Though Thou hidest these things in Thine heart, yet I know that Thou rememberest all" (Job x. 13), asks for a time to be appointed for him for his remembrance before the Almighty God. For hence it is that the Lord says in the Gospel: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things unto Myself" (John xii. 32), to wit, all the elect things. For the Lord, returning from hell, did not draw the elect and the reprobate together, but He took away from thence all those things which He foreknew had cleaved to Him. Whence also He says through the prophet Hosea: "I will be thy death, O death; I will be thy bite, O hell" (Hos. xiii. 14). For what we kill, we act so that it may not be at all. From that which we bite, we draw away a part, and a part we leave. Because, therefore, in His elect the Lord fundamentally killed death, He became the death of death. But because He took away a part from hell, and a part He left, He did not kill hell fundamentally, but He bit it. He says therefore: "I will be thy death, O death"; that is, in My elect I fundamentally destroy thee. I will be thy bite, O hell," because, they being taken away, I transfix thee in part. Blessed Job therefore, knowing this arrival of our Redeemer to those in hell, asks for that which he foresaw as future, and says: "And that Thou wouldst appoint me a time in which Thou mayest remember me." It follows:

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 14.---Thinkest thou a dead man shall live again?

16. Sometimes words of weakness are to be taken up by the strong.---Just men are wont, in that which they feel certain and solid, to utter something as if out of doubt, so that they may transfer the words of the weak to themselves. But again, by a strong sentence, they altogether contradict the doubt of the weak one, in order that by that which they are seen to utter doubtingly they may in some degree condescend to the weak, and by that which they utter as a certain sentence, they may draw the doubting minds of the weak to solidity. This indeed they do while they follow the example of our Head. For the Lord, approaching His Passion, took upon Himself the voice of the weak, saying: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Matt. xxvi. 39), and He took up their fear, that He might withdraw it; and again, showing the force of fortitude through obedience, He says: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Ibid. 39), so that when that is imminent which we do not wish to be done, we may so ask through weakness that it be not done, that through fortitude we may be ready that the will of our Creator be done even against our own will. By this example, therefore, words of weakness are sometimes to be taken up by the strong, so that through them, after strong preachings, the hearts of the weak may be more graciously strengthened. Whence blessed Job,

when he brought forth words as if of one doubting, saying: "Thinkest thou a dead man shall live again?" immediately added the sentence of his certainty, in which he says:

CHAPTER XIII

[Vet. and Rec. IX].

IBID.---All the days, in which I now serve as a soldier, I wait until my change come.

17. Job, having despised the course of this life, seeks the state of immutability.---He therefore who waits for his change with such great desire, hints how certain he is of the resurrection; and he makes known how much he despises the course of this present life, who calls it warfare (militiam). For in warfare it is always tended towards the end, and daily the term of the conclusion is expected. He therefore despises the course of this life, and seeks the state of solidity, who, because he serves as a soldier changeably, hastens to arrive at his change. For to the just man in this life the very burden of his corruption is heavy. Because vigils weary him, sleep is sought, so that the labor and anxiety of the vigils may be tempered. But sometimes even sleep kills. Hunger wears away the body, and that its necessity may be repelled, foods are required; but often even foods burden, which had been sought for repelling the burden of debility. Heavy, therefore, is the burden of corruption, which if it were not so heavy, Paul would by no means say: "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but

by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain until now" (Rom. viii. 20). The holy man, therefore, desiring the state of incorruption, let him say: "All the days, in which I now serve as a soldier, I wait until my change come." In which change what is done, he adds:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. X].

VERSE 15.---Thou shalt call me, and I will answer Thee.

18. We shall answer God when He calls, when at His command we shall rise again incorruptible.---We are said to answer anyone when we return works suitable in turn to his deeds. In that change, therefore, the Lord calls, and man answers, because before the brightness of the Incorrupt One, man is shown incorrupt after corruption. For now, as long as we are subject to corruption, we by no means answer our Author, because while corruption is far from incorruption, there is no suitable likeness for our answer. But of that change it is written: "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2). Then, therefore, we shall truly answer God when He calls, when at the command of the highest incorruption we shall rise again incorruptible. And because the

creature cannot perceive this from itself, but it is done by the gift of the Almighty God alone, that it may be changed to such great glory of incorruption, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER XV

[Rec. XI].

IBID.---Thou wilt reach out Thy right hand to the work of Thy hands.

19. What man cannot attain of himself.---As if he were to say plainly: Therefore Thy corruptible creature can persist unto incorruption, because it is raised up by the hand of Thy power, and is held by the grace of Thy regard, that it may persist. For the human creature, by the very fact that it is a creature, has in itself a tendency to flow down beneath itself; but from his Creator man has received that he may both be snatched above himself in contemplation, and be held in incorruption in himself. Lest the creature, therefore, should flow down beneath itself, but that it may persist in incorruption, it is lifted up to the state of immutability by the right hand of its Author. Also by the name of the right hand the Son can be designated: because "all things were made by Him" (John i. 3). Almighty God, therefore, reached out His right hand to the work of His hands, because that He might raise up the human race, abject and lying in the lowest things, to the highest, He sent His only-begotten Son incarnate for this. From whose incarnation it has been given to us, that we who by our own will fell into

corruption, may be able at some time to answer God when He calls us to the glory of incorruption. In which matter who can weigh the bounty of the divine mercy, that He brings man to such great glory after fault? God weighs the evils which we do, and yet through the grace of His kindness He mercifully releases them. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. XII].

VERSE 16.---For now Thou numberest my steps, but Thou sparest my sins.

20. Our faults, lest God punish them, are to be chastised by penance.---God numbers our steps when He marks our several works for the sake of retribution. For what is designated by steps, but our every action? Almighty God, therefore, both numbers our steps and spares our sins, because He both considers our deeds subtilely, and yet mercifully releases them to those who do penance. He also beholds hardness in those who sin, but yet, by preventing grace, He softens it to penance. He numbers our faults, therefore, when He turns us to bewailing each thing we have done. Which He mercifully releases, because while we punish them ourselves, He by no means judges them in the last examination, Paul attesting, who says: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. xi. 31). Whence it is still added:

CHAPTER XVII

[Vet. XI].

VERSE 17.---Thou hast sealed up my transgressions as in a bag, but Thou hast healed my iniquity.

21. Sins, unless they are washed away by penance, will come out from the bag of secrecy to the public of judgment.---Our transgressions are sealed up as in a bag, because that which we do outwardly, unless we wash it away by intervening penance, is kept in the secret of the judgments of God under a certain hiding, so that at some time it may even come out from the bag of secrecy to the public of judgment. Whence also it is said through Moses: "Are not these things stored up with Me, and sealed up in My treasures? In the day of vengeance I will repay them" (Deut. xxxii. 34, 35). But when for the evils which we have done we are worn away by the scourge of discipline, and bewail these through penance, He seals up and heals our iniquity, because He neither leaves them unavenged here, nor reserves them to be punished in judgment. He seals up transgressions, therefore, because He here subtilely attends to them that He may smite; but He heals them, because He fundamentally releases them through the scourge. Whence also He healed, by sealing, the iniquity of that persecutor of His whom He had prostrated on the earth, when He said of him to Ananias: "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children

of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake" (Acts ix. 15). For to him to whom He still threatens future passions for past excesses, He surely held that in which he had offended sealed in His heart. But without doubt He had healed his transgressions by sealing them, whom He called a chosen vessel. Or certainly our sins are sealed in a bag when we always weigh the evils we have done with a solicitous heart. For what is the heart of man but the bag of God? Where, while we carefully behold how much we offend, we carry our sins as if sealed in the bag of God. Did not David hold his sin sealed in a bag, who said: "I acknowledge my iniquity, and my sin is ever before me" (Ps. li. 5)? And because our pious Creator releases the faults which we know by looking at them and doing penance, it is rightly added after "transgressions sealed in a bag": "But Thou hast healed my iniquity." As if he were to say openly: Those things which Thou now sealest that I may see them by doing penance, Thou surely doest that they may not be seen in retribution. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. XIII].

VERSES 18, 19.---And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones, and the earth is consumed by little and little by the flood; and so Thou destroyest men likewise.

22. Some are overturned by sudden, others by slow and soft temptations.---This frequently happens that, when rocks fall, a stone is transferred to other places; that waters wear the stones, and the earth is consumed by little and little by floods. But we must discuss with great intention that which is brought in: "And so Thou destroyest men likewise." For what is this, that the destruction of man is compared to a falling mountain and a transferred rock, to a worn stone and to earth consumed by a flood, except that which is plainly given to be understood, because there are two kinds of temptations (tentationum)? One, which is acted in the mind even of a just man through a sudden event, so that he is so suddenly tempted, that it shakes and prostrates him by an unexpected issue, and he sees not his fall except after he has fallen. But the other, which comes by little and little into the mind, and infects the resisting soul with soft suggestions, and consumes all the powers of justice (justitiae) in him, not by its excess, but by its assiduity. Because, therefore, there is one temptation which for the most part prostrates the just by a sudden invasion, let it be said: "The mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place"; that is, the holy mind, whose place had been justice, is by a sudden impulse transferred to fault. Again, because there is another temptation, which softly pours itself into the heart of man, and corrupts and consumes all the hardness of fortitude (fortitudinis), let it be said: "The waters wear the stones," because

namely the assiduous and soft allurements of lust absorb the hardness of the mind, and a slow and subtle vice corrupts the hard and strong purpose of the mind. Whence it is added: "And the earth is consumed by little and little by the flood." For as the earth is consumed by little and little as the water flows in, so the mind even if strong is absorbed by vice softly creeping in. Whence it is well added: "And so Thou destroyest men likewise." That is, because when by a just judgment Thou permittest a temptation suddenly to master the mind of him who is seen to stand on high, Thou makest the mountain to fall and come to nought; and when the will is changed to vice, the rock is as it were transferred to another place; but when Thou permittest a slow and subtle, but yet assiduous temptation to prevail over the minds of those who are believed to be strong, it is as if the waters wear the stones, and the earth is consumed by little and little by the flood, because surely the hardness of the mind, being subdued by soft suggestion, is softened.

23. David, a high mountain, fell by a sudden fall. Solomon by the slowly creeping allurement of sin. ---Let us see how great a high mountain that David was, who was able to contemplate such great mysteries of God with a prophetic spirit; but let us behold by how sudden a fall he flowed down, who while, walking on the solar, he lusted after and took another's wife, and slew her husband with the loss of his army (2 Sam. xi. 4, etc.), the mountain fell by a sudden fall, when that mind accustomed to heavenly mysteries

was overcome by an unexpected temptation, and subdued to such an immense baseness. The rock therefore was transferred from its place, when the mind of the prophet, excluded from the mysteries of prophecy, came to think of basenesses. Let us see also how the waters wear the stones, and the earth is consumed by little and little by the flood. For Solomon was led even to this by the immoderate use and assiduity of women, that he should build a temple to idols (1 Kings xi. 7); and he who had first built a temple to God, being underlaid by the assiduity of lust, even of perfidy, feared not to build temples to idols. And so it was done that he arrived from the assiduous petulance of the flesh even to the perfidy of the mind. What else then than the waters wore the stone, and the earth was consumed by little and little by the flood, because as the infusion of sin crept in for a little while, the earth of his heart flowed down to consumption? Let blessed Job, therefore, consider both temptations, either the sudden and immense, or the slow and longer; let him consider the falls of men, and from those things which happen outwardly let him snatch contemplation inwardly, saying: "The mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones, and the earth is consumed by little and little by the flood; and so Thou destroyest men likewise"; that is, as these insensible things are now suddenly overthrown, now consumed by the softness of waters infused for a little while, so also him whom Thou hast created rational, Thou either castest down

by a sudden temptation, or permittest to be consumed by a long and slow one. And presently he explains the same rational creature in the following words, saying:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 20.---Thou hast strengthened him for a little while, that he should pass away for ever.

24. Eternity succeeds a short life.---Man has been strengthened for a little while, because he has received the strength of living here for a moderate time, that he may pass away for ever to where a limit does not conclude his life. But in this brevity where he has been strengthened, he gathers from whence he may find in perpetuity, either that he may always rejoice, or that he may not escape the punishments he has received. Because he was strengthened for a little while that he might pass away for ever, it is fitly added presently:

CHAPTER XX

[Rec. XIV].

IBID.---Thou shalt change his face, and send him away.

25. How great the change of man in death.---The face of man is changed when his appearance is worn away by death. But he is sent away, because he is compelled against his will to pass from those things which he held willingly to eternal things; and while he is being led to those, he

knows not how these things which he held long in thought will be when they are left. Whence also it is added.

CHAPTER XXI

[Vet. XIII].

VERSE 21. Whether his children were noble, or ignoble, he does not understand.

26. The souls of the saints seeing God, ignore nothing of those things which are outside of them; otherwise others.---For as those who are still living are ignorant of the place where the souls of the dead are kept, so the dead know not how the life of those living in the flesh after them is ordered, because both the life of the spirit is far from the life of the flesh; and as corporeal and incorporeal things are diverse in kind, so also by distinct knowledge. Which, however, is not to be felt concerning holy souls, because it is by no means to be believed that those who see within the brightness of Almighty God, should be ignorant of anything that is without. But every carnal person, because they bestow chief love on their children, the blessed Job asserts that they afterwards know not this which they loved vehemently here, so that whether their children be noble, or ignoble, they know not, whom their care always wearied. Which, however, if it ought to be understood spiritually, not incongruously are works designated by the name of children; as Paul says of the woman: Because she shall be saved through the generation of children (1 Tim.

2:15). For neither will a woman who, studying continence, by no means generates children, not be saved, but she is said to be saved through the generation of children, because through the effect of good works she is joined to perpetual salvation. Noble children, therefore, are right works, but ignoble are perverse deeds. And often a man strives to do any good with a right intention; but yet for many things, which creep in, it is uncertain how his acts are held before Almighty God. Whether, therefore, his children were noble, or ignoble, he does not understand, because, having been discussed by a subtle examination, he is ignorant whether his works are approved or reproved. And here, therefore, man is placed in the pain of labor, and there he is led in the fear of suspicion. Whence still concerning the labor of the present life itself it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSE 22.---But his flesh, while he lives, shall have pain, and his soul shall mourn over himself.

27. They who delight in the pleasures of the flesh, experience greater tribulations from the flesh.---Of the married Paul says: Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh (1 Cor. 7:28). But even those who already live spiritually can suffer trouble of the flesh here. Why then is trouble of the flesh said as if specially to be in the married, which also is not far from the life of the spiritual, unless because those frequently receive greater tribulations from the flesh who delight in the pleasures of the flesh? But it is

well said: And his soul shall mourn over himself, because whoever desires to rejoice in himself, is already in mourning by that very thing by which he has departed from true joy. For the true joy of the mind is the Creator. It is worthy, therefore, that man should always find sorrows in himself, who, having forsaken the Creator, sought joy in himself. It follows.

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XIV, Rec. XV].

CHAP. XV, VERS. 1, 2.---Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said: Should a wise man answer as if speaking into the wind, and fill his belly with heat?

28. The wicked consider the words of the good not as sentences of reason, but as goads of fury.---We have frequently said already that the blessed Job holds the type of the holy universal Church, but his friends that of heretics, who, as if in defense of the Lord, find occasion for foolish speech, and hurl contumelious words against the good. To whom all things which are felt by the faithful displease as if uttered into the wind. Whence it is now said: Should a wise man answer as if speaking into the wind? Nor do they think the words of the good to be sayings of reason, but goads of fury. Whence also it is added: And he shall fill his belly with heat. Because even those things which they know they say contumeliously, they always study, as has been said, to cloak from the defense of the Lord. Whence Eliphaz adds:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 3.---Thou arguest with words him who is not equal to thee, and speakest that which is not expedient for thee.

29. While heretics do not find true things to reproach, they feign false ones.---They think no one to have the fear of the Lord, unless him whom they could draw to the folly of their own confession. Whence he adds:---VERSE 4---As much as in thee is, thou hast made void fear, and hast taken away prayers before God. 'Tulisti' is said for 'abstulisti' (taken away), as if he said openly: Presuming on thy own justice, thou despisest to deprecate the grace of thy Creator. For when heretics do not find true evils against the good, they feign what they may redargue, so that they may seem to be just, and it happens for the most part that they arrive at open words of contumelies. Whence still it is added:

CHAPTER XXV.

VERSE 5.---For thy iniquity has taught thy mouth, and thou imitatest the tongue of blasphemers.

30. Caring in appearance for the honor of God, they detract from His goodness. ---Iniquity teaches the mouth when from an evil life that which is worse is conceived to be said. But because the blessed Job was as free in mouth as he was just in work, he is reproved by his friends holding the type of heretics, both for an iniquitous life and for an audacious mouth, so that it is

said: For thy iniquity has taught thy mouth. As if it were said openly to him: What thou speakest perversely, thou hast learned from a more perverse life. For often heretics, while as it were they venerate God, contradict His mysteries, and think it humility if they deny the truth. For there are some who think they bring an injury upon God if they confess that He assumed true flesh, or if they should believe that He could truly die for us in the flesh. And while they try to bestow as it were more honor on God, they are compelled to deny the true praises of His goodness. For what is more powerful in the praise of His charity than that He should make those things worthy for His own reception for us, which to Him seem unworthy? But the Holy Church confesses His true flesh, His true death; but saying these things, she is believed by heretics to bring contumely upon God. Whence it is now said: And thou imitatest the tongue of blasphemers. To whom if any adversity should happen in this world, they say that this happens to her from this very injury of her confession. Whence still it is added:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERSE 6.---Thy own mouth shall condemn thee, and not I, and thy lips shall answer thee.

31. They dote that the confession of the right faith is punished by the scourges of adversity.--- For because they think that the evils of adversity burst forth from the error of confession, they assert that his own lips answer him, so that the fault of eloquence should be the cause of the

scourge. But sometimes they wish to restrain it as if by reasoning. [Vet. XV.] Whence Eliphaz strives to reprove the blessed Job as if from reason, saying:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERSE 7, 8.---Art thou the first man born, and wast thou formed before the hills? Hast thou heard the counsel of God, and will His wisdom be inferior to thee?

32. While they seem to defend the divine glory, they look to their own.---As if he should say in plainer words: Thou who speakest of the Eternal, consider that thou art temporal; thou who disputest of His wisdom, consider that thou art ignorant of His counsel. But because heretics assume the words of the defense of the Lord for this purpose, so that they may seem to be learned, and while they seem to defend the divine glory, they may make known their own knowledge to men, these subjoined words of Eliphaz testify this, who indeed began to speak of the wisdom of God, but immediately fell to his own elation, saying:

VERSE 9.---What knowest thou that we ignore? what understandest thou that we know not?

Which sayings indeed plainly show from what elation of mind whatever sounds as if for the defense of the Lord proceeds. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERSE 10.---Both the aged and the ancient are with us, much older than thy fathers.

33. They falsely flatter themselves with the mastery and consensus of the ancient fathers.---Because all heretics have gone out from the holy universal Church, John testifies, who says: They went out from us, but they were not of us (1 John 2:19). But so that they may commend those things which they assert to the foolish minds of men as if from antiquity, they testify that they have the ancient fathers, and they call those doctors of the Church masters of their own profession. And while they despise the present preachers, they glory with a false presumption in the mastery of the ancient Fathers, so that they may confess that the ancient fathers also held those things which they themselves speak, in order that what they are unable to build up by rectitude they may confirm as if by their authority. But because it is written: Whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth, but scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (Heb. 12:6). Often the Holy Church labors in many adversities in this life, and the life of the reprobate is dismissed so much without a scourge, as it is reserved for no rewards. But the heretics seeing the afflictions of the Holy Church, despise her, and suspect that she is worn away by so many scourges from the merit of a depraved profession. Whence still it is added:

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERSE 11.---Is it a great thing for God to comfort thee? but thy depraved words forbid this.

34. They despise the afflicted Church.---As if he should plainly say to him: If thou shouldst correct thy profession of faith, thou wouldst long since have been able to have comfort from the scourges. It follows:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERSE 12.---Why does thy heart lift thee up, and, as if thinking of great things, hast thou astonished eyes?

35. They mock the contemplation of the saints, having never experienced it.---Often the mind of the just is so suspended to contemplate higher things, that externally their face seems to have been astonished. But because heretics are ignorant that this force of contemplation acts in secret, they think this is done by the just and the rightly wise more by hypocrisy than by truth, because they do not suspect that this which they themselves cannot have truly exists in others. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERSE 13.---Why does thy spirit swell against God, that thou shouldest let such words go out of thy mouth?

36. The words of the just and the wicked are often similar, but the heart is dissimilar. Heretics mix certain truths with falsehoods, which are not to be rejected.---Mostly the just, afflicted by some necessities, are compelled to confess their own works, which blessed Job had done, whom

after his righteousness the scourges were depressing; but when the unjust hear their sayings, they think these were brought forth by elation rather than by truth. For they weigh the words of the just from their own hearts, and they do not think that good words can be said humbly. For as it is a grave fault for a man to arrogate to himself that which he is not, so mostly there is no fault if he humbly says the good which he is. Whence it often happens that the just and the unjust have similar words, but yet the heart is always far dissimilar, and by which sayings the Lord is offended by the unjust, in the same also he is appeased by the just. For the Pharisee having entered the temple, said: I fast twice in the Sabbath, I give tithes of all that I possess (Luke 18:12); but the publican went out justified rather than he. King Hezekiah also when, afflicted by trouble of body, he had come to the extremity of life, being compunct in prayer said: I beseech thee, O Lord, remember, I pray, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart (Isai. 38:3). Nor yet did the Lord despise or refuse this confession of his perfection, whom he soon heard in his prayers. Behold the Pharisee justified himself in work, and Hezekiah asserted himself to be just even in thought, and whence that one offended, thence this one appeased the Lord. Why therefore this, unless because Almighty God weighs the words of each from the thoughts, and in his ears those are not proud which are brought forth with a humble heart? Whence blessed Job, when he brought forth his works,

in no way swelled against God, because he said humbly those things which he had truly done. But heretics are wont to mix some truths with the sayings of their errors, and the friends of blessed Job, although in their reproof of him they are in every way deceived, can yet also say some true things, which they learned from his constancy. If all their sayings were to be refuted, the Apostle Paul would by no means have brought forth the sentence of Eliphaz, saying: He taketh the wise in their own craftiness (1 Cor. 3:19). Because therefore even those things which they say rightly they do not say rightly against blessed Job, let us in their sayings both tread upon the vice of indiscretion (indiscretionis), and discuss the strengths of rectitude. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERSE 14.---What is man, that he should be without spot?

37. Man having arisen from the ground (humus) and from a woman, who can he be without stain?---For by the very fact that he is called man (homo), he is expressed as earthly and weak: for man (homo) was named from the ground (humo). And how is he able to be without spot, who of his own accord fell to weakness having been made from the earth? Where also it is added,---IBID.---And that he should appear just, who is born of a woman. For the woman first offered injustice to the man in paradise. How therefore will he appear just, who is born of

her who existed as the prompter of injustice? It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERSE 15.---Behold among his saints no one is immutable, and the heavens are not clean in his sight.

38. God alone is without mutability.---By this name of the heavens he repeated what he previously signified by the appellation of the saints. For of the same saints it is written: The heavens declare the glory of God (Psal. 19:1). Who by nature all have in themselves their own mutability; but while they always desire to cleave studiously to the immutable truth, by cleaving they act so that they become immutable. And when they hold themselves to this with all affection, at some time they receive that, being led above themselves, they overcome this which they existed as mutable in themselves. For what is mutability but a kind of death? Which while it changes any thing into another, as it were kills that which it had been, that it may begin to be that which it was not. And of the author of all it is written: Who alone hath immutability (1 Tim. 6:16), because namely in himself he alone is immutable. Of whom it is said by James: With whom there is no change, nor shadow of vicissitude (James 1:17). For mutability itself is a shadow, which would as it were obscure the light, if it changed it by some vicissitudes. But because in God mutability does not come, no shadow of vicissitude cuts off his light. But it is well said: The heavens are not clean

in his sight, because by themselves before the strict judgment of God not even they themselves can be clean to perfection who become preachers of cleanness, John attesting, who says: If we shall say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves (1 John 1:8). If therefore among his saints no one is immutable, and the heavens in his sight are not clean, who should presume in himself of the work of justice? Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIV.

VERSE 16.---How much more abominable and useless is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?

39. Our evil works are most wicked, but our good ones are imperfect and useless.---He who had previously denied that man could be immaculate and just through himself, calls him abominable and useless: abominable namely on account of the uncleanness of his spot, but useless on account of the injustice of an imperfect life. Which abominable and useless can also be understood in another way. For sometimes a perverse man seems to do some things rightly, but through those which are iniquitous even those things of his which are right are destroyed. And because evil things greatly displease God, neither do those things please which seem good. He therefore who in his evils is abominable to God, in his good things is useless, because while he exhibits himself execrable to God through wicked works, neither does that in him which seems right please. But it is well said: Who drinketh iniquity like water. For that which is eaten is

swallowed with delay, because it is chewed that it may be swallowed. But that which is drunk, has tanto less delay for swallowing, as it has no necessity even for chewing. Guilt therefore, because it is perpetrated by a foolish man without any retraction, is drunk like water iniquity. For because he does unlawful things without fear, he swallows as it were a draught of injustice without obstacle. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERSE 17.---I will show thee, hear me, what I have seen I will tell thee.

40. The proud, the higher they rise by understanding, the more grievously they fall by elation.---All the arrogant have this as their own, that when they have sensed anything right or small, they bend this into the use of elation; and whence they become higher to themselves through understanding, thence through swelling they fall into the pit of elation, and they think themselves more learned than the learned, they exact reverence to themselves from their betters, and they contend to teach the more holy as if from authority. Whence it is now said: I will show thee, hear me. And because he who speaks things heard teaches with less authority than he who speaks those things which he has seen, that Eliphaz may arrogate to himself a stronger authority, he says: What I have seen I will tell thee. But because heretics are sometimes confounded concerning their damned fathers, and yet they bring forth their sentences into the midst as if with au-

thority, from whose folly they are justly reproved, the audacity of the heretics is rightly subjoined, when it is said:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSE 18.---Wise men confess, and they do not hide their fathers.

41. How foolishly the heretics boast of wise men, whom they had as masters of error.---Into whose praise they also break forth, and they glory that those as if alone presided over the Church. Whence it is still subjoined:---VERSE 19:---To whom alone the earth was given, and no alien passed through them. They think the earth was given to their fathers alone, because they think that the masters of their errors alone truly ruled the Church. But who is called an alien but the apostate angel? Whence also it is said by the Psalmist concerning all the malignant spirits together: For aliens have risen up against me, and the strong have sought my soul (Psal. 54:3). Heretics therefore, because they think the hearts of their doctors were not subject to the apostate angel, deny that an alien passed through them. To which alien namely to pass through each one is to put iniquitous thoughts into his heart. Whence also it is said through the voice of the prophet concerning the malignant spirits against a standing soul: And they said to thy soul: Bow down that we may pass through (Isai. 51:23). But Eliphaz the Temanite, because he wishes to be heard since he is about to narrate certain things, although he knows many things which are to be

said, but because he does not know that they were not to be said to blessed Job, let us hear the sentences which he brought forth against blessed Job. For we ought not to weigh to whom, but only what he said. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERSE 20.---All his days the wicked man is proud.

42. The elect end their life in humility, the reprobate in pride.---The elect also are wont to be proud in some of their thoughts and acts. But because they are elect, they cannot be proud all their days, because before they finish their life, they change their hearts from the elation of the heart to the fear of humility. But the wicked man is proud in all his days, because he so ends his life, that he by no means departs from elation. He looks around at that which flourishes temporally, and neglects to weigh whither he is led for eternity. He places confidence in the life of the flesh, and thinks those things will long remain which he holds for the present. The mind is solidified in elation, every neighbor is brought into contempt; he never considers how sudden death may creep up; he never weighs how uncertain his happiness may be. Who if he beheld the uncertainty of a fleeting life, would by no means hold uncertain things for certain. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IBID.---And the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain.

43. Death ought to be feared, because it cannot be foreseen.---For he ought by no means to have been proud, even if he could have had the number of his years certain, so that knowing how long he would live, he might foresee when he would remove himself from elation. But after the present life is always uncertain, so much the more always should death creeping up be feared, as it can never be foreseen. But he well calls the pride of the wicked a tyranny. For properly he is called a tyrant who does not rule by right in a common republic. But it is to be known that every proud man exercises a tyranny according to his own measure. For what sometimes one does in a republic, that is, through the received power of dignity, another does in a province, another in a city, another in his own house, another through hidden wickedness exercises this within himself in his own thought. Nor does the Lord behold how much of evil each one is able to do, but how much he wishes. And when power is lacking without, he is a tyrant within himself, in whom iniquity rules within, because even if externally he does not afflict his neighbors, internally nevertheless he can desire to have power that he may afflict. And because Almighty God weighs the hearts, already in his eyes the wicked man has done what he thought. But for this our Creator willed our end to be hidden from us, that while we are uncertain when we may die, we may always be found prepared for death. Whence

rightly after it was said: All his days the wicked man is proud, he joins: And the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain. As if it were openly said: Why is he extolled as if concerning a certainty, whose life is held under the penalty of uncertainty? But Almighty God not only reserves future punishments for those who act wickedly, but he involves their hearts in punishments even here where they transgress, so that by the very fact that they sin they may strike themselves, so that always trembling and always suspicious they may fear to suffer evil things from others, which they remember they have done to others. Whence still concerning this wicked man it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VERSE 21.---The sound of dread is always in his ears; and when there is peace, he suspecteth snares.

44. Simplicity of heart is a most fortified citadel.---But nothing is happier than a simple heart, because in that it exhibits innocence towards others, there is nothing which it may dread to suffer from others. For it has its own simplicity as it were a certain citadel of strength. Nor is it suspicious of suffering what it does not remember to have done. Whence it is well said through Solomon: In the fear of the Lord is the confidence of strength (Prov. 14:26). Who also says again: A secure mind is as a continual feast (Prov. 15:15). For the very tranquility of security is as it were a continuation of refreshment. But

on the contrary a perverse mind is always in labors, because either it devises evil things which it may bring upon others, or it fears lest these be brought upon itself by others. And whatever it devises against its neighbors, this it dreads to be devised against itself by its neighbors. It becomes on every side suspicious, on every side trembling. Every one who comes to memory is believed to seek contrary things. To him therefore whom the tranquility of security is lacking, to him without doubt the sound of dread is always in his ears. And it often happens that any neighbor of his speaks to him simply, and thinks nothing adverse. But when there is peace, he suspecteth snares, because he who always acts deceitfully, does not think that it is acted simply towards him. And because it is written: The wicked man when he shall have come into the depth of sins, contemneth (Prov. 18:3), involved in the darkness of his iniquity he now despairs of the light. Whence also follows:

CHAPTER XL.

VERSE 22.---He believeth not that he may return from darkness to light, looking around on every side for the sword.

45. The impious, salvation having been despaired of, always increases to wickedness.--- Because while he believes himself to be struck on every side by snares, salvation having been despaired of, he always increases to wickedness. But sometimes that perverse man also attends to the supernal judgments, and he dreads these to

come upon him. But when he seeks the reward (stipendium) of the present life, overcome by the madness of avarice he contemns these same judgments which he had begun to dread. And indeed he thinks he can die in sin, but yet he does not cease from sin. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLI.

VERSE 23.---When he shall move himself to seek bread, he knoweth that the day of darkness is prepared in his hand.

46. Although he may dread to be struck, he always increases that by which he may be struck.---For bread is taken as the reward of the present life; but the day of darkness the time of vengeance. In his act therefore sometimes that perverse man weighs the wrath of the Supernal Judge as present; but he is not turned away from evil, so that even she also may be able to be turned away from his destruction. But his conscience accusing him he dreads to be struck, but yet he always increases that by which he may be struck. He contemns his return, he despairs of pardon, he is proud in guilt; but yet he has within fear as a witness of his wickedness. And although he may seem to act boldly perverse things without, nevertheless concerning these he is compelled to tremble within himself. Whence it is written: For since wickedness is fearful, it giveth testimony to condemnation (Wisd. 17:10), because when anyone perpetrates unlawful things, he fears what he does; and the open witness of condemnation is the fear itself of iniq-

uity, because both what is acted is feared, and yet the evil which is feared is not overcome. Concerning which also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XLII

VERSE 24. --- Trouble shall make him afraid, and anguish shall hem him in, like a king who is prepared for battle.

47. With how many straits is he hemmed in, who leaves the way of truth, the companion of security. The way of truth is plain; the journey of falsehood is rough. In everything that the wicked man does, he is hemmed in by trouble and anguish, because his heart is confounded by anxiety and suspicion. One man secretly desires to seize another's property by force, and he labors in his thoughts, lest he should be able to be detected. Another, having left the truth, resolves to lie, that he may deceive the mind of his hearers. But how great a labor is it to watch solicitously lest that very fallacy of his should be able to be detected? For he sets before his eyes what might be answered to him by those who know the truth, and with great thought he treats how he may surpass the evidences of truth by the arguments of falsehood. He covers himself on every side, and against this, where he might be detected, he seeks an answer similar to the truth, who if he had wished to speak the truth, certainly could have done so without labor. For the way of truth is plain, and the journey of falsehood is heavy. Whence also it is said by the prophet: For they have taught their tongue to speak lies, they have

labored to act wickedly (Jer. 9:5). Well therefore is it said: Trouble shall make him afraid, and anguish shall hem him in, because he fails within himself in the labor of fear, who leaves the way of truth, the companion of security. Who is well compared to a king prepared for battle, because in that very evil which he does, he is both terrified, and he hastens, and he trembles from conscience, and he pants from desire, he fears and is proud, he dreads with suspicions, and raises his mind through audacity. [Vet. XXI.] It must also be known that a king who is prepared for battle is so suspicious of the enemy, that he also fears for that very army which he leads, lest it should be weakened, lest through the destitution of the soldiers he should lie open to the javelins of the enemies. The wicked man therefore is hemmed in by anguish, like a king who is prepared for battle, because namely acting falsely, speaking falsely, he dreads lest he should lose his soldiers, that is, the arguments of falsehood, and lie open to the javelins of truth, if by chance that should fail him which he might oppose from fallacy. But although the mind trembles, although the conscience accuses, nevertheless the wicked man is overcome by his own cupidity, and having suppressed fear, he takes audacity from his iniquities. And often even with vengeance proposed to his mind, he raises himself against God, resolving to endure any adversities from Him, provided that here, while he is able, he may do everything that pleases him. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Rec. XXII]

VERSES 25, 26. --- For he hath stretched out his hand against God, and hath been strengthened against the Almighty. He hath run against Him with an erect neck, and is armed with a fat neck.

48. God through mercy sometimes opposes the will of the wicked, which being angry He sometimes allows to be fulfilled. These things are more clearly understood concerning that very head of the wicked, namely Antichrist, who, lifting up his hand against God, is said to be strengthened, because for a small time he is permitted to be exalted, so that in that for which he is allowed to glory for a little while, he may be punished more atrociously forever. But because all the wicked are his members, let us see now how this which one man is then to do singularly at the end of the world is done by individual bad men. For there are some who, even if they sometimes strive to do anything against the judgment of Almighty God, being broken by the very impossibility of fulfilling their will, look back to themselves, and are converted to Him whom they had wished to despise; and they who could have departed far away, if they had been able to fulfill what they wished, are sometimes saved through this, because what they wickedly wished, they were unable to fulfill. Whence brought back to themselves, they behold of what condition they are, and they bewail that they

wished things contrary to the truth. And there are some who are permitted by the just judgment of God more wickedly to fulfill that which they perversely desire against God. And when malice inflames them, and power strengthens them, they are already so much the more unable to know themselves in error, as in affluent circumstances they are always drawn out of themselves through power. Concerning whose intention it is now said: For he hath stretched out his hand against God, and hath been strengthened against the Almighty. For to stretch out the hand against God is to persevere in a wicked operation, the judgments of God being despised. And because God is then more angry, when He permits to be fulfilled what at least ought not to have been conceived in thought, this wicked man is strengthened against the Almighty, because he is permitted to prosper in his bad action, so that he both does perverse things, and yet lives happily. Concerning which it is still subjoined: He hath run against Him with an erect neck.

49. How great audacity of opulent proud men in wicked works. To run against God with an erect neck is to commit with audacity those things which displease the Creator. Concerning which it is rightly said: He hath run, that is, in his bad work he had no obstacle from adversity. [Vet. XXII.] Concerning which it is still added: And he is armed with a fat neck. A fat neck is opulent pride, supported namely by affluent circumstances as if by much flesh. The powerful wicked man therefore is armed with a fat neck

against God, who, swelling with temporal things against the precepts of truth, is raised up as if by the greatness of his flesh. For what is poverty but a certain leanness, and what is abundance of things but the fatness of this present life? He therefore raises himself against God with a fat neck, who assumes temporal abundance into pride. For powerful and wicked men have this as their own, that, occupied with deceitful riches, they neglect the true riches of God; and the less they seek what is true, the more they are extolled by false riches. For the manifold care of earthly things, because it occupies, blinds. Whence it is still aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIV

VERSE 27. --- Thickness hath covered his face.

50. Abundance of earthly things closing the eyes. For sight is in the face, in which is the first and more honorable part of the body. Not therefore undeservedly is the intention of the mind designated by the face, which wherever we turn it, there we see. Thickness therefore covers the face, because the desired abundance of earthly things oppresses the eyes of the mind, and fouls before the eyes of God that which in them ought to have been honorable, because it burdens with manifold cares. For whom, however, it does not only suffice that they themselves should be proud, unless also those who are joined to them should themselves also glory in their fatness. For there are some who, aided by greater patrons,

are proud, and are extolled through their power against the needy. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XLV

IBID. --- And fat hangs from his sides.

51. Those who adhere to the powerful wicked man swell with his power. Because "arvina" is the fatness of the flesh, and we are accustomed to call the "sides" of the rich those whom we see joined to them, fat hangs from his sides, because whoever adheres to the powerful and wicked man, he himself also swells with his power, as if from the fatness of things, so that, following the iniquity of a perverse patron, he does not fear God, afflicts the poor whom he can and as much as he can, and raises his heart from temporal glory. When therefore such is he who adheres to the powerful wicked man, fat certainly hangs from his side. Concerning whom it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVI

[Vet. XXIII]

VERSE 28. --- He shall dwell in desolate cities, and in deserted houses, which are reduced into heaps.

52. He in turn, while he is extolled by the praises of those joined to him, is more vehemently hurried to wicked works. For because a city is named from the conversation of those living together, desolate cities are the very companies of the perverse who follow him, by whose

clamors this perverse man is praised when he is hurried through wickedness to wicked works. Whence it is written: The sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and he who acts iniquitously is blessed (Ps. 10:3, sec. Heb.). Deserted houses indeed are the wicked thoughts, which this wicked man inhabits, because through everything that he does he desires to please the thoughts of wicked men. Which desolate cities and deserted houses are rightly named, because unless Almighty God had left the conversations and thoughts of such men, their preceding guilts requiring it, they would by no means have arrived at perpetrating more grievous things. But well is it said: Which are reduced into heaps. For the falling buildings of houses and cities make heaps, because while all the wicked are joined to themselves for perverse works with confused actions, they undoubtedly show that they have fallen from the building of life. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVII

VERSE 29. --- He shall not be inhabited, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he send his root into the earth.

53. He is not enriched with virtues except him whose mind God inhabits. The proud man stands without a root, soon to be prostrated by a gentle breeze. What is said here, He shall not be inhabited, I have found in some Codices to be He shall not be enriched; but the sense does not disagree, although the word differs from itself. For he is enriched with virtues, whose mind

Almighty God inhabits. But because the thought of the proud is not inhabited by the grace of its Author, certainly through this he is not enriched with virtues. On account of this, therefore, that he is empty within, let it be said: He shall not be inhabited; but on account of this, that what is transitory swells without, he rightly subjoins: Neither shall his substance continue. As if it were openly said: This which he seems to have without passes away, and that which could not pass away he does not have within. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: Neither shall he send his root into the earth. Which if we take as said of this earth, it is clear without doubt that a tree which has not a root in the earth, falls even if moved by the thinnest breezes. And every proud man while he is strengthened against the Almighty Lord, while he runs with an erect neck, and is raised up with a fat neck against his Author, seems to stand like a tree. But his state is without a root, because as if at a gentle breeze, so at the motion of a hidden sentence his life is plucked up. But if in this place we take "earth" as the retribution of eternal life, of which the Prophet says: My portion in the land of the living (Ps. 142:5), this wicked man does not send his root into the earth, because he never plants the thoughts of his heart toward the desire of eternal life. [Vet. XXIV.] For what the root is to the tree, that his own thought is to every man, because in this which is seen without, he is held by that which is not seen without. Whence also it is said by the prophet: He shall send root downward, and bear fruit upward (Is. 37:31). For

when we stretch our thought to compassionating a needy neighbor, we send as it were a root downward, that we may bear the fruit of retribution above. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVIII

VERSE 30. --- He shall not depart from darkness.

54. Because he does not seek the light of righteousness, he does not depart from darkness. If this proud man had wished to return from fault to righteousness, he would depart from darkness. But because he does not seek the light of righteousness, he does not depart from darkness. By whose example also those who adhere to him pant in earthly successes, are inflamed by the torches of avarice, and are burned by the fires of carnal desires. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIX

IBID. --- The flame shall dry up his branches.

55. He is burned with the torches of carnal desires together with those joined to him. For if he should join to himself some seeking the eternal country, he would have in himself green branches. But because those also who are joined to him glow with earthly desires, and while the flame of desires inflames the minds of his clients, it namely dries up his branches, so that they may not bear the fruit of good work, because through wickedness they pant to seek the lowest things. Well, however, it is subjoined:

CHAPTER L

IBID. --- And by the breath of his mouth shall he be taken away.

56. On account of the relaxed reins of the tongue he is to be most severely tormented. For every proud man, the more he is able in this life, the more audaciously he relaxes the reins of the tongue to himself, so that he speaks any perverse things whatever, fears no one for his words, strikes these with contumelies, and shoots those with maledictions. Not uncommonly indeed he is hurried into blasphemy against the Creator, as is said of such by the Psalmist: They have set their mouth against heaven, and their tongue has passed over the earth (Ps. 73:9). Whence also the rich man placed in the fire asks for a drop of water from the finger of Lazarus to be dropped on his tongue (Luke 16:24). From which thing it is understood that where he had sinned more, there he burned more atrociously. Rightly therefore is it now said: And by the breath of his mouth shall he be taken away, because he received the sentence of percussion in that wherein he did not restrain the breath of his mouth under divine fear. It follows:

CHAPTER LI

[Rec. XXIII]

VERSE 31. --- Let him not believe, vainly deceived, that he is to be redeemed with any price.

57. Then only do alms profit us when we bewail and abandon our sins. As often as we give alms after a fault, we give as it were a price for our wicked acts. Whence also it is said by the Prophet concerning him who does not do these things: He shall not give to God his propitiation, nor the price of the redemption of his soul (Ps. 49:7, 8). Not uncommonly indeed the elated rich oppress their inferiors, seize the things of others, and yet bestow certain things as it were on others; and when they depress many, sometimes they bring the aid of defense to some, and they seem to give a price for the iniquities which they never desert. But then the price of alms delivers us from faults, when we bewail and abandon the things perpetrated. For he who both wishes always to sin, and as it were always to bestow alms, in vain gives a price, because he does not redeem the soul, which he does not restrain from vices. Whence it is now said: Let him not believe, vainly deceived by error, that he is to be redeemed with any price. Because the alms of a proud rich man cannot redeem him, which the simultaneously perpetrated robbery of the poor man does not permit to ascend before the eyes of God. [Vet. XXV.] Which perhaps can be understood otherwise, because often proud rich men when they bestow alms, do not bestow this for the desire of eternal life, but for extending temporal life; they believe that they can defer death by donations, but let him not believe, vainly deceived by error, that he is to be redeemed with any price, because he is not able to obtain from the bestowed gift that he should

escape the due end, whose wickedness also cuts short his life. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER LII.

VERSE 32. --- Before his days be fulfilled he shall perish, and his hands shall wither.

58. The days prefixed for each, can neither be increased nor diminished. He who hopes for longer ones, before they are fulfilled, perishes. --- The days prefixed for each by the internal foreknowledge of God can neither be increased nor diminished, unless it happen that they are so foreknown, that they are longer with the best works, or shorter with the worst, as Hezekiah (Ezechias) merited an increase of days by the shedding of tears; and as it is written of the perverse: Death meets the undisciplined. But often the wicked man, although in the hidden foreknowledge of God long times of his life are not predestined, yet because he desires to live carnally, proposes days to himself with a long mind. And because he is not able to arrive at that time which he expects, he perishes as it were before his days are fulfilled. Which, however, we are able to understand otherwise also. For commonly we see some both act perversely and arrive even to extreme old age. How then is it said: Before his days be fulfilled he shall perish, when in some we often see that their members already fail with long age, and yet their desires do not cease to follow their depravity?

59. He who returns to external things after conversion is eradicated from every state of good

work. --- For there are some who after a lost life return to themselves, and, their conscience accusing them, leave their perverse ways, change their works, contradict their ancient depravity, flee earthly actions, and follow heavenly desires; but before they are solidified in those same holy desires, through the torpor of the mind they return to those things which they had begun to judge, and run back to the evils which they had disposed to flee. For because it often happens that even holy men serve external acts for the utility of many, and are occupied with the governments of peoples, weak men beholding this, and seeking to imitate it through the old pride still remaining, insert themselves into external actions; but the more they come to them uninstructed in spiritual things, the more carnally they execute them. For unless the heart first grows strong in heavenly desires by long study and daily conversation, when it is poured back to doing external things, it is eradicated from every state of good work. Whence also it is rightly said of this wicked man: Before his days be fulfilled he shall perish. Because even if he perhaps began to do anything good, before he grows strong in it through length of time, he slips back to external things, and perversely deserts what he seemed to have rightly begun. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: And his hands shall wither. Because while he is untimely involved in external acts, he is doubtless dried up from every good operation. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER LIII

[Rec. XXIV].

VERSES 33, 34. --- His cluster shall be harmed as a vine in its first flower, and as an olive tree casting off its flower. For the congregation of the hypocrite is barren.

60. Why the good works of the hypocrite wither. How dangerously they preside who are weak in virtue. --- It is to be noted that he speaks so generally of this wicked man, that yet the divine word is derived to his special wickedness. For he who, saying: His cluster shall be harmed as a vine in its first flower, and as an olive tree casting off its flower, immediately subjoins: For the congregation of the hypocrite is barren, plainly indicates that in this wicked man he brings a sentence of reprobation against his hypocrisy. [Vet. XXVI.] But now we must consider how the hypocrite is harmed as a vine in its first flower, or as an olive tree casting off its flower. If an immoderate cold, through inequality of the air, touches a flowering vine, it immediately withers it from all moisture of greenness. And there are some who after perverse ways desire to follow holy paths, but before good desires are strengthened in them, as we have said, a certain prosperity of the present world receives them, which involves them in external things, and while it draws back their mind from the heat of inward love, it extinguishes it as it were from cold, and kills whatever appeared to be seen in them of the flower of virtues. For the mind grows very cold in earthly

acts, if it has not yet been solidified by inward gifts. Whence it is necessary that those should undertake the exercise of greater places or external works, which are to profit human necessities, who have learned to judge these things, and to press them under themselves by inward virtue. For when any weak person is drawn back either to a place of government or to doing external things, whereby he is led as it were outside of himself, he is eradicated, because also the tree which does not first send its roots deep, is more quickly laid low by the force of the winds, if it lifts itself up with its top to the height; and it falls to the depths the more quickly, the higher it grew in the air without roots. But sometimes not cold, but heat withers the flowering vine. And when it is touched by immoderate heat, the blossom being shaken off, the cluster wastes away. And it commonly happens that those who do not come to good works with a right intention, when they see themselves pleasing to men, are more vehemently kindled to exercising these same works, and anxiously study to do things pleasing to human eyes, and as it were grow fervent in holy study. Who then but heat touched these in their flower, whom the desire of human praise made strangers to fruit? Whence also it is well subjoined: And as an olive tree casting off its flower. For the olive tree, when it is in flower, if it is touched by an immoderate mist, is emptied of the fullness of fruits. And as often as any who are beginning good works begin to be praised by beholders, and to be delighted in their own

praises, there is a darkness of understanding in the thought, so that they can no longer discern with what intention they do what they do, and they lose the fruit of the work, as it were from the mist of favor. Whence it is well said by Solomon: Let us rise early to the vineyards, let us see if the vineyard has flourished, if the flowers bring forth fruits (Cant. 7:12). For the vineyards flourish when the minds of the faithful propose good works. But they do not bring forth fruits, if they are weakened by some errors, being overcome from that which they had proposed.

[Vet. XXVII.] 61. In good works the beginning ought not to be attended to, but the end. --- Therefore it is not to be considered if the vineyards flourish, but if the flowers grow strong for the bringing forth of fruits; because it is not a wonder if anyone begins good things, but it is very wonderful if he endures in a good work with a right intention. Whence it happens for the most part that if a right intention is not held in a good work, even this same work which is believed to be good is lost. For often we have seen some leave the earthly things which they had possessed, and no longer seek anything transitory, and be mixed in no strifes for this life. When therefore a faithful soul shows this in itself, it has brought forth as it were the flower of the olive. But when some of such again begin to seek the glory of the world which they had contemned, and insatiably to gape for earthly things which they seemed to have despised, to be at leisure for strifes, to seek out injuries to their neighbors, doubtless the

olive has cast off the flower which it put forth, because it did not lead the rudiments of good study to perfect works. But it is to be known that these things always happen to those who do not follow God with a pure and simple study. Whence it is rightly subjoined: For the congregation of the hypocrite is barren. For it would not lose the good things begun, if it had not been a hypocrite. For hypocrites also congregate good works, but that same congregation of theirs is barren, because through that which they do they do not desire to receive fruit in eternal retribution. They seem fruitful and green in their works to human eyes, but in the sight of the hidden judge they appear unfruitful and dry. But often, kindled with the heat of avarice, they show the greater works of themselves to human eyes, the more they desire more ample gifts to be offered to them by men. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER LIV

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 34. --- And fire shall devour the tabernacles of those who freely receive gifts.

62. It is little not to receive a gift from the hand unless we reject a gift from the mouth. --- For as the body lives in a tabernacle, so the mind dwells in thought. But fire devours the tabernacles when the heat of avarice devastates the thoughts. And it happens for the most part that the hypocrite contemns receiving gold or any bodily goods from men, but because he does not receive these,

he seeks to receive greater praises from them; and perhaps he does not estimate that he has received a gift, because he refuses to receive bodily goods. Whence it is to be known that sometimes a gift is reached out from the hand, but sometimes from the mouth. For he who bestows a coin, has given a gift from the hand; but he who spends a word of praise, has brought forth a gift from the mouth. Therefore the hypocrite, although he refuses to receive external gifts, which perhaps are suitable to earthly necessity, it is more that he desires to be repaid to himself, when, desiring to be praised beyond merit, he seeks a gift from the mouth. And because the heart is kindled with ardor in that very excessive desire of praise, let it be rightly said: And fire shall devour the tabernacles of those who freely receive gifts.

[Vet. XXVIII.] 63. Fire shall devour those delighting in these gifts. --- But if we ought to take their tabernacles as the bodies in which their souls dwell, fire devours their tabernacles, because they who here burn in the mind with the fire of avarice, there also are burned in the flesh by the fires of Gehenna; and because the mind of the hypocrite is never empty of the thought of malice; for whether he desires any earthly things or praise, he envies these to others which he pants for to be bestowed on himself; and he strives so much to show others as perverse, as he desires to seem holier than all, so that from this, that others become despicable, he himself may always appear more reverend. Whence it happens that concerning the opinion of his neighbor before

human judgments, he stretches out the snares of his tongue, that he alone may catch the estimation of those whom he desires to please. Whence also it follows:

CHAPTER LV.

VERSE 35. --- He has conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity, and his womb prepares deceits.

64. He conceives sorrow who thinks perverse things, being about to bring forth iniquity. --- For he conceives sorrow when he thinks perverse things. He brings forth iniquity when he has begun to fulfill what he thought. By envying he conceives sorrow, by detracting he brings forth iniquity. For iniquity is heavy when he who is perverse strives to show others as perverse, so that from this he himself may appear as it were holy, because he has taught that others are not holy. For the light of grace, which comes from above, provides breath for man unto life. Which light indeed is said to search all the secrets of the belly, because it penetrates the hidden things of the mind, so that those things which were hidden from the soul concerning itself, it may bring back before its eyes with weeping. Hence Jeremiah says: I am in pain in my belly, my belly (Jer. 4:19). Who, that he might show what he had called his belly, added: The senses of my heart are troubled. Therefore by the name of the womb the mind is rightly taken, because as offspring is conceived in the womb, so thought is generated in the mind; and as foods in the belly, so thoughts

are contained in the mind. Therefore the womb of the hypocrite prepares deceits, because he always conceives the greater malice against his neighbors in his mind, the more he seeks to seem more innocent than all others alone. Eliphaz brought forth these things for this reason, because he thought blessed Job was struck with so great a blow on account of hypocrisy. But his words, although they are suitable to many, are foreign to him alone for whom alone they were being said, because the holy man had nothing of duplicity in his acts, whom the Truth as witness praised for the simplicity of his heart.

BOOK THIRTEEN.

In which a brief moral and typical exposition of the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters of the book of Job is contained.

CHAPTER I.

1. The saints tolerate by suffering those whom they cannot correct by admonishing. --- This is accustomed to be proper to the perverse, that they cast their own evils upon the good by reproach, before they themselves are truly accused of them; and while they fear to be rebuked for those things which they do, they testify that the just who oppose their depravities do these things. But holy men patiently hear even those things which they do not remember ever to have done, although they know those evils which they see cast upon themselves were perpetrated by those very accusers of theirs; and when they cannot correct them by preaching, they tolerate them by suffering, so that if they are not able to have the fruit of their conversion, they may yet acquire from them the reward of long-suffering. Whence also the holy Church says in the words of the prophet David: Sinners have built upon my back (Ps. 129:3), because indeed while she tolerates heretics or any reprobates whom she

cannot correct, she carries the deeds of sinners upon her back. Therefore blessed Job, seeing his friend Eliphaz complaining many things against him concerning hypocrisy, who had broken out from words of consolation to the bitterness of rebuke, and appeared a feigned comforter, by his patience preserves the type of the Church, which knows how to tolerate such things by hearing, and, when its speech is admitted, to destroy them by reasoning, and says:

CHAPTER II

[Rec II].

CHAP. XVI, VERSE 2. --- I have frequently heard such things.

2. Job is a type of the Church oppressed by feigned friends, who pretend to be comforters. The friends of Job had broken out from consolatory words to rebuking ones. --- For the elect frequently hear the evils of others as if they were their own, and a crime is fastened upon them by those by whom the fastened crimes are perpetrated. Moreover, by this response blessed Job signifies that time of the Church in which, being oppressed by adversaries, she is believed to be as it were cast down by their temporal power. Whence follows: --- IBID. --- Onerous comforters you all are. For whether heretics or any wicked persons, when they behold the good laboring in adversity, in that which they desire to console them, they endeavor to persuade them to evils. Whence not undeservedly their consola-

tion becomes onerous to the minds of the good, because among words of sweetness they desire to administer the poison of error; and while with smooth words they as it were alleviate sorrows, they hasten to impose the burden of sin. But elect men, even when they are deprived of temporal glory, do not lose the vigor of internal judgment. For they know both how to endure adversities without, and yet, unbroken within, to defend right things without fear. Whence is subjoined:

CHAPTER III.

VERSE 3. --- Shall windy words have an end?

3. Sound words are sometimes windy on account of the elation of those by whom they are brought forth. One in mourning is not to be rebuked. --- For windy words are those which serve temporal inflation rather than rectitude. Moreover, often the wicked even say good things; but because they do not say them well, they bring forth windy words. For their sayings, even if sometimes they are sound by their sentence, are yet inflated by elation. [Vet. II.] In this indeed which was said: Onerous comforters you all are, what else are we taught by the mastery of blessed Job, except that each one should know how to weigh solicitously lest he should bring in words of rebuke in a time of mourning? For if there are certain things which ought rightly to be rebuked, they are to be postponed in affliction, lest the comforter by rebuking should increase the sorrow which he had proposed to alleviate. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

IBID. --- Or is anything troublesome to you, if you speak?

4. The just do not return reproaches. --- Wicked men, when they bring forth reproachful words with others like themselves, they are the more quickly silent, the more they soon hear such things of themselves as they say to their hearers. But when they hurl reproachful words at good men, no trouble is born to them from the reproach, because they speak against those who are silent; nor are they compelled to hear what they are, because the just do not return reproaches, even while they are compelled to hear what they are not. Well therefore is it said: Or is anything troublesome to you, if you speak? As if it were openly said to him: You speak the more because you do not hear anything troublesome from me concerning your action. Whence also is subjoined: --- VERSE 4. --- I also could speak things like to you. [Rec III.] The just man relates what he could do; but lest he should desert justice, he declines what he could do. It follows:

CHAPTER V.

VERSES 4-6. --- And oh that your soul were for my soul! I also would comfort you with words, and would move my head over you. I would strengthen you with my mouth, and would move my lips, as if sparing you.

5. Divine scourges ought sometimes to be wished for the wicked. --- Sometimes it is neces-

sary that for depraved minds which cannot be corrected by human preaching, divine scourges should be kindly wished. Which, when it is done with a great study of love, namely, when not the punishment of the erring but correction is sought, is shown to be a prayer rather than a curse. In these words, blessed Job is shown to intend this, that the friends, who knew not how to suffer with him through charity in his grief, might learn from experience how they ought to have pitied the affliction of another; and, being tamed by pains, might draw from their own passion how they should bring consolation to others; and then they would live more healthily within, when they felt something without from infirmity. It is to be noted that he does not say: Oh that my soul were for your soul! but Oh that your soul were for my soul! because he would surely curse himself if he wished himself to become like to them. But he wished better things for them whom he sought to become like to himself. We comfort the wicked when they are set under scourges when we indicate that from the outward smiting, an inward health gains strength in them. [Vet. III.] We move our head also when we bend our mind, which is our principal part, to compassion. And we strengthen them among the scourges when we soothe the force of their grief with mild words. For there are some who, while they know not internal things, are despairingly afflicted by outward evils, of whom it is said by the Psalmist: In miseries they shall not subsist (Psalm 139:11). For he well knows how to subsist

in outward miseries, who knows how to always rejoice in inward hope.

6. Sometimes the Church, as if sparing, does not spare, and as if not sparing, spares the wicked. --- As to the fact that he does not say Sparing, but As if sparing you, I think this should by no means be passed over negligently, because holy Church, keeping the vigor of discipline with a mixture of gentleness, sometimes, as if sparing the wicked, does not spare, and sometimes, as if not sparing, spares. This we show better if we bring forward those things which frequently happen. Let us, therefore, set before the eyes of the mind two wicked men set in holy Church, of whom one is powerful and arrogant, the other mild and subject. If any fault should steal upon the mild and subject one, the preacher immediately follows and corrects this with a rebuke, and by correcting him, he frees him from fault, and reforms him to the way of rectitude. What, therefore, did he do to this man but spare him by not sparing, because while he did not delay the word of correction, he the more quickly freed him from fault? For by rebuking freely he did not spare, but in that which he corrected he spared. But, on the contrary, when a powerful and arrogant man is known to have committed anything, a time is sought that he may be rebuked for the evil he has done. For unless the preacher waits for a time when he can congruously bear correction, he increases in him the evil which he follows. For it often happens that such a one is he who receives no words of rebuke. What, therefore, is to be done by

the preacher in the fault of such a one, except that in the sermon of admonition, which he makes for the common salvation of all his hearers, he should bring to light such faults as he considers him to have committed who is present, and who cannot yet be rebuked concerning himself alone, lest he become worse? And when an invective is directed generally against fault, the word of correction is willingly brought to the mind, because the wicked powerful man does not know that this is said to him specially. What, therefore, did his preacher do to him but not spare him at all while sparing, to whom he both did not bring words of correction specially, and yet smote his wound under a common admonition? Whence it often happens that he laments the committed fault the more vehemently, because he thinks his guilt is not known even while he feels himself smitten.

[Vet. IV.] 7. With what discretion the arrogant are to be rebuked. --- Therefore, it must be done with great art of preaching that they who become worse from open correction should return to salvation by a certain tempering of correction. Whence also Paul says: Those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness; but our comely parts have no need (1 Cor. 12:23). For as the uncomely members in the body, so are some in holy Church, powerful and arrogant, who while they cannot be struck by open invective, are veiled as if by the honor of a covering. But we speak these things concerning the hidden

crimes of the powerful. For when they sin with others also knowing it, they are to be rebuked with others also knowing it, lest if the preacher be silent, he should seem to have approved the fault, and this growing should become an example, which the tongue of the pastor does not cut away. Holy Church, therefore, when through her preachers she rebukes certain deeds of the wicked under the dispensation of invective, moves her lips as if sparing; but yet by sparing she does not spare, because she is not silent generally from the invective of fault, which she is silent upon specially. It follows:

CAPUT VI.

VERS. 7. --- But what shall I do? If I shall speak, my grief will not rest; and if I shall hold my peace, it will not depart from me.

8. The grief of the Church when she sees the wicked corrected in vain. --- No one is ignorant how this fits the person of blessed Job. But if it be drawn to the type of holy Church, she, even when she speaks, her grief by no means rests, when she sees that by her speech the perverse are by no means corrected. And when she is silent, her grief by no means departs, because although she may have become silent in aversion, she groans the more for this very thing that she is silent, because she sees the faults of the perverse grow while she is silent. It follows:

CAPUT VII.

[Rec. IV].

VERS. 8. --- But now my grief has oppressed me, and all my limbs are reduced to nothing.

9. The grief of the Church while she sees the weak drawn away by the examples of the wicked. --- Holy Church is pressed by her grief when she beholds the perverse increase in their malice. And because while the wicked increase, even the weak who are in her are provoked to follow the studies of depravity, it is rightly added: And all my limbs are reduced to nothing. For as the strong are wont to be designated by the bones, so are all the weak by the limbs (artus). The members of the Church, therefore, are reduced to nothing when, from the imitation of the wicked increasing in this world, all the weak are the more weakened. For seeing the happiness of the wicked, they often fall away from the very state of faith, they desire temporal goods, and are reduced as it were to nothing, because while they desert the remaining essence of God, loving transitory things, they tend as it were to non-existence. But it is well said: But now my grief has oppressed me, because forsooth the time of the Church's grief is now, and the time of joy will follow afterward. But it often happens that holy Church not only tolerates infidels and adversaries placed without, but also hardly bears the snares and adversity of those whom she has within. Whence it is aptly subjoined soon by the voice of the blessed man:

CAPUT VIII.

VERS. 9. --- My wrinkles bear witness against me.

10. The wrinkles of the Church are wicked Christians. --- What is designated by wrinkles but duplicity? The wrinkles of holy Church, therefore, are all who live in her with duplicity, who cry out faith with their voices, but deny it with their works. These indeed in time of peace, because they behold the same faith to be an honor to the powers of this world, lie that they are faithful. But when a sudden storm of adversity has disturbed holy Church, they immediately show what they are plotting in their treacherous mind. But holy Church does not have these wrinkles in her elect, because forsooth they know not how to show one thing without, and have another within. Whence the egregious preacher rightly says: That He might present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle (Ephes. 5:27). For she has not spot and wrinkle, who is free both from the foulness of work and from the duplicity of speech. But because now within the bosom of faith she holds many even reprobate, when the time of persecution has flared up, she suffers those very enemies whom she seemed before to nourish with the words of preaching. Let her say therefore that: My wrinkles bear witness against me, that is, they themselves in following me rebuke me, who now, placed in my body, do not conceal the malice of

their own duplicity in themselves. Whence it is well subjoined still:

IBID. --- And a false speaker is raised up against my face, contradicting me.

11. Through the wicked the devil rages. --- Even in the time of her peace holy Church suffers false speaking, while there are many in her who distrust the promise of eternity, and yet lie that they are faithful. Who while they do not presume to contradict her preaching openly, she suffers false speaking not against her face, but as it were behind her back. But when the time of malice has broken out, he who now disparages through fear, comes before her face to contradict, because he opposes the words of true faith with open voices. But it is to be known that when we suffer these things from carnal men, it is not so much they themselves who rage in our death as the malignant spirit who rules their minds, as is said by Paul: For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against princes and powers, against the world-rulers of these darknesses (Ephes. 6:12). Whence when he here also spoke of false speaking, he aptly turned his words soon to describe the prince of that false speaking, saying:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. V].

VERS. 10. --- He has gathered his fury against me, and, threatening me, he gnashed against me with his teeth; my enemy has beheld me with terrible eyes.

12. The devil rages through the wicked, sometimes by hidden, sometimes by open persecution. --- What else are all the iniquitous but members of the devil? He therefore acts through them whatever he instills into their hearts that they ought to do. [Vet. VI]. But even now the devil has fury against holy Church, but his fury is scattered, because he moves hidden temptations through individuals. But when he has broken forth against her in open persecution, he gathers his fury against her, because in her affliction he binds himself with his whole intention. But his members in this time of peace do not have gathered fury against the elect for this reason, because they feel themselves less able to fulfill their malice than they wish. But when they have seen the license of depravity to be available to them, they strike her so much more audaciously, as they are also massed together against her out of unanimity. Rightly therefore is it now said: He has gathered his fury against me. Whose fury, that it may still be set forth more widely, is said: And threatening me, he gnashed against me with his teeth. Concerning which it is also subjoined: My enemy has beheld me with terrible eyes. For that ancient enemy of the Church gnashes with his teeth against her, and beholds her with terrible eyes, because through some he exercises cruelties, and through others he foresees what he may exercise.

13. The teeth of the devil, the persecutors; the eyes, those who rule them by their counsels. --- For the teeth of this enemy are the persecu-

tors and executioners of the good, who tear his members while they afflict his elect with their persecutions. But the eyes of this enemy are those who foresee evils against her which they may do, and by their counsels inflame the cruelties of her persecutors. Her ancient adversary therefore gnashes against her with his teeth, while through cruel reprobates he pursues in her the life of the good. He beholds her with terrible eyes, who by the counsels of the perverse does not cease to seek out evils, in which he may always afflict her more grievously. For just as the incarnate Truth in His preaching chose poor, unlearned (idiotas) and simple men, so on the contrary that damned man, whom the apostate angel shall assume at the end of the world to preach his falsehood, is to choose the crafty and double-minded and those having the knowledge of this world. [Vet. VII]. Whence it is also said by Isaiah: Woe to the land of the cymbal of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, which sends ambassadors in the sea, and in vessels of papyrus upon the waters (Isai. 18:1). For the land to which woe is said is principally that damned man, who is called the cymbal of wings, because those who through pride fly up into the height of thought, sound that same perverse man by preaching. Which land forsooth is rightly held to be beyond the rivers of Ethiopia. For Ethiopia sends forth a black people, and this world, because it brings forth a sinner, brings forth as it were a black people, just as Ethiopia brings forth a people. But the land to which woe is said is held to be beyond the rivers

of Ethiopia, because that damned man is iniquitous with such immensity that he transcends the sins of all who sin. Who sends ambassadors in the sea, because he scatters his preachers into the world (saeculum). Concerning whom it is rightly subjoined how they are sent, when it is said: In vessels of papyrus upon the waters. For from papyrus indeed is paper. What therefore is designated by papyrus but secular knowledge? The vessels of papyrus therefore are the hearts of secular teachers. To send ambassadors in vessels of papyrus upon the waters, therefore, is to place his preaching in the senses of the carnal wise, and to call the peoples flowing down to fault. Those therefore who are there designated by vessels of papyrus, are here designated by eyes, because they see carnally. Concerning whom it is also still subjoined:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 11. --- They have opened their mouths upon me, reproaching.

14. The mouth of the devil, those who preach errors. --- The reprobate open their mouths reproaching when they both fear not to preach the evils of their own error, and deride the preachings of the right faith. Concerning whom it is to be known that they especially persecute those in holy Church whom they perceive to be about to be profitable to many, who bruise the life of carnal men with the word of correction, and spiritually turn them in the body of the Church. Whence also it is subjoined.

CAPUT XII

[Rec. VI].

IBID.---They have struck my cheek, they have been filled with my punishments.

15. The jaw of the Church is the holy preachers.---The jaw of the Church is indeed the holy preachers, as it is said under the species of Judea by Jeremiah: Weeping she hath wept in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks (Lam. 1:2), because in the adversities of the Church they lament more who have known how to break the life of carnal men by preaching. For through them holy Church crushes the wicked from vices, and as it were swallowing them converts them into her own members. Whence also to that first preacher, as if to the jaw of the Church, it is said: Kill and eat (Acts 10:13). [Vet. VIII.] Hence it is also that Samson held the jawbone of an ass, and destroyed the enemies (Judges 15:16), because our Redeemer, holding the simplicity and patience of preachers by the hand of his power, killed carnal men from their vices. And the jawbone cast on the ground afterwards poured out waters, because the bodies of preachers given to death showed great miracles to the people. Perverse men therefore strike the jaw of the Church, when they pursue good preachers. And because then the reprobate think they have done something great when they slay the life of preachers, after the striking of the jaw is aptly subjoined:---IBID.---They have been filled with my punishments.

For that punishment fills them which especially chastises the mind of the Church. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 12. God has shut me up with the iniquitous, and has delivered me into the hands of the impious.

16. The elect permitted to the persecutions of the ancient enemy for a time. --- The people of the elect is shut up with the iniquitous when its flesh is given for a time to the persecutions of the ancient enemy. Who is delivered not to the spirit, but to the hands of the impious, because as much as they cannot capture him in mind, so much more cruelly do they burn against his flesh. But the people of holy Church, when it has begun to suffer adversities heavily, and has beheld its weak ones sliding down to worse things, recalls to mind the times of its peace, when it was feeding its faithful with the opulence of its preaching. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERS. 13. --- I, that once opulent one, have suddenly been bruised.

17. --- To firm minds no adversities come suddenly. --- In that he asserted himself to have been suddenly bruised, he designated the improvident mind of the weak. Who while they know not how to foresee the evils which are about to come, so much more grievous do they become to them as they are also tolerated by them as unex-

pected. But to firm minds adversities do not come suddenly, because they are foreseen before they come. Which however even now holy Church suffers in certain ones sliding backward, who after the opulence of doctrine are sometimes bruised by sudden vices, so that they thus collapse in certain evils, as if they had never had the food of the word. It follows:

CHAPTER XV.

IBID. --- He has held my neck, he has bruised me, he has placed me for himself as it were for a mark (signum).

18. The weak, when persecution is urgent, tremble to preach the truth. --- As in the wicked the neck signifies pride, so in the good it signifies the erection of liberty. Whence sometimes that same pride is put for the authority of erection, as through the prophet the Lord says, promising to holy Church: I will place thee for the pride of ages (Isai. 60:15). And because in time of persecution certain weak ones do not presume to preach freely the true things which they feel, it is rightly said of this enemy: He has held my neck, he has bruised me. [Vet. IX.] But perhaps those are signified by the appellation of the neck who in the time of her peace are raised up more than is becoming, and under the occasion of defending rectitude serve the vice of elation. Who in time of persecution for this reason feel adversities more, because they are extolled from prosperous things. Concerning whom it is well said: He has held my neck, he has bruised me. That is, the

elation which he had in the weak, he bowed down by the strictness of his striking. And he has placed me for himself as it were for a mark. It is certain forsooth that a mark (signum) is placed for this reason, that it may be struck by the emission of arrows. The faithful people therefore is placed for a mark to its enemy, because he always assails it with his blows, and afflicts it with his persecutions. For he who in this life tolerates assiduous evils, placed as if for a mark, receives the blows of the striker. Whence also the egregious preacher, when he was tolerating the evils of persecutions, and was groaning under the persecution of adversaries, consoling the tender mind of the disciples concerning his afflictions, says: For yourselves know that we are placed in this (1 Thess. 3:3). As if he should say to them openly: Why do you wonder at our wounds in this time, who if we seek eternal joys, have come here for this, that we may be struck? It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 14. --- He has surrounded me with his lances, he has pierced my loins, he has not spared, and has poured out my bowels on the earth.

19. The enemy assails us from every part with the darts of temptations. --- These things according to the letter seemed to be able to agree with blessed Job, through that which is said: He has surrounded me with his lances, he has pierced my loins, he has not spared, unless there were subjoined what is read least written concerning him: He has poured out my bowels on the earth.

From which thing it is necessary that while we cannot find this according to the letter, we should seek those things which sound in his words according to history, according to the spirit. Holy Church is surrounded with lances by her enemy when she is assailed in her members by the crafty impugner with the darts of temptations. But we are well said to be surrounded with lances, because the ancient enemy assails us from every part with the wound of his temptation. For often while the throat (gula) is restrained, that lust may be subdued, the prick of vain glory beats the mind. But if the body is not worn down by the affliction of abstinence, the flame of lust excites itself against the mind. Often while we strive to keep parsimony, we slide into tenacity. And often while we give away what we possess profusely, we are led to avarice, because we seek to collect again what we may give. While therefore the darts of the ancient enemy assail us everywhere, it is rightly said: He has surrounded me with his lances. And because every sin indeed the crafty enemy persuades, but we perpetrate it by consenting to his persuasions, it is aptly subjoined: He has pierced (convulneravit) my loins. For in the loins is luxury. Whence also he who desired to extinguish the pleasure of lust from the heart, preached saying: Girded about the loins of your mind (1 Pet. 1:13). When therefore the ancient enemy draws the faithful people to luxury, he undoubtedly strikes it in the loins. Where it is also to be noted that he says not: He has wounded (vulneravit), but He has pierced (convulneravit)

my loins. For as to speak is sometimes of one, but to speak together (colloqui) is of two, or perhaps of many, so the ancient enemy, because he does not snatch us to fault without our will, is said in no wise to wound, but to pierce our loins, because that which he badly suggests to us, we following fulfill from our own will, and as it were we wound ourselves together with him, because we are led to the perpetrating of evil from a free will at the same time. It follows: He has not spared. As if he should say: He did not desist. [Vet. X]. And he has poured out my bowels on the earth. What else ought we to accept as the bowels of holy Church, but the minds of those who contain in themselves certain mysteries of her, who serve at the inward sacraments? But the ancient adversary, when he draws certain faithful, who seemed to serve at the interior sacraments, to secular businesses, undoubtedly pours out her bowels on the earth, because he treads them down in the lowest things who before were hidden in secret and spiritual acts. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERS. 15. --- He has cut me with wound upon wound.

20. That he may cut us with wound upon wound. --- In her weak ones holy Church is cut with wound upon wound when sin is added to sin, that the fault may be more vehemently exaggerated. For whom avarice draws to rapine, and rapine leads to fallacy, so that, the fault having been perpetrated, it is even defended by

falsehood, what is this one but cut by wound upon wound? Whence also it is well said by the prophet: Cursing, and lying, and homicide, and theft, and adultery have overflowed, and blood has touched blood (Hos. 4:2). For sin is wont to be signified by the name of blood. Whence he who desires to be freed from sins cries out through penance: Deliver me from bloods (Psalm 51:14). Blood therefore touches blood when fault has heaped up fault. And because when wound is added to wound the strengths of the ancient enemy more vehemently grow up against us, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

IBID. He has rushed upon me as it were a giant.

21. Those who do not resist, experience him as a giant fighting with them. --- For the enemy is easily resisted if he is not consented to longer, whether in many lapses or in one. But if the soul has been accustomed to be subject to his persuasions, the more frequently it subjects itself to him, the more intolerable it makes him to itself, so that it cannot resist him, because forsooth the malignant adversary fights against this soul, conquered by bad custom, as it were after the manner of a giant. But yet for the most part holy Church even after perpetrated faults recalls the minds of the faithful to penance, and cleanses sins by the virtue of the work of spontaneous affliction. Whence it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 16. --- I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and have covered my flesh with ashes.

22. The Church teaches to cleanse sins by spontaneous affliction. What should be understood in sackcloth and ashes but penance, and what in skin and flesh but the sin of the flesh? When therefore certain ones after a lapse of the flesh return to penance, as it were sackcloth is sewed upon the skin, and the flesh is covered with ashes, because the fault of the flesh is covered by penance, lest in the examination of the strict Judge it should be seen for vengeance. But when holy Church withdraws her weak members from sins, and leads them to the remedy of penance, she undoubtedly aids these with weepings, that they may recover for receiving the grace of their Author, and through the strong she bewails what she did not do, which in her weak members she as it were did herself. Whence it is well subjoined still:

CHAPTER XX

[Old Edition XI, Recent VII].

VERSE 17. --- My face is swollen with weeping.

23. She helps her penitent children with her weepings. Let prelates afflict themselves for the lapses of others as if for their own. For the faces of holy Church are those who, being placed in positions of government, appear foremost, so that from their appearance may be the honor of the faithful people, even if something deformed lies hidden in the body. These prelates indeed bewail

for the peoples the faults of the weak, and so afflict themselves for the lapses of others as if for their own. And often while they see certain ones return to pardon after faults, but others persist in iniquity, they wonder at the hidden judgments of Almighty God, but are unable to penetrate them. For they are amazed at what they do not understand. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI.

IBID. --- And my eyelids have grown dim.

24. Let them direct the ways of their subjects as if with eyes. For those are rightly called eyelids who are vigilant to foresee the journeys of the feet. But when even the vigilant superiors do not understand the hidden judgments of God, the eyelids of holy Church grow dim. But as I remember that I have already often said, blessed Job, holding the type of holy Church, sometimes uses the voice of the body, and sometimes the voice of the head; and while he speaks of its members, he is suddenly raised to the words of the head. Whence here also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII

[Recent VIII].

VERSE 18. --- These things have I suffered without iniquity of my hand, when I had pure prayers to God.

25. Christ alone before all had pure prayers to God. For He bore them without iniquity of His

hand, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth (1 Pet. 2:22, seq.), and yet He endured the pain of the cross for our redemption. Who alone before all had pure prayers to God, because even in the very pain of the passion He prayed for His persecutors, saying: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). For what can be said, what can be thought in prayer more pure than when even to those from whom pain is endured, the mercy of intercession is granted? Whence it came to pass that the blood of our Redeemer, which the raging persecutors had shed, the believers afterwards drank, and proclaimed Him to be the Son of God. Of which blood, indeed, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERSE 19. --- O earth, cover not my blood, and let not my cry find a place of hiding in thee.

26. His blood speaks better than the blood of Abel; for the latter entreats for vengeance, the former for pardon. To the sinning man it was said: Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go (Gen. 3:19). Which earth indeed does not hide the blood of our Redeemer, because every sinner, taking the price of his redemption, confesses and praises it, and makes it known to those neighbors whom he can. The earth also has not covered His blood, because holy Church has already preached the mystery of her redemption in all parts of the world. [Old Edition XII.] It is to be noted what is subjoined: And let not my cry find a place of hiding in thee (Gen. 3:19). For the very blood of

redemption which is received is the cry of our Redeemer. Whence also Paul says: And the sprinkling of blood speaking better than Abel (Heb. 12:24). Concerning the blood of Abel it had been said: The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the earth (Gen. 4:10). But the blood of Jesus speaks better than Abel, because the blood of Abel sought the death of the fratricidal brother, but the blood of the Lord obtained life for His persecutors. That therefore the sacrament of the Lord's passion may not be idle in us, we ought to imitate what we receive, and preach to others what we venerate. For His cry finds a place of hiding in us if the tongue is silent about that which the mind has believed. But lest His cry be hidden in us, it remains that each one, according to his small measure, make known the mystery of his vivification to his neighbors. It is pleasing to lead back the eyes of the mind to the hour of the Lord's passion, when the Jews were raging in persecution, and the disciples were fleeing in fear. For He who seemed to die in the flesh was by no means believed to be God. Whence here it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Recent IX.].

VERSE 20. --- For behold, my witness is in heaven, and my conscious one is on high.

27. When men were ignorant of Christ, He had the Father as witness and conscious one in heaven. For when the Son was being brought

low on earth, He had a witness in heaven. For the witness of the Son is the Father, of whom He Himself says in the Gospel: And the Father who sent me, He hath borne witness of me (John 5:37). Who is also rightly called conscious, because with one will, with one counsel, the Father always works with the Son. Of whom He is also the witness, because no one knoweth the Son but the Father (Matt. 11:27). At that time, therefore, He had a witness in heaven and a conscious one on high, when those who beheld Him dying in the flesh were ignorant how to consider the power of His divinity. And while men were ignorant, yet in death the Mediator of God and men knew that the Father worked with Him. Which perhaps also is able to be referred to the voice of His body. [Old Edition XIII.] For holy Church for this reason tolerates the adversities of the present life, that heavenly grace may lead her to eternal rewards. She despises the death of her flesh, because she looks to the glory of resurrection. And those things which she suffers are transitory, those which she waits for are perpetual. Concerning which perpetual goods, indeed, she has no doubt, because she already holds the glory of her Redeemer as a faithful witness. For she beholds the resurrection of His flesh in her mind, and grows strongly toward hope because, what she sees already done in her Head, she hopes for also in His body, which indeed she herself is without doubt about to follow. Which Church the Psalmist, beholding as one about to remain in perpetual perfection, describes under

the name of the moon, saying: The moon perfect forever (Ps. 88:38). Which, because the Lord's resurrection strengthens for the hope of resurrection, he rightly subjoined: And a faithful witness in heaven, because so that she may not tremble concerning her resurrection, she already has Him in heaven, who rose from the dead, as a witness. Therefore let the faithful people when they suffer adversities, when they are fatigued by hard tribulations, lift up their mind to the hope of following glory, and, trusting in the resurrection of their Redeemer, let them say: For behold, my witness is in heaven, and my conscious one is on high. Who is rightly called conscious, because He knew our nature not only by creating it, but also by assuming it. For His knowing is to have taken our things. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: For He knoweth our frame (Ps. 102:13). For what wonder if He be said specially to know our frame, when it is certain that there is nothing that He does not know? But to know our frame is for Him to have taken this in Himself out of pity.

28. The same witness is to be sought by us. Which voice, however, can also agree with each of us along with blessed Job. For everyone who seeks human praises for that which he does, seeks a witness on earth. But he who hastens to please Almighty God in his acts, considers that he has a witness in heaven. And it often happens that even the good works in us are reproved by incautious men. But he who has a witness in heaven ought not to fear the reproofs of men. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXV

[Old Edition XIV].

VERSE 21. --- My wordy friends, my eye poureth out tears to God.

29. Testimony is not to be sought from men. For what is designated by the eye but the intention of the heart? as it is written: If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome (Matt. 6:22). Because when something is done with a good intention, the action of that intention is not at all darkened before God. When therefore there are wordy friends, that is, when even those who are joined in faith detract, it is necessary that the eye pour out tears to God, so that our whole intention may flow down in the compunction of intimate love, and may lift itself to interior things so much more subtly as it is forced to return within by the repulse of exterior reproaches, lest it vanish without. It follows.

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERSE 22. --- And would that a man might so be judged with God, as the son of man is judged with his colleague!

30. It is uncertain which sin God punishes in us with His scourges. We always acknowledge indeed that we are sinners; but yet often when placed under the scourge, we are ignorant for which sin we are more especially scourged; and we discuss ourselves with a subtle investigation, so that, if in any way we are able, we may prevail

to search out the cause of our percussion. Which while it for the most part remains hidden from us, our blindness becomes a burden to us, and we grieve more for that which we suffer. But whoever comes to judgment with his colleague, both says what he feels, and acknowledges whatever is said in contradiction, and knocks where he wishes, and knows whence he is knocked. But he who is struck by divine animadversion, while he knows indeed that he is being beaten, yet is ignorant why he is beaten, says as it were what he feels, but knows not what is said against him, because he indeed groans under the lash, but God does not openly declare for what vengeance He strikes him. Therefore it is now said: And would that a man might so be judged with God, as the son of man is judged with his colleague! As if it were openly said: As in everything which I say I am heard, so everything which is said concerning me I might hear. Which nevertheless can in no way be done in this life, because great is the interposition to the eyes of our heart for contemplating the subtilty of God, namely our very weakness. But then we shall purely behold Him by whom we are now subtly beheld, when, having laid aside this weakness, we shall have come to the grace of internal contemplation, concerning which Paul says: Then shall I know even as also I am known (1 Cor. 13:12). Whence blessed Job, seeing that the same knowledge can in no way be fully perfected here, groans indeed for the blindness of the present life, but yet consoles himself with its shortness, saying:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERSE 23. --- For behold, short years pass away, and I walk the path by which I shall not return.

31. Its shortness mitigates and soothes the miseries of life. Everything which passes is short, even if it seems to be finished more slowly. But in the path of death, by which we do not return, we walk, not that we are not at all brought back by rising again to the life of the flesh, but that we do not come again to the labors of this mortal life, or to acquiring rewards by labors.

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Old Edition XV, Recent X].

BOOK XVII, VERSE 1. --- My spirit shall be attenuated.

32. The good promise to themselves a short life, but the wicked a long one. The spirit is attenuated by the fear of judgment, because the minds of the elect, by how much more they feel themselves to approach the extreme judgment, by so much more terribly do they tremble for discussing themselves, and if they ever find any carnal thoughts in themselves, they consume them by the ardor of penance, nor do they permit their thoughts to be dilated by carnal pleasure, because they strike themselves so much more subtly by judging, by how much they wait for the strict Judge near at hand. Whence it happens that they always suspect their end to be near. For the

minds of the reprobate for this reason do many things wickedly, because they think they will live here longer. Therefore the spirit of the just is attenuated, but that of the iniquitous grows thick. For in that they swell through elation, in that they have not attenuation of spirit. But the just, while they consider the shortness of their life, avoid the faults of elation and impurity. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID. --- My days shall be shortened, and the grave alone remaineth for me.

33. Hence those ones avoid the faults of elation and impurity, but these ones multiply them. Perfect life is an imitation of death. For he who considers what he will be in death, always becomes timid in operation; and whence in his own eyes he already as it were does not live, thence he truly lives in the eyes of his Maker. He desires nothing that passes away, he contradicts all the desires of the present life; and he considers himself as almost dead, because he is by no means ignorant that he is about to die. For perfect life is an imitation of death, which while the just diligently go through, they escape the snares of faults. Whence it is written: In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin (Ecclus. 7:40). Whence also blessed Job, because he considers his days to be shortened, and thinks that the grave alone remains for him, aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERSE 2.---I have not sinned, and my eye abideth in bitterness.

34. Job was struck not for the correction of fault, but for the increase of grace. As if he were to say openly: I have not committed a fault, and I have received lashes. But in this matter he moves the mind, because in many places of this history he confesses that he has sinned; by what reason then does he now deny that he has sinned? But the reason quickly occurs to these things, because he did not sin so much as to deserve the lashes, and yet he could not be without sin. For that he was struck not for the correction of fault, but for the increase of grace, the Judge Himself testifies, who praises and smites. And again, that he was not without sin, he himself does not deny who is praised by the Judge, and therefore he is praised, because he does not deny it. But I believe that we discuss these words better if we perceive them as spoken from the voice of the Head. For our Redeemer, coming for our redemption, both did not sin and endured bitterness, because He undertook the punishment of our fault without fault; from whose voice is added:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERSE 3.---Deliver me, and set me beside thee, and let any man's hand fight against me.

35. Christ was in bitterness through His passion, He was delivered through His resurrection. For He Himself did not sin in thought or in deed; He Himself abided in bitterness through His passion; He Himself was delivered through

His resurrection; He Himself was set beside the Father through His ascension, because having gone into heaven He sitteth at the right hand of God. And because after the glory of His ascension Judea was stirred up in the persecution of His disciples, it is rightly said now: And let any man's hand fight against me. For then the fury of the persecutors raged in His members; then the flame of cruelty blazed out against the life of the faithful. But where could the wicked go, or what could they do, while He whom they persecuted on earth was already sitting in heaven? Concerning whom is still added:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERSE 4.---Thou hast removed their heart far from discipline.

36. God makes the heart of the wicked to be far from discipline only by permitting it. For if they knew the keeping of discipline, they would by no means despise the precepts of our Redeemer; the very mortality of their flesh would have excited them to the love of immortal life. For this very fact that in this life we are subject to corruption is already of the scourge of discipline. For to be troubled by heat and cold, by hunger and thirst, to be affected by diseases, and sometimes even to be extinguished, what are these but the scourges of sin? But there are some who both tolerate scourges, and yet by no means reform their mind to the fear of Him who scourges. Whence it is rightly said now: Thou hast removed their heart far from discipline. Because although the body

is under discipline, the heart is not under discipline, while each one is both scourged, and yet is not brought back to humility of mind. Nor is this said as if the almighty and merciful God makes the heart of man to be far from discipline, but that He permits it, as it has fallen of its own accord, to remain where it fell by judging it, just as we also say to Him in prayer: And lead us not into temptation (Matth. 6:13); that is, permit us by no means to be led in. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IBID.---Therefore they shall not be exalted.

37. Those expert in discipline are never raised from the lowest things to the heavenly. For if the heart were under discipline, it would desire higher things, and would not gape for acquiring passing goods. Of those, therefore, whose heart is not under discipline, it is rightly said: Therefore they shall not be exalted, because while they, abandoned to the lowest pleasures, always desire earthly goods, they never lift their heart to heavenly joys. For they would be exalted if they raised their mind to the hope of the heavenly country. But they who through discipline do not study to guard their life, always lie at the bottom through desires, and, what is more grievous, in lying down they lift themselves up, because they are extolled by transitory things. For they can be extolled, but they cannot be exalted, because they are deeper in the bottom from the very fact that they become higher in their own eyes. Therefore the heart, which is without discipline, is not able

to be exalted, because the human mind just as when badly lifted up is pressed in the lowest things, so when well pressed is raised to the sublime. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIV.

VERSE 5.---He promiseth prey to his associates, and the eyes of his children shall fail.

38. The devil and the wicked are one body. His associates are the apostate angels; his children, perverse men. After blessed Job brought forth sentence concerning the multitude of the wicked, that is, concerning the body of the ancient enemy, he soon turns the sentence to the very prince of them, that is, the head of all the lost, and returns from the plural number to the singular. For so the devil and all the wicked are one body, that for the most part the body is censured by the name of the head, and the head is called by the name of the body. For the body is censured by the name of the head when it is said of a perverse man: One of you is a devil (John 6:70). And again the head is called by the name of the body when it is said of that apostate angel: An enemy man hath done this (Matth. 13:28). This prince of all the perverse, therefore, has some as associates and others as children. For who are his associates but those apostate angels who fell with him from the seat of the heavenly country? Or what other children has he but perverse men, who are generated from his wicked persuasion in the operation of malice? Whence also by the voice of Truth it is said to the

unfaithful: Ye are of your father the devil (John 8:44).

39. What prey the devil promiseth to his associates. This perverse author of error, therefore, promiseth prey to his associates, because he promiseth to the malignant spirits the souls of the wicked to be snatched at their end. And the eyes of his children shall fail, because while he excites the intentions of men to hope for earthly things alone, he makes them love this which they cannot hold for long. For the intention of a wicked love is not able to remain, when both that which it loves and he who loves are known to fail under speed. Perhaps also by associates may be understood any most cruel ones and those already filled with all malice; but by children those who, still deluded by deceptive promises, are nourished for increasing perversity, so that the devil already has those as it were from the merit of malice as associates who already have no room to grow in perdition, but these as it were as children whom he milks with promises that they may profit to worse things. But the eyes of his children shall fail, because the intentions of the wicked fall when they desert all that they seek here, and there suffer without end that which they may grieve over. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERSE 6.---He hath set me as it were a proverb of the common people: and I am an example before them.

40. The foolish opinion of the common people concerning the scourges of the elect. Let blessed Job say these things from himself, let him say them from the voices of all the elect. For everyone who is struck with a scourge is set as it were for a proverb of the common people, because every foolish person, while he desires to speak evil to anyone, takes the malediction from the likeness of him whom he sees struck temporally, and wishes that punishment to his adversary which he beholds to have happened to the just. And so it happens that the upright is not rightly brought into an example to those who are wise, while the punishment of the just is believed to be damnation, and no glory is foreseen for him by any hope of faith. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSE 7.---My eye hath grown dim through indignation, and my members are reduced as it were to nothing.

41. When the saints are amazed and their eyes grow dim at scourges, the weak sometimes fall away. The eye grows dim through indignation when those also who in the Lord's body, that is, in the Church, have the light of truth, while they behold themselves to be longer despised and disdained by the wicked, are troubled at the wonder of the occult judgment, and are unable to penetrate the secret of God, why the perverse are permitted to prevail against the innocence of the good. For who would not be amazed when Herodias, with a drunken king, obtains by the dancing

of her daughter that the head of the friend of the Bridegroom, a prophet and more than a prophet, should be brought in a dish before the faces of the guests (Mark 6:27)? But when the just grow dim through indignation, the weak for the most part fall away even to unbelief. Whence it is added: And my members are reduced as it were to nothing. For by the name of members is expressed the tenderness of the weak, who while they behold the perverse to flourish and the just to be tortured, sometimes arrive at this, that they repent of having even begun good things; and so they more quickly depart to doing evil things, as if the good which they began had harmed their life. But this which he says: My eye hath grown dim through indignation, he opens with plainer words, adding:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERSE 8. The just shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall be stirred up against the hypocrite.

42. It is for the imperfect to envy the glory of the perverse. In this place the innocent is taken as the just man not yet perfect, who beginning good things as yet, although he knows not how to harm others, yet he himself is by no means able to do perfect things. And because the hearts of the little ones, while they behold the perverse to flourish in the present life, are kindled with the torches of envy; for each one envies the present goods of others so much the more, as he has himself less contemned them. For that which is

not able to be possessed entirely by all at once, is wanting to one which another has had. But the innocent is kindled against the hypocrite, while even he who is wont to harm no one envies the glory of the dissembler. But if in this place any innocent one perfect in good is taken, the innocent is stirred up against the hypocrite when he both beholds him to flourish, and yet contemns him with his flower; and by preaching what things are right, he denounces that he is to be so much more despised by the rest, as he beholds him anxiously to seek those things which may not be able to remain with him for long. In which sense is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VERSE 9.---And the just shall hold his way, and to clean hands he shall add strength.

43. God, who grants temporal goods to the wicked, will not deny eternal ones to the just. For the hypocrite having been considered, the just man holds his way, because while he beholds him from a perverse will to obtain those things which are of the world, he himself is more robustly bound to the love of heavenly things, knowing that for good desires eternal rewards will not be wanting, while even to perverse and double hearts temporal goods are not denied. From which matter also to clean hands he adds strength, because beholding the perverse to obtain earthly glory, he promotes his own good works to perfection; and he so much the more deeply contemns temporal things, as he sees

these to abound even to the wicked. For he considers how much they are to be contemned which almighty God provides even to the perverse. For if they were principally great, the Maker would by no means bestow these on His adversaries. Whence also he weighs it to be unworthy of himself that he should seek those goods which he beholds to abound also to the wicked, but directs his mind to perceiving heavenly things, which are not able to be common to him with the reprobate. Therefore after he brought in the exterior progresses of the wicked, but the interior ones of the good, he brought forth words of exhortation, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VERSE 10.---Therefore turn ye all, and come.

44. We ought to be converted to God by faith, and come by work. Which words of exhortation he properly forms to the elect, whom he calls to eternity. Who are invited in two ways, namely, that they should be converted, and come: let them be converted surely by faith, let them come by work. Or certainly let them be converted by deserting evil things, and come by doing good things, as it is written: Decline from evil, and do good (Psal. 37:27). But it is wonderful what is subjoined:

CHAPTER XL.

IBID.---And I shall not find in you any wise man.

45. Those who are wise in their own conceit cannot reach true wisdom. For what is it that he calls them to wisdom, and yet desires that he may not find them wise, except that they cannot come to true wisdom who are deceived by the confidence of their own false wisdom? Of whom it is written: Woe unto you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight (Isai. 5:21). And to whom again it is said: Be not wise in your own conceits (Rom. 12:16). Whence the same eminent preacher sought that those whom he had found carnally wise should first become fools, that they might perceive true wisdom, saying: If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise (1 Cor. 3:18). And Truth says by Himself: I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes (Matth. 11:25). Because, therefore, they who are wise in their own conceit cannot reach true wisdom, rightly blessed Job, desiring the conversion of his hearers, wishes that he may not find any wise man among them. As if he should say to them openly: Learn to be fools in your own conceits, that you may be able to be truly wise in God. It follows:

CHAPTER XLI

[Vet. XX, Rec. XV].

VERSE 11.---My days have passed, my thoughts are dissipated, tormenting my heart.

46. The days of the Church are prosperity, its nights adversity. The Saints, when forced to dispense earthly things, feel themselves tormented. The holy Church of the elect beholds the spaces of her life pass away through times of day and night, because she has been accustomed to have night in adversities, but day in prosperities. For as it were light arises to her from the tranquility of peace, and night from the pain of persecution. But when after the leisure of rest she returns to the labor of persecution increasing against her, she witnesses that her days have passed. In which days, however, she is wont to be pressed by so much the heavier cares, as she thinks that more subtle accounts are sought from her by the Judge concerning that very tranquility of peace. For in the tranquility of peace at one time she thinks of the gains of souls, at another she cares for the dispensations of earthly things. Which dispensations of earthly acts are so much the heavier to good minds, as by the sight of them they are plucked away, even for a little while, from beholding heavenly things. Whence well blessed Job, whether in his own voice or in that of the universal Church, after he witnesses that his days have passed, immediately subjoined: My thoughts are dissipated, tormenting my heart. Because while temporal happiness passes from good minds, even the care of earthly dispensation is withdrawn from them, which seemed to torment them in their thoughts. For while they desire to be always uplifted to perceive heavenly things, by that very fact that they sometimes de-

scend from earthly dispensation to think on the lowest things, they feel themselves tormented. Whence it comes to pass that even the very adversity of persecution is turned into a great exultation of joy, on account of the rest of heart attained. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERSE 12.---They have turned night into day.

47. The Saints prefer to endure evils, rather than be fatigued with the care of goods. For dissipated thoughts turn night into day, because sometimes it pleases the just more to endure evils from adversity than to be fatigued with the care of earthly dispensation from prosperity. But because they have known more cautiously that both adversities pass away, and prosperities shine forth again, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIII.

IBID.---And again after darkness I hope for light.

48. The Saints are gifted with heavenly rewards immediately after death. For light is hoped for after darkness, because either after the night of the present life the eternal light is perceived, or adversity and prosperity alternate here in such a way that they do not cease to succeed each other in turn. Whence it comes to pass that even in light night is in suspicion, and in night light is in expectation, as it is written: In the day of prosperity be not unmindful of adversity, and

in the day of adversity be not unmindful of prosperity (Eccl. 11:27). But behold, because we have been redeemed by the grace of our Author, we have now this heavenly gift, that when we are withdrawn from the habitation of our flesh, we are soon led to heavenly rewards; because while our Creator and Redeemer, penetrating the bars of hell, led out the souls of the elect from thence, He does not permit us to go thither, whence He has already liberated others by descending. But they who came into this world before His advent, however much virtue of righteousness they might have, could in no wise be received immediately in the bosom of the heavenly country when led out from their bodies, because He had not yet come who should loose the bars of hell by His descent, and place the souls of the righteous in their perpetual seat. Whence blessed Job, both feeling affliction, and knowing that the retribution of the righteous was still deferred, aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER XLIV

[Vet. XXI, Rec. XVI].

VERSE 13.---If I wait, hell is my house, and I have made my bed in darkness.

49. Before Christ the souls of the righteous were kept in hell free from torments. For the former saints could both endure adversities, and yet, when led out from their bodies, they could not as yet be delivered from the places of hell, because He had not yet come who should descend thither without fault, that He might deliver from

fault those who were kept there. But then man made his bed in darkness, when he deserted the light of righteousness by consenting to the crafty persuader. And because in those very places of hell also the souls of the righteous were kept without torment, so that for original sin they still descended thither, and yet from their own acts they had no punishment, it is as if to have made one's bed in darkness is to have prepared rest for oneself in hell. For it was a grave weariness to the elect after the dissolution of the flesh still not to see the face of the Creator. Which weariness blessed Job not undeservedly calls darkness. But because this comes from the penalty of infirmity, he rightly subjoins that same infirmity immediately, saying:

CHAPTER XLV

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 14.---I said to rottenness: Thou art my father; to the worms: My mother and my sister.

50. From a corrupted origin we draw the worms of concupiscence and of cares. What is this that he said to rottenness: Thou art my father, except that every man descends from an origin already corrupted? Whence also it is added: My mother and my sister, to the worms, because namely both from that very rottenness and with it we come into this world. For as far as regards the matter of the corruptible flesh, our mother and sister are the worms, because both we have proceeded from rottenness, and

we come with the rottenness which we carry. But if it can be understood spiritually, nature is called mother, and habit not undeservedly sister, because from the former we are with the latter. Which mother and sister namely are worms, because by a corruptible nature and a perverse habit we are forced to be fatigued in mind with restless thoughts, as with certain worms. For the corrupted nature of the flesh and perverse habit, because they generate innumerable cares in the heart of our infirmity, are well called mother and sister worms. For cares bite the mind, while they disquiet it. For righteous men do not cease either anxiously to think and treat what they should do, or providently to inspect whither they are to be led after the present life. Because, therefore, the elect then before the advent of the Lord saw themselves to be in the labor of the present life, and yet after the present life not yet to perceive heavenly goods, they were burned with many thoughts. For they were waiting for the grace of their Redeemer, and yet they could not reach it while living in the flesh. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVI.

VERSE 15.---Where then is now my expectation?

51. In so many evils of the righteous, Christ is the only hope. What could be the expectation of the righteous, except God justifying the righteous, who should of His own accord descend to the penalties of the human race, and by the

power of His righteousness deliver the captives of death? For they did not cease with intent thought to expect His presence: they knew that it would come, but they sought that it should come more quickly. Whence he says not: Where then is my expectation? but he says: Where then is now my expectation? [Vet. XXII.] For while he adds now, he shows that he desired that which was to come at some time, to come more quickly. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVII.

IBID.---And who considers my patience?

52. Sought for by them with ardent desires. He expressed the desire with which he hastens, being placed in the flesh, to be redeemed and to be recalled from the lower parts to the highest. And indeed it belonged to few men to weigh these things, so as to know how to think of the labors of the present life or of the subsequent delay after death. Both of which the righteous grieved that they suffered before the advent of our Redeemer. Whence also it is rightly said: And who considers my patience? Indeed there is not wanting One to consider his patience; but when He does not hear more quickly, God is said as it were to consider less. For that redemption of the human race which came at the end of the world was believed late by those who preceded from the beginning of the world, because they were separated for a long space of time from heavenly remuneration, Truth witnessing, who says: Many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them (Luke 10:24). Therefore,

what is now said: Who considers my patience? the vows of ardent desire are opened. For neither, as we have said before, does God not consider the patience of the righteous, but He is said as it were not to consider it by appearing less quickly to the vow of desire, and by deferring the grace of His dispensation through longer times. Let him say then: Who considers my patience? because what is short to Him who disposes, is long to him who loves. Whence considering still the losses of his delay, he repeats what he had already said before, and, being about to descend to the lowest parts, he redoubles the voice of sorrow, saying:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERSE 16.---All my things shall descend into the deepest hell.

53. What is the deepest hell, and let their receptacles be told. Since it is certain that among those in hell the righteous were kept not in penal places, but in a superior bosom of rest, a great question arises to us, what it is that blessed Job asserts, saying: All my things shall descend into the deepest hell. Who, even if he were to descend into hell before the advent of the Mediator of God and men, yet it is clear that he was not to descend into the deepest hell. Or does he call those same superior places of hell the deepest hell? Because, namely, as to the height of heaven, the space of this air may already not undeservedly be called hell. Whence, when the apostate angels were plunged from heavenly seats into this dark air, Peter the Apostle says: God spared not the angels

that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment (2 Pet. 2:4). If therefore, as to the height of heaven, this dark air is hell, as to the altitude of the same air, the earth which lies lower may be understood as both hell and deep; but as to the altitude of the same earth, those places of hell also which are superior to other receptacles of hell, are in this place not incongruously marked by the name of the deepest hell, because what the air is to heaven, the earth to the air, this that superior bosom of hell is to the earth.

[Vet. XXIII.] 54. Job feels that the soul alone is the whole man. But it is very wonderful what he subjoins: All my things shall descend. For since the soul alone was about to descend to the places of hell, why is it that the holy man asserts that all his things descend thither, except that he saw himself to be whole there, where he understands the weight of his remuneration? Because that which he leaves of himself insensible on earth, until it returns to the incorruption of the resurrection, he does not feel to be himself. He asserts therefore that all his things are to descend into the deepest hell, whither he sees his soul alone is to descend, because there he is whole, where he can feel what he has received. Or certainly all his things descend into hell, because the retribution of all his labors was still expected to be received in the rest of hell alone. And as it were all that he did descended thither, because there he found the rest of his retribution from all things. Whence

also that same expected rest is subjoined, when it is immediately added:

CHAPTER XLIX.

IBID.---Thinkest thou that there will at least be rest for me there?

55. While Job trembles for his salvation, let no one be secure. In which words namely it is both made known what he desires, and yet he designates himself as still doubtful about receiving rest, lest to him whose holy works so many scourges have followed, by the hidden judgment of the supreme Judge, after temporal scourges permanent torments should also follow. In which matter we must consider with great fear who of us is now secure of eternal rest, if he still trembles for it whose praises of virtue the very Judge who strikes proclaims: For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Pet. 4:18). For blessed Job knew that he would reach rest after the scourges; but that he might shake our hearts with fear, he himself seemed to doubt about the retribution of eternal rest when he says: Thinkest thou? that we namely might weigh with how much dread we ought always to fear the coming judgment, when even he who was praised by the Judge is not yet secure in his own words about the retribution of judgment.

BOOK FOURTEENTH

, In which Saint Gregory opens the historical, allegorical, and moral sense of the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of the book of Job.

CHAPTER I.

1. Recapitulation of what was said above.--- In the former part of this work (Especially in the Preface, ch. 2) we treated how almighty God, in order to correct the minds of those placed under the Law, brought forward the life of blessed Job as a testimony, who knew not the Law, and yet kept it, who guarded the precepts of life which he had not received in writing. His action is first praised with God as witness, and afterwards permitted to be proved by the devil's lying in wait, so that through the trials of tribulation he might show how much he had previously profited in tranquility. The enemy of the human race, wicked after his custom, both knew that his life was praised with God as witness, and yet sought it for testing. When he could not overthrow him, struck with so many losses of things, so many bereavements, he excited his wife against him as a sting of evil persuasion, so that at least through familiar words he might corrupt him whom he was by no means able to overthrow through so many torments of messengers. But when with the help of the woman, which he previously obtained against Adam in paradise, he was not able to be strengthened against this second man placed on the dunghill, he turned himself to other arguments of testing, so as to bring forward his friends as if consoling him, and yet to excite

their minds to the harshness of rebuking; so that him, whose patience the scourges had not conquered, at least harsh words among the scourges might overcome. But the enemy craftily lying in wait endured the fraud which he had prepared against the holy man, because as many occasions of perdition as he brought upon the holy man, so many causes of victory he ministered. For against torments he held patience, against words wisdom, because he both sustained the pains of stripes with equanimity, and wisely restrained the folly of those evilly persuading. But because in those very passions and learned speeches he holds the type of holy Church, while his friends, as we have already often said, speak some right things and some foolish, they are not undeservedly figured as heretics, who because they are friends to the holy man, say many right things about the reprobate; but because they hold the likeness of heretics, they frequently slip in the excess of their mouth, and strike the breast of the holy man with the darts of their words, but are fatigued by their very striking against an unconquerable mind. We therefore ought to distinguish with subtle discretion, both what it is in their words that they truly feel about the reprobate, and what it is that sounds foolish against blessed Job.

CHAPTER II.

CHAP. XVIII. VERS. 1, 2.---Then Bildad the Shuhite (Suhites) answered and said: How long

will you toss words? Understand first, and so let us speak.

2. Heretics accuse the Church of pride and ignorance.---All heretics think that the holy Church is proud in some known things, but suspect that she does not even understand some things. Wherefore Bildad the Shuhite (Suhites) charges blessed Job with having broken out into pride, whom he confesses to be tossing words. But he marks how much elation he himself had swelled with, who thought that blessed Job spoke what he did not understand. And because all heretics complain that they are despised by the holy Church in their own estimation, it is aptly added:

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 3.---Why are we counted as beasts (jumenta), and reputed vile before thee?

3. Suspicions and reproaches of heretics against the Church.---It is proper to the human mind to suspect that what it does is being done to itself. For they think they are despised, who have been accustomed to despise the ways of the good. And because the Church shows in those things which can be comprehended by reason against heretics that what they assert is not reasonable, they suspect themselves to be estimated by her judgment like beasts (jumenta). From which suspicion of their own contempt they immediately leap to indignation, and are excited to reproaches of the same Church. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 4.---Why dost thou lose thy soul in thy fury (furore)?

4. Heretics call the zeal of the Church fury and madness.---Heretics estimate either the zeal of rectitude or the spiritual grace of holy preaching as not the weight of virtue, but the madness of fury (furore). By which fury namely they think the souls of the faithful perish because they believe the life of the Church perishes therefrom, whence they behold it glowing against them. It follows:

CHAPTER V.

IBID.---Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?

5. God is not truly worshipped outside the true Church.---For they think that they themselves worship God everywhere, and that they have occupied the whole world. What is it therefore to say: Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? unless that which they often say to the faithful, because if that is true which you say, all the earth is forsaken by God, which we already hold by reason of our multitude; but the holy universal Church preaches that God cannot be truly worshipped except within her, asserting that all who are outside of her shall by no means be saved. But on the contrary, the heretics, who trust that they can be saved even outside of her, profess that the divine help is present to them in any place. Whence they say: Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? that is,

so that whoever shall be outside thee shall by no means be saved? Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER VI.

IBID.---And the rocks (rupes) shall be transferred from their place.

6. Heretics call their teachers rocks.---Heretics call those rocks (rupes) whom they estimate to exceed the human race in sublime senses, whom indeed they glory to have as teachers. But when the holy Church studies to gather all perverse preachers within the bosom of the right faith, what else does she do than move rocks from their own places, so that they may lie humbly within her, feeling rightly, who previously stood rigid in their own perverse senses? But the heretics altogether contradict this being done, and because of her voice they resist rocks being transferred from their own place, because namely they do not wish that those who were foolishly wise in false things, being elated in their senses among them, should feel true things humbly on coming to her.

7. They rage against the Church because of the scourges she suffers.---But very often heretics, when they behold some within the holy Church laboring either in want or under scourges, immediately extol themselves into the arrogance of justice; and whatever they consider to have happened against the faithful, they think this was done for their iniquities, being namely ignorant that the quality of the present life by no means proves the merit of actions. For very often both good things happen to the evil, and evil things

to the good, for the reason that both true good things are kept for the good, and true evil things for the evil in the eternal retribution. Bildad therefore holding the type of heretics extolling themselves because of the prosperity of the present life, is puffed up against the scourges of blessed Job as if from their voice against the reproaches of the just, and indeed disputes eloquently against the ungodly; but how perversely he says such things against the just he knows not, for he added, saying:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 5.---Shall not the light of the ungodly be extinguished, nor the flame of his fire shine?

8. Evil things often happen to the good, and good things to the evil in life.---If he denounces these things in the definition of the present life, he is deceived; because very often the light of prosperity is seen to be in the ungodly, and the darkness of ignobility and poverty hides the godly. But if indeed his speech is directed to this, that he may show what the ungodly suffer in their end, it is truly said: Shall not the light of the ungodly be extinguished, nor the flame of his fire shine? Which if it could be said rightly of the ungodly, yet it ought not to have been said against the holy man set in scourges. But we, weighing the strength of his arms in his sentences, let us consider how strongly he hurls the darts, and let us cease to look at whom he attacks in hurling them, namely knowing that with frustrated blows he strikes a stone. Let him

say therefore: Shall not the light of the ungodly be extinguished? Because the ungodly also have their light, namely the prosperity of the present life. But the light of the ungodly shall be extinguished; because the prosperity of a fugitive life is terminated more quickly with the life itself. Whence it is aptly added: Nor shall the flame of his fire shine?

9. The evil mostly obtain what they seek, to the accumulation of their perdition.---For every ungodly man has the flame of his own fire, which he kindles in his heart from the fervor of temporal desires, while at one time he glows with these, at another time with those lusts, and inflames his thoughts more through the manifold allurements of the world. But if fire has no flame, it by no means shines with shed light. The flame therefore of his fire is the outward beauty (decor) or power, which proceeds from his inward heat, because what he anxiously desires to obtain in this world, he mostly obtains to the accumulation of his perdition, and whether in the power of height or in the riches of multiplication, he shines as if by outward glory. But the flame of his fire shall not shine; when on the day of departure all outward beauty is withdrawn, and he is burned by his own inward heat alone. The flame therefore is withdrawn from the fire when outward glory is separated from his inward heat. The just also have the flame of their fire, but namely that which may shine, because namely their desires shine in good works. But the flame of the iniquitous by no means shines, because by this that

they seek evil things, they are drawn forth to darkness. Whence also it follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 6.---Light shall become dark in his tabernacle.

10. The joy of the iniquitous quickly fails. Above them is joy; of the just, within.---If we very often take darkness for sadness, we ought not undeservedly to take light for joy. Light therefore in his tabernacle becomes dark, because in his conscience, which he evilly inhabits, the joy which had been from temporal things fails. Whence also it is aptly added:

IBID.---And the lamp (lucerna) which is over him shall be extinguished.

To speak as of the use of many, a lamp (lucerna) is light in a shell (testa), but light in a shell is joy in the flesh. The lamp therefore which is over him is extinguished, because when the retribution of his evils follows the ungodly, carnal joy is dissipated in his mind. But well it is not said of this lamp which is with him, but which is over him, because earthly joys possess the mind of the iniquitous, and so absorb it in pleasures, that they are over it, not with it. But the just, even when they have the prosperity of the present life, know how to press it under themselves, so that this which they rejoice at in good things with themselves, they may pass over by the counsel of gravity, and exceed by the governance of virtue. The lamp therefore of the ungodly which is over him is extinguished, because his joy more quickly

fails, which possessed him entirely in this life. And he who now evilly expands himself in pleasures, afterwards the penalty narrows him in punishments. Whence it is still added:

CHAPTER IX.

VERS. 7.---The steps of his strength (virtutis) shall be straitened.

11. Those who now wander in delights, shall be narrowed in punishments.---For now he as it were exerts the steps of his strength (virtutis) as often as he exercises the violences of his power. But the steps of his strength (virtutis) shall be straitened, because the powers of his malice, which he now exhibits in his pleasure, afterwards the penalty constrains. It follows:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. V].

IBID.---And his own counsel shall cast him down headlong.

12. Every wicked man falls headlong by his own counsel.---Every unjust man now has his own counsel: to desire present things, to desert eternal ones, to do unjust things, to deride just ones; but when the judge of the just and unjust shall come, every wicked man is cast down by his own counsel, because by that which he chose to desire here with depraved thoughts, he is plunged into the darkness of eternal punishment. For him whom temporal glory here extols,

there penalty without end oppresses. He who here rejoiced in pleasure, there is tortured with perpetual vengeance (ultione). And it happens for the most part that this very prosperity of this world, which is greedily desired by the wicked, so binds their steps, that even when they wish to return to good works, they are scarcely able, because they have no power to act rightly since they fear to displease the lovers of this world. Whence it comes to pass that through the glory which the wicked man attains from sin, his sins are yet more abundantly multiplied, which Bildad well expresses when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. VI].

VERS. 8.---For he has thrust his foot into a net, and he walks in its meshes.

13. When the sinner strives to be disentangled from the snares of sin, he knows with how hard bonds he is held, especially at the end of life. --- He who puts his feet into a net, does not cast them out when he will, so he who casts himself into sins does not rise as soon as he will; and he who walks in the meshes (maculis) of a net, entangles his steps by walking, and when he strives to disentangle himself for walking, he is bound so that he cannot walk. For it often happens that anyone, persuaded by the delight of this world, reaches in it to the glory of honor, so as to arrive at the effect of his desires, and rejoices that he has arrived at that which he sought. But because the goods of

the world are in love when not possessed, and for the most part become vile when possessed, by perceiving he learns how vile is that which he sought. Whence recalled to his mind he seeks how he may flee without fault, that which he beholds himself to have obtained with fault; but the very dignity which has entangled him holds him, and he has no power to flee without other faults from this place where he arrived not without fault. He has therefore thrust his feet into a net, and he walks in its meshes, because when he strives to be disentangled, then he truly beholds with how hard bonds he is held. For we do not truly know our obligation, except when striving to escape, we as it were endeavor to lift our feet. Whence also he opens this same obligation, subjoining:

VERS. 9.---His sole (planta) shall be held by a snare.

[Vet. V.] Because, forsooth, the end (finis) shall be tightened in sin. And because the enemy of the human race, when he binds the life of each one in fault, anxiously pants for his death, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

IBID.---And thirst shall burn against him.

14. When he experiences himself to be bound, the sinner burns more sharply with concupiscence. ---For our ancient enemy, when he ensnares a life in sin, thirsts to drink the death of the sinner. Which, however, can also be understood in another way. For the perverse mind, when it

beholds that it has come into sin, seeks to escape the snares of sin by some surface of thought; but fearing either terrors or the reproaches of men, it chooses to die forever, rather than to suffer some adversity for a time. Whence it gives itself up entirely to the vices by which it feels itself already once bound. He whose life, therefore, is constrained in fault even unto the end, his sole (planta) is held by a snare. But because the more he considers himself bound by evils, the more he despairs of his return, by that very despair he now burns more sharply towards the concupiscences of this world; a fervor of desires is produced in the mind, and the soul, entangled by preceding sins, is kindled even to greater offences. Whence also it is added: And thirst shall burn against him. For in his soul thirst burns against him, because the more he has been accustomed to do perverse things, the more vehemently is he kindled to drink down evils. For to the wicked man to thirst is to covet the goods of this world. Whence also our Redeemer heals a hydropic man before the house of a Pharisee, and when he was disputing against avarice, it is written: Now the Pharisees, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him (Luke 14:12; 16:4). What is it, then, that a hydropic man is healed before the house of a Pharisee, except that by the sickness of the body in one, the sickness of the heart is expressed in another? For the more a hydropic man drinks, the more he thirsts; and every covetous man multiplies his thirst from drinking, because when he has obtained those things which he de-

sired, he pants more abundantly to desire other things. For he who by obtaining desires more, his thirst increases from drinking. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII

[Vet. VI, Rec. VII].

VERS. 10.---His snare (pedica) is hidden in the earth, and his trap (decipula) upon the path.

15. How great is the craftiness of the devil in deceiving. Qualities of manners akin to certain vices. ---A snare is hidden in the earth when fault is concealed under earthly advantages. For the ensnaring enemy shows to the human mind in earthly lucre what it may desire, and conceals the snare of sin, that he may bind its soul, so that it may indeed see what it is able to covet, and yet by no means see in what snare of fault it is placing its foot. But a trap (decipula) is so called from deceiving (decipiendo). And then a trap is placed upon the path by the ancient enemy, when in the action of this world, which the mind desires, the snare of sin is prepared; which, forsooth, would not easily deceive, if it could have been seen. For a trap is so placed, that while the bait (esca) is shown, the trap itself is by no means seen by the one passing by. For as it were a bait in a snare is lucre with fault, and the prosperity of this world with iniquity. While therefore lucre is desired by the covetous man, the trap which is not seen catches as it were the foot of the mind. Therefore honors, riches, health, and temporal life are often proposed to the soul with fault; which things

while the weak mind sees as a bait, and sees not the trap, through the bait which seeing it desires, it is constrained in the fault which is not seen. For there exist qualities of manners, which are near to certain vices. For rough manners are wont to be joined either to cruelty or to pride; but mild manners, and such as are a little more cheerful than is becoming, sometimes to luxury and dissolution. The enemy of the human race therefore considers the manners of each one, to what vice they are near, and sets those things before his face to which he knows the mind is more easily inclined, so that to mild and cheerful manners he may often propose luxury, sometimes vain glory; but to rough minds, anger, pride, or cruelty. There therefore he places a trap, where he beholds the path of the mind to be, because there he inserts the danger of deception, where he has found the way of a neighboring thought. And because the perverse man fears also to suffer everything that he does, and judges that to be done to himself by all which he himself prepares for all over whom he has power, it rightly follows:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERS. 11.---Terrors shall frighten him on every side.

16. The sinner, drawn by depraved desires to evil action, is entangled by fear. ---For he suspects all to be such against himself, as he himself strives to be against all. And what these terrors do in his action, is subjoined when it is said:

IBID.---And shall entangle (involvent) his feet.

[Vet. VII.] For if the feet are entangled, they cannot have free steps, and they have no power to pursue any journey, because their entanglements hold them. Depraved desires therefore draw to the worst action, but the worst action restrains in fear. Which fear, forsooth, entangles the feet, so that they have no power to go out into right action. And it often happens that for this reason anyone fears to be good, lest he himself should suffer that from the wicked which he remembers himself to have done to the good; and while he fears to suffer what he did, terrified on every side, suspected on every side, he as it were has his feet entangled, who being caught in fear, has no power to do anything freely, because in good work he has as it were lost his step from that point, whence he exceeded towards the evils which he had coveted. It follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 12.---Let his strength (robur) be weakened with famine, and let hunger (inedia) invade his ribs.

17. The unjust man wastes away with famine, because he is fed with no refreshment of internal food. ---After the manner of Holy Scripture, he seems to wish for that which he foresees will be, namely, not with the mind of one cursing, but of one predicting. Every man therefore, because he consists of soul and flesh, is as it were composed of strength (robore) and weakness. For in that

part in which the rational spirit is created, he is not inappropriately called strong (robustus); but in that in which he is carnal, he is weak. The strength of man therefore is the rational soul, which has power to resist assailing vices by reason. Whence also it was said above through blessed Job: Thou hast strengthened him a little, that he might pass away forever (Job 14:20). For from the rational soul man has it that he lives forever. The strength therefore of this unjust man is weakened with famine, because his soul is fed with no refreshment of internal food. Of which famine indeed God speaks through the prophet: I will send a famine into the land, not a famine of bread nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord (Amos 8:11).

18. Hence the senses of the mind fail.---But it is well added: And let hunger (inedia) invade his ribs. For the ribs (costae) constrain the bowels, so that the things lying hidden within may be protected by their solidity. The ribs therefore of each one are the senses of the mind, which protect the latent thoughts. Hunger therefore invades the ribs, when, all spiritual refreshment being withdrawn, the senses of the mind fail, and they cannot rule or protect their own thoughts. Hunger invades the ribs of the unjust man, because internal famine attenuates the senses of the mind, so that they by no means rule their thoughts. For while the senses of the mind have been blunted, the thoughts go forth to external things, and, as if the ribs were weakening, those bowels which could have remained sound in secret are poured

out abroad. Whence it comes to pass that, the thoughts being scattered externally, the deceived soul desires the appearance of external glory, and loves nothing except what it sees to be beautiful without. Against whom it is yet aptly subjoined:

CAPUT XVI

[Vet. et Rec. VIII].

VERS. 13.---Let it devour the beauty of his skin, and let first-born death consume his arms.

19. First-born death is pride, which rich men can scarcely avoid.---The beauty of the skin is temporal glory, which while it is desired without, is retained as a species in the skin. But by the name of arms works are not incongruously designated, because corporal work is done with arms. But what is death but sin, which kills the soul from the interior life? whence it is written: Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection (Apoc. 20:6), because he shall afterwards rise happily in the flesh, who, placed in this life, shall have risen from the death of his mind. If therefore sin is death, first-born death may not incongruously be understood as pride, because it is written: The beginning of all sin is pride (Ecclus. 10:15). First-born death therefore devours the beauty of his skin and his arms, because pride supplants the glory or the operation of the wicked. For he could also have existed in this life glorious without fault, if he had not been proud; he could have been commended by the judgment of his author for some of his works, unless elation

supplanted these very works before his eyes. For we often see certain rich men, who could have had riches and glory without fault, if they had wished to have these things with humility. But they are extolled by things, they are puffed up by honors, they disdain others, and they place all the confidence of their life in that very abundance of things. Whence also a certain rich man said: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; rest, eat, drink, make merry (Luke 12:19). Which thoughts of theirs while the supreme Judge beholds, he plucks them out of this very confidence of theirs. Whence here also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVII

[Rec. IX].

VERS. 14.---Let his confidence be plucked from his tabernacle, and let destruction (interitus) tread upon him as a king.

20. Those whom the devil deceives with mild persuasions, he hurries away to punishment with violent bonds. ---In this place by the name of destruction (interitus) the enemy of the human race himself, who brought in destruction, is designated; who is expressed through a certain attendant of his, of whom it is said to John: His name was Death (Rev 6:8). This destruction, therefore, in the day of departure treads upon the wicked man as a king, because him whom before he deceived with mild persuasions, at the last he hurries away to punishment with violent bonds, and he oppresses him the more harshly, the more

vehemently he binds him in depraved acts. Who here also treads upon the mind of the reprobate while he possesses it, because as often as he has pressed it with delights, so often as it were has he placed the feet of his tyrannical domination upon it.

[Vet. IX.] 21. We cannot escape the temptation of sin, but we can escape its dominion. ---But if by the name of destruction, not the devil openly, but sin ought to be understood, from which it happens that the reprobate are drawn to destruction, such destruction forsooth treads upon the mind as a king, when it possesses it not resisting. For temptation of sin cannot be wanting to man placed in this life, but it is one thing to resist sin tempting, another to serve it reigning. But every unjust man, because he knows not how to resist the persuasions of sin, and fears not to be subjected to its dominion, it is rightly said of him: Let destruction tread upon him as a king. For the Apostle was repelling the kingdom of this destruction from the hearts of the disciples when he said: Let not sin reign in your mortal body (Rom 6:12). For he did not say: Let it not be, but Let it not reign, because it cannot but be, but it cannot reign in the hearts of the good. Because therefore when any fault whatever shall have knocked at the heart of the unjust man, it finds it not resisting, but subjects it to its own dominion, let it be rightly said: Let his confidence be plucked from his tabernacle, and let destruction tread upon him as a king. His confidence therefore is plucked from the earth, when every perverse

man, who had prepared many things for himself according to his wish in this life, is dissipated by sudden death. And destruction treads upon him as a king, because he is either here pressed by vices, or at the time of his death he is subjected to demoniacal power by this that he is hurried away to punishments. Which is therefore so done in the minds of the reprobate, because even when the occasion of perpetrating sin is wanting, the thoughts of desires are by no means wanting to their hearts. And although they always follow the devil in work, yet they bind themselves greatly to him in thought. First therefore fault is in thought, and afterwards in work. Whence it is said to the daughter of Babylon: Come down into the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground (Isa 47:1). For though dust is always ground (terra), yet the ground is not always dust. What therefore ought we to understand by dust except thoughts, which while they fly about importunately and silently in the mind, blind its eyes? And what is designated by the ground (terra) except earthly action? And because the mind of the reprobate is first cast down to thinking perverse things, and afterwards to doing them, it is rightly said to the daughter of Babylon, who descends from the judgment of internal rectitude, by a smiting sentence, that she should first sit in the dust, and afterwards on the ground, because unless she prostrated herself in thought, she would not have cleaved to the evil work. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. X].

VERS. 15.---Let his companions dwell in his tabernacle, because he is not.

22. Satan is said not to be, because he has lost his well-being (bene esse). ---That is, let apostate angels converse in his mind by most wicked thoughts, his companions forsooth, who for this reason already is not, because he has departed from the highest Essence, and through this, a defect daily increasing, he tends as it were to non-being, whither he once fell from Him who truly is; who is also rightly said not to be, because he has lost his well-being, although he has not lost the essence of his nature. [Vet. X.] Still however expressing the same thoughts of the unjust man more subtly, he subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XIX.

IBID.---Let brimstone be scattered in his tabernacle.

23. The sins of the flesh are rightly compared to stinking and burning brimstone. ---What else is brimstone but the fuel of fire? Which yet so nourishes the fire that it exhales a most grievous stench. What therefore do we understand by brimstone but the sin of the flesh? Which while it fills the mind with perverse thoughts as with certain stenches, prepares for it eternal burnings; and while it spreads the cloud of its stench in the reprobate mind, it supplies as it were nourishment against it by the following flames. For that by brimstone the stench of the flesh is un-

derstood, the very history of Holy Writ testifies, which relates that the Lord rained fire and brimstone against Sodom (Gen. 19:24). Who when He had decreed to punish the crimes of her flesh, noted the stain of the sin in the very quality of the vengeance. For brimstone has stench, fire has heat. Because therefore they had burned with perverse desires from the stench of the flesh, it was fitting that they should perish at once by fire and brimstone, that from a just punishment they might learn what they had done from an unjust desire. This brimstone therefore is scattered in the tabernacle of the wicked man, as often as perverse delight of the flesh reigns in his mind. Whom because depraved thoughts possess without ceasing, and forbid him to bear the fruit of good work, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 16.---Let his roots be dried up from beneath, and from above let his harvest be worn away.

24. The aridity and sterility of the wicked. --- For what do we understand by the name of roots, which are placed in secret, and bring forth the bud into the open, but thoughts, which while they are not seen in the heart, produce visible works? Whence also by the name of harvest that same open operation is signified which is produced, to wit, from a hidden root. And because every wicked man first withers in the thoughts of temptations, and afterwards fails from good acts, it is rightly said by Bildad: Let his roots be dried

up from beneath, and from above let his harvest be worn away. Because while every depraved man places his thoughts in the lowest things and neglects to desire the joys of everlasting greenness, what else does he do but permit his roots to be dried up from beneath? Whose harvest is worn away from above, because all his operation is accounted as nothing by the heavenly judgment, even if it seems good before human eyes. Roots therefore are in the lowest part, and the harvest above, because here we first send forth good thoughts, that we may one day deserve to perceive the fruit of good works in the eternal retribution. But every wicked man, when he deserts good thoughts, and pours himself forth to those things which are without, his roots are dried up from beneath. But from above his harvest is worn away, because he who persists here sterile, is called to no rewards after this life. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI

[Vet. and Rec. XI].

VERS. 17.---Let his memory perish from the earth, and let not his name be celebrated in the streets.

25. How short is the glory of Antichrist and of all the wicked. ---We must observe that Bildad the Shuhite speaks of every wicked man in such a way that his words are covertly turned to the head of all the wicked. For the head of the wicked is the devil. He, in the last times, having entered that vessel of perdition, will be called Antichrist,

who will endeavor to spread his name far and wide, whom now every one imitates when he strives to extend the glory of his praise from the memory of an earthly name, and rejoices in transitory opinion. So therefore let these words be understood of every wicked man, that they ought also to be referred specifically to the very head of the wicked. Let him say then: Let his memory perish from the earth, and let not his name be celebrated in the streets. For streets (plateae) are called from breadth by a Greek appellation. Antichrist endeavors to establish his memory on earth, when he desires, if it were possible, to remain forever in earthly glory. He rejoices that his name is celebrated in the streets, when he extends the operation of his iniquity far and wide. But because this his iniquity is not permitted to be extolled for long, let it be said: Let his memory perish from the earth, and let not his name be celebrated in the streets; that is, let him more quickly lose the praise of earthly power, and lose all the joy of his name, which he had spread far and wide in a short prosperity of time. It follows:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERS. 18.---He shall expel him from light into darkness.

26. Eternal punishment succeeds the glory of the wicked. ---He is led from light to darkness when he is condemned from the honor of this present life to eternal punishments. Whence also it is subjoined more plainly:

IBID.---And He shall transfer him from the world.

For he is transferred from the world when, the heavenly Judge appearing, he is taken from this world, in which he perversely glories. Who because he is condemned with all his followers, at the end of the world intervening, it is rightly subjoined:

VERS. 19.---His seed shall not be, nor his progeny among his people, nor any remains in his regions.

For it is written, that the Lord Jesus shall slay him with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8). While therefore his iniquity is terminated with the state of the world, his progeny is not left among his people, because both he and his people are urged together with it to punishment, and all the wicked, who were born from his perverse persuasion in depraved actions, shall be struck with eternal destruction with their same head by the brightness of the coming of the Lord. And no progeny of his remains in the world, because the strict Judge concludes his iniquities with the very end of the world. But that these things should be plainly understood of Antichrist, is shown when it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XII].

VERS. 20.---In his days the last shall be astonished, and horror shall invade the first.

27. The cruel persecution of Antichrist. Then constancy from virtue and fear from the flesh shall be present to the saints. ---For so great iniquity shall then be let loose against the just, that even the hearts of the elect shall be struck with no small fear. Whence it is written: So as to lead into error, if it were possible, even the elect (Matt. 24:24). Which forsooth is said, not because the elect are to fall, but because they are to tremble with great terrors. But then the contest of righteousness against him is related to be held by both the last elect and the first, because forsooth both those who shall be found elect at the end of the world are to be prostrated in the death of the flesh, and those also who proceeded from the earlier parts of the world, to wit, Enoch and Elijah, shall be recalled to the midst, and are to suffer the savageness of his cruelty in their still mortal flesh. At his powers loosened in such great potency the last are astonished, and the first fear, because although according to that by which they are lifted up by the spirit of pride, they despise all his temporal power, yet according to that by which they themselves are still in mortal flesh, in which they can be tormented for a time, they dread those very punishments which they bravely endure; so that in them at one and the same time there is both constancy from virtue, and fear from the flesh, because although they are elect, so that they cannot be overcome by torments, yet through this that they are men, they also fear the torments which they overcome. Let it be said then: In his days the last shall be aston-

ished, and horror shall invade the first, because forsooth he is then to show such great signs, and to do cruel and hard things, as to bring to astonishment those whom he shall find at the end of the world, and to transfix with the pain of carnal death the earlier fathers who were reserved for his expugnation. Therefore because he has related many things concerning all the wicked, or concerning the very head of the wicked, he soon subjoins by a general definition:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERS. 21.---These are therefore the tabernacles of the wicked, and this is the place of him who is ignorant of God.

28. The place of Antichrist is darkness, into which he shall be thrust down with all the wicked. ---For he had said above: He shall expel him from light into darkness, and shall transfer him from the world. Adding his evils, he subjoined: These are the tabernacles of the wicked, and this is the place of him who is ignorant of God, evidently indicating that he who is now lifted up by being ignorant of God, then arrives at his own tabernacles, when his iniquity plunges him into punishments; and at some time finds his place to be darkness, who while he here rejoiced in a false light of righteousness, held a place that was another's. For the perverse in all that they do through simulation, strive to occupy as it were another's place, the name of the glory of the just. But they then arrive at their own place, when by the merit of their iniquity they are tormented

with perpetual fire. For here in all that they do they serve the desire of perceiving praise, and through the image of good works they extend the bosom of the mind to avarice. Let the wicked man go now therefore, and, swollen with much preparation, let him here build his habitations, let him extend the name of his glory, let him multiply his fields, and let him delight himself with abundant riches; but when he shall arrive at eternal punishments, he shall surely know that these are the tabernacles of the wicked, and this is the place of him who is ignorant of God. Rightly indeed had Bildad said these things, but he was ignorant to whom he said them. But the heart of the just man is vehemently afflicted, when sentences are brought against him from an unjust estimation. Whence blessed Job immediately answered, saying:

CHAPTER XXV

[Vet. XIII, Rec. XII].

CHAP. XIX, VERS. 2.---How long do ye afflict my soul, and wear me away with words?

29. What the just suffer from the wicked. --- The words of the holy man, as we have already often said, are sometimes to be understood as from his own person, sometimes from the voice of the Head, but sometimes as a type of the universal Church. But the soul of the just is greatly afflicted when those who know not how to live well hurl strict sentences against the good; and with their voice they claim for themselves a right-

eousness which they impugn by their conduct. Whence to the friends of blessed Job, holding as we have often said the type of heretics, it is rightly answered by him: How long do ye afflict my soul, and wear me away with words? For the good are worn away by the words of the wicked, when those swell against them in words, who lie either in a perverse faith or in depraved conduct. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERS. 3.---Lo, ten times ye confound me.

30. Whether the just are silent, or whether they speak, they always experience the wicked as adversaries. ---Counting the times of the speeches of Job's friends, we find that they have spoken as yet only five times. But because he had heard reproaches from them five times, to whose reproaches he himself had answered five times, he declares that he has been ten times confounded, because he labored heavily both in that he was reproached in vain, and in that he spoke the words of doctrine to those who would not hear. And so both when he was silent and heard, and when he spoke and was not heard, he himself endured labor, who felt the pain of the heart both by being silent patiently, and by speaking to them unprofitably. Whence also he says above: What shall I do? If I speak, my pain will not rest; and if I be silent, it will not depart from me (Job 16:7). But if we refer these words to the type of the holy Church, it is clear that her great joy is to keep the precepts of the Decalogue. But the perverse

confound her ten times, because in all that they sin they leave the precepts of the Decalogue by their depraved conduct, and as often they cause confusion to the good, as often as in their acts they resist the divine voices. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVII.

IBID.---And ye are not ashamed of oppressing me.

31. The enemies of the Church are restrained neither by the fear of God nor by the shame of men. ---There are some whom suddenly arisen malice invites to perpetrate wickedness, but yet human shame recalls them. And for the most part through this, that they are ashamed outwardly, they return to their interior, and take against themselves an internal judgment, because if for the sake of man they fear to do evil things, how much more for the sake of God, who inspects all things, ought they not even to desire evil things? In whom it comes to pass that they correct greater evils by the smallest goods, to wit, by outward shame internal guilt. And there are some who after they have contemned God in the mind, much more do they despise human judgments, and all the evil that they desire, they are not ashamed to perform boldly. Whom secret iniquity invites to perpetrate evil, and no open shame retards; as also it is said of a certain wicked judge: He feared not God, and regarded not man (Luke 18:2). Hence it is also that it was said of some sinning with an impudent front: And they have preached their sin like Sodom (Isa. 3:9). For

the most part therefore such are the adversaries of the holy Church, who are restrained from perpetrating evils neither by the fear of the Lord nor by the shame of men. To whom it is well said by blessed Job: And ye are not ashamed of oppressing me, because although it was depraved to have willed evil things, it is worse not to be ashamed of things evilly desired. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERS. 4.---Surely if I have been ignorant, my ignorance shall be with me.

32. Heretics oppose arrogance to the humility of the Church. ---Heretics have this as their own, to be puffed up with the empty arrogance of their knowledge, and often to deride the simplicity of those who believe rightly, and to account the life of the humble as of no merit. [Vet. XIV.] But on the contrary, the holy Church in all that she truly understands humbly depresses her sense, lest she be puffed up by knowledge, lest she swell in the searching of hidden things, and presume to search out some things which are beyond her strength. For she more profitably studies not to know what she is not able to search out, than boldly to define what she knows not. For it is written: As he that eats much honey, it is not good for him; so he that is a searcher of majesty shall be oppressed by glory (Prov. 25:27). For the sweetness of honey, if it be taken more than is necessary, whence the mouth is delighted, thence the life of the eater is killed. Sweet also is the searching of majesty; but he who desires

to search this out more than the knowledge of humanity permits, its very glory oppresses him, because like honey immoderately taken, it breaks the sense of the searcher, while it is not comprehended. But that is said to be with us, which is for us; and again that is said not to be with us, which is against us (Luke 11:13). Because therefore their knowledge puffs up the heart of heretics, but the knowledge of their ignorance humbles the faithful, let blessed Job say with his voice, let him say also with the confession of the universal Church: Surely if I have been ignorant, my ignorance shall be with me. As if it were plainly said to heretics: All your knowledge is not with you, because it is against you, while it raises you up with foolish elation. But my ignorance is with me, because it is for me; since while I do not proudly dare to search out anything concerning God, I humbly keep myself in the truth. And because these very things which they seek to know heretics catch at for the use of elation alone, that they may seem learned against the faithful and the humble, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XIII].

VERSE 5.---But ye exalt yourselves against me.

33. Order requires that we should first be exalted against ourselves, and afterwards against the wicked. The wicked are ignorant of this method of correction.---But perhaps we weigh these words better if we show how they specifi-

cally fit the friends of blessed Job himself. For they, seeing the just man struck, ought to have returned to their own innermost parts, and by no means to have pressed blessed Job with words of rebuke, but to have bewept themselves; because if he was thus struck who so served, with what vengeance did they deserve to be smitten who had not so served? To whom it is well said: But ye exalt yourselves against me. As if it were more plainly said to them: Ye who ought to have been exalted against yourselves by my striking. For this is the order of exaltation in good, that we should first be exalted against ourselves and afterwards against the wicked. For he who is exalted against the good is puffed up by pride. For we are exalted against ourselves when, recognizing our own evils, we smite ourselves with the strict vengeance of penance, when we by no means spare ourselves in sins, and are inclined by no allurements of thoughts towards ourselves. If we first strictly pursue our own evils in ourselves, it is also just that we should also be usefully exalted against the evils of others; and those things which we punish in ourselves, we may also overcome in others by reproving them.

34. But the wicked know not this exaltation, because they leave themselves and attack the good. They incline themselves within their own conscience with the softness of smooth flattery, and are exalted against the life of the good with the strictness of asperity. Whence it is now rightly said to the friends of blessed Job, swelling in his scourge: But ye exalt yourselves against

me; that is, ye leave yourselves to be reproved, and rebuke me with strict sentences. For he who does not first judge himself, knows not what he should judge rightly in another. And if he knows perhaps by hearing what he ought to judge rightly, yet he is not able to judge rightly the merits of others, to whom the conscience of his own innocence provides no rule of judgment. For it is from this that to certain men lying in wait, and bringing forward an adulteress to be punished, it is said (John 8:7): He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. For they were going to punish the sins of others, and had left their own. They are therefore called back within to their conscience, that they may first correct their own things, and then reprehend those of others. Hence it is that when the tribe of Benjamin had been overwhelmed in a crime of the flesh, all Israel being gathered together wished to avenge the iniquity, but yet once and again was itself prostrated in the conflict of war. But when the Lord was consulted if they ought to go to avenge it, it was commanded. They went according to the command of the divine voice, and fell once and a second time, and then finally smiting the sinful tribe greatly, almost utterly extinguished it. Why is it that they are inflamed to the vengeance of a crime, and yet are themselves prostrated first, unless it be that they through whom the faults of others are smitten must first be purged, so that they who hasten to correct the vices of others may now come clean through vengeance? Whence it is necessary that

when the vengeance of the divine examination ceases against us, our conscience should itself reprehend itself, and exalt itself against itself to the laments of penance, and not be elate against the good and humble to itself, but rigid against itself, and submissive to all the good. Therefore it is now rightly said to the proud ones correcting: But ye exalt yourselves against me, and reproach me with my disgrace. All elate men reckon temporal evils to be a heavy disgrace; and they believe each one to be so far despised by God, as they see him afflicted by the scourge of striking. For they seek nothing in his morals, nothing in his acts; but whomsoever they see struck in this life, they think them to be already condemned by the divine judgment. Whence it is now well said by the voice of blessed Job:

CHAPTER XXX.

IBID.---And reproach me with my disgrace.

35. False judgments of the reprobate concerning the scourges of the just.---Because those who knew him as just before the scourges, judged him to be unjust from his very striking itself. Whence also heretics often, because they see some within the holy Church afflicted, whereas it is written of God: He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth (Heb. 12:6), suspect the tribulations of the faithful to be only from sin, and believe themselves to be just for this reason, because, being left in the sense of their own depravity, they have grown hard without the scourge. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 6.---Know now at least that God hath afflicted me with an unequal judgment.

36. Certain words of Holy Scripture are thought depraved, because they are not required for their interior understanding. ---O how hard sounds the voice of the just man afflicted with stripes; which, however, not elation, but grief expressed! But he is not just who deserts justice in grief. But blessed Job, because he had a mild heart, did not sin even in a hard voice. For if we say that he sinned in this voice, we assert that the devil fulfilled what he proposed, saying: Touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face (Job 2:5). Therefore a heavy question arises. For if indeed he did not sin in that which he says: Know now at least that God hath afflicted me with an unequal judgment, we consent that God (which it is impious to say) did something unjustly. But if he did sin, the devil exhibited concerning him what he promised. It must therefore be maintained both that God acted rightly concerning blessed Job, and yet that blessed Job in that which he says, that he was afflicted with no just judgment of God, did not lie, and that the ancient enemy lied in that which he had promised concerning the fault of the blessed man. For sometimes the words of the good are believed to be depraved for this reason, because they are very little weighed by their interior understanding. For blessed Job had attended to

his life, and was weighing those scourges which he suffered, and he saw that it was not equal that he should receive such scourges for such a life. And when he says that he was afflicted with an unequal judgment, he spoke this with a free voice, which the Lord in His secret had said of him to his adversary: Thou movedst Me against him, to afflict him without cause (Ibid., 3). For that which God says, that He afflicted blessed Job without cause (frustra), this again blessed Job asserts, that he was afflicted by the Lord with an unequal judgment. In what therefore did he sin, who in nothing differed from the sentence of his Author?

[Vet. XVII.] 37. To say good things of oneself, provided they be true, is sometimes allowed. Which is confirmed by the example of Paul and Job.---But perhaps some one may say that it cannot be without sin for us to say that good of ourselves which the Judge has said of us in secret. For whom the just Judge praises, he is not doubted to be justly praiseworthy. But indeed if he has praised himself, his justice is no longer believed to be worthy of praise. Which indeed is rightly said, if that which the just Judge offers through an equal sentence, he of whom it is treated presumes afterwards to say of himself through an elate mind. For if he himself also remaining in humble thought, cause or grief requiring it, has said true good things of himself, he has not so far receded from justice, as he in no way differed from the truth.

38. Whence Paul the Apostle also related many strong things of himself for the edification of his disciples; but in relating these things he in no way failed, because he did not recede from the path of truth and certain attestation and a humble heart. Therefore blessed Job, feeling his own life to be just, may say that he was not afflicted with a just judgment. Nor does he sin in this voice in which he does not differ from his Author, because he whom God struck without cause (frustra), himself also asserts himself to be afflicted with no just judgment. But again another question arises, which I remember to have been solved already in the beginning of this work (Lib. 3, chap. and num. 3), since almighty God does nothing in vain, why does He testify that He afflicted blessed Job in vain (frustra)? For our just Maker by so many stripes upon blessed Job, did not care to extinguish his vices, but to increase his merits. It was therefore equal (aequum) what He did through the increase of good merit; however it did not seem equal, because it was believed to punish the causes of sin. But blessed Job believed his sins were being blotted out by those scourges, not his merits increased; and therefore he calls it an unequal judgment, because he examines his life with the scourges. Therefore if life and scourges are weighed, it was not equal what blessed Job, as I said, believed was being done to him through the wrath of strictness. But if the mercy of the Judge is attended to, because through the punishment of the just man the merits of his life are accumulated, it was an

equal or rather a merciful judgment. Therefore Job both said true things, while he weighed his life with the scourge; and God did not afflict Job with an unjust judgment, because He accumulated merits from the scourge; and the devil did not fulfill what he had promised, because blessed Job among words which sound hard did not recede both from a true sentence and from a humble mind. But these words of the afflicted one we understand perhaps less, unless we know the sentence of the Judge. Who (451) when He gave sentence between both parties, says to the friends of Job: Ye have not spoken before Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath (Job 42:8). Who therefore with a foolish mind would confess that blessed Job sinned in his speech, while by the very voice of the Judge he is asserted to have spoken rightly? Which voice indeed if we refer it to the person of the holy Church, we fit it not incongruously to its weak members, who, in the time of its persecution, while they consider both its merits and its scourges, because they see the unjust flourish, and the just perish, in no way suspect this to be just. Well, however, by the voice of the blessed man it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Vet. XVIII].

IBID.---And hath compassed me with His scourges.

39. The weak members of the Church are troubled by constant scourges.---For it is one thing to

be struck with scourges, another to be compassed by them. For we are struck with scourges when we have consolation even in pains from other things. For when so great affliction presses us, that the mind can breathe from the consolation of no thing, we are no longer only struck by scourges, but even compassed, because we are surrounded on every side by the lash of tribulations. Paul had been compassed with scourges, when he said: Without were fightings, within were fears (2 Cor. 7:5). He had been compassed with scourges, when he said: In perils of my own nation, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness (2 Cor. 11:26), and the rest, which he so enumerates, that he shows himself to have had rest nowhere. But when the holy Church is compassed with the scourges of its tribulations, in it all the weak are reduced to a case of pusillanimity, so that they already think themselves despised in this, in that they see themselves more slowly heard. Rightly still also from their type it is subjoined by the voice of the holy man:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERSE 7.---Behold, I shall cry, suffering violence, and no one will hear; I shall cry aloud, and there is no one to judge.

40. God dissembles the complaints of the suffering, that He may increase their utility.---Almighty God, knowing what may be profitable for us, dissembles hearing the voice of the suffering, that He may increase their utility, that life

may be purged through punishment, and the tranquility of rest, which cannot be found here, may be sought elsewhere. But this grace of dispensation some even of the faithful are ignorant of. From whose person also it is now said: Behold, I shall cry, suffering violence, and no one will hear; I shall cry aloud, and there is no one to judge. For it is said there is no one to judge when He who is Himself dissembles to judge, because besides Him there is no one who may judge our cause against the adversary. Nor, however, is this without judgment, that judgment is deferred, because when blessed Job was saying these things, both the merits of the holy man and the punishment of the adversary were increasing. Therefore it is the part of the Judge to defer this very judgment. But it is one thing what God justly disposes within, another what the mind, worn out by scourges without, desires. Whence still concerning that depression of stripes he subjoins:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Rec. XV].

VERSE 8.---He hath fenced up my path, and I cannot pass, and He hath set darkness in my way.

41. To those sinning from ignorance and infirmity God is present as our illumination and salvation. ---He saw his path fenced up with stripes when, desiring to pass to security, he could not escape the scourges. And because he saw himself struck, and yet found not in himself a life worthy of striking, he found as it were

darkness in the way of the heart of his ignorance, who could not penetrate why he was so scourged. Which is referred not incongruously also to the weak members of the holy Church, when by this that they remember themselves to have acted perversely, they are retarded also from a (452) good work; and timid from their own infirmity, they do not presume to attempt strong good things against these. For they fear to begin great good things, who remember themselves to have been weak in their own acts. And when for the most part they even know not what good they should choose, they dread as it were the darkness set in their way. For often the mind becomes so uncertain concerning its own work, that it is altogether ignorant what is virtue, what is fault. Therefore he finds darkness in his way, who in those things which he desires to do knows not what he ought to choose. [Vet. XIX.] Since therefore it is sinned often from infirmity, sometimes indeed from ignorance, it is said from the weakening members: He hath fenced up my path, and I cannot pass. But from those who are in the dark as to what good work they should choose, it is subjoined: And He hath set darkness in my way. For indeed it is from the punishment of fault to see the good which one ought to do, and yet not be able to fulfill it; and again it is from the heavier punishment of fault not even to see what one ought to do. Whence also against both these it is said by the voice of the Psalmist: The Lord is my illumination, and my salvation; whom shall I fear? (Psalm 27:1). For against the darkness of

ignorance the Lord is illumination, but against infirmity He is salvation, when He both shows what ought to be sought for doing, and provides strength so that what He has shown may be able to be fulfilled. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXV

[Rec. XVI.]

VERSE 9.---He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.

42. The weak members of the Church are sometimes stripped of justice for a time.---That all these things suit the person of the blessed man set in affliction, there is no doubt. But because the words of the history are open, according to the letter they do not need exposition. It is necessary therefore that they should be investigated through mystical senses. For he says: He hath stripped me of my glory. The glory indeed of each one is his justice. For as a garment covers from the cold, so justice fortifies from death. Whence not undeservedly is justice compared to a garment, when it is said by the Prophet: Let Thy priests be clothed with justice (Psalm 132:9). But because in the time of its affliction the holy Church loses this garment of justice, which protects with God, in its weakening members, let it be rightly said: He hath stripped me of my glory; that is, justice has been taken away from the weak, which could not be taken from them if it had inherent in their very marrow; but for this reason it could be taken away, because after the manner of a garment it

adhered outwardly. In which matter it is to be asked how they can be called members of the holy Church, who were able to lose the justice which they seemed to hold. But it must be known that for the most part justice is lost for a time by its weakening members; but when afterwards through the knowledge of their fault they return to penance, they bind themselves to the same justice which they had lost more strongly than was believed. Where it is still added: And taken the crown from my head. As the head is the first part of the body, so the principal part of the interior man is the mind. But the crown is the reward of victory, which is obtained from above, that he who has contended may be remunerated. Because therefore many pressed by adversities by no means endure in the contest, in them the holy Church loses as it were the crown from its head. For the crown on the head is the heavenly remuneration in the mind. And there are very many who, while they are afflicted by adversities, neglect to think of heavenly rewards, and cannot arrive at the perfection of victory. In these therefore the crown is taken from the head, because (453) the heavenly and spiritual reward is taken away from the thought of the mind, so that they already desire quiet outward things, and do not seek eternal rewards, because they had been accustomed to think of them.

43. The crown is taken from the head of the Church, when prelates neglect spiritual goods.--- Or certainly the priests are not undeservedly taken for the head of the faithful, because they

are the first part of the members of the Lord. Whence also by the prophet the head and the tail are said to be exterminated, where indeed by the name of the head priests, and by the appellation of the tail reprobate prophets are designated. Therefore the crown is taken from the head when the rewards of heavenly remuneration are deserted even by those who seemed to preside in this body of the Church. And for the most part when the leaders fall, the army which followed succumbs more widely. Whence soon after the losses of the greater ones he subjoined concerning the manifold tottering of the Church:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Vet. XX].

VERSE 10.---He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone, and He hath taken away my hope like a tree plucked up.

44. When those set over them fall, the weak fall.---For the Church is as it were destroyed on every side, and perishes in its weak members, when those very things which seemed strong fall, when the crown is drawn away from the head, that is, when eternal rewards are neglected even by those set over them. But well is it subjoined concerning the weak falling: And He hath taken away my hope like a tree plucked up. For indeed a tree is impelled by the wind that it may fall. And he whom threats terrify, so that he falls to injustice, what else than a tree has he endured the blast of the wind, and lost the state of his

rectitude? For as it were from the wind he has lost hope, who, overcome by the threats and persuasions of the wicked, has left the eternal rewards which he hoped for. And because it happens for the most part that while one fears punishments he deserts justice, it comes to pass, God judging, that even deserting justice he does not escape the punishments which he feared, and he who very little feared the destruction of the mind, tolerates also the evils of the flesh which he was fearing. Whence still it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVII

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 11.---His fury is kindled against me, and He hath so held me as His enemy.

45. Some God strikes as sons, others as enemies.---For, that eminent preacher attesting, we say that God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear, but will make with the temptation a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10:13). By the prophet also the Lord says: With the wound of an enemy have I struck thee, with a cruel chastisement (Jer. 30:14). He therefore who is so struck, that his strength is overcome by the striking, the Lord no longer strikes him as it were a son through discipline, but as it were an enemy through wrath. When therefore scourges exceed the virtue of our patience, it is greatly to be feared lest, our sins requiring it, we be no longer struck as it were sons by a father, but as it were enemies

by the Lord. And because it happens for the most part that even malignant spirits suggest many things to the hearts of the afflicted, and among the scourges which strike without pour noxious thoughts into their minds, after the fury of the Lord it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVIII

[Rec. XVIII].

VERSE 12.---His robbers came together, and made themselves a way through me.

46. Malignant spirits, breaking in, beset the afflicted. In them the will is unjust, and the power just. For His "robbers" are the malignant spirits, who are occupied in seeking the deaths of men. Because they make a way for themselves in the hearts of the afflicted, when among the adversities which are endured outwardly they cease not to inject also wicked thoughts. Of whom it is still said:

And they have besieged my tabernacle in a circuit.

For they besiege the tabernacle in a circuit when they surround the mind on every side with their temptations. Which they persuade by most evil suggestion now to mourn for temporal things, now to despair of eternal things, now to fall into impatience, and to hurl words of blasphemy against God. Which words, however, as we have already said, agree with blessed Job even according to the history, who while he heaped before his eyes the evils which he endured,

judged that he was struck not as a son to be corrected, but as an enemy. Through whom also His robbers made a way for themselves, because the malignant spirits received against him license of striking. Whose tabernacle they besieged in a circuit, because, his goods and children being taken away, they also wore away his whole body with wounds. [Vet. XXI.] But it is very wonderful, when he said "robbers," why he added "His"? namely, to show that those same robbers are God's. In which matter, if the will and the power of the malignant spirits be distinguished, it is opened why they are called the robbers of God. For malignant spirits incessantly pant to harm us; but though they have a wicked will from themselves, yet they have not the power of harming, unless the supreme Will permits them. And while they indeed unjustly desire to hurt us, yet they are not permitted by the Lord to hurt any one, except justly. Because therefore in them the will is unjust, and the power just, they are called both "robbers" and "of God," so that it is from themselves that they unjustly desire to bring in evils, and from God that they justly consummate what they desired. But because, as we have often said, the holy man placed in the pain of punishments, uses now his own voices, now those of the Church, now those of our Redeemer, and for the most part so relates his own things, that yet through a type he brings forward those which belong to the holy Church and to our Redeemer, the care of the history being set aside for a little while, let us show in those things which he subjoins

how he agrees with the voices of our Redeemer. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Rec. XIX].

VERSES 13, 14.---He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and they that knew me have forgotten me.

ALLEGORICAL SENSE.---47. The Jews, the brethren, acquaintance, and kinsfolk of Christ, denied Him when incarnate, whom they had foretold should be incarnate.

This we show better, if we bring forward the testimony of John into the midst, who says: He came unto His own, and His own received Him not (John 1:11). For from Him his brethren were put far away, and His acquaintance were estranged, whom the Hebrews, holding the Law, knew how to prophesy, and when present they very little recognized. Whence it is rightly said: My kinsfolk have failed, and they that knew me have forgotten me. For the Jews, kinsfolk according to the flesh, and acquaintance through the instruction of the Law, as it were forgot Him whom they had prophesied, while they both sang of Him as to be incarnate in the words of the Law, and denied Him when incarnate in words of perfidy. It follows:

CHAPTER XL.

VERSE 15.---They that dwell in mine house, and my maidservants, count me for a stranger.

48. By priests and Levites Christ was held for a stranger. They that dwell in the house of God were the priests, whose origin being deputed to the service of God was already held by office in that condition. Moreover, by maidservants are not undeservedly understood the souls of the Levites, serving more familiarly at the secrets of the tabernacle, as if at the interior of a chamber. Let him say then of the priests serving with sedulous care, let him say of the Levites obsequious to the interior of the house of God: They that dwell in mine house and my maidservants count me for a stranger, because they would not acknowledge and venerate the incarnate Lord, whom they had long before foretold by the words of the Law. Who still more clearly manifests that He was not acknowledged by their perverse will, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XLI.

IBID.---And I was as a stranger in their eyes.

49. Christ a stranger in His own house. For our Redeemer, while He was not acknowledged by the synagogue, existed in His own house as it were a stranger. Which the prophet openly witnesses, saying: Why shouldest Thou be as a sojourner in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night (Jer. 14:8)? For because He was not heard as Lord, He was believed to be not the owner of the field, but a sojourner. Who as it were a wayfaring man

turned aside only to tarry, because He took away few from Judea, and proceeding to the calling of the Gentiles, He performed the journey He had begun. He was therefore a stranger in their eyes, because while they thought only of those things which they could see, they were not able to understand in the Lord that which they could not see. For while they despise the visible flesh, they did not reach to the invisible majesty. Let it be said therefore rightly: And I was as a stranger in their eyes. Of which people it is still aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERSE 16.---I called my servant, and he gave me no answer.

50. Christ despised by His own servant, namely, the Jewish people. For what was the Jewish people but a servant, who obeyed the Lord not with the love of a son, but with servile fear? Against which it is said to us by Paul: Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Rom. 8:15). This servant, then, the Lord called, because, having conferred gifts, He studied to lead him to Himself as it were by voices sent forth. But he gave no answer, because he despised to return worthy works for His gifts. For God calls us when He prevents us with gifts; but we answer to His calling when we serve worthily according to the gifts received. Because, therefore, He prevented the Jewish people with so many gifts, let Him

say: I called my servant. But because even after so many gifts he despised Him, let Him subjoin: And he gave me no answer. It follows:

CHAPTER XLIII

(Vet. XXII, Rec. XX).

IBID.---I entreated him with my own mouth.

51. Christ entreated him that was reluctant to His commands, and was not heard. As if He were to say more clearly: I, who before my incarnation had commanded him so many precepts to be performed through the mouths of the prophets, having come to him incarnate, entreated him with my own mouth. Whence also Matthew, when he described the precepts given by Him on the mountain, says: Opening His mouth, He said (Matt. 5:2). As if he were to say plainly: Then He opened His own mouth, who before had opened the mouths of the prophets. Hence also it is that it is said of Him by the spouse desiring His presence: Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Cant. 1:1). For the holy Church, as many precepts as she has known from His preaching, has as it were received so many kisses of His mouth. But well is it said: I entreated, because being shown in the flesh, while He spoke the commandments of life humbly, He as it were asked the proud servant that he should come. Where also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIV

(Rec. XXI).

VERSE 17.---My wife abhorred my breath.

52. The bride, the synagogue, abhorred Christ. What is the wife of the Lord understood to be but the Synagogue, subject to Him in the carnal understanding of the covenant of the Law? Moreover, breath is from the flesh. But the faithless people understood the flesh of the Lord carnally, because they believed Him to be a mere man. His wife, therefore, abhorred His breath, because the Synagogue was terrified to believe that Him whom she saw to be a man was God. And when she heard words from His mouth corporally, she refused to understand in Him the secrets of the Divinity, and did not believe Him to be the Creator whom she saw as created. The carnal wife, therefore, abhorred the breath of the flesh, because, being given up to carnal senses, she did not acknowledge the mystery of His incarnation. It follows:

CHAPTER XLV

(Rec. XXII).

IBID.---And I entreated the children of my womb.

53. How God is said to have bodily members. In God, who is not circumscribed by the form of a body, members of the body, that is, hands, eye, womb, are so named, that the effects of His power may be designated from the names of the members. For He is said to have eyes, because He

sees all things; He is described as having hands, because He works all things; but in the womb offspring is conceived, which is brought forth in this life. What then ought we to understand by the womb of God, but His counsel, in which we were conceived before the ages by predestination, that having been created through the ages we might be brought forth? God, therefore, who remains before the ages, entreated the children of His womb, because those whom He powerfully created by His divinity, He being incarnate humbly entreated. But because in that very flesh in which He appeared He was despised by their estimation, it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVI.

VERSE 18.---Even the fools despised me.

54. The wise falling from the truth, the fools also failed. The wise falling from the faith of the truth, it is rightly added also concerning the fools, because while the Pharisees and lawyers despised the Lord, the multitude of the people also followed their unbelief, which in that it saw a man, despised the preachings of the Redeemer of the world. For often by the name of "fools" those who are the poor among the people are designated. Whence also it is said by Jeremiah: I said, Surely these are poor and foolish, that know not the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God (Jer. 5:4). But the wise and rich of the world being left, our Redeemer had come to seek the poor and the foolish. Whence now as it were in increase of pain it is said: Even the

fools despised me. As if it were plainly said: Even they despised me, for whose healing I assumed the foolishness of preaching. For it is written: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Cor. 1:21). For the Word of God is wisdom, but the foolishness of this wisdom is called the flesh of the Word; so that because all carnal ones by the prudence of their own flesh were not able to reach to the wisdom of God, they might be healed by the foolishness of preaching, that is, by the flesh of the Word. He says therefore: Even the fools despised me. As if it were plainly said: and I was despised even by them for whom I feared not to be accounted a fool. And because the multitude of the Jews when it perceived the miracles of our Redeemer, honored Him for the signs, saying: This is the Christ (Mark 13:21); but when it beheld the infirmities of His humanity, it disdained to believe Him the Creator, saying: Nay; but He deceiveth the people (John 7:12); it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVII

(Vet. XXIII).

IBID.---And when I had withdrawn from them, they slandered me.

55. They slandered Christ when He was ceasing from miracles. For the Lord as it were approached the hearts of the people when He showed them miracles, and as it were withdrew

when He showed no signs. But they slandered the Lord when He withdrew, since they would not yield faith to Him when He was ceasing from miracles. But what wonder that He should endure these things from the common people, when they also who seemed to be teachers of the Law, who asserted by prophetic words that He was to be incarnate, and saw Him incarnate, were yet divided from Him by the interruption of perfidy? Of whom it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERS. 19.---My counselors of old have abhorred me, and he whom I loved most has turned against me.

56. The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees abhorred Him.---It is clear to all that God does not need counselors, who Himself provides the counsel of wisdom to the counselors of men. Concerning which it is also written: Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? (Rom. 11:34, from Isa. 40:13). But just as when bread or a garment is given to one in need, the Lord testifies that He has received it (Matth. 25:40), so when right counsel is given to any ignorant person, He Himself receives it, whose member he is who is instructed. For all we faithful are members of our Redeemer; and just as He is fed in us through the mercy of bounty, so He is aided in us through the counsel of doctrine. The scribes therefore and the teachers of the Law, who were accustomed to instruct the people unto life, what else were they but the counselors of

the coming Redeemer? Who nevertheless, when they beheld the incarnate Lord, by their counsels divided many from faith in Him, although previously they seemed to have taught many to believe in the mystery of His incarnation through the words of the prophets. And because he is more in love with God who draws many to His love, it is further added concerning the same order of teachers of the Law and Pharisees: And he whom I loved most has turned against me. For that very order, through the persuasion of perfidy, turned away from the faith of truth, which before, serving in the labor of preaching, was loved most; whom the multitude of the people followed, not only to not believe, but even to persecute the Lord, and were inflamed with the torches of that cruelty even unto His passion. In which passion indeed the hearts of the disciples were troubled. Whence it is now added:

CHAPTER XLIX

[Rec XXIII].

VERS. 20.---To my skin, my flesh being consumed, my bone has cleaved.

57. While Christ was suffering and the apostles were fleeing, the holy women cleaved to Him like skin.---In the bone, strength is designated, but in the flesh, the weakness of the body. Since therefore Christ and the Church are one person, what is designated by the bone but the Lord Himself? What by the flesh but the disciples, who at the time of His passion savored of weak things?

But by the skin, which remains outside the flesh in the body, what are figured but those holy women, who served the Lord with outward ministries to prepare the supports of the body? For while His disciples, although not yet firm, were preaching the faith of truth to the peoples, the flesh was adhering to its bone. And when the holy women were preparing those outward things that were necessary, they remained as it were like skin on the outside of the body. But when it came to the hour of the cross, a grave fear from the persecution of the Jews invaded His disciples: they fled individually, the women cleaved. As if therefore the flesh were consumed, the bone of the Lord cleaved to His skin, because His strength, at the time of the passion, when the disciples fled, found the women near Him. Peter indeed stood for a while, but yet afterwards, being terrified, he denied Him (Matth. 26:70). John also stood, to whom at the very time of the cross it was said: Behold your mother (John 19:27). But he could by no means persevere, because of him also it is written, that a certain young man followed him wrapped in a linen cloth over his naked body, and they laid hold of him; but he, leaving the linen cloth, fled naked from them (Mark 14:51). Who, even if afterwards he returned to the hour of the cross to hear the words of his Redeemer, yet first, being terrified, he fled. But the women are recorded not only to have not feared, nor to have fled, but even to have stood even unto the sepulcher. Let Him say then: To my skin, my flesh being consumed, my bone has cleaved. That is,

they who ought to have cleaved more closely to my strength, were consumed by fear at the time of my passion, and those whom I placed for outward ministries, I found in my passion faithfully cleaving to me without fear. Where also it is clearly understood that these words are spoken through a mystery, while there follows:

CHAPTER L

[Vet. XXIV].

IBID.---And only lips are left around my teeth.

58. The apostles, the teeth of Christ, had lost all their power while He was suffering.---For what do we have around our teeth but lips, even if we suffer no scourges? But what is designated by the lips but speech, and what by the teeth but the holy apostles? Who are placed in this body of the Church for this purpose, that they may bite the life of carnal men by correction, and break it from the hardness of its pertinacity. Whence also it is said to the same first of the apostles, as to a tooth placed in His body: Kill, and eat (Acts 10:13). But because at the time of His passion these teeth, through fear of death, lost the bite of correction, lost the confidence of strength, lost the efficacy of every kind of operation, so that two of them walking, after His death and resurrection, spoke on the way and said: We were hoping that it was He who should redeem Israel (Luke 24:21), it is now rightly said: And only lips are left around my teeth. They were still communing about Him, but now they believed in Him very little. Therefore

only lips had remained around His teeth, because they had lost the power of good operation, and retained only words of communing about Him. They had lost the bite of correction, and they had the movement of speech. The lips therefore were only left around the teeth, because they still indeed knew how to commune, but they were afraid now to preach Him, or to bite the vices of the unfaithful. Having finished these things which he spoke in the voice of the Head, blessed Job returns to his own words, saying:

CHAPTER LI.

VERS. 21.---Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord has touched me.

59. In adversity, the mind of the pious is moved to prayer, not to wrath.---This the mind of the pious is accustomed to have as its own, that when it suffers unjust things from adversaries, it is moved not so much to wrath as to prayer, so that if their depravity can be gently moderated, they choose rather to entreat than to be angry. Whence it is now rightly said: Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord has touched me. Behold, he calls those "friends" from whom he considers himself to be always afflicted with insults, because to good minds even those things become prosperous which seem adverse. For all the perverse are either converted by the sweetness of the good, so that they return, and by that very fact they are friends by which they become good; or

they persevere in malice, and in this also they are friends even against their will, because if there are any faults of the good, they purge them by their persecutions even without knowing it. It is also to be noted that the words of the blessed man in public agree with those things which were done in secret before God. For he had been struck by Satan, and yet he does not attribute his striking to Satan, but calls himself touched by the hand of the Lord, just as Satan himself also had said: Put forth Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, if he will not bless You to Your face (Job 2:5). For the holy man knew that even through this very thing which Satan had done with perverse will against him, he had power not from himself, but from the Lord. It follows:

CHAPTER LII

[Vet. XXV, Rec. XXIV].

VERS. 22.---Why do you persecute me like God, and are satisfied with my flesh?

60. God does not persecute us by being cruel.---It is not inconsistent with the language of piety that he asserts himself to be persecuted by God. For there is a good persecutor, as the Lord says of Himself by the prophetic mouth: Him that slandered his neighbor in secret, him did I persecute. But when any holy man is permitted to be scourged, he knows that he suffers persecution against the vices committed by an internal dispensation. But the cruel minds of persecutors, when they seek the power of striking, are

inflamed against the life of the good not with a desire for purgation, but with the torches of envy. And indeed they do that which Almighty God permits to be done. But while one and the same cause is acted through them as through God, yet one and the same will is not maintained in the same cause, because while Almighty God in love displays purgation, the depravity of the unjust in cruelty exercises malice. That therefore which is said, Why do you persecute me like God? he referred to the outward striking, not to the inward intention, because even if they do this outwardly which God has disposed to be done, yet they do not seek this which God seeks in His action, that the good may be purged from affliction. Which can also be understood in another way. For Almighty God strikes the vices of others so much the more justly, as He has nothing of vices in Himself. But men, when they strike others through discipline, ought so to strike another's weakness, as to know how to turn their eyes back even to their own, that they may consider from themselves how much they should spare others in striking, when they are not ignorant that they themselves also are worthy of strikings. Therefore it is now said: Why do you persecute me like God? As if it were openly said: You so afflict me out of my weaknesses, as if you yourselves in the manner of God had nothing of weakness. Whence it must be considered that if there are any who perhaps are in need of sharpness of correction, then a hard correction is to be applied to them by us, when the hand of God ceases from

the stripe. But when the heavenly scourges are present, not correction now, but consolation is due from us, lest while we join rebuke to pain, we add striking to striking.

61. Slanderers, like wild beasts, devour men.---But it is well added: And are satisfied with my flesh? Those whose mind hungers for the punishments of their neighbors, beyond doubt seek to be satisfied with the flesh of others. It must also be known that they also who feed on the slandering of another's life, are beyond doubt satisfied with the flesh of others. Whence it is said by Solomon: Be not in the feasts of drinkers, nor eat with them who contribute flesh to eat (Prov. 23:20). For to contribute flesh to eat is to speak of the vices of neighbors in turn in the conversation of detraction. Concerning whose punishment it is there soon added: Because they that are given to drinking and giving a contribution shall be consumed, and drowsiness shall be clothed with rags (Ibid.). They are given to drinking, who intoxicate themselves with the reproach of another's life. But to give a contribution is, just as each one is accustomed to contribute food to eat for his own part, so to contribute words in the communing of detraction. But they that are given to drinking and giving a contribution shall be consumed, because as it is written: Every slanderer shall be rooted out. But drowsiness shall be clothed with rags, because his own death finds him despised and destitute of all good works, whom the languor of his own detraction occupied here in searching out the crimes of another's

life. [Vet. XXVI.] But so many hard things which blessed Job sustains, it is not worthy that they should pass by in silence, and that the obscurity of ignorance should cover them from the knowledge of men. For so many are able to be built up for the preservation of patience, as many as shall have known the deeds of his patience, heavenly grace filling them. Whence also the same blessed Job wishes the scourges which he feels to be drawn into an example, who immediately subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER LIII

[Rec. XXV].

VERSES 23, 24.---Who will grant me that my words may be written? Who will give me that they may be engraved in a book with an iron pen, and with a plate of lead, or at least be carved in flint?

62. The hearts of the Jews are designated by the plate of lead, those of the Gentiles by the flint.---All the things which blessed Job endured, because that heavy people of the Jews, being taught by the strong sentence of the fathers, recognized them, they are written with an iron pen and a plate of lead. But because even the hard hearts of the Gentiles recognized these things, what do we see them as except carved in flint? And it is to be noted that what is written on lead, by the very softness of the metal, is more quickly deleted; but on flint letters can indeed be impressed more slowly, but more difficultly

deleted. Not undeservedly therefore is Judea expressed by the plate of lead, which both perceived the precepts of God without labor, and lost them with speed. Rightly is Gentility figured by the flint, which could scarcely receive the words of the sacred eloquence to be kept; but yet, being strongly received, it preserved them. But by the iron pen what else is designated than the strong sentence of God? Whence also it is said by the prophet: The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen on a diamond nail (Jer. 17:1). In the nail is the end of the body. Moreover, the diamond stone is so hard that it cannot be cut by iron. By the iron pen a strong sentence is signified, but by the diamond nail the eternal end. The sin of Judah therefore is said to be written with an iron pen on a diamond nail, because the fault of the Jews is reserved through the strong sentence of God for an infinite end.

63. Lead signifies avarice.---Rightly also by the plate of lead we understand those whom the weight of avarice burdens, to whom it is said by the reproving Prophet: O ye sons of men, how long will ye be heavy of heart (Ps. 4:3)? For by lead, whose nature is of a heavy weight, the sin of avarice is specially designated, which so renders heavy the mind which it has infected, that it can by no means be lifted up to seek sublime things. [Rec. XXVI.] For hence it is written in Zechariah: Lift up thine eyes, and see. What is this that goeth forth? And I said: Whatnam is it? And he said: This is an amphora going forth, and he said: This is their eye in all the earth. (Vet. XXVII.) And be-

hold a talent of lead was carried, and behold one woman sitting in the midst of the amphora, and he said: This is impiety. And he cast her into the midst of the amphora, and cast the leaden mass into her mouth (Zech. 5:5, seq.).

He who, to show that he had known more broadly something about this vision of the amphora, and of the woman, and of the lead, still following subjoined: And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw; and behold two women going forth, and the spirit was in their wings, and they had wings as the wings of a kite, and they lifted up the amphora between the earth and the heaven. And I said to the angel who spoke in me: Whither do these carry the amphora? And he said to me: That a house may be built for it in the land of Shinar (Zech. 5:9, seq.). Which testimony of the prophet we have brought forth to no purpose for the proof of lead, if we do not also, repeating it, explain it. For he says: Lift up thine eyes, and see. What is this that goeth forth? And I said: What is it? And he said: This is an amphora going forth (Ibid.). God, willing to show the prophet the human race, from what fault it mostly slips from Him, through the image of an amphora designated as it were the open mouth of avarice. For avarice is like an amphora, which holds the mouth of the heart open in its circuit. And he said: This is their eye in all the earth (Ibid.). We see many men of obtuse sense, and yet we see them astute in evil acts; the prophet also attesting, who says: They are wise to do evil, but to do well they know not (Jer. 4:22). These therefore are torpid in sense, but in those

things which they seek they are excited by the stings of avarice; and they who are blind to see good things, being excited by rewards, become watchful to perform evil things. Whence rightly of this same avarice it is said: This is their eye in all the earth. And behold a talent of lead was carried (Ibid.). What is the talent of lead, except the weight of sin from the same avarice? And behold one woman sitting in the midst of the amphora. Which woman, lest perhaps we should be able to doubt who she was, the angel straightway made known. For there soon follows: And he said: This is impiety. And he cast her into the midst of the amphora. Impiety is cast into the midst of the amphora, because doubtless impiety is always held in avarice. And he cast the leaden mass into her mouth. The leaden mass is cast into the mouth of the woman, because namely the impiety of avarice is burdened by the weight of its own sin. For if she did not covet those things which are below, she would by no means exist as impious towards God and her neighbor.

[Vet. XXVIII.] 64. Pride and vain glory are two principal vices. By these avarice is lifted up.--- And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw; and behold two women going forth, and the spirit was in their wings. What else do we understand in these two women, except two principal vices, namely pride and vain glory, which are joined to impiety without any doubt? Which are also narrated to have the spirit in their wings, because in their actions they serve the will of Satan. For the prophet calls him the spirit, of whom Solomon says: If the

spirit of him that hath power ascend upon thee, leave not thy place (Eccl. 10:4). And of whom the Lord says in the Gospel: When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry and waterless places (Matt. 12:43). The spirit is in their wings, because pride and vain glory through everything that they do are subservient to the will of Satan. And they had wings, as the wings of a kite. A kite always strives to lie in wait for the nature of the young. These women therefore have wings, as the wings of a kite, because their actions are beyond doubt similar to the devil, who always lies in wait for the life of the little ones. And they lifted up the amphora between heaven and earth. Pride and vain glory have this as their own, that they extol him whom they have infected in his own thought above other men, and now through the ambition of things, now through the desire of dignities, they lift up him whom they have once held captured as if into the height of honor. But he who is between heaven and earth, both deserts the lowest things, and by no means reaches the higher things.

65. They lift up therefore these women the amphora between heaven and earth, because pride and vain glory so lift up the mind captured through the avarice of honor, that despising any neighbors they as it were desert the lowest things, and boasting seek high things. But such as these while they are proud, both pass in mind those with whom they are, and are by no means joined to the superior citizens. The amphora therefore is said to be lifted up between earth

and heaven, because all the avaricious through pride and vain glory both despise the neighbors near them, and in no way apprehend the superior things which are beyond them. Between earth therefore and heaven they are carried, because they neither hold the equality of fraternity in the lowest things through charity, nor yet prevail by extolling themselves to reach the highest things. And I said to the angel who spoke in me: Whither do these carry the amphora? And he said to me: That a house may be built for it in the land of Shinar. For the same amphora a house is built in the land of Shinar. For Shinar is called their stench. And as a good odor is from virtue, Paul attesting, who says: He manifesteth the odor of his knowledge through us in every place, because we are the good odor of Christ to God (2 Cor. 2:14). So on the contrary stench is from vice. For the root of all evils is cupidity (1 Tim. 6:10). And because whatever evil is produced through avarice, it is worthy that the house of avarice should be constructed in stench. It is to be known also that Shinar is a very wide valley, in which a tower had begun to be built by the proud, which, the diversity of languages having been made, was destroyed. Which tower namely was called Babylon, for that same confusion of minds and languages. Not undeservedly is the amphora of avarice placed there, where Babylon, that is confusion, is built, because while through avarice and impiety it is certain that all evils arise, rightly this same avarice and impiety are said to dwell in confusion.

66. The Church asks that her sermons be inscribed in hearts heavy with avarice, and in hard ones.---These things we have said in few words by excess, that we might show the weight of sin expressed by the plate of lead. Which words nevertheless of blessed Job agree also to the holy Church, which keeping the two Testaments of the sacred eloquence, as it were a second time asks that her sermons be written, saying: Who will grant me, that my words may be written? who will give me, that they may be engraved in a book? Which because with a strong sentence she speaks now to hearts heavy through the weight of avarice, but now to hard hearts, she writes with an iron pen in a plate of lead or at least in flint. But by right we say that blessed Job uses the voices of our Redeemer and of His Church if we find something which he speaks openly concerning the same our Redeemer. [Vet. XXIX.] For by what means is it to be believed that he insinuates something through a figure from him, if he does not demonstrate him to us with open voices? But now let him open what he feels concerning him, and let him take away from us all the ambiguities of thoughts. It follows:

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CHAPTER LIV.

VERSE 25.---For I know that my Redeemer liveth.

67. Job openly foretold Christ the Redeemer.---For he who says not Creator, but Redeemer, openly announces Him who, after He created all things, that He might redeem us from captivity, appeared incarnate among us, and by His passion liberated us from perpetual death. And it is to be noted with how great faith he binds himself in the strength of His divinity, of whom it is said by Paul: That although he was crucified from weakness, but he liveth from the strength of God (2 Cor. 13:4). For he says: For I know that my Redeemer liveth. As if he said with open voices:

Let any infidel know Him scourged, derided, struck with palms, crowned with a thorny crown, smeared with spittle, crucified, dead; I believe with certain faith that He lives after death, I profess with a free voice, because my Redeemer liveth, who lay down among the hands of the impious. But what, blessed Job, through His resurrection dost thou also trust concerning the resurrection of thy flesh, profess, I pray, with an open voice. It follows:

CHAPTER LV

[Rec. XXVII].

IBID.---And in the last day I shall rise out of the earth.

68. Christ died that we might not fear to die; He rose again that we might trust that we can rise again.---Because, forsooth, the resurrection which He showed in Himself He will also at some time work in us. For the resurrection which He showed in Himself He promised to us, because the members follow the glory of their Head. Our Redeemer therefore took upon Him death, lest we should fear to die. He showed resurrection, that we might trust that we can rise again. Whence also He willed that the same death should not be for more than three days, lest if resurrection were delayed in Him, it should be altogether despaired of in us. Which is well said of Him by the Prophet: He shall drink of the torrent in the way, therefore shall He lift up the head (Psal. 110:7). For He deigned as it were to drink of a certain river of

our passion, not in a mansion, but in the way, because He touched death transitively, that is, for three days, and in that death which He touched, He by no means remained as we do until the end of the world. [Rec. XXVIII.] While therefore He rose again on the third day, He showed what should follow in His body, that is, the Church. For by example He showed what He promised in reward, that as the faithful should acknowledge that He Himself had risen, so they might hope for the rewards of resurrection in themselves at the end of the world. Behold, we through the death of the flesh remain in the dust until the end of the world, but He on the third day flourished from the dryness of death; that He might show to us the power of His divinity by the very innovation of His flesh. Which is well demonstrated through Moses by the twelve rods placed in the tabernacle (Num. 17:2). For when the priesthood of Aaron, who had been of the tribe of Levi, was despised, and the tribe was not believed worthy to offer burnt offerings, twelve rods, according to the twelve tribes, were commanded to be placed in the tabernacle; and behold, the rod of Levi flourished, and showed what power Aaron had in his office (Ibid., 8). By which sign what is hinted at, but that all of us who lie in death until the end of the world, remain as the other rods in dryness? But while all the rods remain in dryness, the rod of Levi returns to flower, because the body of the Lord, our true Priest forsooth, placed in the dryness of death, broke forth into the flower of resurrection. By which flower Aaron is rightly known

to be priest, because by this glory of resurrection our Redeemer, who was born of the tribe of Judah and Levi, is shown to be intercessor for us. Behold therefore already the rod of Aaron flowers after dryness; but the rods of the twelve tribes remain in dryness, because already indeed the body of the Lord lives after death, but our bodies are still delayed from the glory of resurrection until the end of the world. Whence he cautiously brought in this same delay, saying: And in the last day I shall rise out of the earth.

[Vet. XXX.] 69. The resurrection of many dead reinforces our confidence.---We have therefore the hope of our resurrection, considering the glory of our Head. But lest anyone should perhaps say in silent thought that He therefore rose from death, because He, being one and the same God and man, overcame by His divinity the death which He endured from His humanity, but that we, who are pure men, cannot rise from the damnation of death, rightly at the time of His resurrection the bodies of many saints also rose again, that He might both show in Himself an example to us, and strengthen us by the resurrection of others who were like to us through pure humanity, so that when man should despair of perceiving in himself what God-man had shown in Himself, he might presume that this could be done in himself, which he should know was done in those whom he should not doubt to have been pure men.

70. Faith in the resurrection is established.---But there are some who, considering that the

spirit is loosed from the flesh, that the flesh is turned into rottenness, that the rottenness is reduced to dust, that the dust is so dissolved into the elements that it is by no means seen by human eyes, despair of resurrection being possible; and while they look upon dry bones, they distrust that these can be clothed with flesh and flourish again to life. Who if they do not hold the faith of resurrection from obedience, certainly they ought to have held it from reason. For what does the world daily imitate in its elements but our resurrection? For through the moments of each day the temporal light itself as it were dies, while, the darkness of night coming on, that which was beheld is withdrawn, and as it were daily rises again, while the light taken from the eyes is restored again when the night is suppressed. Through the moments of the seasons also we see the trees lose the greenness of their leaves, and cease from the bringing forth of fruits; and behold suddenly as if from the withering wood, a kind of resurrection coming on, we see the leaves burst forth, the fruits grow large, and the whole tree to be clothed with renewed beauty. Unceasingly we see the small seeds of trees committed to the moisture of the earth, from which not long after we behold great trees arise, and bring forth leaves and apples. Let us consider therefore the small seed of any tree which is cast into the earth, that a tree may be produced from it, and let us comprehend, if we can, where in that so great brevity of the seed so immense a tree lay hid, which proceeded from it, where the wood, where

the bark, where the greenness of the leaves, where the abundance of fruits. Was any such thing discerned in the seed when it was cast into the earth? And yet the secret Artificer of all things wonderfully ordering all, both the roughness of the bark lay hid in the softness of the seed, and in its tenderness was concealed the strength of the oak, and in its dryness the abundance of fructification. What wonder therefore if He reforms into a man when He wills the very thin dust, reduced in the elements to our eyes, who reintegrates immense trees from the thinnest seeds? Because therefore we are created rational, we ought to gather the hope of our resurrection from the very appearance and contemplation of things. But because in us the sense of reason has grown torpid, the grace of the Redeemer came in for an example. For our Creator came, took upon Him death, showed resurrection, that we who would not hold the hope of resurrection from reason, might hold it from His help and example. Let therefore blessed Job say: I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And let whoever despairs of the power of resurrection being possible in himself, blush at the words of a faithful man placed in gentilism, and let him weigh with how great a weight of punishment he is to be struck, if he still believes not his own [resurrection], who has already known the resurrection of the Lord to be accomplished, if even he believed his own, who still hoped for the resurrection of the Lord Jesus to be accomplished.

[Vet. XXXI.] 1. The quality of bodies after resurrection.---But behold I hear of resurrection, yet I inquire the effect of the same resurrection. For I believe that I shall rise again, but I wish to hear of what sort. For I must know whether I shall rise in some other subtle body perhaps, or aerial, or in that body in which I die. But if I shall rise in an aerial body, it will no longer be I who rise. For how is there a true resurrection, if there cannot be true flesh? Open reason therefore suggests that if there shall not be true flesh, without doubt the resurrection will not be true. For neither can it be rightly called resurrection, where that which fell does not rise again. But take away from us these clouds of doubt, O blessed Job, and because by the received grace of the Holy Spirit thou hast begun to speak to us of the hope of our resurrection, openly indicate if our flesh truly rises again. It follows:

CHAPTER LVI

[Rec XXIX].

VERSE 26.---And again I shall be compassed with my skin.

72. The error of Eutychius, asserting that the body will be impalpable and more subtle than air, is refuted.---When "skin" is openly mentioned, all doubt of true resurrection is taken away, because our body will not be, as Eutychius bishop of the city of Constantinople wrote, impalpable in that glory of resurrection, more subtle than winds and air. For in that glory of resurrection

our body will be indeed subtle through the effect of spiritual power, but palpable through the truth of nature. Whence also our Redeemer, to the disciples doubting of His resurrection, showed His hands and side, offered His bones and flesh to be felt, saying: Handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have (Luke 24:39). To whom, when placed in the city of Constantinople, I had brought forward this testimony of evangelical truth to the same Eutychius, he said: Therefore the Lord did this, that He might remove the doubt of His resurrection from the hearts of the disciples. To whom I said: It is a very wonderful thing which thou assertest, that doubt should rise to us from that whence the hearts of the disciples were healed from doubt. For what worse can be said than that this should become to us a matter of doubt concerning His true flesh, by which His disciples were restored to faith from all doubt? For if He is asserted not to have had that which He showed, whence faith was confirmed to His disciples, thence ours is destroyed. Who also added, saying: He had a palpable body which He showed; but after the hearts of those feeling it were confirmed, all that in the Lord which could be felt was reduced into some subtlety. To these same things I replied, saying: It is written: Christ rising from the dead, dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him (Rom. 6:9). If therefore anything in His body could be changed after resurrection, against the truthful sentence of Paul, after resurrection the Lord returned to death. Which who even foolish would presume to

say, unless one who denies the true resurrection of His flesh? Then he objected to me, saying: Since it is written: Flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:50), by what reason is it to be believed that flesh truly rises again? To whom I said: in sacred eloquence flesh is called in one way according to nature, and in another way according to fault, or corruption. Flesh indeed according to nature, as it is written: This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh (Gen. 2:23); and The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (John 1:14). But flesh according to fault, as it is written: My spirit shall not remain in these men, because they are flesh (Gen. 6:3). And as the Psalmist says: He remembered that they are flesh: a spirit going, and not returning (Psal. 78:39). Whence also Paul said to the disciples: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit (Rom. 8:9). For neither were they not in the flesh, to whom he transmitted epistles, but because they had conquered the passions of carnal desires, being already free through the power of the spirit, they were not in the flesh. That therefore which the apostle Paul says: Because flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God, he wills flesh to be understood according to fault, not flesh according to nature. Whence also he presently showed that he spoke of flesh according to fault, adding: Neither shall corruption possess incorruption. In that glory therefore of the heavenly kingdom, flesh according to nature will be, but according to the desires of passions it will not be, because

the sting of death being overcome, it shall reign in eternal incorruption.

[Vet. XXXII.] 73. The responses and evasions of Eutychius are dissolved.---Which things being said, the same Eutychius replied that he presently consented, but yet he still denied that a palpable body could rise again. Who also in the book which he had written concerning resurrection had inserted the testimony of the apostle Paul saying: That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it first die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain (1 Cor. 15:36). Hastening forsooth to show this, that the flesh will be either impalpable, or will not be itself, while the holy Apostle, treating of the glory of resurrection, said that the body which shall be is not sown. But to these things it is more quickly replied. For the apostle Paul saying: Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, insinuates this which we see, because the grain is born with stalk and leaves, which is sown without stalk and leaves. He therefore in the increase of the glory of resurrection did not say that that which was was wanting to the grain of seed, but that that was present which was not. But this man, while he denies that the true body rises again, by no means says that that is present which was wanting, but that that is wanting which was.

74. The emperor thinks to commit the book of Eutychius to the flames. Eutychius dies, having abjured his error.---Then therefore being led into a long contention concerning this matter, we be-

gan to recoil with the heaviest feignedness from each other, when the emperor Tiberius Constantine of pious memory, receiving me and him in secret, recognized what discord was turned between us, and weighing the allegation of each part, destroying the same book which he had written concerning resurrection by his own allegations also, he deliberated that it ought to have been burned with flames. From which as we went out, a strong sickness followed me, and the same Eutychius a strong sickness and death followed. Who being dead, because there was almost no one who followed his sayings, I dissembled to pursue the things begun, lest I should seem to hurl words into ashes. While however he was still living, and I was sick with very strong fevers, whoever of my acquaintances went to him for the sake of salutation, as I learned by their relation, he held the skin of his hand before their eyes, saying: I confess that we shall all rise again in this flesh. Which, as they themselves confessed, he had been altogether accustomed before to deny.

75. Resurrection is proved from the words of Job.---But we, putting those things aside, let us subtly inquire in the speeches of blessed Job if the resurrection will be true and the body true in the resurrection. [Vet. XXXIII.] For behold already we cannot doubt of the hope of resurrection, while he says: And in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. He also took away doubt concerning the true restoration of the body, who said: And again I shall be compassed with my skin. Who still to take away the ambiguities of our thought adds:

VERSE 26.---And in my flesh I shall see God.

76. Job believed that the flesh was to be restored into a perfect state.---Behold resurrection, behold skin, behold flesh he confesses with open voices. What therefore remains whence our mind can doubt? If therefore this holy man, before the effect of the Lord's resurrection, believed that the flesh was to be restored into a perfect state, what will be the guilt of our doubt, if the true resurrection of the flesh is not believed even after the example of the Redeemer? For if after resurrection the body shall not be palpable, surely another rises than dies, which is a wicked thing to believe, because I die, and another should rise. Whence I pray thee, blessed Job, subjoin what thou feelest, and take away from us the scruple of this question. It follows:

CHAPTER LVII

[Rec. XXX].

VERSE 27.---Whom I myself shall see, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.

77. Our flesh after resurrection will be the same by nature, and different by glory.---For if, as some followers of errors think, after resurrection the body shall not be palpable, but the subtlety of an invisible body shall be called flesh, although it be not the substance of flesh, surely he is one who dies, and another who rises. But blessed Job destroys this sentence for them with a truthful voice, who says: Whom I myself shall see, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. But

we, following the faith of blessed Job, and truly believing the body of our Redeemer to be palpable after resurrection, confess that our flesh after resurrection will be both the same and different: the same by nature, different by glory; the same by truth, different by power. It will be therefore subtle, because also incorruptible. It will be palpable, because it will not lose the essence of true nature. But the holy man adds with what hope he holds the same confidence of resurrection, with how great certainty he expects it. It follows:

CHAPTER LVIII.

IBID.---This my hope is laid up in my bosom.

78. Job is most certain of his resurrection.---We believe that we have nothing more certain than this which we hold in our bosom. He therefore held his hope laid up in his bosom, because he assumed a true certainty concerning the hope of resurrection. But because he has made known the coming day of resurrection, now already either by his own voice, or in the type of the holy and universal Church, he reproves the deeds of the wicked, and foretells the judgment which follows in the day of resurrection. For he presently adds:

CHAPTER LIX.

VERSES 28, 29.---Why then do ye say now: Let us persecute him, and let us find the root of the word against him? Flee ye then from the face of

the sword, because the sword is the avenger of iniquities, and know ye that there is a judgment.

79. From the judgment which is to follow the resurrection, he urges the iniquitous to repentance.---For by the former sentence he reproved the deeds of the iniquitous, but by the following he made known the punishments from the divine judgment. For he says: Why then do ye say now: Let us persecute him, and let us find the root of the word against him? Any perverse persons, because with an evil study they hear things well brought forth, and desire to find an entrance of accusation in the tongue of the just, what else do they seek but the root of the word against him, from which forsooth they may take the origin of speaking, and expand the branches of perverse loquacity in accusation? But the holy man, when he suffers such things from the perverse, does not grieve against them, but rather for them, and reproves things evilly thought, and shows to them the evils which they should flee, saying: Flee ye then from the face of the sword, because the sword is the avenger of iniquities, and know ye that there is a judgment. Every one who acts perversely, by that very thing by which he despises to fear this, knows not that there is a judgment of God. For if he knew that this was to be feared, he would not do those things which are to be punished in it. For there are many who know by word only that there is a final judgment, but by acting perversely they testify that they know it not. For because he dreads this not as he ought, he has not yet learned with how great

a whirlwind of terror it comes. For if he knew how to weigh the weight of the tremendous examination, he would surely by fearing provide against the day of wrath. To flee also the face of the sword is to appease the sentence of strict animadversion before it appears. For the terror of the judge cannot be avoided except before the judgment. Now he is not discerned, but is appeased by prayers. But when he shall sit in that tremendous examination, he both can be seen, and can no longer be appeased, because the deeds of the perverse, which he long sustained in silence, he will at once repay all together in anger. Whence it is necessary now to fear the judge, while he does not yet exercise judgment, while he long sustains, while he yet tolerates the evils which he sees, lest when once he has shaken his hand in the retribution of vengeance, he should strike so much more strictly in the judgment, as he waited longer before the judgment.

BOOK FIFTEEN.

In which a brief explanation of the 20th and 21st chapters of the book of Job is completed.

[Vet. et Rec. I.] That the friends of blessed Job could by no means have been perverse, the words of Zophar the Naamathite testify, who hearing from his mouth the terror of the coming judgment, presently adds:

CHAPTER ONE.

CHAP. XX, VERSE 2.---Therefore my various thoughts succeed one another, and my mind is snatched into different things.

1. With how great terror we ought to be affected from the assiduous consideration of it.---As if he said with open voices: Because I consider the terror of the last judgment, therefore I am confounded in fear by the tumults of thoughts. For the mind expands itself so much more in thought, as it weighs that that which is imminent is terrible. And the mind is snatched into different things, when now the evils which it has done, now the good which it neglected to do, now the reprehensible things in which it is, now the right things which it beholds to be still wanting to itself, it weighs with solicitous dread. But the friends of blessed Job, although taught by the

assiduity of his life they knew how to live well, yet not knowing how to weigh the judgments of God subtly, they did not believe that any of the just could receive evils here. Whence also they suspected the same holy man to be iniquitous, whom they saw scourged, and from this suspicion it was worked that they should also fall into his rebuke; to which rebuke however they descend as if under a kind of reverence. Whence Zophar subjoins saying:

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 3.---I will hear the doctrine wherewith thou reprovest me, and the spirit of my understanding shall answer me.

2. Many hear warnings to judge, not to follow.---As if he said openly: I hear thy words indeed, but whether they are rightly brought forth, I discern by the spirit of my understanding. For they who despise the words of a teacher, take his doctrine not for a help, but for an occasion of strife, that they may rather judge what is heard than follow it. These things therefore being premised under a kind of moderation, he breaks out now into open reproach of the blessed man, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. II].

VERS. 4, 5.---This I know from the beginning, since man was placed upon the earth, that the

praise of the impious is short, and the joy of the hypocrite like a point.

3. Whatever is finished is short.---It is clear now that, puffed up with the spirit of his own understanding, he turns those sentences which he brings forward against the impious into reproofs of blessed Job. For whom he saw first acting justly and afterwards enduring punishments, he thinks all that he saw in him was hypocrisy, because forsooth he did not believe that a just servant could be afflicted by a just God. But let us follow those same sentences of his, which he brought forth as right but not rightly, weighing them with careful attention; and despising what he speaks false against blessed Job, let us behold how true things he would say if he spoke these against the impious. He says therefore: This I know from the beginning, since man was placed upon the earth, that the praise of the impious is short. [Vet. II.] Being about to speak of the brevity of the present life, he brought back the eye of the heart to the start of our origin, that from things past he might collect how null are those things which seem to be something while they are. For if from the very rise of the human race even to this time in which we are we lead the eyes of the mind, we see how short everything has been that could be finished. For let us suppose any man to lead his life from the first day of the world's creation even to this present day, yet today to finish that same life which he seemed to lead so long, behold the end is present, past things are now nothing, because all have passed away. There is nothing future in

this world, because no moment, even the shortest, remains for life. Where then is the long time which, caught between the beginning and the end, is so consumed as if it had never been even short?

4. Many care not to be, but to be called good. The joy of the hypocrite passes, the punishment remains. The impious therefore, because they love the present life, being doubtless puffed up in it, seek to receive praise. They are extolled by the favors of the tongue, and they desire not to be good, but to be called so. Which praise indeed they think to be long while they attain it, but understand to have been short while they lose it. For in the end it is shown to them how nothing it was which they loved. Whence it is rightly said against the same impious: This I know from the beginning, since man was placed upon the earth, that the praise of the impious is short. Where it is aptly subjoined: And the joy of the hypocrite like a point. Often a hypocrite, while he feigns himself holy, and fears not at all to show himself iniquitous, is honored by all, and the glory of sanctity is deferred to him by those who see the outward things, but cannot look through the inward. Whence it comes to pass that he rejoices in the first seat, is merry in the first place at the table, is puffed up in the first salutation, is elevated in the reverent voice of those obeying, and swells with proud thought in the service of subjects, as also by the voice of Truth it is said of such: But all their works they do to be seen by men. For they broaden their phylacteries, and en-

large their fringes. And they love the first places at suppers, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market-place, and to be called by men, Rabbi (Matth. xxiii. 5). But what will this their joy be compared to eternity, when, at the rushing in of the moment of death, it is so consumed as if it had not been at all? The gladness of which joy indeed has passed away, and the punishment remains, and when the thing is lost, the cause lasts. But it is well said: The joy of the hypocrite like a point. For in a point the style is raised as soon as it is placed, nor is any delay made that it may be drawn along to express a line. The joy therefore of the hypocrite is after the likeness of a point, because it appears for a moment, but disappears forever; and as the style in a point is raised while it is placed, so the hypocrite loses the joys of the present life while he touches them. Concerning which it is also added:

CHAPTER IV

[Rec. III].

VERS. 6, 7.---If his pride shall ascend even to heaven, and his head shall touch the clouds, he shall be lost in the end like a dunghill.

5. The joys of the present life, which the unjust make so much of, the just account as dung.--- The pride of the hypocrite is said to ascend even to heaven, when his elation seems to lead a heavenly life. Whose head also touches as it were the clouds, when the principal part, namely his intellect, is believed to be equalled to the merits

of the preceding saints. But in the end he is lost as it were a dunghill, because in his death when he is led to torments, full of the dung of vices, he is trodden down by malignant spirits. [Vet. III.] For the joys of the present life, which the unjust esteem as great goods, the just account as dung. Whence it is written: For the dung of oxen the slothful man is stoned (Ecclus. xxii. 2). He therefore who would not follow God, becomes slothful from the love of eternal life. And as often as he is struck by the loss of temporal things, he is doubtless afflicted by those things which just men despise as dung. He therefore who is worn away by the stroke of earthly things, what else is he but stoned with the dung of oxen? And rightly is the hypocrite said to be like a dunghill, because while he desires to have temporal glory, now by thought he swells within himself, now he envies the same glory in others, and mocks those who truly have it. With as many vices as he is full of, so with as it were so many dunghills does his breast stink in the sight of the eternal Judge. Let it be said therefore: If his pride shall ascend even to heaven, and his head shall touch the clouds, he shall be lost in the end like a dunghill. Who, although he feigns that he leads a heavenly life, although he ostentatiously shows his intellect to be like to true preachers, yet is lost in the end like a dunghill, because his mind is condemned for the stench of his own vices. It follows:

CHAPTER V.

VERS. 7.---And they who had seen him shall say: Where is he?

6. The life of hypocrites is detected in the end.---For the most part the life of hypocrites, being reprobate even by all, is known in the end, that by signs now more open it may be shown who they were. They therefore who now saw him puffed up, shall say of him when extinct: Where is he? Because he appears neither here where he had been puffed up, nor in the rest of eternity, in which he was thought to be. Concerning the brevity of whose life it is still aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. IV].

VERS. 8.---As a dream flying away he shall not be found, he shall pass away like a nocturnal vision.

7. The life of a hypocrite is like a phantasm.---What is the life of a hypocrite but a certain vision of a phantasm, which shows that in an image which it has not from truth? Whence also it is rightly compared to a dream, because all praise and glory are as it were lost by him while they are held. For often in a nocturnal vision some poor men wonder at themselves being made rich, they see honors deferred to them, they consider heaps of riches, a multitude of followers, beauty of garments, abundance of food to be present to them; they rejoice that they have escaped penury, which they were tolerating with a groan; but suddenly, when they awake, they find how false

was that which they rejoiced in, and they regret having awoken, because true want holds them waking. So the minds of hypocrites, while one thing is what they do, and another what they show to men, receive praises from the very ostentation of sanctity, are preferred in the estimation of men to many better ones, and while they are inwardly proud in their own silent thought, they show themselves humble outwardly. And when they are immoderately praised by men, they think themselves to be such also with God, as they rejoice to have become known to men. Whence it comes to pass that they even presume that they shall receive the rewards of eternal life, and they who here exult in human favors, doubt not at all that they shall there have rest. But in the midst of these things the secret hour of vocation creeps on, and when they close the eyes of the flesh, they open those of the mind, and as soon as they have received eternal punishments, they see there that they were rich in the estimation of virtues in dreams. Well therefore is it said of this hypocrite: He shall pass away like a nocturnal vision. Because this that he sees himself for a moment rich in human estimations, is from the ostentation of a phantasm, not from the solidity of virtue. For when his mind awakes in the death of the flesh, he knows without doubt that he saw the favors of men around him while sleeping. It follows:

CHAPTER VII

[Rec. V].

VERS. 9.---The eye which had seen him shall not see him, neither shall his place any more behold him.

8. The tongues of flatterers profit him nothing in judgment.---What is the place of the hypocrite but the heart of flatterers? For there he rests where he has found favors. The eye therefore which had seen him shall not see him, because, being withdrawn by death, he is hidden from his foolish lovers, who had been accustomed to behold him with admiration. Neither shall his place any more behold him, because the tongues of flatterers do not follow him to judgment with their favors. But yet as long as he lives, he ceases not to teach even his followers those things which he himself does, and through the depravity of his own error he generates others also to that simulation which he exhibits. Concerning whom it is here aptly added:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 10.---His children shall be worn away by want.

9. Hypocrites being multiplied outwardly, become empty inwardly.---It is written: Wisdom will not enter into a malevolent soul (Wisd. i. 4). And by the Psalmist it is said: The rich have lacked and suffered hunger (Psal. xxxiii. 11). For if their want and hunger were spoken of as to outward famine, surely they would not be rich who lacked the bread of the body. But because while they are multiplied outwardly, they become empty inwardly, they are recorded to be both rich and

needy at the same time, because forsooth they deserve not in the least to be satisfied with the bread of wisdom. The children therefore of this hypocrite are worn away by want, because they who are born in hypocrisy from the imitation of him, while they hold not the solidity of truth, fail in the want of the heart.

CAPUT IX

[Vet. IV].

IBID.---And his hands shall restore to him his sorrow.

10. Eternal punishment will be paid to hypocrites as a kind of debt.---What is designated by the hands but works? His hands therefore shall restore to him sorrow, because he shall receive just damnation from iniquitous operation. But it is well said, not that they shall give, but restore, because his perverse actions shall pay him eternal punishment as a kind of debt. But before he arrives at eternal punishments, let him add more fully what kind of person he shows himself here. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

VERS. 11.---His bones shall be filled with the vices of his youth, and they shall sleep with him in the dust.

11. Vices never desert hypocrites.---The origin of a depraved beginning multiplies the causes of fault even by presumption. For while anyone

has begun to do evil, by use it now grows for the worse in that which he had begun. What therefore is the youth of this hypocrite but the beginning of depravity? For in youth lust already begins to grow hot. And then the hypocrite has youth, when he has begun to desire and embrace the lust of glory. Which in him, while the bland fomentations of flatterers multiply it, they make more robust, and turn it as it were into bones. For this which he began badly, he daily makes stronger by custom for the worse. Let it be said therefore: His bones shall be filled with the vices of his youth, because the hard customs of depravities in him were taken from the vice of a most wicked beginning. Whence it is written in the Proverbs: A young man according to his way, even when he has grown old, shall not depart from it (Prov. xxii. 6). Which bones indeed shall sleep with him in the dust, because iniquitous customs endure in him so far as to draw him along to the dust of death. For for the bones or vices to sleep with him in the dust, is for them not to desert him even to the dust, that is, by no means to cease from iniquity even to death. Those depraved customs therefore hold him, which once began, and daily exist more hard. And they sleep with him in the dust, because they are not finished except with his life. But these things may be understood also in another way.

[Vet. V.] 12. Hypocrites feigning to have many things which they have not, lose even those which they have.---For a hypocrite sometimes has something strong and valid in his operation;

but while he feigns himself to have many good things which he has not, he loses even those things which he has. Whence it is well said now: His bones shall be filled with the vices of his youth. Because since he does many things childishly, being light and changeable, even in those things which he has done strongly, he becomes soft in vice. Which bones of his indeed shall sleep with him in the dust, because forsooth as all that simulation which he acts is like dust, so also if he has anything valid in him, it is emptied of all solidity, so that through the arrogance of virtue he loses this also, which could have been of virtue in him. For the bones to sleep with him in the dust, therefore, is for even those things well done to perish together with his depraved acts. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 12.---For when evil shall be sweet in his mouth, he shall hide it under his tongue.

13. It is the part of the hypocrite to pretend sweet things in words, and to plot perversities in thoughts.---Evil is sweet in the mouth of the hypocrite, because iniquity is sweet to him in his mind. For the mouth is the thought of the heart, concerning which it is written: Deceitful lips in the heart, and they have spoken evil with the heart (Psal. xi. 3). But this evil, which is sweet in the mouth of the hypocrite, is hidden under his tongue, because the roughness of malice which lies hid in the mind, is covered under the cloak of bland speech. For the evil would be in the tongue, and not under the tongue, if the

hypocrite speaking should open the malice of his depravity. But as most of the just, when they see some acting perversely, who are to be smitten with hard rebukes, take roughness in the tongue, but cover the benignity of their mind under the tongue. Whence also it is said by the voice of the Bridegroom of the holy Church: Honey and milk are under thy tongue (Cant. iv. 11). For they who would not open the sweetness of their mind to the weak, but speaking smite them with a certain roughness, and yet amidst the rough words as it were secretly interpose something of sweetness, these namely have sweetness not in the tongue, but under the tongue, because amidst the hard things which they bring forth they emit certain bland and sweet things, by which the mind of the sorrowing may be refreshed from benignity. So all the perverse, because they have evil not in the tongue, but under the tongue, pretend sweet things in their speeches, and plot perversities in their thoughts. For hence it is that Joab held the chin of Amasa with his right hand, but secretly putting his left to the sword, he poured out his bowels (II Sam. xx. 9). For to hold the chin with the right hand is as it were to flatter from benignity. But he puts his left to the sword, who secretly strikes from malice. Hence also concerning their head himself it is written: Under his tongue is labor and sorrow (Psal. x. 7). For he who does not openly show the evils which he thinks, does not exert the labor and sorrow of those whose death he desires in the tongue, but presses

it under the tongue. But it is well subjoined concerning this hypocrite:

CHAPTER XII

[Rec. VI].

VERS. 13.---He will spare it, and will not leave it, and will hide it in his throat.

14. It is the part of the hypocrite never to confess things committed.---For he spares the evil which he loves, because he does not persecute this in himself by repenting. Whence also it is added: He will not leave it. For if he wished to leave it, he would by no means spare it, because he would persecute it. But he hides this in the throat, because he so preserves it in thought, as never to bring it forth in voice. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 14.---His bread in his belly shall be turned into the gall of asps within him.

15. The glory in which the hypocrite delights is converted into the gall of asps.---That which bread is in the belly, is the satiety of temporal delight in the mind. Let the hypocrite, then, be satiated now with the praise bestowed on him, let him be delighted with honors; his bread in his belly shall be turned into the gall of asps within him, because the satiety of transitory delight will be turned into bitterness in the end of retribution; and it is recognized to have been the persuasion of the gall of asps, that is, of

malignant spirits, which was here believed to be the praise of glory. For then the wicked see that they have been infected with the venom of the ancient serpent, when, delivered over to the avenging flames, they are tormented with the same persuader of theirs. This bread, therefore, tastes of one thing in the mouth, but of another in the belly, because the joy of transitory delight is sweet while it is being acted out here as if by chewing; but it becomes bitter in the belly, because after the joy is completed, it is swallowed down for punishment.

[Vet. VI.] 16. The hypocrite desires to be instructed in the mysteries of Sacred Scripture, not that he may live by them, but that he may be extolled. Or certainly, because bread is not inconveniently understood as the understanding of Sacred Scripture, which refreshes the mind and provides it with the strength for good work, and often the hypocrite also studies to be instructed in the mysteries of sacred eloquence (*sacri eloquii*); yet not that he may live by them, but that he may appear to other men how learned he is; his bread in his belly shall be turned into the gall of asps within him, because while he glories in the knowledge of the sacred law, he converts for himself the drink of life into a cup of poison; and thence the reprobate dies, whence he seemed to be instructed for life. Nor is this inconveniently understood, that sometimes the hypocrite, while he studies the word of doctrine for display, blinded by divine judgment, understands perversely this very word which he evilly

seeks. But when he falls into the error of heresy, it happens to him that just as from the gall of asps, so the unhappy man dies from bread; and in his doctrine he finds death, because in the words of life he by no means sought life. But it often happens that the eloquence of divine admonition, even if the hypocrite understands it rightly, because he by no means preserves it in work, he loses these things even before he finishes the course of the present life, so that he loses knowing what by knowing he refused to do. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV

[Vec. VII.]

VERS. 15.---The riches which he hath swallowed he shall vomit up, and God shall draw them out of his belly.

17. By contemning good work, the hypocrite often loses even knowledge.---The hypocrite wishes to know the divine eloquence (*divina eloquia*), and yet not to do it. He wishes to speak learnedly, and not to live so. For the reason, therefore, that he does not act what he knows, he loses even this which he knows, so that because he does not join the pure operation of his knowledge, by contemning the purity of good work he loses also knowledge. The riches, therefore, of the sacred law, which by reading he swallowed down, by forgetting he vomits up, and God draws them out of his belly, because that which he refused to observe, by a just judgment

He plucks out of his memory, lest he should hold the precepts of God at least in his tongue, which he has not preserved in his life. Whence it is said by the Prophet: But to the sinner God hath said: Why dost thou declare my justices, and take my covenant through thy mouth (Psal. xlix. 16)? Which words of doctrine also, if ever it happens that the hypocrite seems to retain them in his mouth even unto the end, he will be the more damned thence, whence even the evil man is by no means deprived of the good gift of God. For it is written: To them that remember His commandments to do them (Psal. cii. 18). He, therefore, who remembers His commandments in memory, but by no means does them, this man holds in the words of doctrine the sentences by which he is to be damned.

[Rec. VIII.] 18. Sacred eloquence is for eternal damnation to those who either will not know it, or knowing it contemn it. Hence indeed it is written in Zechariah: What seest thou, Zechariah? And I said: I see a flying roll, the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. And he said to me: This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth, for every thief, as it is there written, shall be judged (Zach. v. 2). For what is the flying roll, but Sacred Scripture? Which while it speaks of heavenly things, lifts up the intention to the higher things of our mind, because while we behold it to be above us, we avoid attending to, that is, desiring, the lowest things. [Vet. VII.] Which is said to have a breadth of ten cubits, but a length of twenty, because the

breadth of our operation is single, and the long-suffering (*longanimitas*) of hope is extended to double, since for our good work both rest of mind is prepared for us here, and eternal joys there, the Truth attesting, who says: Whosoever shall leave house, or lands, and the rest, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and in the future shall possess eternal life (Matth. xix. 29; Luke xviii. 30). For the number of an hundred becomes perfect by the ten being tenfold. He, therefore, receives an hundredfold here, who although he should have nothing, yet by that very perfection of mind already seeks to have nothing in this world. Because, therefore, by this a double is returned to us for a single, rightly is this roll extended in length through twenty cubits, which is widened through ten. But because these very sacred words are for eternal damnation to those who either will not know them, or certainly knowing them contemn them, it is rightly said of this roll: This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth (Zach. v. 3). And why it is called a curse, he adds: Because every thief, as it is there written, shall be judged. The hypocrite, therefore, because he contemns living according to the words of the law which he knows, and seeks favors from doctrine, shall be judged a thief, because by this that he speaks just things, he snatches for himself the praise of the life of the just. Concerning whom it is still well subjoined:

CHAPTER XV

[Rec. IX].

VERS. 16.---He shall suck the head of asps, and the viper's tongue shall kill him.

19. In temptation the devil first creeps in gently, afterwards he pulls violently.---The asp is a small serpent, but the viper is of a more prolonged body; and asps produce eggs, and from their eggs their young are procreated, but vipers when they have conceived, their young rage in the belly, who, having burst the sides of their mothers, proceed from their bellies. Whence also the viper is so named because it brings forth by force (*vi pariat*). Therefore the viper is so born that it goes out violently, and is produced with the extinction of its mother. What then are figured by small asps but the latent suggestions of unclean spirits, which first creep into the hearts of men with a small persuasion? But what is designated by the viper's tongue, but the violent temptation of the devil? For first he creeps in gently, but afterwards he even pulls violently. Therefore he sucks the head of asps, because the beginning of a hidden suggestion is first born small in the heart, but the viper's tongue kills him, because afterwards the captured mind is slain by the venom of a violent temptation. First the unclean spirits speak to the heart of man with subtle counsels, who while they gently persuade, as it were pour out the venom of asps. Whence it is written: They have broken the eggs of asps, and have woven the webs of the spider. He that shall eat of their eggs shall die, and that which is warmed shall break out into a cockatrice (*regulum*) (Isai. lix. 5). [Vet. VIII.] To break the eggs

of asps for wicked men is to open by perverse works the counsels of malignant spirits, which lie hid in their hearts. To weave also the webs of the spider is to work any temporal things for the concupiscence of this world. Which while they are solidified by no stability, the wind of mortal life undoubtedly snatches them away. But it is well added: He that shall eat of their eggs shall die (Ibid.), because he who receives the counsels of unclean spirits, kills in himself the life of the soul. And that which is warmed shall break out into a cockatrice (*regulum*), because the counsel of the malignant spirit which is covered in the heart is nourished to full iniquity (*iniquitatem*). For the cockatrice (*regulus*) is called the king of serpents. But who is the head of the reprobate, but the Antichrist? Therefore that which shall have been warmed shall break out into a cockatrice (*regulus*), because he who receives in himself the counsels of the asp to be nourished, having been made a member of the wicked head, grows into the body of the Antichrist. Concerning this hypocrite, therefore, it is said: He shall suck the head of asps, and the viper's tongue shall kill him, because when he willingly receives the wicked suggestion of the ancient enemy, he afterwards delivers himself up vanquished to his violent temptations. Whence also in paradise, he brought words of bland persuasion to the man while standing (Gen. iii. 5 seq.); but him whom once he snatched to consent, now even while resisting he pulls, and almost violently kills him vanquished by the delights of his corruption. But

perhaps we are able to understand these very things even through a contrary interpretation. For because the asp kills quickly with its venom, but the viper more slowly, by the asp is designated a violent and sudden temptation, but by the viper a gentle and long-lasting one. Whence also to the one death is said to be in the sucking of the head, but to the viper in the tongue, because a sudden temptation often kills the unexpecting mind as soon as it arises; but a long temptation, because it suggests perverse things by persuading for a longer time, as it were from the tongue the viper kills. And because every hypocrite, penetrated by the suggestion of unclean spirits, as it were by the venom of serpents, by no means considers what are the heavenly gifts of the Holy Spirit, while he spreads the intention of the heart in exterior favors, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. X].

VERS. 17.---He shall not see the rivulets of the river, the torrents of honey and butter.

20. The hypocrite is devoid of faith, hope, and charity.---In the Gospel the Lord says: He that believeth in me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water (John vii. 38). Where the Evangelist subjoins, saying: But this He said of the Spirit, which they that believed in Him were to receive. The rivulets of the river, therefore, are the gifts of the Holy Spirit. A rivulet of the river is charity (*charitas*), a rivulet of

the river is faith, a rivulet of the river is hope. But since every hypocrite loves neither God nor his neighbor, while he seeks the transitory glory of the world, he does not see the rivulets of the river, because he is not infused with the irrigation of charity. The hypocrite, while he seeks present gains, despises future gifts, and not having faith, he does not see the rivulet of the river in his mind, because faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things not appearing (Hebr. xi. 1). And while the hypocrite retains those things which are seen, he neglects the hope of those things which are not seen. Therefore he does not see the rivulet of the river through desire, because he intends only visible things. And it is written: For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for (Rom. viii. 24)? He would, therefore, have seen the rivulets of the river, if he had closed his eyes to the glory of the present world, and opened them to the love of the heavenly country (*coelestis patriae*). And it is to be noted that he says not rivers, but rivulets (*rivulos*). For by the rivulets of the river can be understood those spiritual gifts which run so subtly from heavenly things into the mind of the lover, that they cannot be fulfilled through the mouth of the flesh. For often the soul of the lover is filled with such a gift of contemplation (*contemplationis*), that it is able to see what it is not able to speak. But the torrent river is that very inundation of the Holy Spirit, which is collected in the soul of the contemplator by an exuberant infusion, when

the mind is filled more than it is sufficient to understand.

[Vet. IX.] And it is to be known that when the grace of the Holy Spirit infuses us, it fills us likewise with honey and butter. For honey falls from above, but butter is collected from the milk of animals. Therefore honey is from the air, but butter is from the flesh. But the Only-begotten of the Highest Father, although He be God above all, was made man among all. Who when He filled us with the sweetness of His divinity and the mystery of His incarnation, satiated us likewise with honey and butter. Because, therefore, the spirit of Christ gladdens the mind which it has filled, both with the sweetness of His divinity and with the faith of His incarnation, these rivulets of the torrent river are mentioned to be of honey and butter together, because both from the knowledge of God they refresh the mind with high sweetness, and from the grace of the incarnation they anoint it with the mystery of the charism. But because this hypocrite, poured out in exterior favors, does not perceive these internal gifts, he adds to what things he may tend after punishments, when it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XVII

[Rec. XI].

VERS. 18.---He shall pay for all that he hath done, and yet he shall not be consumed.

21. The damned are always dying, yet never to be consumed by death.---For he pays in torment

those desires which he kept here illicitly; and, delivered over to the avenging flames, he is always dying, because he is always preserved in death. For he is not consumed in death, because if the life of the dying were consumed, the punishment would also end with the life. But that he may be tormented without end, he is compelled to live without end in punishment, so that he whose life was dead here in guilt, there his death may live in punishment. Let him say, therefore: He shall pay for all that he hath done, and yet he shall not be consumed, because he is tormented, and not extinguished; he dies, and lives; he fails, and subsists; he is always ending, and is without end. These things are very terrible by hearing alone, how much more by suffering! But because the multitude of his iniquity (*iniquitatis*) demands that he can never be without punishments, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

IBID.---According to the multitude of his inventions, so also shall he suffer.

22. They are tormented for punishment with new inventions, who found many things for guilt.---Because he found many things for guilt, he is tormented with new inventions in punishment. For what he could not suspect here, that he feels there when delivered over to vengeance. For as the elect exercised in good works sometimes study to do more than the Lord deigned to command them (for virginity of the flesh was by no means commanded, but only praised; for

if it were commanded, surely marriage would already be believed to be a fault, and yet many are powerful in the virtue of virginity, so that namely they may impend more in obedience than they received in precept), so for the most part all the perverse are exercised in wicked acts, so that they find more to do in perverse operation than they could receive examples of iniquity (*iniquitatis*) from the use of the reprobate. Whence also they are smitten with the torment of more ample retribution, because they themselves have found more wicked actions from themselves, for which they ought to be smitten. [Vet. X, Rec. XII.] Well therefore is it said: According to the multitude of his inventions, so also shall he suffer. For he would not find new iniquity unless he also sought it; and he would not seek it, unless from study he hastened to perpetrate it. Therefore the excess of evil thought is weighed in his torment, and he receives the pain of worthy retribution. And although the pain of all the damned be infinite, yet they receive heavier torments who have found many things in iniquities from their own desires also. But because Zophar brought in the punishment of this hypocrite, he immediately joins the guilt, nor does he narrate any one guilt, but that from which all arise. For it is written: The root of all evils is cupidity (*cupiditas*) (I Tim. vi. 10). He, therefore, to whom cupidity is said to dominate, is without doubt shown to be subject to all evils. For he subjoins:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 19, 20.---Because breaking he hath made bare the house of the poor, he hath snatched, and hath not built it, nor is his belly satiated.

23. He is punished with eternal punishment who has not bestowed his own; how much more he who has snatched the things of others? Avarice grows by the obtained things desired, it is not extinguished.---He breaks and makes bare the house of the poor, who does not blush to spoil also through avarice (*avaritiam*) him whom he crushes through power. He snatches it, and does not build it. As if it were openly said: He who ought to have built it, moreover snatches it. For the Lord, coming in judgment, is about to say to the reprobate: I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not, and the rest (Matth. xxv. 42). From which guilt it is subjoined: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Ibid.). If therefore he is punished with so great a punishment, who is convicted not to have given his own, with what punishment is he to be smitten, who is proved to have taken away the things of others? He snatched, therefore, and did not build it, because he not only bestowed nothing of his own, but also took what was another's. But it is well subjoined: Nor is his belly satiated. For the belly of the wicked (*iniqui*) is avarice (*avaritia*), because in it is collected whatever is swallowed by perverse desire. For it is clear that

avarice is not extinguished by the things desired, but is increased. For after the manner of fire, when it has received the wood which it may consume, it grows; and whence the flame seems for a moment to be compressed, thence a little after it is seen to be dilated. And often Almighty God, when He is vehemently angry with an avaricious mind, first permits all things to be at hand for it according to its wish, and afterwards He withdraws them through vengeance, so that it must tolerate eternal punishments for them. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 20.---And when he shall have what he desired, he shall not be able to possess it.

24. It is a sign of greater wrath, when that is granted which is evilly desired.---For it is a sign of greater wrath (*iracundiae*) when that is granted which is evilly desired, and thence sudden vengeance follows, because he has also obtained that which he desired while God was angry. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist, when the people are reported to have evilly desired the meat of the flesh: While their meat was yet in their mouth, and the wrath (*ira*) of God came upon them, and slew the most fat of them (Psal. lxxvii. 31). For divine judgments are wont to appear more slowly, when they are hindered, lest evil vows ought to be fulfilled. For by how much more quickly an evil vow is permitted to be fulfilled, for the most part by so much more swiftly is it punished. Whence therefore the hypocrite

is speedily multiplied that he may be powerful, thence it is acted with celerity that he may not be, because also the shrubs which grow more slowly endure for years; and those which profit in a short time wither more swiftly, and as it were while they hasten to be, they tend to not being. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI

[Vet. XI].

VERS. 21.---There remained nothing of his meat.

25. His meat is all this that he desired with perverse longing. But when the hypocrite is struck, nothing remains of his meat, because when he is led to eternal punishments, he is alienated from all the goods which he had possessed here. Whence also it is still subjoined:

IBID.---Therefore nothing shall continue of his goods.

For if anything of his goods continued for him, he would take with him what he had had. But because, encompassing all things, he refused to fear the Judge, having been withdrawn from this life, he goes naked to the Judge. To whom, however, being wicked (*iniquo*), it is less for retribution that he is tormented in the subsequent punishment, if at least in this life he is permitted to be free. But there is no liberty in guilt, because it is written: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (II Cor. iii. 17). And for the most part, its

own guilt becomes a punishment for the perverse mind. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII

[Rex. XIII].

VERS. 22.---When he shall be satiated, he shall be straitened (*arctabitur*).

26. The anguish of the rich from satiety.---For first he pants through avarice (*avaritiam*) to gather what he has desired; and when he has gathered many things as if in a certain belly of avarice, being satiated he is straitened, because while he is anxious how he may guard the things acquired, his very satiety narrows him. For the field of a certain rich man had brought forth abundant fruits, but because he had not where he might store so many, he said: What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said: This will I do, I will pull down my barns, and build greater (Luke xii. 17). He therefore who, being straitened from abundance, said: What shall I do? was seething as if pressed by much food. Let us consider with how many vows he desired that his field should bring forth abundant fruits. Behold, however, the vows are fulfilled, because the field had brought forth abundant fruits. But because the places do not suffice for storing them, the multiplied rich man knows not what he may do. O anguish born from satiety! The mind of the avaricious is straitened by the fertility of the field. For saying: What shall I do? surely he indicates that, pressed by

the affections of his own vows, he was laboring under a certain bundle of things. Well therefore is it said: When he shall be satiated, he shall be straitened (*arctabitur*). Because the mind of the avaricious, which first had sought rest from abundance, afterwards labored more heavily for guarding. Whence here also it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII.

IBID.---He shall be troubled (*aestuabit*), and every sorrow shall rush in upon him.

27. Anxiety in acquiring and guarding riches is a prelude to eternal punishments. For he first had sorrow in the very fatigue of his concupiscence, how he might seize what he desired, how he might take away some things by flatteries (*blandimentis*), others by terrors; but after he has arrived at his desire through the acquired things, another sorrow fatigues him, so that with solicitous fear he may guard what he remembers to have been acquired with heavy labor. Hence on every side he fears waylayers, and greatly fears to suffer that which he himself did to others. He dreads another more powerful, lest he sustain him as violent; but when he beholds a poor man, he suspects a thief. He also cares greatly for those very things which have been heaped together, lest they be consumed through negligence from the defect of their own nature. In all these things, therefore, because fear itself is a punishment, the unhappy man suffers as much as he fears to suffer. After this also he is led to Gehenna, and is delivered over to eternal tortures. Every sorrow,

therefore, rushes in upon him, whom here first the punishment of concupiscence, afterwards indeed the care of guarding, and there eventually the punishment of vengeance burns.

[Vet. XII.] 28. The wonderful security of the heart not exposed to avarice. But wonderful is the security of the heart not to seek the things of others, but to remain content with the food of each day. From which security, evidently, even perennial rest is born, because from a good and tranquil thought one passes to eternal joys. On the contrary, the reprobate are fatigued both here in desires, and there in torments; and for them from the labor of thought the labor of sorrow is born, while from the heat of avarice they are drawn to the fire of Gehenna. And because, as we have already said above, often every perverse man the more quickly he arrives at his desire, the more easily is he snatched to torment, it is subjoined by choosing:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERS. 23.---Would that his belly might be filled, that He might send forth into him the wrath of His fury, and rain upon him His war!

29. God's darts rain upon the avaricious rich man. The Lord rains His war upon this hypocrite when He strikes his works with the swords of His judgments. For to rain war for God is to urge the life of the wicked to destruction by strict sentences from above. To rain war for God is to strike the hearts that are proud against Him, and to hit the dry mind, as if with certain thickening

drops of rain, with the darts of His judgments, so that when he is already snatched to judgment, he may now remember that he has desired evilly, and studied to gather the desired things more evilly; now he may grieve that he leaves what he gathered, and at length he may even feel the fire of vengeance, which, lest he should live well, he contemned to foresee. It follows:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XIV].

VERS. 24.---He shall flee from iron weapons, and shall rush into a bow of brass.

30. While avoiding temporal want, avarice is delivered over to perpetual, and at the same time to eternal punishments. It should be known that avarice sometimes creeps in through elation, sometimes indeed through fear. For there are some who, while they desire to appear more powerful, are inflamed to the ambition of others' things. And there are some who, while they fear that the necessaries of support may fail them, relax their mind to avarice, and ambitiously seek others' things, when they suspect that their own cannot suffice for them. Every necessity is not incongruously called iron, because it tortures the life of the needy with the wound of sorrow, as it is also written of his necessities who, being sold by his brothers, was leading an afflicted life: *Iron passed through his soul* (Psal. 104:18). What then are iron weapons, except the necessities of this present life, which press hardly, and pursue

the life of the needy? For rust consumes iron, but it is usually more difficult to consume brass. By iron, therefore, the present necessity, which is transitory, is figured, but by brass the eternal sentence. And because the heavenly judgment is not attended to by the mind of the wicked, it is justly compared to a bow, since it strikes as if from an ambush, while he who is struck does not attend to it. He shall flee, therefore, from iron weapons, and shall rush into a bow of brass, because while, fearing present necessities, he seizes many things through avarice, he sets himself before the strict strokes of the last judgment. And when he flees iron weapons, he is found by the arrows of the bow of brass, because, foolishly guarding against temporal evils, he is struck by the eternal sentence. For he who here flees the hardness of want with guilt, there finds the perpetuity of just vengeance. [Vet. XIII.] But before he is snatched to judgment, it still intimates what this wicked man works here. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XV].

VERS. 25.---Drawn, and coming forth from its scabbard, and flashing (*fulgurans*) in its bitterness.

31. Drawn to sin by the devil, we come forth by our own will. This wicked man lies in wait for the depredations of his neighbors; but while he contrives evil in his thoughts, it is as if the sword is still in the scabbard; but when he iniq-

uitously performs the evil which he thought, he comes forth from his scabbard, because from the concealment of his thought he is opened through the iniquity of evil operation. It is shown in work of what kind he lay hid in thought. And it is to be noted that it says: *Drawn, and coming forth from its scabbard*; drawn, namely, by the seducer, but coming forth by his own will. For he who is led undoubtedly follows him leading; but he who comes forth, is seen to proceed according to his own will. He, therefore, who is both drawn to any evil works by the ancient enemy, and yet is bound in their desires by his own free will, is said to be drawn and coming forth from his scabbard, since that which goes out from a perverse thought to a most wicked operation, is both of that spirit who suggested it, and of his wickedness who consented by his own will.

32. The more the wicked shine, the more sharply they shall be punished. The terror of whose power is still shown when it is immediately subjoined: *And flashing in its bitterness*. For lightning (*fulgur*) when it comes suddenly from above, shines with terror before the eyes, shows brightness, and strikes the things set before it. So, so indeed, the wicked man when he has assumed the glory of the present life, whence in this world he is shown bright through power, thence it is brought about that in the last he may be struck. For to flash, as it were, belongs to the wicked to shine in the honor of this life. But because the splendor of that glory is delivered over to the eternal punishments of Gehenna, it

is now rightly said: *Flashing in its bitterness*. For he who now rejoices striking as if from terror and brightness, thereafter sustains punishments forever. And indeed of a certain rich man it is written (Luke 16:19) that he feasted sumptuously every day (*splendide*). But it is one thing to shine (*splendere*), and another to flash (*fulgurare*). For sometimes there is splendor without striking, but by the name of lightning splendor is expressed with striking. He, therefore, who being placed in power hurts others, is not incongruously called flashing, because whence he himself is extolled against the good as if from the light of glory, thence the life of the good is tortured. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XVI].

IBID.---Terrible ones shall go, and shall come upon him.

33. By as many succeeding vices as the sinner is pressed, by so many going and returning evil spirits is he devastated. Who in this place are called terrible ones, except the evil spirits, to be feared and fled from by good minds? And because those same evil spirits are to be believed each to serve certain vices, when this perverse man seems indeed to desert some vices for a moment, but begins to do others, upon him indeed terrible ones go and come, because although other evils desert the mind of the perverse, others occupy it. For you may often see a wicked man placed

in earthly power, moved by grave fury, executing whatever wrath has suggested; and when the fury has departed, soon luxury devastates his mind; when luxury is intermitted for a time, elation immediately, as if from continence, is substituted in his thought, and that he may be feared by others, he desires to appear terrible. But when the matter requires that he should speak anything doubly, as if having postponed the terror of pride, he flatters with remiss speech; and when he has ceased to appear proud, he does not fear to become double. In whose mind, therefore, vices succeed to vices, rightly is it said of him: *Terrible ones shall go, and shall come upon him*, because by as many departing and succeeding vices as he is pressed, by so many evil spirits is his mind devastated as if by ones going and returning. But these things which he does outwardly come forth by parts; for to his mind all evils are bound together at the same time. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERS. 26.---All darkness is hidden in his secret places.

34. All vices are bound together in the mind of the hypocrite. For although the hypocrite shows good actions on the surface, some darkness of evil works, however, appears in him; but yet he produces less in work than lies hidden in his thought. For he who does not fulfill all things together in effect, holds all things that may hurt silently in his mind. All darkness, therefore, is

said to be hidden in his secret places, because although he does not show all evils in himself, he yet desires to bring all upon his neighbors. [Vet. XIV, Rec. XVII.] But let him subjoin by what vengeance that mind so reprobate is to be struck. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID.---A fire that is not kindled shall devour him.

35. The fire of Gehenna is wonderfully cherished, and tortures both soul and body. In a very wonderful manner the fire of Gehenna is expressed in few words. For corporeal fire, that it may be able to be fire, stands in need of corporeal nourishments. Which, when it is necessary that it be preserved, is undoubtedly nourished through heaped up logs; nor can it exist unless kindled, and unless cherished it cannot subsist. But on the contrary, the fire of Gehenna, although it be corporeal, and corporeally burns the reprobates sent into it, is neither kindled by human study, nor nourished with logs, but once created lasts unquenchable, and does not need kindling, and is not without heat. Well, therefore, is it said of this wicked man: *A fire that is not kindled shall devour him*, because the justice of the Almighty, foreknowing the future, from the very origin of the world created the fire of Gehenna, which should once begin to be in the punishment of the reprobate, but would never end its heat even without logs. But it should be known that all the reprobate, because they have sinned from soul

and flesh together, are there tortured in soul and flesh alike. Whence it is said by the Psalmist: *Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven, in the time of thy countenance; the Lord in his wrath shall trouble them, and fire shall devour them* (Psal. 20:10). For an oven burns inwardly, but he who is devoured by fire begins to be burned from the exterior part. That therefore the sacred eloquences might demonstrate that the reprobate burn both exteriorly and interiorly, they testify that they are both devoured by fire, and set as an oven, so that they may be tortured in body by fire, and burn in mind by sorrow. Whence here also, when it was said of this impious man: *A fire that is not kindled shall devour him*, it is immediately added concerning his spirit:

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XVIII].

IBID. He shall be afflicted being left in his tabernacle.

36. The evil who now are led forth from the body unwillingly, shall be held in the body against their will. For the tabernacle of the wicked is the flesh, because he inhabits it gladly, and if it be possible, he desires that he may never relinquish it. But the just, because they place their joy in the hope of heavenly things, and their conversation is in heaven (Philip. 3:20), although they are still in the flesh, they are as if already not in the flesh, because they are fed by no delight of the flesh. Whence also it is said to some: *But

you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit* (Rom. 8:9). For they were not not in the flesh who through the master's epistles were receiving the eloquences of exhortation; but to be as if already not in the flesh is to have nothing of the love of carnal things. But on the contrary this wicked man, because he placed all his joy in carnal life, dwelt in the tabernacle of the flesh. Which flesh indeed when he shall have received in the resurrection, he shall burn with it delivered over to the fire of Gehenna. Then he desires to be led forth from it, then he seeks to escape its torments, if he be able; then he begins to wish to avoid what he loved. But because he preferred that same flesh to God, it is brought about by the judgment of God, that he may be more tortured from it in the fire. Here therefore he does not want to relinquish it, and yet he is drawn away from it; there he desires to relinquish it, and yet he is held in it on account of punishments. For the increase therefore of torment, both here he is led forth from the body unwillingly, and there he is held in the body against his will. Because therefore his spirit will wish to escape in torment the flesh which he preferred to himself by loving evilly, and is not able, it is now rightly said: *He shall be afflicted being left in his tabernacle*. Concerning whose accusation it is presently said:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Vet. XX, Rec XIX].

VERS. 27.---The heavens shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him.

37. In judgment the wicked shall experience just and unjust accusers. What do we understand by the heavens except the just, and what by the earth except sinners? Whence also in the Lord's prayer we ask: *Thy will be done as in heaven and in earth* (Matth. 6:10), that namely the will of our Creator as it is perfected in all the just, so also it may be fulfilled in all sinners likewise. Concerning the just also it is written: *The heavens declare the glory of God* (Psal. 18:1). And upon the sinning man the sentence is brought, by which it is said: *Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go* (Gen. 3:19). Of this impious man therefore, led to that terrible judgment, the heavens reveal the iniquity, and the earth rises up against him, so that he who here never spared either the good or the bad, in that tremendous examination both the life of the just and of sinners alike may accuse him. And indeed it is more grave if anyone should hurt the just rather than sinners. Whence also it is said by the prophet: *Her blood is in the midst of her, she shed it upon the most clear rock; she shed it not upon the ground, that it might be covered with dust* (Ezek. 24:7). Signifying namely by the ground and the dust sinners, but by the most clear rock the just man, who is not exasperated by the grave contagions of sinners. Blood therefore is shed upon the most clear rock, when the malice of a bloody mind ranges in the affliction of a just soul. Since therefore it is more grave to afflict the just than the unjust

unjustly, yet it is much more grave to hurt both the just and the unjust alike. Because therefore here the wicked man hurt both the just and the unjust alike, in the accusation of condemnation the heavens shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him, because he both opposed those who savored of heavenly things, and pressed those who savored of the lowest. By the earth indeed not sinners and reprobates, but those who, occupied in earthly acts, through the help of alms and tears arrive at eternal life can be designated, concerning whom it is said by the Psalmist, when the Lord was announced to come to judgment: *He called the heavens from above, and the earth, that he might judge his people* (Psal. 49:4). For He calls the heavens from above when those who, relinquishing all their own things, held the conversation of heavenly life are called to sit together in judgment, and come as judges with Him. The earth also is called from above when those who had been bound in earthly acts, yet in them sought more heavenly than earthly gains, to whom it is said: *I was a stranger and you gathered me; naked, and you covered me* (Matth. 25:43). The heavens therefore reveal the iniquity of this hypocrite, and against him the earth rises up, while both those who come as judges with God, and those who are liberated through judgment exist as witnesses of that depravity. Nothing therefore of those things which he did in time is hidden for his damnation, and although many of his acts are now concealed from men through duplicity, yet in the day of

damnation whatever was lying hid within him is shown. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Vet. XVI].

VERS. 28.---The offspring of his house shall be exposed, it shall be pulled down in the day of the fury of God.

38. In judgment the evils lying hidden within shall be revealed. Then the offspring of his house is exposed, when all the evil that was born in his conscience is shown. For now the offspring of the house of the hypocrite remains hidden, because although his operation appears good in image, yet the intention lies hid. For it is one thing which he does, another which he intends. But when, the Judge arriving, the conscience of each one shall have been led to testimony, whence it is written: *Their thoughts accusing, or also defending them* (Rom. 2:15), in this the offspring of the house of the hypocrite is exposed, because in his mind the perverse thought is detected. And in the day of the fury of God it is pulled down, because, the wrath of the Judge being shown, delivered over to the avenging flames, he is separated from His sight. For he who would not think on the highest while he lived, depressed by the weight of his own sins, shall fall from the face of the Judge into the lowest of punishments. But now the Judge both considers the sinning man and tolerates him, and expects each to conversion, because it is the day of patience, and not

yet is the day of fury. But in this day of patience the hypocrite remains as if immovable, while he both perpetrates many evils, and no scourges chastise him. But in the day of fury he shall be pulled down, because, snatched in the time of vengeance to punishments, he is separated from the countenance of the eternal Judge. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII

[Rec. XX].

This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage of his words from the Lord.

39. In judgment even the least evils will be punished. ---For if he had wished to act well while placed in this life, he would have a portion with the Lord in the fellowship of the heavenly kingdom. But because he chose to be subject to depraved desires, he finds his portion from the Lord in torments, because he did not seek to participate in the grace of the same Lord. But it is well said: And the heritage of his words from the Lord. For he who for great evils is plunged into punishment, was perhaps believed that for the words which he had spoken wrongly he would be judged very little. But when the strict justice of Almighty God exacts punishment from the reprobate for their perverse acts, He renders to them evils even to the retribution (retributionem) of words, so that they who are debtors of great evils, being delivered to punishments, may pay even the last farthing. For those least things are spared to those who have strictly bewailed the

greater evils in themselves. For those whom great things oppress, the smallest evils also in Gehenna (gehenna) likewise afflict. Holy men, however, do not desire to receive a portion from the Lord, but to have the Lord Himself as their portion. Whence the Prophet prays, saying: God is my portion (Psalm 73:26). But the iniquitous man, because he did not seek to have the Lord Himself as his portion, finds his portion outside the Lord in fire, so that, excluded from His face, because he did not desire to rejoice in Him, he may be tortured under Him. These things Sophar so brought in, that by those things which he had said against the hypocrite he might strike at the life of blessed Job, thinking that he who had been smitten by the Lord had not acted with a simple mind in all the good things he had done. For him whom he saw smitten, he believed to have displeased God. But the friends of blessed Job even in this matter hold the likeness of heretics, who in the holy Church, while they behold some who act well groaning under scourges, think that they do not have good merits in their good acts, and believe them evil whom they see afflicted by the divine stroke, being forsooth ignorant that many are the tribulations of the righteous (Psalm 34:19); and He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth (Heb. 12:6). But blessed Job, after the manner of the holy and universal Church, which patiently endures the darts of words from the perverse, and when she hears the sayings of the proud, does not leave the path of her humility, added with great humility of heart, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Vet. XXII, Rec. XXI].

JOB CHAPTER XXI, VERS. 2.---Hear, I pray you, my speeches, and do penance.

40. Holy men, while they teach rightly, do not fear to be derided. ---For he who, when he said Hear, added I pray you, shows with what great humility he speaks, while he entreats those who are proud against him, that he may bring back their sense to the doctrine of salvation. But holy men, while within the universal Church they are ready not only to teach what is right, but also to endure what is perverse, do not fear to be derided. Whence it is also added:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERS. 3.---Suffer me, that I also may speak, and after my words, if it shall seem good, laugh on.

41. Holy men in their words seek to profit their hearers and themselves. To proud hearers the doctrine of humility is a heavy burden. --- For the good, when they speak, have two things which they attend to in their speeches, namely, that they may profit either themselves and their hearers, or themselves alone, if they cannot profit their hearers. For when those good things which they speak are heard well, they profit both themselves and their hearers at the same time. But when they are derided by their hearers, they have without doubt profited themselves, whom they

have made free from the fault of silence. Blessed Job therefore, that he may profit himself and his hearers, says: Hear, I pray you, my speeches, and do penance. But that he himself may discharge what he owes, even if he cannot profit his hearers, he adds: Suffer me, that I also may speak, and after my words, if it shall seem good, laugh on. And it is to be noted that while he subjoined Do penance, he first said Hear; but when he added After my words, if it shall seem good, laugh on, he first said Suffer me. For to hear belongs to one willing, to suffer to one unwilling. His friends therefore, if they desire to be taught, let them hear; but if they are ready to deride, let them suffer the things which are said, because forsooth to proud minds the doctrine of humility is a heavy weight of burden. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Rec. XXII].

VERS. 4.---Is my dispute against man, that I should not be deservedly sorrowful?

42. Job made more humble by his scourges, feared only to have displeased God. ---Every one who, pleasing God, displeases men, has no causes for sorrow. But he who either pleasing men displeases God, or believes that he displeases both God and men at the same time, if sorrow does not affect him, he exists as a stranger to the virtue of wisdom. But blessed Job believed that he had displeased God among his scourges, and therefore he recalled his mind to sorrow, because

he was not to be despised whom he feared he had displeased. If however he were disputing against man concerning the merits of his life, he ought by no means to have been sorrowful; but because through his present scourges he had become doubtful concerning his past life, he rightly sought for sorrow in his scourge. Whence he also adds:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERS. 5.---Look upon me, and be astonished.

43. From the smitings of Job we must learn what we ought to fear. ---That is, consider what I have done, and wonder at the smiting which I suffer. He who still rightly adds, saying:

IBID.---And lay your finger upon your mouth.

As if he were saying openly: Knowing the good things which I have done, and considering the evils which I suffer, restrain yourselves even from the fault of words, and fear your own losses in my smitings. Or certainly because we discern anything with our fingers, discretion is not incongruously designated by a finger. Whence it is also said by the Psalmist: Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight (Psalm 144:1). Designating operation by the hands, but discretion by the fingers. [Vet. XVIII.] The finger therefore is laid upon the mouth when the tongue is restrained by discretion, lest through that which it speaks it should fall into the fault of folly. He says therefore: Lay your finger upon your mouth, that is, join the virtue of discretion to your speech, so that

through these right things which you say against the hypocrite you may see to whom they are to be said. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VERS. 6.---And when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

44. Certain things are said ironically and by way of derision by holy men. ---Because blessed Job had not been forgetful of his own acts, his last speech shows. From which circumstance this which is now said by him to his friends: And when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh, it is forsooth certain that it is said by way of derision. As if it were openly said: If I shall remember that I have had anything of a hypocrite, I immediately tremble in the weeping of penance. But he says that his flesh, if he shall have remembered, is shaken with trembling, that is, that the infirmity of his work is fatigued with the dread of vengeance. But because Sophar asserted many things concerning the sudden damnation of the impious, in which he bit at the power of blessed Job, the holy man adds against his sayings, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Rec. XXIII].

VERS. 7.---Wherefore then do the wicked live, are they lifted up, and strengthened with riches?

45. The happiness of this life is weighed, in dignities and riches, in children and kinsfolk; in a peaceful house; in the fecundity of herds; in the multitude and exultation of the family. ---For unless the divine patience tolerated them, they would by no means lead a life for a long time in sins. For they are lifted up with riches when they begin to be powerful, but they are strengthened when they are permitted to subsist for a long time in this life. For those whom substance elevates, the length of days strengthens in the pride of their power. Or certainly they are reported as lifted up and strengthened, because they are lifted up by honors, strengthened by things. But there are many who both lifted up by honors, and strengthened by riches, receive those things which they desire in this life, but are deprived of the succession of offspring. To these forsooth their very power is a punishment, when they both consider that they have a great inheritance, and have no heirs to whom they may leave it. What therefore does it profit if all things be present, and children be wanting who may become successors? It follows:

CHAPTER XL.

VERS. 8.---Their seed is established in their sight with them.

46. Unto the increase of great happiness, heirs are also given with a great patrimony; and lest any even temporal necessity should subtract from their eyes those in whom their soul exults, it is said of this their seed: It is established in

their sight. But what if children are given, but they themselves are struck with sterility? So is the race extinguished in them, just as it was feared it would be extinguished by the sterility of the parents. It follows:

IBID.---And their offspring before their eyes. [Propinquorum turba et nepotum in conspectu eorum.]

Behold life is present, honors and riches are present, children are present, grandchildren are present. What if any inward thought should burn the mind, and domestic strife should strike through the joys of security? What is the happiness of this world, if it be not joyful? It follows:

CHAPTER XLI.

VERS. 9.---Their houses are safe from fear, and the rod of God is not upon them.

47. They are secure and peaceful, because they live sinning, they do things to be bewailed, and they do not leave their joys. The rod (virga) of heavenly discipline does not smite them, and they profit in fault so much the more, as they are smitten less from fault. But because we have heard the things which prosper within, let us see also in the fields what prosperity smiles upon them. It follows:

VERS. 10.---Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and is not deprived of her calf.

The use of common speech is that it calls the male bull and the female cow, but the locution of literature (that is, of grammar) calls bull of the

common gender. Whence it is now said: Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and is not deprived of her calf. The first happiness to the masters of flocks is, if the flock, having no sterility, conceives; the second, if the conception comes to the birth; but the third, if that which is brought forth be led to growth through nourishments. That therefore he might show that all were present at once to the impious, blessed Job asserts that their flocks have conceived, and not miscarried; have brought forth, and have not been deprived of their own offspring. But the happiness is less, if when the flocks increase, the keepers of the flocks also do not profit. Whence also to the fecundity of the flocks the fecundity of the family is soon substituted. For it is said:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERS. 11.---They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

48. That as greater things are granted to be possessed, so many may bud forth to keep them. But because he said They dance, lest we should believe that the very play of the infants in the house of the iniquitous was very vile, adding, he says:

VERS. 12.---They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

As if he were saying plainly: When the masters swell with honors and things, the subjects rejoice in playful acts. But, O blessed man, why do you tell us so many things about the pleasures of the iniquitous? You have been speaking for a long

time in their description; after many things distinguish briefly what you feel. It follows:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Old XIX, New XXIV].

VERS. 13.---They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell.

49. Whatever has an end is momentary. Prosperity is not a proof of innocence, nor adversity of iniquity.--- Behold, O blessed man, you had long recounted their joys; how do you now assert that they go down to hell in a moment, unless because all length of time of this present life is known to be a point, when it is terminated by an end? For when each person is brought to the end, he now holds nothing of the past, because all times have slipped away; in the future he has nothing, because the moments of a single hour do not remain. The life, therefore, which could be so narrowed, was a point. For as we said before, we place and lift the pen in a point. He, therefore, touched life as if in a point, who received and lost it. In this "moment" (punctus) it can also be understood that often those who have been long tolerated in iniquity are snatched away by sudden death, so that they are not even allowed to weep before death for the things they have sinned. But because sometimes even the life of the just is terminated by a sudden end, we better understand this if we feel it concerning their temporal life, because whatever could pass away was sudden. But to the friends of blessed Job,

who therefore believed him to be unjust because they saw him scourged, it was rightly shown by the voice of the same holy man concerning the flowering and perdition of the iniquitous that the prosperity of the present life is not a witness of innocence, because many return to perennial life through scourges, and most, who are to be led to infinite punishments, die without a scourge. Concerning whom it is still added:

CHAPTER XLIV

[New XXV].

VERS. 14.---Who said to God: Depart from us.

50. Those who do not obey God's commands, drive Him away from themselves.--- Even fools do not presume to say this in words; but nevertheless all the perverse say "Depart" to God, not in words, but in their conduct. For those who do those things which Almighty God forbids, what else do they do but close their mind against the Almighty? For as to think of His precepts is to introduce Him to oneself, so to resist His commands is to repel Him from the habitation of the heart. Therefore, they say: "Depart from us," who refuse to grant Him access to themselves, and who assail Him with wicked acts, even if they seem to praise Him in words. They say also:

CHAPTER XLV.

IBID.---We desire not the knowledge of Your ways.

51. It is one thing not to know the ways of God, another to be unwilling to know them.--- By the very fact that they despise to apprehend His knowledge. For there are some who, from that which the Truth says: "That servant who knew not the will of his lord, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; but the servant who knew the will of his lord, and did not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Luke 12:47, 48); they are unwilling to know what they should do, and think as if they would be beaten less, if they do not know what they ought to have performed. But it is one thing to have been ignorant, another to have been unwilling to know. For he is ignorant who wishes to apprehend, and is not able. But he who, in order not to know, turns away his ear from the voice of truth, is adjudged not as ignorant, but as a despiser. [Old XX.] But the way of God is peace, the way of God is humility, the way of God is patience. But because the iniquitous despise all these things, they say: "We desire not the knowledge of Your ways." For while they are proud in the present life, while they are puffed up with honors, while they even desire them if they have them not, they despise the ways of God in their thought. For because the way of God in this life was humility, God Himself and our Lord and Redeemer came to reproaches, to contumelies, to the passion, and bore the adversities of this world with equanimity, and bravely avoided prosperities, so that He might teach that the prosperities of eternal life are to be desired, and the adversi-

ties of the present life are not to be feared. But because the iniquitous desire the glory of the present life, and flee ignominy, they are recorded to say: "We desire not the knowledge of Your ways." For they are unwilling to know what they despise to do. Their words are still added, when it is said:

CHAPTER XLVI

[New XXVI].

VERS. 15.---Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?

52. Carnal men either suspect that God does not exist, or they despise serving Him.--- For the mind of man, evilly poured out exteriorly, is so scattered in corporeal things, that it neither returns to itself within, nor is sufficient to think of Him who is invisible. Whence carnal men, despising spiritual commands, because they do not see God corporally, sometimes arrive at this, that they even suspect Him not to be. Whence it is written: "The fool has said in his heart: There is no God" (Psalm 13:1). Whence now also it is said: "Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?" For for the most part men desire more to serve men, whom they see corporally, than to serve God, whom they do not see. For through everything they do, they tend to the end of their eyes; and because they cannot tend the eyes of the body to God, they either despise to offer Him obedience, or if they have begun, they are fatigued. For they do not believe Him to exist, as has been said, whom they do not behold corporally.

Who, if they humbly sought God the author of all, would find in themselves that that which is not seen is better than that thing which is seen. For they themselves subsist of an invisible soul and a visible body; but if this which is not seen is withdrawn from them, immediately that which is seen falls to ruin. And indeed the eyes of the flesh are open; but they cannot see or feel anything. For the sense of vision has perished, because the inhabitant has departed; and the house of the flesh remains empty, because that invisible spirit has withdrawn, which was wont to look through its windows. Since therefore invisible things are more excellent than visible things, all carnal men ought to have weighed it from themselves, and to tend toward God through this, so to speak, scale of consideration: because He exists by the fact that He remains invisible, and remains most high by the fact that He can by no means be comprehended. But there are some who do not doubt that God both exists and is incomprehensible; who nevertheless seek from Him not Himself, but exterior gifts. Which when they see to be lacking to those serving Him, they themselves despise serving Him. Concerning whose words it is further added:

CHAPTER XLVII

[New XXVII].

IBID.---And what does it profit us, if we pray to Him?

53. The order of things to be asked in prayer.---When God is not sought in prayer, the mind is more quickly fatigued in prayer: because when each one asks for those things which perhaps, according to a secret judgment, God refuses to grant, he also comes into a state of weariness, who does not wish to give what is loved. But the Lord wishes Himself to be loved more than those things which He created, and eternal things to be asked rather than earthly ones, as it is written: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33). For He who did not say "they shall be given," but "they shall be added," surely indicates that it is one thing which is principally given, another which is superadded. For because eternity ought to be in our intention, but temporality in our use, both that is given, and this indeed is superadded from abundance. And yet often men, when they ask for temporal goods, but do not seek eternal rewards, ask for that which is added, and do not desire that where it should be added. Nor do they account it as the gain of their petition, if they be temporally poor here, and live there eternally rich in blessedness; but intent only, as has been said, on visible things, they refuse by the labor of petition to purchase invisible things. Who, if they sought heavenly things, would now exhibit labor with fruit: because when the mind in prayers pants after the appearance of its author, inflamed with divine desires, it is joined to heavenly things, and separated from lower ones; by the love of its fervor it opens itself

that it may receive, and receiving it is inflamed; and to love higher things is already to go upward; and while with great desire it gapes after celestial things, in a wonderful way it tastes this very thing which it seeks to receive. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVIII

[Old XXI, New XXVIII].

VERS. 16.---Nevertheless, because their goods are not in their hand, let their counsel be far from me.

54. The just possess their goods, they are not possessed by them; otherwise the iniquitous.--- He has goods in his hand, who, by despising temporal things, keeps them under the dominion of his mind. For whoever loves them excessively, subjects himself to them more than to himself. For many of the just were rich in this world; supported by things and honors, they seemed to have many things, whose mind, because the excessive delight of those things which were present did not possess it, their goods were in their hand: because they were held subject to the power of the soul. But on the contrary, the iniquitous so pour themselves out with all their desires in the appetites of exterior things, that they themselves do not rather hold the things they have, but are held with a captive mind by the things they have. Because therefore their goods are not in their hand, it is rightly added: "Let their counsel be far from me." For what is the counsel of the iniquitous but to seek earthly glory, to neglect eternal

glory, to desire temporal salvation with interior loss, and to exchange transitory pains for eternal groans? The holy man therefore, beholding these thoughts of the iniquitous, should spurn them, and say: "Let their counsel be far from me." Because he certainly sees that to be incomparably good, he chooses to groan here for a short time under the scourge rather than to endure the punishments of eternal vengeance. But neither in this life do those who desire to prosper in it, prosper continually. For for the most part, groans that have arisen interrupt their joys. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER XLIX

[New XXIX].

VERS. 17.---How often shall their lamp be put out, and a flood come upon them, and He distribute the sorrows of His fury?

55. How many and what kind of punishments affect the wicked.--- Often the impious man considers his lamp to be the life of his sons; but when a son who is loved excessively is withdrawn, the lamp of the impious man, which was seen, is extinguished. Often the impious man thinks the glory of present honor to be his lamp; but when, his dignity being taken away, he is cast down, the lamp is extinguished which was shining for him according to his desire. Often the impious man thinks that the riches of earthly substance are present to him as a great lamp of light; but when, a loss rushing in, he has lost the riches which

he loved more than himself, what else has he lost but the lamp in whose light he rejoiced? He therefore who does not desire to rejoice in eternal things, cannot even here, where he wishes to be established, rejoice continually. For how often is the lamp of the impious extinguished, and an inundation comes upon them, and He distributes the sorrows of His fury? A flood comes upon the impious when they suffer waves of sorrows from some adversity. For Almighty God, when He sees Himself despised and man rejoicing in earthly concupiscence, strikes also with sorrows that which He sees preferred to Himself in the thought of the impious man. But it is well said: "And He shall distribute the sorrows of His fury." For He who keeps eternal sorrows for the impious man through retribution, also sometimes pierces his mind with temporal sorrow; because He strikes both here and there, He distributes the sorrows of His fury upon the impious man. For neither does a present punishment, which does not change the soul of the unjust from wicked desires, deliver from eternal punishments. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: "He shall rain snares upon sinners; fire, brimstone, and the spirit of storms, are the portion of their cup" (Psalm 11:6). For by saying snares, fire, brimstone, and the spirit of storms, He brought in many sorrows indeed. But because from those sorrows the sinner who is not corrected is called to eternal punishments, he called those same sorrows not yet the whole cup, but the portion of the cup: because surely their suffering is indeed begun here through sorrows,

but is consummated in perpetual vengeance. Concerning whose end it is further added:

CHAPTER L

[Old XXII, New XXX].

VERS. 18.---They shall be as chaff before the face of the wind, and as ashes which the whirlwind scatters.

56. Like chaff they are carried away to the fire by the breath of divine wrath.--- When the iniquitous man is seen in power, when he is greatly unrestrained in oppressions and violence, he is estimated by the thoughts of the weak as excessively heavy, and as if rooted in this world. But when the sentence of the strict Judge shall come, all the iniquitous shall be like chaff before the wind: because, so to speak, they are suddenly lifted by the breath of wrath and carried away to the fire, they whom here in their former prejudices, as a superincumbent mass of hard weight, the tears of the needy could not move. And they are light to the hands of the snatching judgment, who through injustice were heavy to their neighbors. "And as ashes which the whirlwind scatters." Before the eyes of Almighty God, the life of the iniquitous is as ashes: because, although it appears green for a moment, yet by His judgment it is already seen consumed; because it is deputed to eternal consumption. The whirlwind scatters these ashes: because "God shall come manifestly; our God, and He shall not keep silence. A fire shall burn in His sight, and a mighty tempest round

about Him" (Psalm 50:3). By the whirlwind of this tempest the iniquitous are snatched away from the sight of the eternal Judge; and they who here had solidified their mind with perverse desire, shall there be seen as chaff and ashes: because the snatching whirlwind carries them away to eternal punishments. It follows:

CHAPTER LI

[New XXXI].

VERS. 19.---God shall lay up the sorrow of the father for his children: and when He shall repay it, then he shall know.

57. How God punishes the sins of parents in their children.--- We know it is written: "Who render the sins of the fathers upon the children and grandchildren, unto the third and fourth generation" (Exod. 34:7). And again it is written: "What is it (De Poenit., dist. 4, c. 13) that you turn among yourselves this parable into a proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the teeth of the children are set on edge? As I live, says the Lord God, you shall not have any more this parable for a proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine. The soul that shall sin, the same shall die" (Ezek. 18:2; Jer. 31:29). In both these sentences, therefore, while a dissimilar sense is found, the mind of the hearer is instructed to seek subtly the way of discretion. For we draw original sin from our parents; and unless we be loosed by the grace of baptism, we

also bear the sins of our parents: because we are indeed still one with them. He renders, therefore, the sins of the parents upon the children, while for the fault of the parent, the soul of the offspring is polluted from original sin. And again He does not render the sins of the parents upon the children: because when we are delivered from original fault through baptism, we no longer have the faults of our parents, but those which we ourselves commit. Which nevertheless can be understood in another way also: because whoever imitates the iniquity of a wicked parent, is also bound by his offense. But whoever does not imitate the iniquity of a parent, is by no means weighed down by his offense. Whence it happens, that an iniquitous son of an iniquitous father pays not only his own sins which he added, but also the sins of his father; when with the vices of his father, by which he is not ignorant that the Lord was angered, he also does not fear to add yet his own malice. And it is just, that he who under a strict Judge does not fear to imitate the ways of an iniquitous parent, should be compelled in the present life to pay even the faults of the iniquitous parent. Whence also it was said there: "The soul of the father is mine, and the soul of the son is mine. The soul that shall sin, the same shall die": because in the flesh sometimes children are even destroyed because of the sin of the father. But original sin being deleted, they are not held in the soul from the wickedness of the parents. For what is it that little children are for the most part seized by demons, unless that the flesh of the son

is punished from the penalty of the father? For in himself the iniquitous father is struck, and he despises to feel the force of the percussion. For the most part he is struck in his children, that he may be more sharply burned; and the sorrow of the father is rendered to the flesh of the children, so that through the punishments of the children the iniquitous mind of the father may be punished. But when not little ones, but now more grown children are struck because of the fault of parents, what else is clearly given to be understood, but that they also pay the penalties of those whose deeds they followed? Whence also it is rightly said: "Unto the third and fourth generation." For because unto the third and fourth generation, the children can see the life of their parents which they imitate, the vengeance is extended unto them, who saw what they should evilly follow.

[Old XXIII.] 58. Guilt closes the eyes of the impious, punishment opens them.--- And because guilt closes the eyes of the impious, but punishment opens them at the last, it is rightly added: "And when He shall repay it, then he shall know." For the impious man does not know the evils which he has done, except when he has already begun to be punished for those same evils. Whence also it is said by the prophet: "And only vexation shall give understanding to the hearing" (Isa. 28:19). For then he understands what he heard, when he has already grieved that he is vexed for his contempt. Hence it is said by Balaam concerning himself: "The man whose eye is stopped up has said: the hearer of the words

of God has said, who has beheld the vision of the Almighty, who falls: and so his eyes shall be opened" (Num. 24:3, 4). For he offered counsel against the Israelites, but afterwards in punishment he saw what he had previously committed from guilt. But the elect, because they foresee that they ought not to sin: their eyes indeed are open before the fall. But the iniquitous man opens his eyes after the fall: since after the guilt he already beholds in his punishment, that he ought to have avoided the evil which he did. Concerning whose useless knowledge even then it is subjoined:

CHAPTER LII.

VERS. 20.---His eyes shall see his own destruction, and he shall drink of the fury of the Almighty.

59. Eyes are opened uselessly after the fall.--- Who, if placed in this life, had wished to see his own guilt, would not afterwards drink of the fury of the Almighty. But he who here turns away his eyes from the regard of his crime, shall not be able there to decline the sentence of damnation. But often those who do not fear eternal punishments, dread to do wicked things at least for the sake of temporal percussion. But there are some who have so hardened in iniquity, that they do not even fear to be struck in those things which they love, provided that they may fulfill what they have perversely thought. Whence in this place concerning the obduration of the iniquitous it is subjoined:

CHAPTER LIII.

VERS. 21.---For what concerneth it him concerning his house after him? or if the number of his months be cut off in the midst?

60. The stupendous obduration and blindness of some wicked men, even while they are being struck.--- For we ought not to understand it in such a way that this wicked man, after he has been condemned to eternal punishments, thought not at all of his house, that is, of the kinsfolk whom he left behind, since Truth itself says that the rich man who had been buried in hell, even when placed in punishment, took care for the five brothers whom he had left (Luke 16:28). For every sinner will be prudent in punishment who was foolish in guilt (Dist. 38, c. 10), because there, already constrained by pain, he opens his eyes to reason, which here, given over to pleasure, he closed; and by the torturing punishment it is required that he be wise, who here, blinding himself with pride, was acting foolishly. To whom, however, his wisdom will then be of no profit, because here, where he ought to have worked according to wisdom, he lost the time. For here he desires as the highest good to have offspring of his race, to fill his house with family and wealth, and to live long in this corruption of the flesh. But if perhaps something should come according to his desire, which however he cannot obtain except with offense to the Creator, his mind, perturbed for a little while, thinks that if he does this here, whence he incurs the offense

of his Creator, he is struck in his house, in his children, in his life. But being straightway instigated by his pride, he hardens; and whatever stroke he may feel in his house, whatever in his life, he cares not at all, provided that he may fulfill what he has thought; and as long as he lives, he does not cease to perfect his pleasures. For behold, his house is struck for his guilt; but what concerneth it him concerning his house after him? Behold, for the vengeance of his wicked work, that length of life which might have been is shortened; but what concerneth it him, if the number of his days be cut off in the midst? And in this therefore the sinner erects himself against God, where Almighty God breaks his erection; and neither does the inflicted stroke humiliate the mind, which obstinacy hardens in deliberation against the Lord. And it is to be noted how heavy is the guilt of the fault, both to propose to the mind the punishment for the fault, and yet, not even through fear of torment, to incline the neck of the heart under the yoke of the Creator. [Vet. XXIV, Rec. XXXII.] But behold, when we hear these things, a question arises in our heart, why Almighty and merciful God has permitted the reason of the human mind to fall into such great blindness? Lest however anyone should presume to discuss the hidden judgments of God beyond what he ought, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER LIV.

VERS. 22.---Shall any one teach God knowledge, who judgeth the high ones?

61. The hidden judgments of God are not to be searched out too curiously.--- When we are in doubt in those things which are done concerning us, we ought to look at other things which are certain to us, and appease that complaint of thought which had arisen from our uncertainty concerning ourselves. For behold, because scourges recall the elect to life, and scourges do not restrain the reprobate from evil acts, the judgments of Almighty God over us are very hidden, and they are not unjust. But if we stretch the eye of the mind to higher things, in them we behold that we have nothing of which to complain justly concerning ourselves. For Almighty God, discerning the merits of the angels, appointed some to remain in eternal light without a fall, others, having fallen spontaneously from the state of their loftiness, He prostrated in the vengeance of eternal damnation. Therefore He does nothing unjustly with us, Who also judged justly a nature more subtle than ours. Let him say therefore: Shall any one teach God knowledge, who judgeth the high ones? For He who does wonders over us, it is certain beyond doubt that He disposes all things concerning us with knowledge. These things being thus premised, that is subjoined where the human mind is fatigued in inquiry. For it is added:

CHAPTER LV.

VERS. 23-25.---One dieth strong and whole, rich and happy, his bowels are full of fat, and

his bones are watered with marrow; but another dieth in bitterness of soul without any riches.

62. The life of the elect and the reprobate is unlike, but the death of the flesh is the same. The joy of the wicked passeth to punishment, the punishment of the innocent to joy.--- Since these things are so, who shall discuss the secrets of Almighty God, why He permits these things to be so? For the life of the elect and the reprobate is indeed unlike, but the corruption of the flesh in death is not unlike. Whence it is subjoined:

VERS. 26.---And yet they shall sleep in the dust together, and worms shall cover them.

What wonder then if they run dissimilarly for a moment in the prosperity or adversity of the present world, who return to the earth similarly through the corruption of the flesh? [Vet. XXV.] That life only, therefore, is to be thought of, in which with the resurrection of the flesh a dissimilar end of retribution is reached. For what health or strength is there to the wicked, what fatness and riches, while the whole is left here with speed, and there retribution is found which can never be left? But as the joy of this wicked man passeth to punishment, so the punishment of the afflicted innocent passeth to joy. Neither riches, therefore, ought to lift up the mind, nor want to perturb it. Whence blessed Job, amidst the losses of things, admits no losses of thoughts to his mind, but to those who despise him in his smiting, he subjoins in refutation, saying:

CHAPTER LVI

[Rec. XXXIII].

VERS. 27, 28.---Surely I know your thoughts, and the unjust sentences against me. For ye say: Where is the house of the prince, and where are the tabernacles of the wicked?

63. Job was unbroken, because though other things were lost he had not lost God.--- For they had believed him wicked whom they saw temporally destroyed, his goods being taken away. But the holy man judges them with as much high consideration as he stood with unbroken rectitude amidst the losses which he had endured. For what had the losses of things without harmed him, who had not lost Him whom he loved within?

Allegorical sense.---64. From abundance pride is born.--- But as to this which is said: Together they shall sleep in the dust, and worms shall cover them, if anyone should perchance wish to take it by allegory, we can briefly explain it, if we repeat concerning this wicked rich man what has already been said. For it is said: His bowels are full of fat. For as fatness is born of abundant food, so from abundance of things is born pride, which fattens the mind of the rich man while the soul of the proud is lifted up. For the pride of the heart is as it were a certain fatness of grossness. Whence because many commit sins from abundance, it is said by the Prophet: Their iniquity hath come forth as from fatness (Ps. 72:7). It follows: And his bones are watered with marrow. The lovers of this world have as it were

bones, when they possess the strength of dignities in this world.

But if in outward dignity earthly and domestic riches be wanting, as far as their own judgment goes they have bones indeed, but they have not marrow in the bones. Because, then, this lover of this world is so supported by outward power, as to be fattened also with the inward abundance of an earthly house, it is said: And his bones are watered with marrow. Or surely the bones of this rich man are his depraved and hard customs, but the marrow in the bones are the very desires of living ill, which are not even satisfied by the fulfillment of wickedness. Which marrows water the bones as it were, when depraved desires preserve their perverse customs in the delight of pleasures.

[Vet. XXVI, Rec. XXXIV.] 65. Whence the rich man rejoices vainly, thence the other poor man is afflicted more vainly. The goods which the rich man hath with fear, the poor man desires with anxiety.--- And there are some who have not riches in this world, but desire to have them, they long to be exalted; although in this world they cannot obtain what they desire; and though they be supported by no things or honors, yet through evil desires their conscience adjudges them guilty in the sight of the internal Judge. For such a one is often afflicted for this reason, because he is not able to grow rich and be proud. Of whom it is also added: But another dieth in the bitterness of his soul without any riches. Behold, whence the rich man with a proud heart rejoices vainly,

thence another poor man with a proud heart is more vainly afflicted. Well then is subjoined concerning both: And yet they shall sleep in the dust together, and worms shall cover them. For to sleep in the dust is to close the eyes of the mind in earthly desires. Whence to every one sinning and sleeping in his own fault it is said: Arise thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee (Eph. 5:14). But the worms which are born of the flesh cover them both together, because carnal cares oppress the mind either of the rich man or of the proud poor man. For in earthly things the reprobate poor and rich man, although they be not supported by equal prosperity, yet are troubled with equal anxiety, because what that one already has with fear, this one desires with anxiety; and because he is not able to have it, he grieves. Let it be said then: Together they shall sleep in the dust, and worms shall cover them, because although they are not together relieved by temporal things, yet they are together lulled by a torpor of mind in the care of temporal things. And at the same time worms cover them, because carnal thoughts oppress either this one that he may have what he desires, or that one lest he lose what he has.

66. Job was neither elated by things possessed, nor anxious for things lost.--- But blessed Job, who had neither been elated by things possessed, nor sought after those that were lost with anxiety, because he was bitten by no thoughts of outward loss, the worms of the heart had not covered him. And because he had not cast down

his mind in earthly care, he by no means slept in the dust.

It follows: Surely I know your thoughts, and the unjust sentences against me. Since it is written: What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him (1 Cor. 2:11)? for what reason is it now said: Surely I know your thoughts. But the spirit of a man is then unknown by another when it is not demonstrated by words or works. For as it is written: By their fruits ye shall know them (Matt. 7:20), by that which is done without, whatever lies hid within is opened. Whence also it is rightly said by Solomon: As in waters the faces of those who look in shine forth, so the hearts of men are manifest to the prudent (Prov. 27:19). Therefore blessed Job, when he said that he knew the thoughts of his friends communing with him, added: And the unjust sentences against me, that he might show by a manifest thing that he had found that which lay hid in them. Whence also he subjoins their very unjust sentences, saying: For ye say: Where is the house of the prince, and where are the tabernacles of the wicked?

[Rec. XXXV.] 67. The false opinion of those who measure faults by scourges.--- All the weak, who desire to flourish in this world, and dread scourges as great evils, measure faults in those whom they behold scourged by the punishment. For those whom they see smitten, they suspect to have displeased God. Whence the friends of blessed Job, whom they saw smitten, believed that he had been wicked, namely, estimating that

if he had not been wicked, his tabernacles would remain. But this no one thinks except him who yet labors with the weariness of infirmity, who fixes the step of his thought in the delight of the present world, who knows not how to pass to the eternal country with perfect desires. Whence it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER LVII

[Vet. XXVII].

VERS. 29, 30.---Ask any of the wayfaring men, and ye shall know that he understandeth these same things. Because the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and he is led to the day of fury.

68. Those are to be consulted who think that life is a way for them, not a country.--- For often divine patience tolerates for a long time those whom it already condemns to foreknown punishments, it permits those to flourish whom it yet sees perpetrating worse things. For because He sees to what pit of damnation they are tending, He accounts it as nothing that here the perverse multiply things that must be left behind. But whosoever loves the glory of the present life, accounts it a great happiness to flourish here according to his wish, although he be compelled afterwards to endure eternal punishments. He alone therefore beholds that it is nothing that the wicked flourishes, who has already removed the step of his heart from the love of the present world. Whence rightly, when it was spoken

concerning the subsequent damnation of the impious, it is premised: Ask any of the wayfaring men, and ye shall know that he understandeth these same things. For he is called a wayfaring man who attends to this, that the present life is a way to him and not a country, who despises to fix his heart in the love of the passing world, who desires not to remain in things transitory, but to arrive at things eternal. For he who does not desire to be a wayfaring man in this life, by no means despises the prosperous things of this life, and he wonders at those things which he himself desires, when he sees them abound in others. Whence the prophet David, since he had already passed in heart from the love of the present world, describing the glory of the wicked, said: I saw the wicked exalted on high and lifted up like the cedars of Lebanon (Ps. 36:35). But because he did not subject his heart to this world, he justly despised him, saying: I passed by, and lo, he was not (Ibid., 36). The wicked man would indeed have been something in his estimation, if he himself had not at least passed from this world by intention. But he to whom, while not passing, it would have been something great, to his passing mind it appeared how nothing it was, because while eternal retribution is thought of, present glory is known how null it is. Hence Moses, when he sought the glory of heavenly contemplation, said, I will pass and see the vision (Exod. 3:3). For unless he had removed the step of his heart from the love of the world, he could by no means have understood heavenly things.

Hence Jeremiah, requesting the mourning of his heart to be considered, says: O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see, if there be sorrow like unto my sorrow (Lam. 1:12). For those who do not pass through the present life as through a way, but attend to it as a country, know not how to consider the mourning of the heart of the elect. Those therefore the prophet seeks out that they may consider his sorrow, whom it has happened not to have fixed their mind in this world. Hence it is said by Solomon: Open thy mouth for the dumb, and for the causes of all the children that pass by (Prov. 31:8). For they are called dumb who by no means resist by contradicting the words of the preachers. Who also are those that pass by, because they disdain to fix the intention of the mind in the love of the present life. Therefore because the wicked is reserved for the day of destruction, and is led to the day of fury, no one understands this except he who is a wayfaring man, since he who has fixed his heart in present things, perceives not the punishments which follow the wicked. Concerning which it is yet added:

CHAPTER LVIII

[Rec. XXXVI.]

VERS. 31.---Who shall reprove his way before his face? and who shall repay him for the things that he hath done?

69. Christ alone shall subdue Antichrist, who is elated with so many signs, and such a show of holiness.--- Often the wicked man experiences

the indignation of his Creator, which he is to suffer eternally, even while placed in this life, while he loses the prosperity which he loves, and finds the adversity which he fears. And although he may be rebuked for his depravities by the tongue of the righteous even in prosperity, yet we know that when his own deeds cast down any perverse person, the rebuke of the righteous gains strength. But for what reason is it now said: Who shall reprove his way before his face? since even if the righteous be silent, this also is known, that the way of the wicked is here as often reproved as his prosperity is troubled by intervening adversity [Vet. XXVIII]. But blessed Job, while he was speaking concerning the body of all the wicked, suddenly turned his words to the head of all the wicked. For he saw that at the end of the world Satan, entering into a man whom Sacred Scripture calls Antichrist, is lifted up with such great elation, rules with such great power, is raised up with such great signs and prodigies in the show of holiness, that his deeds cannot be reproved by man, because he adds even signs of shown holiness to the power of terror; and he says: Who shall reprove his way before his face? Who, that is, should dare to rebuke that man, whose very look he fears to bear? But yet not only Elijah and Enoch, who are brought forward to his reproach, but also all the elect reprove his way, while they despise him, while they resist his malice with the power of the mind. But because they do this from divine grace, and not from their own strength, it is rightly now said: Who shall

reprove his way before his face? For who, but God, by whose aid the elect are supported that they may be able to resist? For sometimes in Sacred Scripture when Who is placed interrogatively, the Almighty is designated. Whence it is written: Who shall raise him up (Gen. 49:9)? Concerning which it is said by Paul: Whom God hath raised from the dead (Gal. 1:1). In this then that holy men contradict his iniquity, it is not they themselves who reprove his way, but it is He by whose grace they are strengthened. And because his presence, with which he is to come in man, will be much more atrocious in persecution than now, when he is least perceived, because he is not yet specially carried in that proper vessel of his, it is well said: Before his face. For many now correct the ways of Antichrist by judging them, but they do this as it were in his absence, while they reprove him whom as yet they do not specially behold. But when he shall come in that damned man, whosoever resists his presence reproves his way before his face, whose strength he both beholds and despises. Or surely, to reprove his way is to trouble the prosperity of his course by the intervention of eternal punishment. Because only the Lord is to do this by His own power, concerning whom it is written: Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8), it is rightly said: Who shall reprove his way before his face? Whence also it follows: And who shall repay him for the things that he hath done? Who indeed, but the Lord? Who alone will repay that

lost man for what he has done, when by His coming He shall have broken his so strong power with eternal damnation. But this elated prince of the wicked, as long as he is placed in this life, let us hear what he does. It follows:

CHAPTER LIX

[Vet. XXIX, Rec. XXXVII].

VERS. 32.---He shall be brought to the graves, and shall watch in the heap of the dead.

70. Satan watches in the multitude of sinners as in a heap of dead men, and in the graves.--- Because graves cover the dead, what else is designated by graves but the reprobate, in whom souls extinguished from the life of blessedness lie hid as it were in graves? Therefore this wicked man shall be brought to the graves, because he shall be received in the hearts of the wicked, since those alone receive him in whom souls dead to God are found. Concerning whom also it is rightly said by the prophet, while his punishments are being described: Round about him are his graves, all of them slain, and they that fell by the sword (Ezek. 32:22). For those are in hell next to him, in whom the same malignant spirit lies dead. Who fell smitten by the sword of his iniquity. Whence it is written: Who hast delivered David Thy servant from the malignant sword (Ps. 144:10). And it is rightly said: And he shall watch in the heap of the dead, because now in the congregation of sinners he puts forth the snares of his craftiness. For because of the rarity of the good in the world, and

the multitude of the wicked, it is rightly named a heap of the dead, that the very multitude of the wicked may be signified. For wide is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat (Matt. 7:13). Therefore for Satan to watch in the heap of the dead is to exercise the crafts of his malice in the hearts of the reprobate. Concerning which it is yet added:

CHAPTER LX

[Rec. XXXVIII].

VERS. 33.---He was sweet to the pebbles of Cocytus.

71. As he is bitter to the elect, so is he sweet to the reprobate by suggesting vices to them.--- In the Greek language Cocytus is called mourning, which mourning, however, is wont to be understood of women or of any weak persons. But the wise men of this world, excluded from the light of truth, have endeavored to hold as it were certain shadows of truth by their inquiry. Whence they thought that the river Cocytus ran among those in hell, designating evidently that those who do works worthy of sorrows, run down into hell to mourning. But let us despise the shadow of carnal wisdom, we who already hold the light of truth, and let us know by the voice of the blessed man that Cocytus is called the mourning of the weak. For it is written: Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened (Ps. 31:24). For those who refuse to be strengthened in God, tend to mourning through the infirmity of the mind. But we

are accustomed to call the little stones of rivers which the flowing water draws along, pebbles. What therefore is designated by the pebbles of Cocytus but the reprobate, who, given up to their pleasures, are as it were always drawn down by the river to the depths? For those who will not stand firmly with fortitude against the pleasures of this world, become pebbles of Cocytus, who by their daily slips tend to mourning, that they may mourn eternally afterwards, who now relax themselves delightfully in their pleasures. And because the ancient enemy, having entered his vessel, that reprobate man, while he bestows gifts on the perverse, while he exalts them in this world with honors, while he shows prodigies to their eyes, unstable minds admire and follow him in his prodigies, it is well said of him: He was sweet to the pebbles of Cocytus. For while the elect despise him, while they contemn him with the heel of the mind, those follow and love him who are drawn as it were by the water of pleasure to perpetual mourning, who through earthly concupiscence, after the manner of a pebble, slide down to the depths by daily slips. For to some he offers the taste of his sweetness through pride, to others through avarice, to others through envy, to others through fallacy, to others through luxury; and into as many kinds of vices as he draws them, he provides as many draughts of his sweetness. For when he persuades anything proud in the mind, what he says becomes sweet, because the perverse man desires to appear set above others. While he endeavors to instill avarice into the

mind, what he speaks secretly becomes sweet, because through abundance necessity is avoided. While he suggests anything of envy, what he says becomes sweet, because the perverse mind, when it sees another decay, exults that it by no means appears less than he. When he persuades anything of fallacy, what he suggests becomes sweet, because by that very thing by which he deceives others, he seems prudent to himself. When he speaks luxury to the deceived mind, what he persuades becomes sweet, because he dissolves the mind in pleasure. As many vices, then, as he inserts into the hearts of the carnal, he offers them as many draughts of his sweetness. Which sweetness of his, however, as I said before, none perceive except those who, given up to present pleasures, are drawn to perpetual mourning. Well then is it said: He was sweet to the pebbles of Cocytus, because he is bitter to the elect, and sweet to the reprobate. For those alone he feeds with his delights, whom he impels to groaning by daily slips. It follows:

CHAPTER LXI

[Vet. XXX, Rec. XXXIX].

IBID.---And after him he draweth every man, and before him innumerable.

CHAPTER LXII.

VERS. 54.---How then do you comfort me in vain, since your answer is shown to be contrary to the truth?

73. How hateful a lie is to the saints.---The friends of blessed Job could not comfort him, in that by their speeches they were going against the truth. And when they called him a hypocrite or impious, by the fact that they themselves in lying were committing a fault, they were undoubtedly increasing the punishment of the just man afflicted with wounds. For the minds of the saints, because they love the truth, are tortured even by the fault of another's deceit. For by how much they see the crime of a lie to be grave, by so much they hate it not only in themselves, but also in others.

Book sixteenth.

Having run through with a brief explanation chapters XXII, XXIII and XXIV of the book of Job, the third part closes as far as the middle of verse 20.

501 [Vet. and Rec. I.] Those who fail in their allegation against the words of truth, often repeat even well-known things, lest they should seem to be overcome by keeping silence. Whence Eliphaz, pressed by the discourses of blessed Job, says those things which no one is ignorant of. For he says:

CHAPTER FIRST.

CAP. XXII, VER. 2.---Can a man be compared with God, even when he shall be of perfect knowledge?

1. Our knowledge compared with the divine is ignorance.---For in comparison with God, our knowledge is ignorance. For we are wise by participation in God, not by comparison. What wonder then when that is said as it were by way of doctrine, which could have been known even if it were kept silent? Who still subjoins, as it were in defense, the power of God:

CHAPTER II.

VER. 3.---What does it profit God if thou wert just? or what dost thou confer on Him if thy life were unspotted?

2. God does not need our justice.---For in everything that we do well, we help ourselves, and not God. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: I have said to the Lord: Thou art my God, for Thou hast no need of my goods (Ps. 16:2). For He is truly Lord to us, because He is indeed God, who does not need the good of the one who serves Him, but confers the goodness which He receives, so that the goodness offered may profit not Himself, but first those who receive it and afterwards those who return it. For although the Lord coming to judgment says: As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me (Matth. 25:40), He says this with wonderful piety out of compassion for His members. And He Himself helps us by the fact that He is our head, who is helped in His members by our good works. Still Eliphaz adds what no one is ignorant of, saying:

CHAPTER III.

VER. 4.---Will He reprove thee fearing, and will He come with thee into judgment?

3. It is said idly of God what is ignored by no one.---Who, even a foolish person, would feel this, that the Lord reproves us out of fear, and out of dread proposes His judgment against us? But those who do not know how to measure their words, undoubtedly slide down to idle sayings. In which if they do not at all reprove themselves,

they immediately leap forward to harmful and contumelious words. Whence Eliphaz, who introduced idle things, immediately broke out into contumelious words, saying:

CHAPTER IV.

VER. 5.---And is it not for thy great malice, and thy infinite iniquities?

4. From idle words one comes to contumelious ones.---Behold, from a sluggish heart he came to idle words, and from idle words through the crime of deceit he flared up into contumelies. For these are the falls of increasing guilt, so that the tongue, when it is not restrained, by no means lies where it has fallen, but always descends to worse things. But those things which are subjoined, because they are very evident according to the history, are not to be expounded according to the letter.

5. But because we have said that the friends of blessed Job hold the representation of heretics (Above, in the preface, and very often elsewhere), and that he himself bears the signification of the holy Church, let us now show in what way the words of Eliphaz agree with the falsehood of heretics. For it follows:

CHAPTER V

[Vet. and Rec. II].

502 For thou hast taken a pledge of thy brethren without cause, and hast stripped the

naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary, and thou hast withdrawn bread from the hungry. In the strength of thy arm thou didst possess the land, and as the most powerful thou didst obtain it.

TYPICAL SENSE. 6. Heretics lie that their own err and lose the Holy Spirit when they return to the Church.---In sacred Scripture, by the appellation of a pledge (pignus), sometimes the gifts of the Holy Spirit are signified, and sometimes the confession of sin. For the gift of the Holy Spirit is received as a pledge, as it is said by Paul: Who has given us the pledge of the Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22). For we receive a pledge for this purpose, that we may hold certainty concerning the promise which is made to us. The gift therefore of the Holy Spirit is called a pledge, because by this our soul is strengthened for the certainty of interior hope. Again, by the name of a pledge the confession of sin is wont to be understood, as it is written in the Law: When thy brother owes thee anything, and thou shalt have taken a pledge from him, restore the pledge before the setting of the sun (Ex. 22:26). For our brother becomes a debtor to us when any neighbor is shown to have committed some fault against us. For we call sins debts. Whence it is said to the sinning servant: All the debt I forgave thee (Matth. 18:32). And in the Lord's prayer we daily pray: Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors (Matth. 6:12). But we receive a pledge from our debtor, when we already hold the confession of his sin from him who is known to have sinned against us, by which we

are asked to release the sin which was committed against us. For he who confesses the sin which he committed, and asks for pardon, has already given as it were a pledge for his debt. Which pledge indeed we are commanded to restore before the setting of the sun, because before the sun of justice sets in us through sorrow of heart, we ought to restore to him the confession of pardon from whom we receive the confession of guilt, that he who remembers that he has sinned against us may feel that what he did wrong is soon released by us. Because therefore the holy Church, when she receives any returning from heretics to the truth of the faith, first persuades them that they ought to confess the guilt of their error, it is said as it were under the representation of heretics through Eliphaz: For thou hast taken a pledge of thy brethren without cause. That is, from these who come from us to thee, thou hast uselessly exacted a confession of error. If on the other hand, as we have said before, we understand by a pledge the gifts of the Holy Spirit, heretics say that the holy Church has taken away the pledge of their brethren, because they suspect that those who come to her lose spiritual gifts. Whence also it follows: And thou hast stripped the naked of their clothing.

[Rec. III.] 7. They call the same ones lazy and dull.---Those whom heretics draw by their perverse preachings, they think have the precepts of their doctrine as it were certain garments, and they think them clothed so long as they consider these things which they themselves

have preached to be observed by them; from whom when some return to the holy Church, they immediately suspect that they have lost the garments of doctrine. [Vet. III.] But since a naked person cannot be stripped, we must ask: how are they mentioned first as naked, and afterwards as stripped? 503 But it is to be known that everyone who enjoys purity of heart, by that very fact that he has not the covering of double-mindedness, is naked. And there are some among heretics who have indeed purity of heart, but yet receive the perverse dogmas of their doctrine. These indeed are both naked from their own purity, and are as it were clothed from their preaching. And because such as these easily return to the holy Church, for the reason that they do not use the malice of double-mindedness, heretics confess them to be naked, whom they say have been stripped of their garments by her, because they think simple ones to be lazy and dull, whom they consider to have lost their own perverse dogmas.

8. They accuse the Church of ignorance when they speak of unknown things.---It follows: Thou hast not given water to the weary, and thou hast withdrawn bread from the hungry. Heretics, in that they do not hold the solidity of truth, for that reason sometimes study to appear more loquacious, and glory as it were in the knowledge of their doctrine against the faith of Catholics; they seek to draw all whom they behold to themselves by perverse discourses, and from the very thing by which they associate others to themselves for destruction, from thence they think they are act-

ing with some vivacity. For we call those weary who are fatigued under the laborious burden of this world. Whence also the Truth says by Himself: Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you (Matth. 11:28). Heretics therefore, because they do not cease to preach their own dogmas, mock the holy Church as if for unskillfulness, saying: Thou hast not given water to the weary, and thou hast withdrawn bread from the hungry. For they think that they give water to the weary when they offer their cup of error to some who labor under a terrestrial burden. And they suspect that they have not withdrawn bread from the hungry, because even when questioned about invisible and incomprehensible things, they answer with proud audacity. And then they believe themselves learned above all when they more unhappily presume to speak of unknown things. But the holy Church, while she sees anyone hungry for that which it would not profit him to receive, either modestly suppresses it if they are already known to her, or if they still seem unknown, humbly confesses it, and recalls them to the sense of an ordered humility when she says to them by her preacher: Not to be more wise than it behooves to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety (Rom. 12:3). And again: Be not high-minded, but fear (Rom. 11:20). And again: Seek not the things that are too high for thee, and search not into things that are above thy strength (Ecclus. 3:22). And again: Thou hast found honey, eat what is sufficient for thee, lest perhaps being filled thou vomit it up (Prov.

25:16). For to find honey is to taste the sweetness of holy understanding. Which is then sufficiently eaten, when our intelligence is held under guidance according to the measure of sense. For he that is filled casts out the honey, who desiring to penetrate more than he captures, loses even that from which he might have been nourished. Because therefore the holy Church forbids weak minds to search into high things, it is said to blessed Job: Thou hast withdrawn bread from the hungry.

[Vet. IV.] 9. They envy her magnitude and universality.---And because heretics also envy her magnitude, in that she holds the peoples universally in the true faith, when they find a time of earthly prosperity, they exceed against her in proud voices, and in reproaching they lay open how much they formerly envied her power in secret. For it follows: In the strength of thy arm thou didst possess the land, and as most powerful thou didst obtain it. As if they should say openly: That in thy preaching thou hast occupied the land universally, was the power of fortitude, not the reason of truth. For because they see Christian princes to hold her preaching, they suspect that this which is believed of her by the peoples, is not the virtue of rectitude, but the cause of secular power. It follows:

CHAPTER VI.

VER. 9.---Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless thou hast broken.

10. They detract from her when she benignly receives the masters of error who come to their senses.---The common people who are subject to preaching heretics, conceive the perverse seeds of their errors from carnal understanding, and are associated with them in their own damnation. But when the holy Church receives into herself those very preachers of errors, either overcome by reason, or restrains under the bond of her discipline those hardened in their study of perversity, the destitute heretics, when they see the common people remain among them without preachers, what else do they grieve for from the holy Church but that widows are left empty? And because, the masters of the heretics being withdrawn, they suspect that their disciples are weakened in their own work, they complain as if the arms of the fatherless were broken by the Church. Or certainly because the holy Church, while she receives some coming from heretics, it is evidently clear that she contradicts their former error. For there are some who so study the virginity of the flesh that they condemn marriages; and there are some who so praise abstinence that they detest those who take necessary food. Concerning whom it is said by Paul: Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful (1 Tim. 4:3). Because therefore she recalls them from the carnal intention of their superstition, heretics, when they behold these living otherwise than they taught, testify that their arms have been broken by the Church from the operation which

they formerly held. Whence also in this time of discipline, if any adversity should happen to her, they suspect that this has happened from a worthy retribution for sins. For it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VII.

VER. 10.---Therefore thou art surrounded with snares, and sudden fear troubles thee.

11. They reproach the one suffering adversities that they are the punishments for crimes.---That sudden fear troubles him who neglects to consider what is imminent from the strictness of the coming Judge. Because therefore heretics believe the faithful people to be oppressed by the guilts of perfidy, they accuse them of being surrounded with snares. And because they think that they do not foresee future things, in their percussion they think this one is troubled by sudden fear. Who still insulting subjoin:

VER. 11.---And thou thoughtest that thou shouldest not see darkness, and that thou shouldest not be oppressed by the violence of overflowing waters.

As if he should say openly: Thou hadst proposed to thyself security of peace in hope, and therefore thou didst rejoice in thy presumption as if in light, nor didst thou ever think thou wouldest be oppressed by tribulations. But behold, while thou art afflicted by supervening evils, the very darknesses of tribulations which oppress thee show whether those things which thou holdest are right. Which tribulations indeed Eliphaz compares to overflowing waters, because

while some rush upon others, as if with swelling waters, waves follow waves. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Ancient V].

VERS. 12-14.---Is not God higher than heaven, and elevated above the height of the stars? And thou sayest: How doth God know? and He judgeth as it were through a mist. The clouds are His hiding place, and He considereth not our things, and He walketh about the poles of heaven.

12. An excellent description of the immensity and divine providence. God so attends to all things, that He is present to each.---There are many so dull that they know not how to fear except what they see corporally. Whence it comes that they fear not God, whom they cannot see. But heretics, because they think themselves to be wise, bring forth words of derision against Catholics, and suspect that He is not feared by them, whom they cannot see corporally; so that as it were through a torpor of sense they think their Author, because He is higher than heaven, and elevated above the heights of the stars, cannot see from afar; and because between us and the heavenly seat aerial parts intervene, He judges as if hiding in a cloud through a mist, and intent on higher things, He less weighs the lowest; and while He constrains the poles of heaven by walking around them, He sees not the interior things. But who even foolish would suspect these things of God, who indeed since He is always

Omnipotent, so attends to all things, that He is present to each; so is He present to each, that at the same time He is never absent from all? For although He deserts certain sinners, He is nevertheless present to those same ones by judgment, to whom He is seen to be absent by help. For so He surrounds the exterior things, that He fills the interior; so He fills the interior, that He surrounds the exterior; so He rules the highest, that He deserts not the lowest; so He is present to the lowest, that He recedes not from the higher; so He is hidden in His own appearance, that nevertheless He is known in operation; so is He known in His own work, that nevertheless He cannot be comprehended by the estimation of the one knowing; so is He present, that He cannot be seen; so He cannot be seen, that nevertheless His own judgments testify to His presence; so He offers Himself to be understood by us, that nevertheless He clouds for us the very ray of His understanding; and again He so represses us with the mist of ignorance, that nevertheless He flashes into our mind with the rays of His brightness: so that both being uplifted it may see something, and being reverberated it may tremble; and because it cannot see Him as He is, it may in some measure know Him by living. But these things heretics do not think the holy Church knows, because by a foolish judgment they think themselves alone to be wise. From whose type still it is subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 15.---Dost thou desire to keep the path of the ages, which wicked men have trodden?

13. The path of Christ is humility, the pride of the world.---As the path of our Redeemer is humility, so the path of the ages is pride. Wicked men therefore tread the path of the ages, because through the desires of this life they walk in elation. Concerning which wicked men it is still added:

CHAPTER X

[Ancient VI, Rec. IV].

VERSE 16.---Who were taken away before their time, and a flood has overthrown their foundation.

14. The wicked always die before the time they have fixed for themselves, never before that appointed by God. Since the time of life is without doubt fixed for us by the divine prescience, it is much to be asked for what reason it is now said that the wicked are withdrawn from the present world before their own time. For Almighty God, although He frequently changes His sentence, never changes His counsel. At that time therefore each one is withdrawn from this life, in which it is foreknown by divine power before times. But it is to be known that Almighty God, creating and ordering us, according to the merits of each, disposes also the limits, so that either that bad man may live briefly, lest he should harm many who act well; or this good man may subsist longer in this life, that he may exist as an assistant of

good work to many; or again the bad may be deferred longer in life that he may increase still depraved works, by whose temptation the purified just may live more truly; or the good may be more quickly withdrawn, lest if he live here long, malice should corrupt his innocence. It is to be known nevertheless that it is the goodness of God to grant to sinners a space of repentance. But because they turn the accepted times not to the fruit of repentance, but to the use of iniquity, they lose what they might have merited from divine mercy. Although Almighty God foreknows that time of each one unto death in which his life is terminated, nor could anyone have died in another time, except that in which he dies. For if fifteen years are mentioned as added to the life of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20, 6), the time indeed of life grew from that limit in which he himself deserved to die. For divine disposition then foreknew his time, in which He afterwards withdrew him from the present life. Since therefore it is so, what is it that is said: Because the wicked were taken away before their time, except that all who love the present life promise to themselves longer spaces of the same life? But when death supervening withdraws them from the present life, it cuts short the spaces of their life, which they had been accustomed to extend longer for themselves as if in thought. Concerning whom it is rightly said: [Rec. V.] And a flood has overthrown their foundation.

15. The foundation of the wicked is in earthly things, of the just in heavenly. For the wicked,

while they neglect in heart to pass over to eternal things, and do not behold all present things to be fugitive, fix their mind in the love of the present life, and construct for themselves as it were a foundation of long habitation in it, because they are solidified in earthly things through desire. So Cain is described as having first constructed a city on the earth (Gen. 4), who indeed is clearly shown to be a stranger, because he himself placed a foundation on the earth, who was alien from the solidity of the eternal country. For a stranger from the highest, he placed a foundation in the lowest, who placed the station of his heart in earthly delight. Whence also in his race Enoch, which is interpreted dedication, is first born; but in the progeny of the elect Enoch is recorded to have been the seventh, because indeed the reprobate in this life which is before dedicate themselves by building up themselves, but the elect await the dedication of their building in the end of time, that is in the seventh. For thou mayest see very many to think only temporal things, to seek honors, to gape for things to be ambitiously sought, to require nothing after this life. What therefore do these but dedicate themselves in the first generation? Thou mayest see the elect to seek nothing of present glory, to sustain want willingly, to endure the evils of the world with equanimity, that they may be able to be crowned in the end. To the elect therefore Enoch is born in the seventh generation, because they seek the dedication of their joy in the glory of the extreme retribution. And because by the daily

lapse of time the very mortality of the present life runs down, and destroys the dedication of the reprobate by withdrawing the same reprobate, it is rightly said of the wicked: And a flood has overthrown their foundation. That is, the very course of mutability overthrows in them the state of perverted construction. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

VERSE 17.---Who said to God: Depart from us.

16. Who would doubt that the blessed Job also said these things? But those things which we have explained in his sayings, for the fastidiousness of the reader we avoid to repeat. It follows:

IBID.---And as if the Almighty could do nothing, they esteemed Him.

In these also the word, and not the sense, is changed. For what was said by blessed Job: Who is the Almighty, that we should serve Him (Job 21, 15)? this is said by Eliphaz: And as if the Almighty could do nothing, they esteemed Him. It follows:

CHAPTER XII

[Ancient VII].

VERSE 18.---When He had filled their houses with good things.

17. God also heaps benefits upon the wicked. For what purpose.---The Lord fills the houses of the wicked with good things, because He does not deny His gifts even to the ungrateful, so that either they may blush at the kindness of the

Creator, and return to goodness; or, altogether contemning to return, they may be more heavily punished there, whence here also they have returned evils for the more bountiful goods of God, so that more harsh punishments may then punish them, whose malice even gifts did not overcome here. It follows:

IBID.---Whose sentence be far from me.

Sentence is one thing, counsel another.---This also was said by blessed Job. For he says: Whose counsel be far from me (Job 21, 16), although sentence may be understood as one thing, and counsel another. Sentence indeed is in the mouth, counsel in thought. While therefore Eliphaz desired himself to be far from the sentence of the wicked, but blessed Job from the counsel, it is clear indeed that the one desires to be unlike the wicked in words, but the other even in thought. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. VI.]

VERSE 19.---The just shall see, and shall rejoice, and the innocent shall laugh them to scorn.

18. The just now waste away because of the sins of the wicked, to rejoice at some time at their destruction.---When the just see the unjust erring here, they cannot rejoice at the error of those perishing. For if they rejoice in errors, they are not just. Again if they rejoice through insult because they are not such as they see others to be, they are altogether proud. Whence also the

Pharisee lost justification, because by rejoicing he preferred himself to the merits of the publican, saying: I give thanks to Thee, because I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican (Luke 18, 11). Again if we say that the just can exult with perfect joy over the death of the depraved, what kind of joy is there in this world over the vengeance of those sinning, in which the life of the just is still uncertain? Let us therefore distinguish the times of trembling and of exultation. For the just now see the unjust, and waste away because of their wickedness. And when they see them being struck, they also become suspect of their own life. When therefore shall the just see the destruction of the wicked, and rejoice, except when they shall have cleaved to the strict Judge with perfect security of exultation, when in that extreme examination they shall behold their damnation, and shall not have what they may fear for themselves? Now therefore they behold the reprobate and groan, then they shall behold and laugh them to scorn, because by exulting they shall despise those, whom now they see neither without groaning when they perpetrate iniquities, nor without fear when they die for iniquity. Whence by this which is subjoined, it is shown that it is said concerning their last damnation; for it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. VII].

VERSE 20. Is not their pride cut down, and the fire has devoured their remains?

19. The wicked now flourish, but are to be cut down at some time, and punished both in flesh and in soul.---For here the wicked are uplifted, because they are extolled in depraved actions, because they both act perversely, and nevertheless for perverse acts are by no means struck. They sin and flourish; they increase sins and multiply earthly goods. But their pride is then cut down, when they are drawn away either from the present life to destruction, or from the sight of the eternal Judge to the eternal fire of Gehenna. Who although they leave here their dead flesh, they also receive it back in the resurrection, so that they may burn with the flesh in which they sinned. For as their guilt was in the mind and body, so their punishment will be in the soul and flesh alike. Because therefore this will not be free for them from torment, that they leave it dead here, it is rightly said now: The fire has devoured their remains. It follows:

CHAPTER XV

[Ancient VIII].

VERSES 21, 22.---Acquiesce therefore to Him, and have peace, and through these thou shalt have the best fruits. Receive the law from His mouth, and place His words in thy heart.

20. The pride and presumption of heretics.---It is a fault of pride to teach one better, which heretics often commit, who concerning those

things which they depravedly feel presume as it were to teach Catholics. For then they think them to acquiesce to God, if it should happen that they consent to their perversities. And to those acquiescing they promise peace, because they already desist from quarreling against those who consent to them. But they promise the best fruits to those consenting to them, because they think those alone to do good works, whom they exult to draw to their own dogmas. To whom also this is consistent, which he adds: Receive the law from His mouth. Because they suspect those things which they themselves feel to proceed from the mouth of God: And place His words in thy heart. As if he should openly assert, saying: Whom until now thou hast held in the mouth, and not in the heart. For because he rejects their perverted dogmas, they accuse him of having the words of God not in sense, but in show. Whence as if under a certain species of sweetness they infuse the poison of pestiferous persuasion, so that they may admonish the Church to place the words of God in its heart. Which if they had ever receded from its heart, it would by no means hear such things from them. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 23.---If thou shalt return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, and thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacle.

21. What is returned to God after sins, is cleansed in thought and in work.---Heretics think the faithful people to have departed from

God, because they see them resisting their preachings. Whom when they behold afflicted with present evils, they try as it were by admonition to draw to the grace of the Creator, saying: If thou shalt return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up. As if they should openly say: Because by resisting our dogmas thou hast departed from the Lord, therefore thou art destroyed from the building up of righteousness. But we sometimes take the tabernacle for the dwelling place of the body, sometimes indeed for the dwelling place of the heart. For as we inhabit the body by the soul, so we inhabit the mind by thoughts. Iniquity therefore in the tabernacle of the mind, is a perverted intention in the study of thought; but iniquity in the tabernacle of the body is a carnal action through the completion of work. Eliphaz therefore, because he was a friend of the blessed man, feeling certain true things, and nevertheless in those things in which he deviates from rectitude, holding the species of heretics, not knowing that blessed Job was scourged for virtues, believed that he who he saw struck had erred, and promises to him, if he shall have returned to the Almighty, saying: Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacle, as if he should clearly say: Whoever returns to God after errors, is cleansed in thought and in work alike. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII

[Ancient IX, Rec. VIII].

VERSE 24.---He shall give for earth a flint, and for flint golden torrents.

22. The weak, God healing them, escape strong, and shine before others with doctrine.---What is signified by earth but weakness of action, what by the hardness of flint, but fortitude? what do we take by golden torrents, but the doctrine of inner clarity? But Almighty God gives flint for earth to those converted to Him, because He bestows fortitude of robust work for weak action. He also gives golden torrents for flint, because for robust work He multiplies the doctrine of clear preaching, so that each sinner converted, and from weak being able to exist as strong, may rise up in his fortitude even to bringing forth the words of inner clarity, so that in him both the weakness of action, in which as it were he is dissolved, may be solidified by the fortitude of living well; and again when sense is drawn from life, from that very fortitude golden torrents may flow down, because in the mouth of those living well the clarity of doctrine overflows. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERSE 25. And the Almighty shall be against your enemies, and silver shall be heaped up for you.

23. God, having put the enemies to flight, enriches us with the silver of divine eloquence.---What other enemies do we suffer more than the malignant spirits, who besiege us in our thoughts, that they may be able to break into the city of our mind, and hold it captured under

the yoke of their dominion? But that by the name of silver sacred eloquence is designated the Psalmist testifies, who says: The words of the Lord are pure words, silver tried by the fire of the earth (Ps. 11:7). And often when we apply ourselves to sacred eloquence, we endure the snares of malignant spirits more grievously, because they sprinkle the dust of earthly thoughts upon our mind, that they may obscure the eyes of our intention from the light of inner vision. Which indeed the Psalmist had endured, when he said: Depart from me, ye malignant, and I will search into the commandments of my God (Ps. 119:115). Plainly, of course, intimating that he could not search into the commandments of God when he was enduring the snares of malignant spirits in his mind. Which we also know to be signified in the work of Isaac under the wickedness of the Allophyli, who filled up with a heap of earth the wells which Isaac had digged (Gen. 26:15). For we indeed dig these wells when we penetrate deep things in the hidden senses of sacred Scripture. Which, however, the Allophyli fill up secretly when, while we are tending toward deep things, the unclean spirits cast earthly thoughts into us, and take away, as it were, the water of divine knowledge that was found. But because no one overcomes these enemies by his own strength, it is said through Eliphaz: And the Almighty shall be against your enemies, and silver shall be heaped up for you. As if it were plainly said: When the Lord by His own strength shall have repelled

the malignant spirits from you, the bright talent of divine eloquence increases within. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX

[Ancient X, Rec. IX].

VERSE 26.---Then upon the Almighty you shall abound in delights.

24. Those abound in delights who know how to discern the manifold senses in the sacred Scriptures.---To abound in delights upon the Almighty is to be satiated with the feasts of sacred Scripture in the love of Him. In whose words indeed we find as many delights as we receive diversities of understanding for our progress, so that now history may feed us nakedly, now under the text of the letter a veiled moral allegory may refresh us inly, now contemplation may suspend us toward higher things, already flashing between in the darkness of the present life from the light of eternity. And it should be known that whoever abounds in delights is dissolved in a certain remission of himself, and is relaxed from the study of labor as if from weariness, because indeed when the soul has begun to abound with internal delights, it least of all consents to lie upon earthly works; but captured by the love of the creator, and already free in its captivity, it sighs to contemplate His beauty by failing, and recovers, as it were, by growing weary, because while it is no longer able to carry foul burdens, it hastens by rest to Him whom it loves within. Hence also in the admiration of

the bride it is written: Who is this that cometh up from the desert abounding in delights (Cant. 8:5)? Because indeed holy Church, unless she abounded in the delights of the words of God, could not ascend from the desert of the present life to superior things. Therefore she abounds in delights and ascends, because while she is fed by mystical understandings, she is raised up daily to contemplate heavenly things. Hence also the Psalmist says: And night is my illumination in my delights (Ps. 139:11), because while the studious mind is refreshed through mystical understanding, already in it the obscurity of the present life is illuminated by the brightness of the following day, so that even in the darkness of this corruption the force of future light may break into the understanding of it, and fed by the delights of words, it may learn by foretasting what it should hunger for from the food of truth. It follows:

CHAPTER XX.

IBID.---And you shall lift up your face to God.

25. To lift up the face to God is to raise up the heart purified by penance to investigate divine things.---To lift up the face to God is to raise up the heart to investigate sublime things. For as we are known and conspicuous to man through the bodily face, so to God through the inner image. But when we are depressed by the guilt of offense, we fear to lift up the face of our heart to God. For while it is supported by no confidence of good works, the supreme mind trembles to behold, because the conscience itself accuses it.

But when already the guilt is washed away by the lamentations of penance, and thus things perpetrated are bewailed, so that things to be bewailed are by no means perpetrated, a great confidence is born to the mind, and the face of our heart is lifted up to behold the joys of heavenly retribution. But Eliphaz would say these things rightly if he were admonishing a weak man. But when he despises a just man on account of scourges, what else does he do but pour out words of knowledge without knowing? Which sayings indeed, if we lead them to the type of heretics, they themselves promise that we shall lift up our face to God by false promises. As if they should say plainly to the faithful people: As long as you do not follow our preaching, you press down the heart in weak things. But because Eliphaz admonished blessed Job to return to God, from whom indeed that same blessed man never departed, he adds further by promising:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 27.---You shall ask Him, and He shall hear you.

26. They ask God in vain who despise His precepts.---Indeed they ask the Lord, but they by no means deserve to be heard, who despise the precepts of the commanding Lord. Hence it is written: He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, his prayer shall be an abomination (Prov. 28:9). As long, therefore, as Eliphaz believed that blessed Job was not heard, hence

indeed he judged that he had erred in his work. Hence also he adds still:

IBID.---And you shall pay your vows.

[Ancient XI.] He who has vowed vows, but is not able to pay them on account of weakness, it is done to him from the punishment of sin so that the ability to do good is taken away from him who is willing. But when in the sight of the inner Judge that guilt which stands in the way is wiped away, it happens immediately that ability follows the vow. It follows:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSE 28.---You shall decree a thing, and it shall come to you.

27. False judgments of men concerning adversity and prosperity.---This is wont to be the proper judgment of the weak, that they think anyone just in proportion as they see him attain everything he desires. Since, indeed, we know that earthly goods are sometimes taken away from the just, which are given with a large gift to the unjust, because even for despaired-of sick people physicians command whatever they ask for to be given, and to those whom they foresee can be brought back to health they refuse to give the things they desire. But if Eliphaz brought in these sayings concerning spiritual gifts, it should be known that a thing is decreed and comes when the virtue which is desired by longing, by the bounty of God, also prospers in effect. Hence also it is added further:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Rec. X].

IBID.---And light shall shine in your ways.

28. Wonderful splendor of virtue.---For light to shine in the ways of the just is to sprinkle the signs of their clarity through wonderful works of virtues, so that wherever they go by intention, they may shake off the night of sin from the hearts of the beholders, and pour the light of justice into them by the example of their work. But however great the justice of work may be, it is nothing with the internal Judge if the swelling of the mind elevates it. Hence also it is added:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 29.---For he who shall have been humbled, shall be in glory; and he who shall have inclined his eyes, he shall be saved.

29. Commendation of humility.---Which sentence indeed does not differ from the mouth of Truth saying: Everyone who exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted (Luke 14:11). Hence also it is said through Solomon: Before he is crushed, the heart of man is exalted; and before he is glorified, he is humbled (Prov. 18:12). But it is rightly said: He who shall have inclined his eyes, he shall be saved, because, as much as can be perceived through the ministry of the members, the first showing of pride is wont to be in the eyes. For hence it is written: And the eyes of the proud

Thou wilt humble (Ps. 17:28). Hence it is said of that very head of the proud: He beholdeth every high thing (Job 41:25). Hence of that which adhered to him through infidelity it is written: A generation whose eyes are lofty, and its eyelids lifted up on high (Prov. 30:13). Therefore to incline the eyes is to despise no one by looking back, but to estimate oneself less and unequal to all whom one beholds. He therefore shall be saved who inclines his eyes, because he who deserts the false summit of pride, ascends the height of truth. It follows:

CHAPTER XXV.

VERSE 30.---The innocent shall be saved, he shall be saved moreover by the cleanness of his hands.

30. Necessity of preventing grace, which free will ought to accompany and follow.---Which sentence indeed, if it is brought forth concerning the retribution of the heavenly kingdom, is supported by truth, because when it is written of God: Who rendereth to every man according to his works (Rom. 2:6), the justice of the eternal Judge saves him in the final examination whom His piety here delivers from unclean works. But if anyone is believed to be saved here by the cleanness of his hands to this end, that he may become innocent by his own strength, without doubt it is erred, because if heavenly grace does not prevent the guilty one, it will never indeed find an innocent one whom it may remunerate. Hence it is said by the truthful voice of Moses: And no

one with Thee is of himself innocent (Ex. 34:7). Heavenly piety, therefore, first does something in us without us, that, our free will also following, it may do with us the good which we already desire, which however, through bestowed grace, it so remunerates in us in the final judgment as if it had proceeded from us alone. [Ancient XII.] For because divine goodness prevents us so that it may make us innocent, Paul says: But by the grace of God I am what I am (1 Cor. 15:10). And because our free will follows that same grace, he adds: And His grace in me was not void, but I labored more abundantly than they all. Who, while he beheld that he was nothing of himself, said: Yet not I. And yet because he found himself to be something with grace, he added: But the grace of God with me. For he would not say with me if he had not subsequent free will with preventing grace. That he might therefore show that he was nothing without grace, he said: Not I. But that he might demonstrate that he had worked with grace through free will, he added: But the grace of God with me. Therefore by the cleanness of his hands the innocent shall be saved, because he who here is prevented by a gift that he may become innocent, when he is led to judgment, is remunerated from merit. All which things Eliphaz, as was said before, although he brought them forth rightly, yet knew not to whom he should bring them forth, because he ought not to have taught a better man, but to have heard him. All which things, however, through a type agree with the promises of heretics, who when they

find any faithful people afflicted in the present life, think them struck from the guilt of perfidy, and promise them, if they follow their dogmas, the safety of innocence through the cleanness of good works. But the mind of the faithful despises them so much the more highly, as it does not see them have that innocence which they promise. Hence it is well said through Solomon: In vain is the net spread before the eyes of the winged ones (Prov. 1:17). For the spirits of the good are winged, who while they fly away to higher things through the hope of truth, decline the nets of the deception of wicked men that are placed. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XI].

CHAPTER XXIII, VERSES 1, 2.---But Job answering said: Even now my speech is in bitterness, and the hand of my stroke is aggravated above my groaning.

31. Inordinate consolation increases pain.--- According to his custom, blessed Job begins in plainer words, but consumes his sayings with a high prosecution of mystery. Indeed, the pain of the afflicted ought to have been healed by the consolation of friends; but because the consolation broke out into the flatteries of deceit, the pain of the afflicted became horrible. For because Eliphaz did not fear to promise better things to one converted, the wound grew as if from a noxious medicine. Hence it is rightly said: Even now my speech is in bitterness, and the hand of my stroke is aggravated above my groaning, because

indeed the intention of inordinate consolation multiplied the percussion which it ought to have diminished. In which words indeed, through a type of holy Church, the pain of the faithful is also expressed, who groan so much the more as they behold the wicked to flatter, who according to the voice of Paul: By sweet words and blessings seduce the hearts of the innocent (Rom. 16:18).

32. [Ancient XIII.] The minds of the faithful know not how to be without bitterness. These words are also rightly referred to considering more subtly the mind of the faithful, who know not how to be without bitterness even if they seem to prosper in this world. When adversity also happens to them, it redoubles the pain which it finds. Hence it is rightly said: Even now my speech is in bitterness, that it may be shown openly that the mind of the elect was not without bitterness even in prosperity. But it is well said: And the hand of my stroke is aggravated above my groaning. For the hand of the stroke is the strength of the percussion. For the elect consider their first percussion, because they are divided from the vision of their Creator, because they by no means enjoy the clarity of inner illumination, but groan as if relegated to a place of blindness in the exile of the present life. Therefore they always have their groaning in this hand of the stroke. But when even adverse things still happen in this life, the hand of their stroke is aggravated even above their groaning. For there was a groaning of the stroke even when the adverse things of the present life were lacking. But the bitterness of the

first percussion increases even from the temptation of adversity. He says therefore: And the hand of my stroke is aggravated above my groaning: because adversity in this life did not strike each just man joyful, but multiplied in him the pain of the wound. It happens, however, by the wonderful moderation of Almighty God, that when in this world the mind of the just labors more with adversities, it thirsts more to contemplate the face of its Author. Hence it is aptly added here:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XII].

VERS. 3.---O that I might know and find him, and come even to his throne!

33. The ardor of the elect desiring to enjoy the sight of God.---Unless each of the elect had known God, he certainly would not love Him. But it is one thing to know by faith, and another by sight; one thing to find by belief, another by contemplation. From which matter it comes to pass that all the elect pant to see also by sight Him whom they have known by faith. Burning with love of Him, they are in a fever, because they already taste the sweetness of His mildness in the very certainty of their faith. Which that man healed of demons in the region of the Gerasenes well designates, who wants to go away with Jesus; but it is said to him by the Master of salvation: Return to thy house, and tell how great things God hath done for thee (Luke 8:39). For a delay is still imposed on the lover, so that

from the desire of delayed love the merit of retribution may be increased. Therefore, Almighty God becomes sweet to us in miracles, and yet remains hidden in His loftiness, so that both by showing something of Himself He may kindle us in His love by a hidden inspiration, and yet by hiding the glory of His Majesty He may increase the force of His love through the heat of desire. For unless the holy man sought to see Him in His Majesty, he certainly would not subjoin: And come even to his throne [Ancient XIV]. For what is the throne of God, but those angelic spirits who, by the testimony of Scripture, are called thrones? He, therefore, who wishes to come even to the throne of God, what else does he concupisce than to be present with the angelic spirits, so that he may no longer sustain any failing moments of time, but may rise up to permanent glory in the contemplation of eternity?

34. The elect venerate the hidden judgments of God.---Which words, however, also suit the just placed in this life. For when they behold anything to be done against their vow and desire, they recur to the hidden judgments of God, so that they may see in them that that is not inordinately disposed within which seems to run inordinately without. For when they contemplate with the eyes of faith the Creator of all presiding over the angelic spirits, they come indeed to His throne. And because they consider that He who wonderfully rules the angels does not dispose men unjustly, they surely find the causal reasons how just they are, while those very causes may

seem unjust from without; and while they do this humbly, they often reprehend themselves in their own will, they sometimes judge their own vows in themselves, while they think those things which the Creator disposes to be better. Hence it is well still added:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 4.---I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

35. From the consideration of the hidden judgments of God the elect are kindled to repentance.---To order a cause before God is, within the secret of the mind, through the contemplation of faith, to open the eyes of our consideration to the tremendous examination of His Majesty, to attend to what a sinful man deserves, and to consider how terrible the Judge, now hidden and silent, will appear afterwards. From which matter it comes to pass that the soul is recalled more subtly to the knowledge of itself, and the more it sees its hidden Judge to be terrible, the more fearfully it is straitened concerning its own acts. It trembles anxiously, it pursues its faults with lamentations, by repenting it reproaches what it remembers itself to have been. Hence now also after it has been said: I would order my cause before him, it is rightly subjoined: And fill my mouth with arguments. For he who orders his cause for himself in the sight of God, fills his mouth with arguments, because while

he contemplates the subtle examination of the tremendous Judge against himself, he pursues himself with the invective of bitter repentance. But often while we neglect to weigh our faults, we are ignorant what reproach of them may follow in judgment; but when we pursue them by repenting, we find what the Judge may be able to say to us concerning them in His examination. Hence it is still aptly subjoined:

CAPUT XXIX.

VERS. 5.---That I might know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

36. The elect, while they fear the hidden judgments of God, escape them.---For then we bewail our faults when we have begun to weigh them. But then we weigh more subtly, when we bewail more solicitously, and from the lamentations there is born more fully in our heart what the divine strictness threatens to sinners, what those reproaches of the reprobate will be, what terror, what implacable aversion of the Majesty. For the Lord, angry with the reprobate, will say so great things then, as great as He shall have permitted them to suffer from equity. Which words of that animadversion the just indeed, while they now solicitously fear, escape. But who may prevail to be found just in that examination, if God should discuss the life of men according to the Majesty of His strength? Aptly therefore it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXX

[Vet. XV, Rec. XIV].

VERS. 6.---I would not that he contend with me with much strength, nor overwhelm me with the weight of his greatness.

37. Dreading the strength of God, they desire infirmity in the assumed humanity.---For the mind of even any just man, if it is strictly judged by Almighty God, is overwhelmed by the weight of His greatness. In which words indeed this also is to be understood, that the holy man, while he avoids the strength of God, what else does he desire than His infirmity? And it is written: The weakness of God is stronger than men (1 Cor. 1:25). Whence also he immediately adds:

VERS. 7.---Let him propose equity against me, and my judgment shall come to victory.

For who else but the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5), is designated by the name of equity? of whom it is written: Who was made wisdom unto us from God, and justice (1 Cor. 1:30). Which justice indeed while it comes into this world against the ways of sinners, we overcome the ancient enemy, by whom we were held captives. Let him say therefore: I would not that he contend with me with much strength, nor overwhelm me with the weight of his greatness; let him propose equity against me, and my judgment shall come to victory. That is, let Him send His incarnate Son to reprove my ways, and then through the judgment of my absolution I, a victor, shall exclude the waylaying adversary. For if in the strength of His

divinity the only-begotten Son of God should so remain invisible that He should take nothing of our infirmity, when could weak man have been able to find access of grace to Him? For the considered weight of His greatness would rather oppress than help. But He appeared strong above all things, weak among all things, so that while He suited us from the assumed infirmity, He might raise us to His permanent strength. For in its loftiness His divinity could not have been apprehended by us as little ones, but He prostrated Himself to men through His humanity, and we ascended as if upon one lying down; He arose, and we were lifted up. Whence this also is soon added, by which the invisible and incomprehensible divinity is demonstrated. For there follows:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Rec. XV].

VERS. 8, 9.---If I go to the East, he appeareth not; if to the West, I shall not understand him; if to the left, what shall I do? I shall not apprehend him; if I turn myself to the right, I shall not see him.

38. God is invisible and incomprehensible, to be sought not in a part but everywhere.---For the Creator of all is not in a part, because He is everywhere. And then He is found the less, when He who is whole everywhere is sought in a part. For the uncircumscribed spirit has all things within himself, which yet he both surrounds by filling, and fills by surrounding, and transcends

by sustaining, and sustains by transcending. But it is well that after it was said: If I go to the East, he appeareth not; if to the West, I shall not understand him; if to the left, what shall I do? I shall not apprehend him; if I turn myself to the right, I shall not see him; he immediately added: But he knoweth my way. As if he should say openly: I am not able to see Him seeing me, and I cannot behold Him who beholds me subtly; that he may show indeed that He is so much the more cautiously to be dreaded, as He is not visible. For He who so looks at us, that He cannot be looked at by us, is so much the more to be feared, as, seeing all things, He is least seen. For when we believe anyone to lie in wait for us in ambush against us, we fear him the more for this, that we see him least. And when we by no means detect his ambushes where they are, we even fear them there where they are not. But our Creator, who is whole everywhere, and, discerning all things, is not discerned, is so much the more to be feared, as, remaining invisible, it is unknown when and what He may decree concerning our acts. Which words, however, can be understood also otherwise. For we go to the East, when we lift up the mind in consideration of His Majesty. But He appeareth not, because such as He is in His nature He prevaileth not to be seen by mortal thought. If to the West, I shall not understand him [Ancient XVI]. We go to the West when we bring back to ourselves the eye of the heart raised up in God, but reverberated by that very immensity of light, and having become weary we learn that that

which we were seeking is far above us, and considering our mortality, we find ourselves to be yet unworthy who may be able to see the Immortal. If to the left, what I shall do I shall not apprehend him. To go to the left is to consent to the delights of sins. And indeed it is certain that he is not able to apprehend God who yet lies on the left in the delight of sin. If I turn myself to the right, I shall not see him. Into the right doubtlessly he is turned who is lifted up by virtues. But he is not able to see God who rejoices with private gladness concerning good acts, because in him the tumor of elation presses the eye of the heart. Whence it is well said elsewhere: Turn not aside to the right, or to the left (Deut. 17:11). In all which the soul for the most part discusses itself, yet it prevaileth not to apprehend itself fully. Hence it is aptly subjoined here:

CAPUT XXXII.

VERS. 10.---But he knoweth my way.

39. God explores the ways of the just and proves them.---As if he should say plainly: I both discuss myself strictly, and I cannot know myself perfectly; and yet He whom I prevail not to see, subtly sees all things which I do. There follows:

And he will prove me as gold which passeth through the fire.

Gold in the furnace profits to the clarity of its nature, while it loses dross. As gold therefore which passes through the fire the souls of the just are proved, to whom by the burning of tribulation both vices are withdrawn and merits are

increased. Nor was it of elation that the holy man compared himself placed in tribulation to gold, because he who was called just by the voice of God before the scourges, was not for that reason permitted to be tempted that vices might be purged in him, but that merits might increase, but gold is purged by fire. He esteemed therefore less of himself than he was, while, delivered to tribulation, he believed himself to be purged, who had not anything in him to be purged.

40. The just, however humble, are not ignorant of their good works.---But it is to be known that although the mind of the just feels humble things of itself, yet they behold those things which they do how right they are, but they do not presume concerning their rectitude: Whence it is still subjoined: My foot has followed his footsteps: his way I have kept, and have not declined from it. From the commandments of his lips I have not departed, and in my bosom I have hidden the words of his mouth. But in all these let us see whether he thinks himself to be anything. There follows: For he is alone [Rec. XVI]. By which sentence subjoined he shows that in so many good things which he had done he believed himself to be nothing. But repeating these same words above, let us touch upon them as we are able.

CAPUT XXXIII.

VERS. 11.---My foot has followed his footsteps.

41. The long-suffering and piety of God are to be imitated by us. Examples of Christ to be

followed.---For as if some steps of God are His operations which we behold, by which every good and evil man is ruled, by which the just and unjust are disposed in their orders, by which both every subject is daily led to better things, and the adverse one falling to worse things is tolerated. Concerning which steps indeed the Prophet said: Thy steps have been seen, O God (Psal. 67:25). We therefore, when we behold the virtue of His long-suffering and piety, and beholding we contend to imitate, what else do we do than follow the tracks of His steps, because we imitate certain extremes of His operation. For Truth admonished to imitate these footsteps of His Father, when He said: Pray for them that persecute and slander you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and the good (Matth. 5:44, 45; Luke 6:28). [Ancient XVII.] Blessed Job, however, who with certain faith had already said: I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I am to rise from the earth (Job 19:25), can so intend in the future operation of wisdom to be incarnate, just as we see the already past works of the same wisdom through faith, that the Mediator of God and men was benign to bestow, humble to sustain, patient to provide an example. Whose life indeed while blessed Job, filled with the heavenly spirit, beheld with solicitous intention, foreseeing the future humility of that mildness, he recurs as if to an example proposed to himself, so that whatever he should do in this life, he might bind to the tracks of that imitation, so far as he who was not able

to see the sublime things of His hidden disposition, beholding as if on the earth, might hold the tracks for His imitation. Concerning which His tracks it is said through Peter: Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps (1 Pet. 2:21). Concerning which it is still subjoined:

CAPUT XXXIV.

IBID.---His way I have kept, and have not declined from it.

42. The solicitude of the just is to observe the ways of truth.---He keeps and does not decline, who works this where he intends. For to keep by intention, is not to decline by operation. For this is the solicitude of the just, that they daily examine their acts according to the ways of truth, and, proposing those things to themselves as a rule, they decline not from the path of their rectitude. For they daily contend to go above themselves, and as they are advanced into the summit of virtues, they judge by cautious reprehension whatever remains of them from themselves below themselves, and they hasten to draw themselves whole to that point where they find themselves to have partially arrived. There follows:

CAPUT XXXV.

VERS. 12.---From the commandments of his lips I have not departed.

43. To search the will of God in the Scriptures, another solicitude of the just.---Just as well-obeying servants are always intent upon the faces of their masters, so that they may quickly hear those things which they shall have commanded and contend to fulfill them, so the minds of the just through their intention assist the Almighty Lord, and in His Scripture they behold as if His mouth, so that because God speaks through it everything that He wills, they may not differ from His will so far as they acknowledge that same will of His in His eloquence. Whence it comes to pass that His words do not pass superfluously through their ears, but they fix these in their hearts. Hence it is subjoined here:

CAPUT XXXVI

IBID.---And in my bosom I have hidden the words of his mouth.

44. To hide the words of God in the bosom, another solicitude of the just.---For in the bosom of the heart we hide the words of His mouth, as far as we hear His commandments not transitorily, but to be fulfilled in work. Hence it is that it is written of the Virgin Mother herself: But Mary kept all these words, conferring them in her heart (Luke 2:19). Which words indeed, even when they go forth to operation, lie hidden, concealed in the bosom of the heart, if the mind of the worker is not lifted up within by that which is done without. For when the conceived word is led to work, if human praise is sought through this, the word of God is doubtlessly not hidden in the bosom

of the mind. But I would wish to know, blessed man, why you examine yourself with such great intention, why you bind yourself with such great solicitude? There follows:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

[Old XVIII].

VERSE 13.---For He is alone, and no one can turn away His thought.

45. God alone is He, in comparison of whose essence our being is not being.---Are there not angels and men, heaven and earth, air and seas, all winged things, quadrupeds, and creeping things? And certainly it is written: He created all things that they might be (Gen. 2:3, seq.). When therefore there are so many things in the nature of things, why is it now said by the voice of the blessed man: For He is alone? But it is one thing to be, another thing to be principally; one thing to be changeably, and another thing to be unchangeably. For all these things are, but principally they are not, because they do not at all subsist in themselves, and unless they be held by the hand of the Governor, they can by no means be. For all things subsist in Him; by whom they were created, nor do those things which live give life to themselves, nor are those things which are moved and do not live led to motion by their own nods, but He moves all things, who vivifies some, and others indeed not vivified He keeps, wonderfully ordering them into an extreme essence. For all things were made out of nothing, and their

essence would tend again to nothing, unless the Author of all held it back with the hand of governance. Therefore all things which have been created are neither able to subsist by themselves, nor to be moved; but they subsist so far as they have received that they ought to be; they are moved so far as they are disposed by an occult instinct. For behold, a sinner is to be scourged concerning human things: the earth dries up in his labors, the sea is shaken in his shipwrecks, the air is inflamed in his sweats, the heaven grows dark against him with inundations, men are incensed in his oppressions, and the angelic powers are moved in his adversity. Do these things, which we have called inanimate or living, move by their own instincts and not rather by divine impulses? Whatever it is therefore that rages outwardly, by this He is to be intuited, who disposes this inwardly. In every cause therefore He alone is to be intuited, who principally is. Who also says to Moses: I am who I am. Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: He who is, hath sent me to you (Exod. 3:14). When therefore we are scourged by those things which we see, we ought solicitously to fear Him, whom we do not see. Let the holy man therefore despise whatever terrifies outwardly, whatever by its own essence, unless it were ruled, would tend to nothing, and let him intuit with the eye of the mind, all things being suppressed, the One in comparison of whose essence our being is not being, and let him say: For He is alone.

46. God unchangeable in nature and will.---Of whose unchangeability it is aptly added immediately: And no one can turn away His thought. For as He is unchangeable in nature, so is He unchangeable in will. For no one turns away His thought, because no one is able to resist His occult judgments. For even if there were some who seemed to have turned away His thought by their prayers, His internal thought was such, that they were able to turn away His sentence by praying, and received from Him what they should do with Him. Let him say therefore: And no one can turn away His thought, because judgments once fixed can by no means be changed. Whence it is written: He hath set a decree, and it shall not pass (Ps. 148:6); and again: Heaven and earth shall pass, but my words shall not pass (Mark 13:31); and again: For my thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my ways as your ways (Is. 55:8). When therefore the sentence seems to be changed outwardly, the internal counsel is not changed, because whatever is done changeably without, is unchangeably constituted within concerning each thing. There follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

[Old XIX, Correct XVIII].

IBID.---And whatsoever His soul has willed, that He has done.

47. Those things which seem to be done against His will do not resist God.---Since God is exterior to all bodies, interior to all minds, that

very power of His, by which He penetrates all things, and disposes all things, is called His soul. To whose will indeed even those things do not resist, which seem to be done against His will, because for this He sometimes permits even that to be done which He does not command, so that by this that which He orders may be more certainly fulfilled. For the perverse will is of the apostate angel, but nevertheless it is wonderfully ordered by God, so that his snares also serve for the utility of the good, whom they purge while they tempt. Thus therefore His soul has done whatsoever it willed, so that from that also He fulfills His will, whence it seemed His will was resisted. Let the just man therefore be terrified, and considering the weight of so great majesty, let him find himself to be weak.

48. But among these words I wish to inquire, and say: O blessed Job, placed among so many scourges, why do you still dread adverse things? already you are surrounded by tribulations, already you are straightened by innumerable afflictions. An evil ought to be feared which has not yet been received; you, placed in such great grief, what do you fear? But behold, the just man, satisfying our inquiries, adds:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VERSE 14.---When He shall have fulfilled His will in me, and many other like things are present to Him.

49. From those things which we suffer, we learn to fear those which we have not yet suf-

fered.---As if he should say plainly: I already weigh what I suffer, but I still dread what I am able to suffer. For He fulfills His will in me, because He afflicts me with many percussions. But many like things are present to Him, because if He thinks to strike, He still finds where the wound may increase. From this therefore it is to be weighed how fearful he was before the scourge, who even being struck still fears lest he be struck. For considering an incomprehensible power to be in Him both of might and of examination, the just man would not be secure even concerning the scourge. Whence still fearing he adds:

CHAPTER XL.

VERSE 15.---And therefore I am troubled at His face, and considering Him, I am solicitous with fear.

50. While the wicked show security before them, the just always fear.---He is rightly troubled at the face of the Lord, who sets the terror of His majesty before the eyes of his heart, and is shaken by the dread of His rectitude, while he perceives that he is not fit for rendering accounts, if he be strictly judged. But it is rightly said: And considering Him, I am solicitous with fear, because when anyone least considers the power of divine animadversion, he least fears it; and he is so much more as it were secure in this life, as he is alien from the consideration of internal strictness. For the just men always return to the secret chamber of the heart, they intuit the power of occult strictness, they assist at the judgment of the

internal majesty, so that they may sometime be more secure, by how much here, as long as they lived, they would not be secure. For the minds of the wicked, when they refuse to consider what they may fear, sometime arrive rejoicing at that which they by no means escape by fearing. But behold, we know of blessed Job that he was devoted to frequent sacrifices to God, that he was expended in hospitalities, in the needs of the poor, that he was humble even to those subject to him, that he was benign to those opposing him, and yet he received so many scourges nor did he already stand secure among the scourges, but he still feared, still considering the power of divine strictness he trembles. What therefore do we miserable ones, what do we sinners say, if he so fears, who so acted? But whether he has the weight of so great fear from himself, he makes known. There follows:

CHAPTER XLI

[Old XX].

VERSE 16. God has softened my heart, and the Almighty has troubled me.

51. This fear is a gift of God.---The heart of the just is said to be softened by a divine gift, because it is penetrated by the fear of heavenly judgment. For that is soft which can be penetrated, hard that which cannot be penetrated. Whence it is said by Solomon: Blessed is the man who is always fearful, but he who is of a hard mind shall fall into evil (Prov. 28:14). Therefore he attributes the power

of his dread not to himself, but to the Author, who says: God has softened my heart, and the Almighty has troubled me. For the hearts of the good are not secure, but troubled, because while they consider the weight of the future examination, they do not desire to have rest here, they trouble their own security by the consideration of internal strictness. Who nevertheless among those very punishments of fear often recall the mind to gifts, and so that they may refresh themselves with consolation, among that which they fear they bring back the eye to the gifts which they have received, so that hope may lift up him whom fear presses down. Whence also there follows:

CHAPTER XLII

[Correct XIX].

VERSE 17.---For I have not perished on account of imminent darkness, nor has a mist covered my face.

52. Scourges of the just either purge past evils committed, or avoid future ones.---For he, placed in the scourge, perishes from the health of the body on account of imminent darkness, who is therefore struck for things past, so that he may be hidden from future punishments. For the scourges of the good either purge vices committed, or avoid future ones which could have been committed. But blessed Job, because placed in the scourge, he was neither purged from preceding sins, nor covered from imminent ones,

but only his virtue was increased in the scourge, says with confidence: For I have not perished on account of imminent darkness, nor has a mist covered my face. For since he always looked upon the weight of divine dread, the mist of sin did not cover the face of his heart. And he whom no punishments followed, did not lose the health of the body on account of imminent darkness.

53. No one is immune from depraved thoughts.---And it is to be noted that he, announcing former things, by no means says: It has not touched my face; but: A mist has not covered. For often even the hearts of the just are polluted by thoughts arising, they touch them with delights of earthly things, but while they are more quickly driven away by the hand of holy discretion, it is speedily brought about that the mist does not cover the face of the heart, which already touched it from unlawful delight. For often in the very sacrifice of prayer importunate thoughts intrude themselves, which are able to snatch away or to defile that which we weeping sacrifice in ourselves to God. Whence Abraham, when he offered a sacrifice at the setting of the sun, bore with birds pressing upon him, which he zealously drove away, lest they should snatch away the offered sacrifice (Gen. 15:11). So we, when we offer a burnt offering to God on the altar of the heart, let us guard it from unclean birds, lest malignant spirits and perverse thoughts snatch away what our mind hopes usefully to offer to the Lord. There follows:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Old and Correct XX].

CHAPTER 24, VERSE 1.---Times are not hidden from the Almighty; but they who know Him, are ignorant of His days.

54. The days of God are His eternity. God is what He has.---What are the days of God, unless His eternity itself be called so? which is sometimes expressed by the pronunciation of one day, as it is written: Better is one day in Thy courts above thousands (Ps. 83:11). But sometimes indeed for its length it is signified by the appellation of many days, of which it is written: Thy years are for generation and generation (Ps. 101:25). We therefore are rolled within times, by this that we are a creature. But God who is the creator of all comprehends our times by His eternity. He says therefore: Times are not hidden from the Almighty; but they who know Him, are ignorant of His days. Because He indeed sees our things comprehensibly, but we are by no means able to comprehend those things which are His. But since the nature of God is simple, it is much to be wondered at, why he says: They who know Him, are ignorant of His days. For neither is He one thing, and His days another. For God is this which He has. For He has eternity, but He is eternity itself. He has light, but He Himself is His own light. He has brightness, but He is His own brightness. There is not therefore in Him one thing to be, and another thing to have. What is it therefore to say: They who know Him, are ignorant of His

days, unless because even they who know Him still are ignorant? For even they who already hold Him by faith, still are ignorant by sight. And since He is eternity to Himself, whom we truly believe, yet in what manner His eternity itself is we are ignorant. For in this which we hear concerning the power of the divine nature, we are sometimes accustomed to think those things which we know by experience. For everything which begins and ends, is concluded by a beginning and an end. Which if it is deferred by some little delay that it may be finished, it is called long; in which length indeed when anyone brings back the eyes of the mind behind by memory, he tends before by expectation, he dilates it in the mind as if by a space of time. And when he hears of the eternity of God, to his mind intending after a human manner he proposes long spaces of life, in which he may always measure both what has gone away behind, which may be retained in memory, and what remains before, which may be expected by intention.

55. In eternity nothing is past or future.---But as often as we think in that eternity, we have not yet known eternity. For there is that which is neither begun by a beginning, nor terminated by an end, where neither that which shall come is expected, nor that which ought to be remembered runs through, but it is one thing which is always to be. Which although we and the angels begin to see to be with a beginning, yet we see this to be without a beginning, where it is so always to be without end, that the mind never tends itself

to following things, as if those things which were were multiplied and became long. For although it has been said by the spirit of prophecy: Lord, who reignest forever, and for the world, and still (Perhaps Exod. 15:18, where it is read: The Lord shall reign forever and beyond), after the manner of sacred eloquence, the spirit has spoken to men in a human way, so that it should say "still" there, where expectation was not present. For eternity does not have "still", which has "always to be", in which no part of its length passes away, so that another part may succeed, but to be is all at once, so that nothing may seem to be wanting which it does not discern; in which the mind sees everything that is both not to be slow, and to be long. But we speaking these things concerning the days of eternity, endeavor more to see something than we see. Let it be said therefore rightly: But they who know Him, are ignorant of His days, because although we already know God by faith, yet in what manner His eternity is, without past before the worlds, without future after the worlds, without long delay, without perpetual expectation, we do not see. Blessed Job therefore holding the type of Holy Church, because he moderates himself under the great bridle of knowledge, lest he should savor more than it behooves to savor, and testifying that the days of God cannot be comprehended, soon brings back the respect of the mind to the pride of heretics, who desire to savor high things, and boast that they perfectly know what they cannot in any way take. For there follows:

CHAPTER XLIV

[Correct XXI].

VERSE 2.---Others have removed the landmarks, they have snatched away the flocks, and fed them.

56. Heretics remove the landmarks established by the fathers.---Whom does he designate by the name of others unless heretics, who exist as strangers from the bosom of Holy Church? For they remove the landmarks, because by prevaricating they transcend the constitutions of the fathers. Concerning which constitutions indeed it is written: Do not transgress the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set (Prov. 22:28). Who snatch away the flocks and feed them, because they draw all the unskilful to themselves by perverse persuasions, and nourish them with pestiferous doctrines for their destruction. For that unskilful peoples are designated by the name of flocks, the words of the Bridegroom testify, who addresses his Bride, saying: If thou know not thyself, O thou fairest among women, go forth, and go after the footsteps of the flocks (Cant. 1:7), that is, unless thou knowest thy honor, in which thou wert created after the likeness of God, by living well, go forth from the sight of my contemplation, and imitate the life of unskilful peoples. There follows:

CHAPTER XLV.

VERSE 3.---They have driven away the ass of the fatherless, and taken away the ox of the widow for a pledge.

57. The elect are the fatherless.---Whom do we take for the fatherless in this place, unless the elect of God, placed in tenderness of mind, who are nourished by the great grace of faith, and do not yet see the face of their Father now dead for them? And there are many in the Church who behold certain ones desiring heavenly things, and holding all earthly things in contempt; and although they themselves labor in the toils of this world, yet they bring the aid of this life to those whom they behold panting for heavenly things, from the things which they possess in this world. And although they themselves are unable to do spiritual things, yet they willingly minister subsidies to those tending to the highest things. For the ass is accustomed to bear the burdens of men. As it were therefore a certain ass of the elect is he, who, serving earthly acts, carries away burdens for the uses of men. And often when heretics turn away any such one from the bosom of Holy Church, they as it were drive away the ass of the fatherless, because when they draw him over to their own perfidy, they repel him from the ministry of the good. The Church is a widow.---But what widow ought to be understood unless Holy Church, who in the meantime is deprived of the vision of her slain Husband? But the ox of this widow is every preacher. And it often happens that heretics draw over by their perverse dogmas even those who seemed to be preachers.

They therefore take away the ox of the widow, when they take away even a preacher from Holy Church. Where it is rightly added: For a pledge. For when a pledge is taken, one thing indeed is that which is held, but yet still another thing is sought. And for the most part heretics for this reason endeavor to take away those who preach, so that they may also draw their followers. The ox of the widow therefore is taken for a pledge, when he himself who preached is snatched away for this reason, that others may follow. From whose ruin it is for the most part brought about that these also go out from the bosom of Holy Church, who in it seemed to be mild and humble, endowed with good morals. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER XLVI.

VERSE 4.---They have subverted the way of the poor, and oppressed together the meek of the earth.

59. By the name of the poor the humble are to be understood.---For by the name of poverty humility is often accustomed to be designated. And sometimes those who seem meek and humble, if they know not how to preserve discretion, fall by the examples of others. But there are some heretics who flee from being mixed with the peoples, but seek a retreat of more secret life; who for the most part infect those whom they find so much the more with the pest of their persuasion, as they seem more reverend as if from the merits of life. Concerning whom it is added:

CHAPTER XLVII

VERSE 5.---Others as wild asses in the desert go forth to their work.

60. Heretics are like wild asses. They perform not God's work, but their own.---For the wild ass (onager) is a wild ass. And rightly in this place are heretics compared to wild asses, because, being given up to their own pleasures, they are strangers to the bonds of faith and reason. Hence it is written: A wild ass accustomed to the wilderness, in the desire of her soul, drew in the wind of her love (Jerem. 2:24). For the wild ass is accustomed to the wilderness, because while he does not cultivate the soil of his heart with the virtue of discipline, he dwells where there is no fruit. Because in the desire of his soul he draws in the wind of his love, because those things which he conceives in his mind from the desire of knowledge have power to puff up, not to edify. Against whom it is said: Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth (1 Cor. 8:1). Hence here also it is fitly added: They go forth to their work. For they perform not God's work, but their own, while they follow not right dogmas, but their own desires. For it is written: He that walketh in a perfect way, he served me (Psalm 101:6). He therefore who walketh not in a perfect way, serveth himself rather than the Lord. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVIII

IBID.---Rising early to the prey, they prepare bread for their children.

61. Heretics are watchful for the prey.---They are watchful for the prey, who always endeavor to snatch the words of the just to their own sense, that by these they may prepare the bread of error for their perverse children. Of which bread indeed it is said in Solomon by the words of the woman who bears the type of heretical depravity: Stolen waters are sweeter, and hidden bread is more pleasant (Prov. 9:17). It follows:

CHAPTER XLIX

VERSE 6.---They reap a field not their own, and they gather the vintage of his vineyard whom they have oppressed by force.

62. Heretics are they who lay waste a field not their own, and a foreign vineyard.---By the name of a field the breadth of Holy Scripture may be signified, which heretics reap as not their own, because they take from it sentences far different from their own senses. Which is also expressed by the name of a vineyard, because through the sentences of truth it brings forth clusters (botros) of virtues. The Lord of which vineyard, that is, the Founder of Holy Scripture, they as it were oppress by force, because they violently endeavor to bend His sense into the words of the sacred eloquence, who saith: Thou hast made me to serve in thy sins, thou hast given me labor in thine iniquities (Isa. 43:24). And they gather the vintage of the same vineyard, because they heap up from it clusters of sentences according to the intention of their own understanding. By the name of a field or a vineyard the universal Church may be desig-

nated, which perverse preachers reap, and by oppressing its Author in His members they gather the vintage, because persecuting the grace of our Creator, while they snatch away some from it who seemed to be upright, what else do they but carry off the ears or clusters of souls? Concerning whom it is still added:

CHAPTER L

VERSE 7.---They send men away naked, taking away their garments, who have no covering in the cold.

63. Heretics leave men naked by destroying good works.---As garments protect the body, so do good works protect the soul. Hence it is said to one: Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked (Rev. 16:15). Heretics therefore when they destroy good works in the minds of some, undoubtedly take away the coverings of their garments. But it is well said: Who have no covering in the cold. For the covering pertains to righteousness, the cold to guilt. And there are some who in certain things commit sins, but in certain others follow right works. He therefore who offends in some acts, and in others performs righteousness, what is he but one clothed in the cold; he is cold, and yet covered; because from one work he grows warm to righteousness, from another he grows cold to guilt? But when heretics take away good works from such, they act so that they may have nothing to be clothed with in the cold. Rightly therefore is it said: They send men away naked,

taking away their garments, who have no covering in the cold, that namely the cold of guilt alone may kill those whom the heat of another work was in some part covering. [Vet. XXIV.] But by the cold may be signified desire, by the garment operation. And there are many who still burn with perverse desires, but, spiritually contending against themselves, they resist them by right works, and cover with good acts that which they feel resulting from temptation as sinister to themselves. These therefore from where they desire evil things, from thence they are cold; but from where they work good things, from thence they are clothed. But when heretics by perverse allegations take away the works of the right faith, what do they but cause those who still feel the colds of carnal desires to die without the garment of good acts? It follows:

CHAPTER LI

VERSE 8.---They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and having no covering they embrace the stones.

64. We are watered by the sentences of the Holy Fathers as by streams.---The showers of the mountains are the words of the teachers (doctorum). Of which mountains it is said by the voice of the holy Church: I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains (Psalm 121:1). These therefore the showers of the mountains water, because the streams of the holy Fathers satisfy them. But by a covering, as we have already said, we understand the protection of a good work, by

which each one is covered, so that before the eyes of Almighty God, the foulness of his depravity may be covered. Hence it is written: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Psalm 32:1). But whom do we understand by the name of stones but the strong men within the holy Church? To whom it is said by the first shepherd: Ye also as living stones are built up (1 Peter 2:5). These therefore who trust in no work of their own, run to the protection of the holy martyrs, and persist with tears at their sacred bodies, and pray that they may deserve to obtain pardon, they interceding for them. What then do these do in this humility, but because they have not the covering of good action, they embrace the stones? It follows:

CHAPTER LII

VERSE 9.---They used violence in plundering the fatherless, and spoiled the multitude of the poor.

65. Heretics catch the weak and the unlearned, partly by force and partly by flatteries.---When heretics have not the prosperity of the present life, they persuade weak minds of perverse things with smoother words. But if any prosperity of the present time should smile upon them, they do not cease to draw even by force those whom they can. By the name of the fatherless (pupillorum), therefore, are designated those who are yet tender, being placed within the holy Church, whose life the merciful Father preserved by dying, who have already been led to a good intention, but

are not yet strengthened with any virtue in good acts. Heretics therefore, plundering the fatherless, use violence, because they rage against the weak minds of the faithful with violence of words and works. But the multitude of the poor is the unlearned people, who if they had the riches of true wisdom, would by no means lose the garment of their faith. For there are as it were certain senators within the holy Church, true teachers, who when they multiply knowledge in their heart, abound with true riches in themselves. But heretics spoil the multitude of the poor, because while they cannot prevail over the learned, they strip all the unlearned of the covering of faith by their pestiferous preaching. It follows:

CHAPTER LIII

VERSE 10.---They took away the ears of corn from the naked and those walking without clothing, and from the hungry.

66. Heretics take away the doctrine of the Holy Fathers from the idle and the incautious.---In that he says to the naked, he repeats this, without clothing; but it is one thing to be naked, another to walk naked. For every one who works neither good nor evil is naked and idle; but he who does evil walks naked, because without the covering of a good work he proceeds through the way of depravity. But there are some who, knowing the evil of their wickedness, hasten to be satisfied with the bread of justice, and desire to receive the sayings of the sacred eloquence. These, as often as they revolve in their thought the sentences

of the Fathers for the edification of their minds, carry as it were ears of corn from a good crop. Heretics therefore take away the ears of corn from the naked and those walking without clothing and the hungry, because whether some be idle, and exercise themselves in no good things, or whether they proceed through the way of impudence without the covering of a good work, even if at any time they now desire to return to penance, and long for the food of the word, they take away the ears of corn from them being hungry, because they destroy the sentences of the Fathers in their mind by pernicious persuasions. And not without reason do we say that the ears of corn signify the sentences of the Fathers, because often while they are brought forth through figurative eloquences, we withdraw from them the covering of the letter as it were the chaff of the beards, that we may be refreshed with the marrow of the spirit. It follows:

CHAPTER LIV

VERSE 11.---They have taken their rest at noon-day among the stores of those who thirst, the wine-presses being trodden.

67. The utility of the persecutions which heretics bring upon the faithful. They stir up the powerful of the world against them.---What else do all they who persecute the holy Church but tread the wine-press? Which is permitted to be done by the divine dispensation, that the clusters of souls may flow down into spiritual wine, which, being stripped of the corruptible

flesh, may run to the heavenly kingdoms as into a storehouse (apothecam). For the unjust, while they depress the just, put as it were clusters under their feet. But the compressed clusters abound to the satiety of the heavenly banquet, which before were hanging as it were in the liberty of this air. Hence David the prophet, beholding the affliction of the holy Church, writes a psalm for the wine-presses (Psalm 8, or 84). But all who persecute the life of the faithful, tread and thirst, because by doing cruel things, they become more fierce; being blinded by the merits of their own impiety, they aim to do more grievous things, the more they have already done grievous things. But heretics, when they have not in themselves the power of persecution, stir up the powerful of this world, and draw their minds to persecution, and kindle them with what persuasions they can. Whom when they behold doing cruel things against the life of Catholics, they rest as it were in the very heat of the sun. Well therefore is it now said: They have taken their rest at noon-day among the stores of those who thirst, the wine-presses being trodden, because they join themselves to the multitude of those whom they already see doing grievous things, and still thirsting for more grievous. Whose fervor while it satisfies their desires, they rest in their acts, as if in the noon-day. It follows:

CHAPTER LV

VERSE 12.---They have made men to groan from out of the cities.

68. Heretics endeavor to dissolve the unity of the Church.---Since cities are so called from the peoples living together, not without reason by the name of cities are designated the Churches of the true faith, which being placed in individual parts of the world make one Catholic Church, in which all the faithful, thinking rightly of God, live in concord. [Vet. XXVI.] For this concord of peoples living together the Lord designated in the Gospel even by the distinction of places, when being about to satisfy the people with five loaves, He commanded them to sit down by companies of fifties, or by hundreds, that namely the crowd of the faithful might receive its food both disjoined in places and conjoined in manners. For the rest of the Jubilee is contained in the mystery of the number fifty, and fifty is doubled, that it may be brought to a hundred. Because therefore first there is rest from evil work, that afterwards the soul more fully rest in thought, some sit down by fifties, and others by hundreds, since there are some who already have rest of work from depraved acts, and there are some who already have rest of mind from perverse thoughts. Heretics therefore, because, often adhering to the perverse powerful ones of this world, they persecute the social life and concord of the good, it is now rightly said: They have made men to groan from out of the cities. Whom blessed Job rightly mentions as men (viros), because heretics aim more to extinguish those who run with perfect steps through the way of God, not flowingly and enervatedly, but manfully. Who when they behold

the wound of perfidy being inflicted on the mind of the little ones of the faithful, always return to crying out and groaning. Whence also it is rightly said:

CHAPTER LVI

IBID.---And the soul of the wounded hath cried out, and God suffereth it not to go unavenged.

69. God will not leave the crimes of heretics unpunished.---For the soul of the just is wounded when the faith of the weak is disturbed, to whom now this very thing is to cry out, to pine away at another's fall. But God suffers it not to go unavenged, because although by a just order He permits something unjust to be done, yet He does not suffer to go unavenged the unjust thing which He justly permitted to be done, because even through the injustice of the reprobate He smites certain faults of the elect which He considers to be in them, and yet the eternal justice does not neglect to strike the injustice of those who strike. It follows:

CHAPTER LVII

VERS. 13.---They have been rebellious to the light.

70. The punishment of those who reject the divine light is blindness.---For the most part, the perverse both know the right things they ought to follow, and yet they despise to follow what they know. They are therefore rebellious to the

light, because, by following their own desires, they despise the good which they have known. They, therefore, who transgress not through ignorance but through pride, oppose the shield of their elation to the arrows of truth, lest they should be wholesomely smitten in the heart. From which pride of theirs it is brought about that, because they will not do what they know, they should no longer even know the good things they should do, but their own blindness should utterly exclude them from the light of truth. Whence it is aptly added:

CHAPTER LVIII

IBID.---They have not known His ways, nor returned by His paths.

71. The perverse are therefore delivered over to a reprobate sense, because they were rebellious to the divine light.---For they who are first rebellious by knowing, are afterwards blinded that they may not know, as it is said of certain persons: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful (Rom. 1, 21). Of whom it is added a little after: God gave them over to a reprobate sense, to do those things which are not convenient (Ibid., 28). For because they would not glorify Him Whom they had known, being delivered over to a reprobate sense, they were left for this, that they should no longer know how to weigh the evils which they were doing. It is well said: They have not known His ways, nor returned by His paths. For the path is narrower than the way. But they who

contemptuously neglect to do the more manifest good things, by no means arrive at understanding the more subtle. But Almighty God expected that they should walk through His paths; but would that they had even been willing to return through them, so that they might hold by penitence at least those journeys of life which they would not hold by innocence! In which matter it is shown how great are the bowels of mercy of Almighty God, Who seeks that they may return, whom He beholds departing from Him. Whence after the enumerated faults of the transgressors, He recalls the Synagogue by the prophetic voice, saying: Therefore at least from this time call Me, my Father, Thou art the guide of my virginity (Jer. 3, 4). It follows:

CHAPTER LIX

VERS. 14.---The murderer rising with the light killeth the needy and the poor, but in the night he is as a thief.

72. The perverse abuse the prosperity of this present life to the oppression of the just.---Since a murderer is wont to commit his outrages in the slaughter of his neighbors especially during the silence of the night, why is he said in this place to rise with the light to kill the needy and the poor, while in the night he is reported to be as a thief? But while the words of the letter do not agree among themselves, we are recalled to search out the secrets of the spirit. In Holy Scripture, the "morning" is sometimes used for the coming of the Lord's Incarnation, sometimes for the coming

of the now terrible and strict Judge, and sometimes for the prosperity of the present life. For the morning was the coming of the Lord's Incarnation, as the Prophet says: The morning cometh, and also the night (Is. 21, 12); because both the beginnings of the new light shone forth in the presence of the Redeemer, and yet the darkness of their own perfidy was not wiped away from the hearts of the persecutors. Again, by the morning is designated the coming of the Judge. Whence it is said by the Psalmist: In the morning I put to death all the sinners of the earth (Ps. 101, 8). As also expressing the person of the elect, he says: In the morning I will stand before Thee and will see (Ps. 5, 3). Again, by the morning, the prosperity of the present life is designated, as it is said by Solomon: Woe to thee, O land, whose king is a child, and whose princes eat in the morning (Eccles. 10, 16). For because the morning is the first time of the day, and the evening the last, we are by no means to be refreshed by the prosperity of this life which goes before, but by those things which follow at the end of the day, that is, at the end of the world. They, therefore, eat in the morning, who are puffed up by the prosperities of this world, and while they take vehement care for things present, they think not of things to come. For every one that hateth his brother is a murderer (1 John 3, 15). In the morning, therefore, the murderer rises, because in the glory of the present life every perverse man is lifted up, and depresses the life of those who, while they thirst for the following glory, seek as it were to be satis-

fied in the evening. For every wicked man, seizing on the dignity of transitory power in this world, spreads himself the more sharply to the accomplishment of evil, in that he loves no one through the bowels of charity. For as often as he rages in his thoughts against the good, so often does he slay the life of the innocent.

73. Evil men, when pressed by adversity, secretly do harm by perverse counsels.---Who if, by God's disposal, he should suddenly lose the glory of the power he had received, he changes his place, but he changes not his mind, because he immediately falls away to that which is added: But in the night he shall be as a thief. For in the night of his tribulation and dejection, although he is not able to put forth the hand of cruelty, yet he offers counsels of perversity to those whom he sees to prevail; he runs hither and thither, and suggests whatever he can for the injury of the good. Who is rightly called "as a thief," because in these very perverse counsels of his he fears lest he should be caught. He, therefore, who against the needy and the poor is a murderer in the morning, is hidden in the night as a thief, because every perverse man, who in the prosperity of the present life slays the life of the humble by depressing it, when placed in adversity and dejection, secretly does harm by wicked counsels, and that which he is not able to fulfill by himself, he exercises by adhering to the powerful of this world. It follows.

CHAPTER LX

VERS. 15.---The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me.

74. Heretics adulterate the word of God.---This also, according to the letter, there is no obstacle to understanding, because he who desires to commit adultery seeks the darkness. But because the sentence is brought against heretics, it is worthy that these things which are said should be understood mystically. For Paul says: For we are not as many, adulterating the word of God (2 Cor. 2, 17). For an adulterer in carnal intercourse seeks not offspring, but pleasure. And every perverse man and slave of vain glory is rightly said to adulterate the word of God, because by the sacred eloquence he desires not to beget sons to God, but to ostentate his own knowledge. For he whom the lust of glory draws to speak, bestows his labor rather on pleasure than on generation. Where also it is aptly added: No eye shall see me, because the adultery which is committed in the mind is very difficult to be penetrated by human sight. Which the perverse mind commits the more securely, in that it fears not to be seen by men, whom it would blush at. It must also be known that as he who commits adultery unlawfully joins to himself the flesh of another's wife, so all heretics, when they snatch away a faithful soul into their own error, take away as it were another's wife, because forsooth the mind spiritually adhering to God, and joined to Him as in a certain chamber of love, when it is led away to the perversity of dogma by perverse persuasions,

is defiled as another's wife by a corruptor. Well also it is added:

CHAPTER LXI

IBID.---And he shall cover his face.

75. Heretics, after the manner of adulterers, cover their face.---The adulterer covers his face for this reason, that he may not be known. But every one who lives wickedly in feeling or in acting, covers his face, because by the perversity of dogma or of work he tends to this, that he may not be able to be recognized by Almighty God in the judgment. Whence He is to say to some in the end: I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity (Matt. 7, 23). But what is the face of the human heart, but the likeness of God? Which face, forsooth, the perverse man covers, that he may not be able to be known, when he confounds his life either with evil acts, or with the error of perfidy. But such a one, when he sees the just supported by the prosperity of the present life, by no means presumes to persuade them of perverse things; but if any storm of adversity should find them, he immediately breaks out into words of pestiferous persuasion. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER LXII

VERS. 16.---In the dark they dig through houses, as in the day they had appointed for themselves, and they have not known the light.

76. Heretics in the night of adversity attempt to dig through the conscience of the just.---For

what in this place is designated by the name of houses but consciences, in which we dwell when we consider what we are doing? Whence it is said to a certain man who was healed: Go into thy house to thy people, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee (Luke 8, 39); that is, being now secure from the vice of sin, return to thy conscience, and excite it into the voice of preaching. The just, therefore, when they shine in the present world in the day of prosperity, the masters of errors fear to persuade them of perverse things. But they seek for counsels, they especially wait for the dejection of their prosperity, that in the darkness of adversity they may by persuasion dig through their minds, to whom while they were living prosperously they by no means dared to speak perverse things. Whom as soon as they have seen in adversity, they rise up, and assert that they suffer such things only from the merit of sin, because, loving only the glory of the present life, they believe the scourge to be condemnation. In the dark, therefore, they dig through houses, because they strive to corrupt the minds of the good from their very adversity. But it is well said: As in the day they had appointed for themselves; because when they saw the just to have shone with the light of prosperity, since they were not able to speak, they were at leisure only for malignant counsels against them. But whether heretics, or any perverse persons whatever, when they see the just in dejection, they rejoice; but when they have seen them break forth to the summit of governing power, they are

disturbed, they fear, they pine away with afflictions. Whence also it is added:

CHAPTER LXIII

VERS. 17.---If the morning suddenly appear, they think it the shadow of death.

77. The wicked are disturbed by the prosperity of the just.---The wicked always expect the affliction of the faithful, and desire to see them in tribulation. And in the dark they dig through houses, while they corrupt the heart of the innocent, but yet the weak, at the time of their dejection by the worst discourse. But it for the most part happens that while they behold any good men in dejection, suddenly by the occult dispensation of God some just man who seemed to be oppressed, is supported by some power of the world, and the prosperity of the present life smiles upon him, whom before the darkness of adversity was pressing. Which prosperity of his when the perverse behold, as has been said, they are disturbed. For they immediately return to their own hearts, they recall before the eyes of their mind whatever they remember themselves to have done perversely, they dread lest every vice should be avenged in them; and whence he shines who receives power, thence every perverse man who fears to be corrected is darkened in sadness. Well therefore is it said: If the morning suddenly appear, they think it the shadow of death. For the morning forsooth is the mind of the just, which, deserting the darkness of its sin, now breaks forth to the light of eternity, as it

is said also of the holy Church: Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising? (Cant. 6, 9). By how much therefore every just man, being irradiated with the light of justice, is sublimated with honors in the present life, by so much before the eyes of the perverse do the shadows of death arise, because they who remember themselves to have done perverse things, fear to be corrected. For they always desire to be relaxed in their perversities, to live uncorrected, and to have joy of their fault. Whose very deadly joy is conveniently expressed, when it is immediately added:

CHAPTER LXIV

IBID.---And so they walk in the darkness as in the light.

78. The wicked so rejoice in the night of sin, as if the light of justice surrounded them.---For with a perverse mind they rejoice in crimes, by their own fault they are daily dragged to punishment, and they are secure. Whence it is said also by Solomon: There be wicked men who are so secure, as if they had the deeds of the just (Eccles. 8, 14). Of whom again it is written: Who rejoice when they have done evil, and exult in the worst things (Prov. 2, 14). So therefore they walk in the darkness as in the light, because they so rejoice in the night of sin, as if the light of justice surrounded them. Or certainly, because darkness not inconveniently expresses the present life, in which the consciences of others are not seen; but our light is the eternal country, in which while we behold the faces, we see in turn our hearts within

us; but the wicked because they so love the present life, and so embrace these times of exile as if they were already reigning in their country; it is rightly said: So they walk in the darkness as in the light, because they are so joyful in their present blindness, as if they were already enjoying the light of the eternal country. It follows:

CHAPTER LXV

VERS. 18.---He is light upon the face of the water.

79. The wicked are light to every wind of temptation or error.---From the plural number he returns to the singular, because for the most part one person begins evil things, and many follow by imitating. But his is principally the fault who offered examples of iniquity to those who followed perversely. Whence the sentence frequently returns to him who stood forth as the author in the fault. But the surface of the water is driven hither and thither by a breeze, and being solidified by no stability is moved everywhere. The mind of the wicked, therefore, is more light than the surface of the water, because whatever breeze of temptation shall have touched it, it draws it without any tardiness of retractation. For if we consider the flux of the heart of any perverse man, what else do we behold but the surface of the water placed in the wind? For now the breeze of lust drives him to go, now the breeze of pride, now the breeze of luxury, now the breeze of envy, now the breeze of deceit draws him away. He therefore is light upon the face of the water

whom any wind of error when it has come drives along. Whence also it is well said by the Psalmist: O my God, make them like a wheel, and as stubble before the face of the wind (Ps. 83, 13). For the wicked are placed as a wheel, because, being sent into the circuit of labor, while they neglect those things which are before, and follow those things which are to be deserted, they are elevated from the things behind, and fall in those that are before. Who are also rightly compared to stubble before the face of the wind, because, the breeze of temptation rushing in, while they are supported by no reason of gravity, they are elevated that they may fall, and often they estimate themselves to exist of some merit, in that the blast of error carries them into high things. It follows:

CHAPTER LXVI

IBID.---Let his portion be cursed in the earth, and let him not walk by the way of the vineyards.

80. The wicked, having lost the rectitude of faith or of justice, are bound by the guilt of a curse.---Whoever in the present life acts rightly and sustains adverse things, is seen indeed to labor in adversity, but is consummated to the blessing of a perpetual inheritance. But whoever acts perversely, and yet receives prosperous things, and restrains not himself from evil acts even by the largess of gifts, is seen indeed to prosper, but is bound by the guilt of a perpetual curse. Whence it is now rightly said: Let his portion be cursed in the earth. Because although he is blessed for a time, yet he is held in the guilt of

a curse. Of whom also it is aptly added: Let him not walk by the way of the vineyards. For the way of the vineyards is the rectitude of the Churches. In which matter whether a heretic, or any carnal person, there is no obstacle to understanding, because the way of the vineyards, that is, the rectitude of the Churches, is lost, while either the right faith, or the rectitude of justice, is not held. For he walks by the way of the vineyards, who, weighing the preaching of the holy universal Church, declines neither from the rectitude of faith, nor of good acts. For to walk in the way of the vineyards is to behold the Fathers of the holy Church as depending clusters, by whose words while he attends in the labor of his journey, he is inebriated with the love of eternity. It follows:

CHAPTER LXVII

[Rec. XXVII].

VERSE 19.---Let him pass from the waters of snow to excessive heat.

81. How difficult it is to be wise unto sobriety.---Iniquity is therefore compared to cold, because it constrains the mind of the sinner with numbness. Whence it is written: As a cistern makes its water cold, so she has made her wickedness cold (Jer. 6:7). On the contrary, charity is heat, because it clearly enkindles the mind which it fills. Concerning this heat it is written: Iniquity shall abound, the charity of many shall grow cold (Matt. 24:12). And there are some who, while they diminish the colds of their iniq-

uities, come to the true faith, or to the habit of holiness. But because they presume more than is necessary upon their own senses, they often wish to search into those things which they do not grasp in the faith which they receive, so that they may be held in God by reason rather than by faith. But because the human mind is not able to search into divine secrets, they contemn believing everything which they cannot search into by reason, and they fall into error through excessive inquiry. These, therefore, when they did not yet believe, or were still vacant to the works of iniquity, were waters of snow. But when, deserting carnal deeds, they desire to search into more than they grasp in the faith to which they have been led, they are indeed more heated than they ought to have been. Well, therefore, is it said of any such perverse person, by the sentence of one prophesying at least, and not of one wishing: Let him pass from the waters of snow to excessive heat. As if it were plainly said: He who is not humbly restrained under the bond of discipline, falls into error through immoderate wisdom from his own infidelity, or the cold of perverse work. Whence also the eminent preacher, avoiding this excessive heat of exquisite wisdom in the hearts of his disciples, says: Not to be more wise than it behooves to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety (Rom. 12:3). Lest perhaps excessive heat should destroy those whom before the waters of snow, that is, the colds of infidelity or of sluggish actions, held about to die. And because it is very difficult for him who esteems himself wise to

reduce his mind to humility, and to believe those preaching right things, and to cast away the sense of his own perversity, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER LXVIII

[Rec. XXVIII].

IBID.---And even to hell his sin.

82. The sin which is not amended here is irremissible.---For the sin is led even to hell, which before the end of this present life is not amended through correction to penance. Concerning which sin indeed it is said through John: There is a sin unto death, I do not say for that that any one should pray (1 John 5:16). [Vet. XXXI.] For a sin unto death is a sin even unto death, because clearly for a sin which is not corrected here, its pardon is prayed for in vain. Concerning which it is still added:

VERSE 20.---Let mercy forget him.

The mercy of Almighty God is said to forget him who shall have been forgetful of the justice of Almighty God, because whoever fears Him not as just now, is not able to find Him merciful hereafter. Which sentence indeed is aimed not only at him who deserts the preachments of the true faith, but also at him who, placed in the right faith, lives carnally, because the vengeance of eternal animadversion is not escaped, whether it be sinned in faith or in work. For although the quality of damnation is different, yet for the fault which is by no means cleansed through penance, no faculty of absolution is supplied. It follows.

CHAPTER LXIX

[Rec. XXIX]

VERSE 21.---His sweetness is the worm.

83. Secular cares delight the carnal, by which they are gnawed as by worms.---Whoever desires to prosper in this world, to exceed others, to swell with things and honors, to him indeed secular care is in delight, and rest in labor. For he is greatly fatigued, if secular care by which he may be fatigued be wanting. But because it is the nature of worms to be incessantly moved at every moment, not undeservedly is the inquietude of thoughts signified by the name of worms. The sweetness of a perverse mind, therefore, is the worm, because it is delightfully fed from that whence it is incessantly agitated through inquietude. The flesh can also be more plainly designated by the name of worm. Whence also it is said above: Man is rottenness, and the son of man a worm (Job 25:6). Therefore, how great blindness is demonstrated of any luxurious person and one given up to the pleasures of the flesh, when it is said: His sweetness is the worm. For what is the flesh but rottenness and a worm? And whoever pants for carnal desires, what else does he love than a worm? For what the substance of the flesh is, the graves bear witness. Which of parents, which of faithful friends, can touch the flesh of his dearly beloved when it is swarming with worms? Therefore, when the flesh is lusted after, let it be weighed what it is when breathless, and it is understood what is loved. Nothing indeed

is so powerful to tame the appetite of carnal desires, as that each one should weigh what that which he loves living is like when dead. For carnal corruption being considered, it is more quickly known that when the flesh is illicitly lusted after, wasting is desired. Well, therefore, is it said of the mind of the luxurious: His sweetness is the worm; because he who glows in the desire of carnal corruption, pants for the stench of rottenness. These things, as I remember that I promised in the beginning of this third part (Lib. XI, in exord.), I have run through with brevity: that those things which follow in this work, because they are involved in great obscurity, may be more widely discussed, God helping.

Part four

, CONTAINING SIX BOOKS.

BOOK SEVENTEEN.

Expounds the remainder of chapter 24 from the middle of verse 20, with chapters 25 and 26 entire, chiefly in a moral sense.

CHAPTER I.

533 The aim of the Holy Doctor is to explain the history of Job typically and in a mystic sense.---As often as we attempt to unfold the mystery of typical exposition in the history of the holy man through a new volume, it behooves us to bring forth the mystic signification principally from either the name or the passion of the same man, so that, after the manner of dwellings, while we prefix the superscription of the title on the very front of the doorpost, because whose house it is is recognized, it may be entered more securely. But I remember that I have often said that blessed Job signified by his passion and his name the passions of our Redeemer, and of His body, that is, the holy Church. For Job is interpreted sorrowing. And who else is figured in this sorrowing one, but He of whom it is written: Truly He has borne our infirmities, and carried

our sorrows (Isa. 53:4)? Concerning whom again it is said: By His stripes we are healed (Ibid., 5). But his friends hold the likeness of heretics, who, as we have already often said, while they strive to defend God, offend Him. Therefore, let the holy man so speak through his wounds and his words, as that he may signify ours also, and let him often narrate through the spirit of prophecy things to come, and transcend things present; but sometimes let him so discuss things present, that he may be silent concerning things future. 534 This guard of discretion being known, let our understanding also alternate with the change of his voice, that it may so much the more truly agree with his senses, as it changes itself also with his voices. By the preceding words, therefore, the holy man, through eloquent sentences of the art of prudence, brought forth the faults of any wicked person, and expressed how much his action is to be condemned. Concerning whose punishment he soon subjoins, saying:

CAPUT II

[Rec. II].

VERSE 20.---Let him not be in remembrance, but let him be broken as unfruitful wood.

2. The punishment of the wicked is to be blotted out from the memory of God.---For he is not reduced to the remembrance of the Creator, whoever is subjugated to vices until the end of life. For if the memory of supernal regard touched him, it would beyond doubt recall him

from iniquity. His merits indeed require that he be fundamentally blotted out from the remembrance of the Author. But it is to be known that God is by no means properly said to remember. For He who cannot forget, in what way can He remember? But because we embrace those whom we remember, but are elongated from those of whom we forget, by human usage even God is said to remember, when He bestows gifts, and to forget, when He leaves in fault. But because He weighs all things, He considers all things without alternation of intermission; and He remembers the good, of whom nevertheless He never forgets; and He by no means remembers the evil, whom nevertheless He always beholds through judgment. For He as it were returns to the memory of the good, which nevertheless He never deserted; and as it were by no means respects the evil, whose deeds nevertheless He considers, but over these He keeps the judgment of damnation in the last things. For hence it is written: The eyes of the Lord contemplate the good and the evil (Prov. 15:3). Hence it is said through the Psalmist: The face of the Lord is upon them that do evil, to lose the memory of them from the earth (Ps. 33:17). He considers therefore whom He may punish, but the same ones He did not see before, whom He knows not. For to some He is about to say in the end: I know you not whence you are; depart from Me all you workers of iniquity (Matt. 7:23; Luke 13:27). In a wonderful way therefore He both beholds and forgets the life of the wicked, because those whom He judges through strictness of sen-

tence, He is ignorant of as far as pertains to the memory of mercy.

3. They who as unfruitful wood shall be broken.---Who, since they come not into His remembrance, are as unfruitful wood from whose judgment they are broken. For the earth nourished them with temporal expense, the rain from above of preaching poured into them. But because their life by no means brought forth the fruit of good work, the angry Husbandman cut it off, so that according to the sentence of Truth it may not occupy the place which another is able to hold to fruit (Luke 13:7). Concerning this unfruitful wood it is said through John: Now the axe is laid to the root of the tree. Every tree, therefore, which does not make good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire (Matt. 3:10; Luke 3:9). But in this place, that the eternal punishments of the reprobate may be designated, the wood is by no means said to be cut off, but to be broken, because clearly the death of the flesh cuts off the reprobate, but the punishment following breaks them. For he is as it were cut here, when he is separated from the present life. But he is broken in Gehenna, when he is tortured with perpetual damnation. But the holy man, because he brought forth the strict punishment of the perverse, immediately recurs to the fault, that from the immensity of injustice he may teach that so great damnation of him is not unjust. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSE 21.---For he fed the sterile woman, and her who does not bear, and to the widow he did not do well.

4. The wicked feeding the sterile flesh, deserts the care of the soul.---What in this place is called sterile, but the flesh? Which while it desires only present things, knows not how to beget good thoughts. But what is called the widow, but the soul? Which because the Creator wished to join to Himself, He came to the chamber of the carnal womb, the Psalmist attesting, who says: And He as a bridegroom, proceeding from His chamber (Ps. 18:6). Which is rightly called a widow, because her husband suffered death for her, and now lives in the secret places of heaven, hidden from her eyes, as it were in the part of another region. [Vet. II.] The wicked therefore feeds the sterile, and neglects to do well to the widow, because serving carnal desires, he contemns the care and the life of the soul. For with all intention and every study he thinks how the flesh about to die may subsist without any necessities, and he despises to care for the life of the soul, which without doubt lives forever either in death or in beatitude. But rightly when it was said: He fed the sterile, there is immediately added: And her who does not bear. For we know from sacred history that certain women were sterile, but yet in the end of time brought forth. But the flesh is said to be not only sterile, but also she who does not bear, because by its own sense it is not able to beget good thoughts even in the last things. For it fails now from its own vigor, and yet it does

not yet desist from lusting after transitory things, and being now weary from its former strength, it is almost repelled by the very world which it loves, and yet it still endeavors by a wicked effort to obtain temporal things. It does not suffice to act perversely now, but yet it by no means desists from thinking even those things which it does not act. Rightly therefore it is called not only sterile, but also not bearing, which by its own sense, as we said, is not made fruitful to the offspring of good thought, not even when it shall have been weakened.

5. The labors of heretics are sterile.---Which nevertheless can be understood also concerning heretical preachers. For every preacher of error, while he teaches the people placed outside the unity of the Church, indeed feeds the sterile, and her who is not able to bear, because he also bestows the use of his labor upon her, who by no means returns spiritual fruits. But well he does not to the widow, because clearly he contemns to live and to serve the holy universal Church, whose husband suffered the adversities of death. For to do well to the widow is to labor in the consolation of her who is broken in the love of her dead husband. Whence also by the voice of the Psalmist this same widow, namely the holy Church, complains, saying: I sought for one to comfort me, and I found none (Ps. 68:21). For then only she finds one comforting her, when from that death which her husband suffered she sees many within herself rise to life. But often the preacher of error is joined to the rich of this

world, who for the reason that they brood over earthly occupations, are ignorant to detect the craftiness of sayings; and when they desire to be powerful outwardly, they are caught without labor in the snare of perverse preaching. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 22.---He drew down the strong in his strength.

6. In the strength indeed of his own depravity he draws down the strong, when through the craftiness of his error he ravishes the mighty of this world. Against whom it is said through Paul: God has chosen the weak things of the world, that He might confound the strong (1 Cor. 1:27). But the strength of a perverse preacher is an elated science of speech, by which being puffed up, he despises others, and in the contempt of all swells as if singularly skilled in himself. Who thinking great things of himself, but ignorant of true things concerning the Lord, is disjoined far from the knowledge of the faith, and yet endeavors to be seen as a preacher of the faith. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER V

[Vet. III].

IBID.---And when he shall have stood, he will not believe his life.

7. Every sinner guilty of unbelief.---Every perverse preacher stands in this world, as long as he lives in a terrestrial body. But he refuses to believe his life, because he contemns to know true things concerning God. For he would believe his life, if he felt rightly concerning the substance of his Creator. These things, therefore, we said before were brought forth concerning any wicked person, but suddenly we turned the understanding to a preacher of error. Whence it is to be known that we are so led to the species, as that we are nevertheless by no means fundamentally plucked away from the genus. For every perverse person, even if he be seen to hold the right faith in the bosom of the universal Church, stands, 537 and believes not his life, because those things indeed are right which he understands concerning the Creator through faith, but yet he contemns to hold the works of faith; and he is convicted of unbelief, because by living he is reproved from that which he shows himself to believe. For hence it is said through John: He who says that he knows God, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar (1 John 2:4). Hence Paul says: They confess that they know God, but in deeds they deny Him (Tit. 1:16). Hence James says: Faith without works is dead (James 2:20, 26). But among these things the Creator, by a wonderful dispensation of counsel, both respects the faults, and bestows times of living, so that longer spaces of temporal life may either become to the converted an aid of a gift, or to the unconverted to the increase of damnation. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. IV].

VERS. 23.---God gave him a place of penance, and he abuses it in pride.

8. Mercy bestowed on a sinner and neglected, is turned into punishment.---Whosoever offends and lives, for this reason the divine dispensation tolerates him in iniquity, that He may restrain him from iniquity. But he who is longer tolerated, and yet is not restrained from iniquity, receives indeed the gift of heavenly patience, but by the bonds of his own guilt, from that very gift he binds himself the more tightly. For because he turns the received times of penance into fault, the strict Judge in the last things converts the bestowed arguments of mercy into punishment. For hence it is said through Paul: Art thou ignorant that the patience of God leadeth thee to penance? But according to thy hardness and impenitent heart thou treasurest up to thyself wrath in the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God (Rom. 2:4, 5). Hence Isaiah says: The child of a hundred years shall die, and the sinner of a hundred years shall be accursed (Isa. 65:20). As if he should openly deter us, saying: The life indeed of a child is drawn out to a great length, that he may be corrected from childish deeds; but if he is not restrained from the perpetration of sin even by the length of time, this very length of life, which he received through mercy, grows to him to the heap of malediction. Whence it is necessary that

when we see ourselves to be longer waited for, we should fear those very times of prolonged piety as arguments of damnation, lest from the clemency of the judge the punishment of the sinner should increase; and whence each one could be rescued from death, thence he may tend more heavily to death. Which is therefore for the most part done, because the eye of the mind is by no means separated from present things. For the sinner neglects to consider the ways of the Redeemer, and therefore in his own journeys he grows old without ceasing. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VII

[Vet. IV, Rec. V].

IBID.---For his eyes are on his ways.

9. The sinner, having left the ways of the Lord, delights in his own, that is, in vices.---For the sinner beholds his own ways, because he strives to think of, to discern those things only which may support him for temporal advantage. For hence Paul says: All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's (Phil. 2:21). For the way of the elated is pride; the way of the robber, avarice; the way of the slippery is carnal concupiscence. In his own ways, therefore, every wicked man casts down his eyes, because he intends only vices, that through these he may satisfy his mind. Whence it is said through Solomon: The eyes of fools are in the ends of the earth (Prov. 17:24), because they behold this alone with the whole intention of the heart, through which they may be led to the end

of earthly desire. By no means, indeed, would the sinner fix the gaze of his consideration on the earth, if 538 he lifted up the eyes of his mind to the holy journeys of his Redeemer. Whence it is said again through Solomon: The eyes of a wise man are in his head (Eccl. 2:14), because, namely, every wise man considers Him with his whole intention, whose member he weighs himself to be through faith. For he had contemned to see these ways of human conversation, who said: I will exercise myself in Thy commandments, and I will consider Thy ways (Psalm 119:15). And so let him openly promise, saying: Those things which are mine, I now refuse to see, because I burn to proceed in the way of Thy imitation by the steps of conversation. For he who already contradicts the present world, by the continual excitation of love objects the ways of his Redeemer to the eyes of his heart, that the mind may fly from prosperous things, and be prepared for adverse ones; that it may seek nothing which soothes, and fear nothing which it believes to deter; that it may repute sorrow to be joy; and weigh the joys of the present life as losses of sorrow; that it may not fear the detriments of abjection, but through these seek a place of abiding glory. For these ways the Truth showed to the eyes of those following, when He said: If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me (John 12:26). To these ways He recalled the swelling hearts of the disciples, when they already sought a place of glory, but were ignorant of the way of the same glory, saying: Can ye drink the chalice which I am about to drink (Matt.

20:22)? For they had sought the loftiness of that confession on the right hand and on the left, but they did not see how great was the narrowness of the journey to this. Whence also the chalice of the passion to be imitated is soon objected to their eyes, that namely, if they tended to the joys of sublimity, they should first find the way of humility. Because, therefore, the sinner neglects to consider the ways of God, but intends only those in which he may be carnally delighted, it is now rightly said: For his eyes are on his ways. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 24.---They are lifted up for a little, and they shall not stand.

10. He who is elated with vain glory falls for a little while.---When the glory of the wicked for the most part is extended into a multitude of years, it is estimated by the minds of the weak to be long and as it were stable. But when a sudden end intercepts this, it proves it without doubt to have been short, since the determining end becomes known, because that which could pass away was for a little. They are lifted up, therefore, for a little, and they by no means stand, because by that very thing by which they seek to be seen high, they become far from the true essence of God through elation. For they cannot stand, because they are divided from the solidity of the eternal essence, and they tolerate this first ruin, because through private glory they fall in themselves. For hence it is said through

the Psalmist: Thou hast cast them down, when they were lifted up (Psalm 73:18), because they fall within in that same degree in which they wickedly rise without. [Vet. V]. Beholding this brevity of temporal glory, he says again: I have seen the impious highly exalted and lifted up as the cedars of Libanus; I passed by, and lo! he was not (Psalm 37:35). Hence again he says: Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be (Ibid. 10). Hence James says: For what is your life? it is a vapor appearing for a little (James 4:14). Hence the prophet, weighing the brevity of carnal glory, denounces, saying: All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass (Isa. 40:6). The power of the wicked, indeed, is compared to the flower of grass, because forsooth carnal glory while it shines, falls; while it is extolled in itself, being intercepted by a sudden end, it is terminated. For so by the blast of the winds stubble is snatched up on high, but by a swift fall it is recalled to the lowest parts. So smoke is lifted up to the clouds, but suddenly by swelling into nothing it is dissipated. So from the lowest parts a mist raises itself by thickening; but the rising ray of the sun wipes this away, as if it had not been. So on the surface of herbs the moisture of the nocturnal dew is sprinkled, but by the sudden heat of the daily light it is dried up. So the foamy bubbles of the waters, excited by the beginning rains, come forth from the innermost parts in emulation; but they perish the more quickly by being broken, the higher they are extended being inflated. And when they grow that

they may appear, by growing they finish that they may not stand. Concerning the wicked, therefore, swelling with the elation of temporal glory, but yet enduring in no solidity in this, let it be rightly said: They are lifted up for a little, and they shall not stand. Concerning whom it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

IBID.---And they shall be humbled as all things, and they shall be taken away.

11. The earth in essence will always stand, although in image it continually passes away.--- The progress of contemplation ought to be such, that from a few things it may be snatched to consider many things, to all things, so that having been led out by degrees it may profit, and judging all transitory things, it may itself by comprehending them grow almost incomprehensibly. Whence the holy man, when he discussed the glory and the failure of the wicked, straightway stretched the eye of his mind to all things, saying: They shall be humbled as all things, and they shall be taken away. All earthly things, forsooth. As if he should openly say: They can by no means stand, because those things also on which they lean fly away; and while they love temporal things, they run through with these from the volubility of time. But it may be asked, since it is said through Solomon: A generation passeth away, and a generation cometh, but the earth standeth for ever (Eccl. 1:4), why the blessed Job asserts that all things are humbled and taken away? Which, however, we easily discuss, if we

distinguish how the earth and the heaven either pass away, or how they remain. For both of these pass away through that image which they now have, but yet they subsist without end through their essence. For hence it is said through Paul: For the figure of this world passeth away (1 Cor. 7:31). Hence through itself the Truth says: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away (Matt. 24:35). Hence it is exhibited to John by an angelic voice: There shall be a new heaven and a new earth (Apoc. 21:1). Which indeed are not others to be created, but these very ones are renewed. Heaven, therefore, and earth both pass away and shall be, because it is both wiped from that species which it now has through fire, and yet it is always preserved in its own nature. Whence it is said through the Psalmist: Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed (Psalm 102:26). Which last change of theirs they now announce to us by those same vicissitudes by which they alternate incessantly for our uses. For the earth fails from its species by winter dryness, it grows green by spring moisture. The heaven is daily covered by the darkness of night, and is renewed by daily brightness. Hence, therefore, hence let every faithful one gather both that these things perish, and yet are repaired by innovation, which it is certain are now assidue repaired as if from failure [Vet. et Rec. VI]. Among these things, therefore, the holy man, when he beholds the course of the wicked, makes known with how great animadversion

they sometimes fail, while he straightway subjoins:

CHAPTER X.

IBID.---And they shall be bruised as the tops of ears of corn.

12. The wicked rich, although concordant for oppressing the just, are separated from each other by their cupidities.---For the tops of ears of corn are the beards (*aristae*). But beards come forth joined together in the ear, but growing for a little while, they are disjoined from each other, being bristly and rigid. 540 So forsooth, so the wicked rich rise to the glory of this world. For they are joined to each other by the communion of nature, but they are divided against each other by growing in turn. For one despises the other, and the one burns against the other with the torches of envy. They, therefore, who from the swelling of the mind separate themselves from the unity of charity, stand rigid against each other as if in the manner of beards. What, therefore, should I call the wicked rich of this world, but certain beards of the human race? Who while they are proud against each other, but unanimously afflict the life of the good, are indeed divided against themselves, but yet concordantly press down the grains below.

13. The reprobate in the manner of beards are now raised up; the elect as grains lie hid.---Now, therefore, the beards leap forth to high things, the grains lie hid, because both the power of the reprobate is eminent, and the glory of the elect

does not appear. The former show themselves with the loftiness of honors, the latter depress themselves in humility. But the time of threshing will come, which may both break the rigidity of the beards, and not bruise the solid grains. Then, forsooth, the pride of the wicked is diminished, then it is declared with how great integrity the life of the elect shines, because when the unjust fail, it is brought about by this very bruising of the beards that the grains which were hid may appear. And when the beards are broken, the brightness of the grains is shown, because the wicked falling into eternal punishments, it is demonstrated with how great truth the righteousness of the saints shines. Whence also it is rightly said through John: Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His floor; and he will gather the wheat indeed into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire (Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17). Let the blessed Job, therefore, behold with how great animadversion the elation of the wicked is broken, and comparing them to perishing beards, let him say: As the tops of ears of corn they shall be bruised, because forsooth the rigidity of the proud is broken by the fortitude of the last threshing, which now is lifted up despising the life of the elect. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

[Rec. VII.]

VERS. 25.---But if it is not so, who shall be able to argue that I have lied, and to set my words before God?

14. The just, if they offend, are by no means to be corrected by the wicked.---If it is not so as he speaks, forsooth all can argue him of falsehood. Why, therefore, is it said: If it is not so, who shall be able to argue that I have lied, while namely we know that it is permitted to any one to reprehend a fallacious person? But if we discuss the sense of the speaker by a subtle interrogation, we soon find how right are those things which he brought forth. For a just man, even if he ever speaks anything by offending, it is not worthy that he should be judged by the unjust and by those living wickedly. Whence the holy man, depressing the pride of his friends, not only if it is so, but even if it is not so as he brought forth, by no means trusts that he can be reprehended, because forsooth they can rightly redargue false things, who know not how to do false things. For they lose the daring of correction against fallacy, who still live fallaciously. He says, therefore: But if it is not so, who shall be able to argue that I have lied? As if he should openly say: All things are so as I have brought forth, which yet if they were not so, I could by no means be redargued by you, because while you still succumb to your own, you are not able to reprehend another's fallacy.

15. Our judgments are to be weighed before the supreme Judge.---Where it is also aptly subjoined: And to set my words before God. For whosoever truly reprehends fallacious sayings,

thinking on the things heard, and weighing these from the rule of truth, sets words before God: because 541 he examines within himself in the presence of the truth, what he may decree without against fallacy. To set words before God is, the inward Judge being considered, to weigh exterior sayings. The holy man, therefore, does not estimate that his words can be set before God by his proud friends. As if he should openly say: For this reason you are not able to set what I speak before the Judge, because you hide His face from you by sinning. Which, however, even from the type of the holy Church there is nothing to hinder being understood, which when it is reprehended concerning its weak ones by the derision of heretics, disdains that very astuteness of their derision, because it is more tolerable to God that any one should lie in weakness and ignorance with humility, than with elation comprehend high things. But because the holy man brought forth many things against those who are proud of fugitive power, and swell with windy honors, Bildad the Shuhite, profiting from his correction, acknowledges with whom true power is, saying:

CHAPTER XII

[Vet. VII, Rec. VIII].

CHAP. XXV, VERS. 2---Power and terror are with Him, who maketh concord in His high places.

16. God alone is powerful and to be feared.--- As if he should openly say: He alone truly terrifies

the hearts of mortals, who from the power of His divinity truly possesses them. For what terror does human power strike, which knows not when it may lack the right of the same power? But it is rightly said: Who maketh concord in His high places, because many things disagree among themselves below, but run to the concordant fullness of the things above; and it is brought about from the cause of internal peace, that often those things which are without are disposed without peace. For Almighty God advances the good to merit, when He permits the wicked to rage against their life. And the highest things are composed in concord, while the lowest things are confounded, because He thence associates His elect in the heavenly places with the choirs of angels, whence in earthly and lowest things He bears the manners of the reprobate opposing His beck.

17. Which angels, being in the highest degree concordant, are said to fight among themselves.---But among these things it is pleasing to inquire, if peace is retained in the highest degree in high places, what is that which is said through the angel to Daniel: I came for thy words: but the prince of the kingdom of the Persians resisted me one and twenty days; and, behold, Michael, one of the first princes, came to help me (Dan. 10:13). And a little after: Now will I return to fight against the prince of the Persians. When I went forth, the prince of the Greeks appeared coming (Ibid. 20). Whom, therefore, does he call other princes of the nations, but angels, who could

have resisted him as he went forth? What peace, therefore, can there be in high places, if among the angelic spirits also a contest of fighting is carried on, who always assist the sight of the truth? But because certain ministries of angels are set over each several nation to be dispensed, when the manners of the subjects deserve the aid of the set over spirits against each other, the spirits themselves who are over them are related to come against each other. For that angel who was speaking to Daniel is acknowledged to be set over the captive Israelitish people established in Persia. But Michael is found to be set over those who remained of the same people in the land of Judea. Whence also it is said by this same angel a little after to Daniel: There is none that helpeth me in all these things, but Michael your prince (Ibid. 21). Concerning whom also he says this, which we premised: And behold Michael one of the first princes came to help me (Ibid. 13). Who while he is by no means said to be at the same time, but to come to help, 542 is openly acknowledged to be set over that people, which was held captive in another part. What is it, therefore, for the angel to say: I came for thy words, but the prince of the kingdom of the Persians resisted me (Ibid. 13), but to announce his works to the subjects? As if he should openly say: The merits indeed of thy prayers require that the Israelitish people be stripped from the yoke of their captivity, but there is still that which ought to be purged in the same people by the dominion of the Persians, so that concerning their rescue

the prince of the Persians may by right contradict me, although the tears of those also who were left in Judea may help thy prayers. Whence also he subjoins this which we have said: Michael your prince came to help me. And when he goes forth to fight against the prince of the Persians, the prince of the Greeks appears coming to him. By which thing it is hinted that Judea had committed something against the Greeks also, for whose cause forsooth it resisted their rescue. The angel, therefore, hears the prayers of the prophet, but the prince of the Persians resists, because although already the life of the just one praying requires the rescue of the people, yet the life of the same people still contradicts, so that because they who had been led into captivity are not yet fully purged, by right the Persians still lord it over them. Michael helps, but the prince of the Greeks comes to the fight, because so long an oppression of the captive ones could indeed merit pardon, but this was also meeting the benefit of their rescue, which they had offended in against the Greeks. Rightly, therefore, it is said that the angels come against each other, because the merits of the nations subject to them contradict in turn. For the sublime spirits ruling over the same nations by no means fight for those acting unjustly; but they examine their deeds judging justly. And when either the fault or the justice of each nation is led to the counsel of the heavenly court, the one set over the same nation is related either to have obtained in the contest, or not to have obtained. Of all of whom, however, there

is one victory, the supreme will of their Maker over them, which while they always behold, they never will that which they are not able to obtain. Well, therefore, it is said: Who maketh concord in His high places. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. IX].

VERS. 3.---Is there any number of His soldiers?

18. The number of angels, although finite to God, is infinite to men.---In the cognition of human reason there is no number of the high spirits, because it knows not how great is that frequency of the invisible army; concerning which it is said through Daniel: Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand assisted Him (Dan. 7:10). The number of the heavenly citizens is expressed as both infinite and definite, that it may be shown to be numerable to God, but innumerable to men. Although it is one thing to assist, another to minister. For those powers forsooth assist, which do not go forth to announce certain things to men. But those minister who come to fulfill the offices of messengers, but yet they themselves also do not recede from the innermost things in contemplation. And because there are more who minister, than those who principally assist, the number of those assisting is shown as if definite, but of those ministering indeed as indefinite.

[Vet. VIII] 19. Why the soldiers of God are so called.---We rightly call the angelic spirits the

soldiers of God, because we are not ignorant that they fight against the aerial powers. Which contests, however, they perform not by labor, but by command, because whatever they seek by acting against the unclean spirits, they are able to do from the aid of Him who rules all things. Concerning this 543 militia, indeed, our King being born, it is written: Suddenly there was made with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host (*militiae*) (Luke 2:13). To which militia also the number of elect men is joined, who through the sublime desire of the mind, are liberated from the servitude of earthly conversation. Concerning whom it is said through Paul: No man warring for God entangleth himself with secular businesses (2 Tim. 2:4). Who although they now appear few, yet in the invisible country they reign innumerable, because although in comparison of the wicked they are few, in the frequency of their congregation they can by no means be measured. But because the virtue of the same soldiers is strengthened not by their own powers, but by the infusion of heavenly grace, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV.

IBID.---And upon whom shall His light not arise?

20. Not by their own powers, but by the gift of grace they are strong.---The light of God forsooth is prevenient grace. Which if it should by no means arise gratuitously in our heart, forsooth our mind would remain obscure in the darkness of its sins. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XV.

Verse 4. Can man be justified compared with God, or can he appear pure that is born of a woman?

21. No one is just except by the illumination of God, not by comparison. This verse was spoken above by blessed Job, and is now repeated in his reproach. For every just man is just by the illumination of God, not by comparison. For human justice, compared to the Author, is injustice, because even if man had persisted in his own condition, the creature could not be equalled to the Creator (Job 9:2). To whom, however, for the heavier weights of defect, there was added also guilt, which the lurking serpent brought in, and the weakened woman persuaded (Gen. 3:6). Whence now because man is born through a woman subject to guilt, the weakness of the first guilt is propagated in the offspring. And because the branch of the human race has rotted at the root, it by no means subsists in the greenness of its condition. Whence it is rightly said now: Can man be justified compared with God, or can he appear pure that is born of a woman? As if it were openly said: Lest man should be proud against his Author, let him consider whence he came hither, and let him understand what he is. But behold, some, aided by the gift of the Spirit, are raised up against the weakness of their flesh, they shine with virtues, they flash also with the miracles of signs; yet there is no one who passes through life without guilt, as long as he

carries the flesh of corruption. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI.

Verse 5. Behold even the moon shineth not, and the stars are not pure in His sight.

22. No one is so just, as in corruptible flesh to be without all sin. What is designated by the moon, if not the whole Church together; what by the stars, if not the souls of individual well-living persons? who, amidst the conversations of wicked men, while they excel in great virtues, shine as it were in the darkness of the night. Whence also it is said by Paul to the disciples: Among whom ye shine as lights in the world (Phil. 2:15). For because the holy Church is expressed by the appellation of the moon, the prophet testifies, saying: The sun was lifted up, and the moon stood in her order (Hab. 3:11). For the sun being lifted up, the moon is set in her order, because when the Lord ascended to the heavens, the holy Church was immediately strengthened in the authority of preaching. And because the elect are signified by the name of the stars, Paul again insinuates, saying: For star differeth from star in brightness (1 Cor. 15:41). The moon therefore shineth not, and the stars are not pure in His sight, because neither does the holy Church flash with so many miracles by her own power, unless the gifts of prevenient grace (gratia praeveniens) pour through her, nor are the minds of individual well-living persons pure from the stains of sins, if they be judged with

piety removed, because in the eyes of the strict Judge (districtus judex), his own corruptibility defiles each one, unless the grace of Him that spares wipes it away daily. For the mind of the elect strives to go forth to the liberty of justice, but is still held by the fetter of weakness; and indeed it desires to subdue faults perfectly, but as long as it is bound by the corruption of the flesh, it is tied by its bonds, even when it is unwilling. Hence therefore let him gather with how great a weight of sins they are pressed down who neglect to fight against these things, if even those who manfully fight against fault do not fully overcome it. Whence also after it was said: Behold even the moon shineth not, and the stars are not pure in His sight, it is immediately added:

CHAPTER XVII.

Verse 6. How much more is man rottenness, and the son of man a worm?

23. If the holier are not free from stains, how many are defiled who are immersed in the filthiness of the flesh. As if it were openly said: If they also who shine with virtues amidst the darkness of the present life are not able to be without contagion, with how great a guilt of iniquity are they bound who still live carnally? If they who are already conversant in heavenly desires cannot be free from sin, what weights of sins do they endure who, given up to the pleasures of their flesh, still carry the yoke of rottenness (putredo)? Hence Peter says: If the righteous scarcely be

saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Pet. 4:18). Hence it is said by Isaiah: Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars, how much more upon all the houses of joy of the exulting city! (Isai. 32:13). For the Lord calls the mind of all the elect the land of His people, upon which He asserts that thorns and briars come up, because He sees that even it is not without the prickings of vices. But the house of joy of the exulting city is the mind of the wicked, which while it neglects to behold the punishments to come, abandoning itself in the pleasure of the flesh, grows vainly hilarious. He says therefore: Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars, how much more upon all the houses of joy of the exulting city? As if He should say openly: If vices depress the mind even of those who afflict themselves for the desire of the heavenly country (coelestis patria), to what faults are they subjected who without any fear abandon themselves in the pleasure of the flesh?

24. The first man is rottenness, whose sons are worms. But it is to be noted in his speech how much Bildad held the order of our condition and of our birth, who calls man not a worm, but rottenness (putredo), but the son of man a worm (vermis). For the first parent of the human race was man, not the son of man, from whom whoever has proceeded was not only man, but also the son of man. As therefore from man is the son of man, so from rottenness is born the worm. Whence rightly man is called rottenness, but the son of man a worm. For the first man was indeed

rottenness, not a worm, because although he rotted through death, yet he did not come from rottenness through birth. But he who is the son of man is called a worm, because he is already propagated from the corruption of mortal bodies.

25. Therefore, because the words of the friends are finished, blessed Job leans on a deeper sharpness of prosecution, and his sayings are as valid as they are extreme, because it is also the custom of lawyers to keep the argument by which they foresee they will excel their adversaries for the conclusion of the prosecution. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Vet. X, Rec. XI].

CHAP. XXVI, VERS. 1, 2.---But Job answering said: Whose helper art thou? is it of the weak? and dost thou sustain his arm that is not strong?

26. To wish to help the weak is of charity; the powerful, of elation.---To help the weak is of charity; to wish to help the powerful is of elation. Because, therefore, his friends, holding the species of heretics, as if helping God, endeavored to show their own wisdom, Bildad is justly reproved, so that it is said: Whose helper art thou? is it of the weak? and dost thou sustain his arm that is not strong? As if he were openly saying: While thou strivest to help him under whose magnitude thou succumbest, every solace which thou expendest is from ostentation, not from piety.

27. In what sense we are said to help God.--- But among these things it is to be known, that often we also help God, who namely is not weak, by acting humbly. Whence also it is said by Paul: For we are God's helpers (1 Cor. 3:9). For when we concur with the voice of exhortation to him whom he himself infuses through internal grace, this which he acts inwardly through the Spirit, we help from without by our ministry to you, and then only is our exhortation led to perfection, when God shall have been in the heart who may be helped. Whence also he says elsewhere: Neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase (Ibid., 7). For to plant and to water is to help. Both of which shall be a void ministry, if God does not give the increase in the heart. But they who savor other things from their own sense, do not wish to be humbly God's helpers, because while they estimate themselves to be useful to God, they alienate themselves from the fruit of utility. Whence also it is said by the voice of Truth to the disciples: When you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do (Luke 17:10). It follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

Verse 3. To whom hast thou given counsel? perhaps to him that hath no wisdom?

28. To give counsel to a fool is of charity, to a wise man of ostentation; to Wisdom itself, of perversity. To give counsel to a fool is of charity; to

give it to a wise man is of ostentation; but to give it to Wisdom itself is of perversity. And because these who we said held the likeness of heretics were serving ostentation rather than usefulness by their speech, it is rightly still subjoined against Bildad:

IBID.---And thou hast shown thy prudence to be very great. Every one whose prudence is right, it is not "very great," because, according to the voice of Paul, he does not desire to be wise more than it behoveth to be wise (Rom. 12:3). But he whose prudence is "very great," it is not right, because while it is stretched beyond measure, it declines on any side into fault. But they show their prudence to be very great who desire to appear more prudent than others. Whence it comes to pass for the most part that when they know not how to be wise with moderation, they even speak foolish things. For which reason the very excess of prudence is subjoined, that it should be said:

CHAPTER XX.

VERSE 4.---Whom hast thou wished to teach? was it not Him who made the breath?

29. How great is the folly of Bildad, preferring his own wisdom to the divine.---By the breath (spiramentum) we live, by prudence we are wise. But it is our part first to live, afterwards to be wise, because that we may be able to be wise, it is first brought about that we should be. He therefore who gave life, Himself beyond doubt also bestowed prudence. But Bildad, because

he believed blessed Job to be scourged for a fault, strove with proud temerity to penetrate the hidden judgment of God, which he ought to have humbly venerated. He therefore preferred himself by his prudence to Him whose judgment he judged by not understanding it. He preferred himself by his prudence to Him from whom he received the breath (spiraculum) of living; as if he were more wise than He from whom he had it that he should be. But because blessed Job, holding the type of the holy Church, uttered a few things in the correction of the proud, whom he was not ignorant held the likeness of heretics, as he said above: I desire to dispute with God, first showing you to be forgers of lies, and maintainers of perverse dogmas (Job 13:3); he suddenly raises himself to doctrine, and against the unskilfulness of the elated expands the breadth of his knowledge by sentences, saying:

CHAPTER XXI

[Old XI, Rec. XII].

VERSE 5.---Behold the giants groan under the waters.

30. Proud angels and men are involved in the abyss of ignorance.---It was indeed fitting that he should first beat down the swelling of earthly wisdom by rebuke, and afterwards pass by doctrine to words full of mysteries. For nothing hinders us from understanding by 'giants' either apostate angels or any proud men. Hence it is said by the Prophet: The dead shall not live, the giants

shall not rise again (Isai. 26:16). For whom does he call 'dead' but sinners? And whom 'giants' but those who even pride themselves on sin? The former live not, because by sinning they have lost the life of righteousness. The latter cannot even rise again after death, because being puffed up by pride after their fault, they do not recur to the remedies of penance. Hence again it is written: The man that shall err from the way of doctrine shall abide in the assembly of the giants (Prov. 21:16); for whoever deserts the path of rectitude, to whose number does he join himself but that of the proud spirits? Well then is it said against the elated: Behold the giants groan under the waters. As if it were plainly said: Why should man pride himself on knowledge, when an abyss of ignorance presses even upon those most proud spirits of the angels?

31. They who aim to be over others are made subject to them.---But if by the name of giants the powerful of this world are designated, the people may be figured in the waters, as John attests, who says: For the waters are peoples (Rev. 17:15). Well then is it said against the proud man: Behold the giants groan under the waters, because all the elated, while they desire to attain height of honors in this life, groan under the weights of the peoples. For by how much any one is here raised above another, by so much is he burdened with heavier cares; and he is made subject in mind and thought to those very peoples over whom he is placed in dignity. And well is it briefly indicated by these words that all pride lies in the lowest

depth by the very fact that it raises itself to the heights, so that it is more subject to all from the very point where it seeks to be over all. For a man raised on high sustains as many above him as he rules when placed under him. But they who are associated with such are themselves also depressed by participation in their labor. For they endure with them even the labor of the weight, while they equally affect the glory of the honor. Whence, when he had said: Behold the giants groan under the waters, he immediately added:

CAPUT XXII.

IBID.---And they that dwell with them.

32. Greater cares open a easier way to vices. Desired dignities cannot be ministered without sin.---As if he should say: They also groan who are associated with their glory from delight. But the very occupation of secular dignities is pressed by so much easier vices, as it is burdened by greater cares. For would that the human mind were able to see and avoid sins even when at rest. Because therefore he saw that the desired heights of things cannot be ministered without sins, and because whatever unlawful thing is perpetrated is not hidden from the divine wrath, fitly following he added:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERSE 6.---Hell is naked before Him, and there is no covering for destruction.

33. No sin is hidden from the divine wrath.---Which also the Apostle Paul says: For all things are naked and open to His eyes (Heb. 4:13). But by the name of hell and destruction he designated the devil and all the associates of his damnation. But who He is before whom hell is naked, he says following:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Rec. XIII].

VERSE 7.---Who stretcheth out the North over the empty space.

34. The devil fills hearts void of divine love.---By the name of the North, the devil is wont to be called in sacred eloquence, who, that he might constrain the hearts of the nations with the cold of torpor, said: I will sit on the mount of the testament, in the sides of the North (Is. 14:13). Who is stretched over the empty space, because he possesses those hearts which are not filled with the grace of divine love. But yet it belongs to Almighty God also to fill the vessels of the devil, void of all virtues, by the gift of His grace, and to place in them the solidity of divine fear, whom He beholds strengthened by no action of rectitude. Whence it is fitly subjoined:

CAPUT XXV.

IBID.---And he hangeth the earth upon nothing.

35. The Church founded upon Gentiles and Jews reduced to nothing by sin.---For what is designated by the name of earth but holy Church, which while she receives the words of preaching, returns the fruit of good work? Concerning which it is said by Moses: Let the earth hear the words out of my mouth, let my speech be expected as the rain (Deut. 32:2). And what is designated by nothing, but the Gentile peoples? Of whom it is said by the prophet: All nations are as nothing and vanity before him (Isai. 40:17). In that nothing, therefore, the earth is suspended, which before was held void by the North, because those hearts of the Gentiles are filled with the charity of God, which before had been pressed by the torpor of the devil. [Vet. XII.] But also by this void the infidelity of Judea and by the earth, as we have said, the fructification of holy Church may be designated. Let the holy man therefore behold the fall of perishing Judea, and let him discern the merits of Gentility returning to pardon, and let him say: He who stretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. For because the hearts of the Jews, void of faith, are subject to the devil, he stretcheth out the North over the empty place. But because, no merits existing, as it was said: For nothing thou shalt save them (Psal. 55:8), the Lord founded his Church upon the nations, which by the prophet are called nothing, he aptly subjoins: He hangeth the earth upon nothing. But in what order this was done, he weaves together by subjoining a wonderful reason. For he says:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XIV]

VERSE 8.---Who bindeth up the waters in His clouds, that they may not break out together downwards.

36. Apostles and preachers designated by the name of clouds.---What does he call in this place 'water' but knowledge, what 'clouds' but preachers? For that in sacred eloquence knowledge is sometimes called 'water,' we have learned on the testimony of Solomon, who says: Deep water are the words from the mouth of a man, and a flowing torrent is the fountain of wisdom (Prov. 18:4). The Prophet David attests that knowledge is signified by water, saying: Dark water in the clouds of the air (Ps. 18:11). That is, hidden knowledge in the Prophets, who before the coming of the Lord, while pregnant with hidden sacraments they bore immense mysteries, their understanding was dark to the eyes of beholders. But by the name of 'clouds,' what else is designated in this place but the holy preachers, that is, the Apostles, who being sent everywhere through the parts of the world, knew both how to rain by words and to flash by miracles? Whom the Prophet Isaiah beholding long before, said: Who are these that fly as clouds? (Is. 60:8). Since therefore this man, full of the prophetic spirit, desires in this his speech to commence the beginnings of the rising Church to the praise of God, he studies to relate its order from the preaching of the Apostles, who took great care to preach

to uninstructed peoples things plain and capable of being understood, not the highest and most difficult. For if they should pour out from their mouth the holy knowledge, which is here designated by the name of water, just as they drew it into their heart, they would rather overwhelm their hearers by its immensity than water them. Whence knowledge being bound up within, that it might not break out together downwards, that cloud, nourishing its hearers by the distillation of words, spoke, saying: I could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal; as to little ones in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not meat (1 Cor. 3:1, 2). For who could have borne it, if he that was caught up to the third heaven, caught up into paradise, hearing even secret words which it is not lawful for man to speak, had opened such immense bosoms of heavenly knowledge (2 Cor. 12:2, 4)? Or whose virtue as a hearer would it not have overwhelmed, if those things which he could draw in within, as far as the tongue of the flesh sufficed, the immensity of this water overflowing had flowed out without?

37. Uninstructed hearers are to be watered not by an inundation but by a distillation of knowledge.---But that uninstructed hearers may be cherished not by an inundation of knowledge, but by a moderate distillation of preaching, God bindeth up the waters in His clouds, that they may not break out together downwards, because He tempers the preaching of teachers, that the infirmity of hearers, being nourished by the dew of sayings, may grow strong. Which is well related

in the Gospel by a mystical description, when it is said: Jesus entered into the ship of Peter, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land; and so sitting down He taught the multitudes (Luke 5:3). What else is designated by the ship of Peter but the Church committed to Peter? Of which, that the Lord may preach to the crowds flowing together, He commands it to be thrust out a little from the land. Which He commands to be neither led into the deep, and yet to be removed from the land, surely signifying that His preachers ought to preach to uninstructed peoples things neither too high concerning heavenly things, nor yet earthly things. Water therefore is bound up in the clouds, because the knowledge of preachers, speaking to the minds of the weak, is prohibited from teaching as much as it is able to feel.

[Old XIII]. 38. Deeper knowledge is to be concealed from weak minds. For for the most part if the heart of the hearers is corrupted by the immensity of the word, the tongue of the teachers is punished for the penalty of indiscretion. Whence it is written: If any man shall open a cistern and dig it, and shall not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall into it, the owner of the cistern shall pay the price of the beasts (Exod. 21:33, 34). For what is it to open a cistern, but to penetrate the secrets of Holy Scripture with a strong understanding? And what is understood by the ox and the ass, namely, a clean and an unclean animal, but every faithful and unfaithful person? He then who digs a cistern, let him cover it, lest an ox or an ass

fall therein, that is, let him who already understands deep things in sacred eloquence, conceal the sublime senses by silence before those who do not comprehend them, lest by a scandal of the mind he destroy either a faithful little one, or an unfaithful person who might have been able to believe. For from the death of the beasts he owes the price, because he is indeed convicted of having committed that for which he is held guilty to do penance. The cistern is therefore to be covered, because deep knowledge is to be read before little minds, lest from where the heart of the teachers is raised to the highest things, from thence the infirmity of the hearers should slide down to the lowest. Let it be rightly said then: Who bindeth up the waters in His clouds, that they may not break out together downwards. For the waters would break out together, if before weak hearers as much knowledge as there is should flow from the mouth of the speaker, if at once all the fullness of preaching should pour itself out, and reserve nothing for itself with those that are making progress. For it is indeed fitting that he who preaches should consider the measure of the hearer, in order that the preaching itself may grow with the increase of its hearer. For so every preacher ought to act, as it is dealt with him divinely, that he should by no means insinuate to the weak all things which he feels, because as long as he himself is weak in the flesh of mortality, he does not feel all those things which are above. He ought not therefore to preach to the uninstructed as much as he knows, because

he himself also cannot know of the heavenly mysteries how great they are. For hence it is that the Apostle Paul, after he had been present at the heavenly mysteries, says: We see now through a glass darkly, but then face to face (1 Cor. 13:12). Whence also there follows here immediately:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XV].

VERSE 9.---Who holdeth the face of His throne, and spreadeth His cloud over it.

39. In this life the glory of God is known only in part.---Knowledge is wont to be demonstrated in the face. The face of His throne therefore is held, because the glory of His kingdom is not recognized by us in this life as great as it is held within. Over which it is rightly said that a cloud is spread, because the glory of that heavenly kingdom is not seen as it is. For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly habitation weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things (Wisd. 9:15). From seeing Him therefore we are sprinkled with a cloud, because we are darkened by the very obscurity of our ignorance. Whence it is rightly said by the Psalmist: Darkness was under His feet, and He rode upon the cherubim, and did fly; He flew upon the wings of the winds, and He made darkness His secret place (Ps. 18:9, 10, 11). For darkness is under His feet, because He is not seen by those below in that brightness in which He rules in the things above. For He rode upon the cherubim and did fly.

For Cherubim is called the fullness of knowledge. Therefore He is said to have ridden upon the fullness of knowledge, and to have flown, because no knowledge comprehends the height of His majesty. He flew therefore, because He snatched Himself far on high from our understanding. He flew upon the wings of the winds, because He transcends the knowledge of souls. Who made darkness His secret place, because while we are obscured by the darkness of our infirmity, He is hidden from us by our ignorance, lest He should be seen by us now in eternal and inward brightness. Whence also it is said to Him in the Song of Songs by the bride: Flee, my beloved, flee (Cant. 8:14). [Old XIV.] He flees from us, we say, as often as that which we wish to remember does not occur to our mind. He flees from us, we say, when we do not hold in memory that which we wish. The holy Church therefore, after she describes the death and resurrection of the Lord, and His ascension, cries to Him full of the prophetic spirit: Flee, my beloved, flee. As if she should say: Thou who wast made comprehensible by the flesh, exceed by Thy divinity the understanding of our sense, and remain in Thyself incomprehensible to us. He holds therefore the face of His throne, because He hides the power of His majesty from mortals.

40. The very ministries of the angels are very little known.---But if we take His throne for the angelic powers, for He presides over them as it were a royal seat, He holds the face of His throne from us, because as long as we subsist

in this mortal flesh, we do not see what and how great those ministries of the Angels are. And He spreadeth His cloud over it, because beyond doubt He both raises our heart to seek, and yet it is dealt with by a hidden moderation, that it may be repressed by the very immensity of its seeking. Whence it is written: The abyss gave forth its voice from the height of its fantasy (Hab. 3:10). For the human mind is compelled to cry out in admiration, while in the height of consideration in its seekings, by the very fact that it is extended more widely, it is narrowed. Or surely, because we ourselves are the throne of God, He is not unworthily said to hold the face of His throne, while our knowledge is prohibited from proceeding to higher things. Over which throne of His, God is said to sprinkle His cloud, because remaining invisible, He exerts hidden judgments over us, so that both that which we can see is done in open things, and yet the origin of the deed lies hid in secret things, so that we ought not to know why it is done. Whence also it is fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Rec. XVI].

VERSE 10.---He hath compassed the waters with a boundary, until light and darkness come to an end.

41. Perfect knowledge of eternity is given to no one as long as we live.---Because for the most part in sacred eloquence, as we have said above, peoples are designated by the name of waters,

the Lord compasses the waters with a boundary, because He so moderates the knowledge of the human race, that as long as the vicissitudes of alternating times pass, it does not perfectly reach to the knowledge of inward brightness. But if by the name of light we take the just, and by the appellation of darkness sinners (whence also Paul says: Ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord [Ephes. 5:8]), nothing hinders the very same thing which we have said from being felt, because perfect knowledge of eternity is given to no one, until the course of the just and the unjust be finished. But because it is no wonder that carnal peoples are ignorant of heavenly things, the holy man raises himself in admiration of the same divine power, and beholds that it transcends even the very knowledge of angels and of perfect men, saying:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 11.---The pillars of heaven tremble, and are afraid at his nod.

42. The pillars of heaven are either angels, or the chief preachers of the Church, or even the Churches themselves.---What else does he call the pillars of heaven than either the holy angels, or the chief preachers of the Church? Upon whom the whole structure of the spiritual fabric, growing in heavenly things, has arisen, as holy Scripture elsewhere testifies, saying: He that shall overcome, I will make him a pillar in the temple of

my God (Rev. 3:12). For whoever is strengthened with a right intention in the work of God, is raised up as a pillar in the structure of the spiritual fabric, so that, being placed in this temple, which is the Church, he may be both for utility and for ornament. But those whom Job calls the pillars of heaven, the Apostle calls the pillars of the Church, saying: Peter, and James, and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave to me the right hands of fellowship (Gal. 2:9).

43. We may also not inappropriately take the Churches themselves to be the pillars of heaven, which, being many, make one Catholic Church diffused throughout the whole world. Whence also the Apostle John writes to the seven Churches, that he might designate by the spirit one Catholic Church full of sevenfold grace (Rev. 1:4; 2:29). And of the Lord we know that Solomon said: Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewn out seven pillars (Prov. 9:1). Who, that he might make it known that he had said this of the seven Churches, following also carefully inserted the sacraments themselves, saying: She hath slain her victims, she hath mingled her wine, and set forth her table, she hath sent forth her handmaids, that they might call to the citadel and the walls of the city: If any one is a little one, let him come to me (Ibid.). For the Lord slew victims, by offering Himself for us. He mingled wine, tempering the cup of His precepts from historical narration and spiritual understanding. Whence it is said elsewhere: The cup in the hand of the Lord, of pure wine, is full of mixture (Ps.

75:8). And He set a table, that is, Sacred Scripture, which refreshes us with the bread of the word when we come to it weary and from the burdens of the world, and strengthens us against our adversaries by its refreshment. Whence also it is said elsewhere by the Church: Thou hast set a table in my sight, against those who trouble me (Ps. 23:5). He sent His handmaids, namely, the souls of the Apostles, weak in their very beginning, that they might call to the citadel and the walls of the city, because while they announce the inward life, they lift us up to the high walls of the heavenly city, which walls surely none but the humble ascend. Whence it is added there by the same Wisdom: If any one is a little one, let him come to me (Prov. 9:4). As if he should say openly: Whoever esteems himself great in his own eyes, narrows the entrance of access to me, because one reaches to me so much the higher, as the mind of each is more severely humbled within itself.

44. No one can search out the judgments of God.---But by however great virtue anyone may profit, by however great knowledge he may increase, he does not suffice to penetrate by what moderation of judgments the Creator rules us. Let him say then: The pillars of heaven tremble, and are afraid at his nod, because in most things even they do not prevail to reach to the height of His will, who see and announce the rewards of that same will. Which, as we said above, nothing hinders from being understood also of the holy angels, because the very virtues of the heav-

enly beings, which behold Him without ceasing, tremble in their very contemplation. But lest this same trembling should be painful to them, it is not of fear, but of admiration. But because he has introduced how great is the dread of His admiration, he now relates the order of our salvation. It follows:

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XVIII].

VERSE 12.---In his strength the seas were suddenly gathered together, and his prudence hath struck the proud one.

45. By the Incarnation of the Lord the world was subdued, its swelling being pressed down.--- What else is designated by the name of the sea than this present world, in which the hearts of men seeking earthly things swell with diverse waves of thoughts? Who, being excited by the elation of pride, while they attack one another with alternate intention, are dashed together as if by a confronting wave. But now in His strength the seas are gathered together, because, the Lord being incarnate, the discordant hearts of secular men believe in concord. Now Peter walks upon the sea, because doubtless those once swelling hearts have been subjected to the preachers of Christ with humble hearing, so that He rightly also figured in the Gospel the mildness of this world, in that the stormy water of the sea was trodden by the feet of the Lord, its swelling being pressed down. But in what way this was done is

opened, while it is said: And his prudence hath struck the proud one.

46. God preferred to strike the devil by prudence, rather than by strength. The economy of the Incarnation.---Who else is here called the proud one, but he who said: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High (Isa. 14:14)? And of whom it is said by the voice of God: Who was made that he should fear no one, and he is king over all the children of pride (Job 41:24, 25). Concerning whom also the prophet David agrees with this sentence, saying: Thou hast humbled the proud one, as one that is wounded (Ps. 89:10). But although to the simple nature of the Godhead it is not one thing to be, and another to be wise, nor one thing to be wise, and another to be strong, since that very strength is the same as the wisdom, and that very wisdom is the same as the essence of the Godhead, yet I think it is to be vigilantly considered that this man, full of the prophetic spirit, preferred to say that the proud devil was struck by the prudence of God rather than by His strength. For he does not say His strength, but His prudence hath struck the proud one. For although, as has been said, on account of the simple nature, the strength of God is His wisdom, yet the Lord overcame the devil, as far as the face of the matter is concerned, not by power, but by reason. For that very devil, supplanting us in that root of our first parent, held man under his captivity as if justly, who, being created with free will, consented to him suggesting unjust things. For being created

for life in the liberty of his own will, he of his own accord became a debtor to death. Such a fault therefore had to be blotted out, but it could not be blotted out except by a sacrifice. A sacrifice had to be sought, but what kind of sacrifice could be found for the absolving of men? For it was not just that for rational man the victims of brute animals should be slain. Whence the Apostle says: It is necessary therefore that the patterns of heavenly things should be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these (Heb. 9:23). Therefore if brute animals were not worthy victims for a rational animal, that is for man, a man had to be sought who ought to have been offered for men, so that for a rational sinner a rational host might be sacrificed. But what, since a man without sin could not be found, and how could the host offered for us have cleansed us from sin, if that host itself were not free from the contagion of sin? For being defiled, it could not have cleansed the defiled. Therefore that it might be a rational host, a man had to be offered, but that he might cleanse man from sins, a man, and without sin. But who would be a man without sin, if he descended from the commixture of sin? Accordingly the Son of God came for us into the womb of the Virgin, there for us He was made man. Nature was assumed by Him, not fault. He made a sacrifice for us, He exhibited His body as a victim for sinners without sin, which might both be able to die by His humanity, and to cleanse by His righteousness. This one therefore, when the ancient enemy saw

Him after His baptism, he soon attacked with temptations, and having strove to creep into His inward parts through diverse approaches, he was overcome, and prostrated by that very unassailable integrity of His mind (Matt. 4:1 sqq.).

47. The devil, having tempted Christ in vain inwardly, attacked Him outwardly.---But he who did not prevail in inward things, turned himself to His outward things, so that because he was overcome by the virtue of His mind, he might seem at least to overcome by the death of the flesh Him whom he did not prevail to deceive by temptation; and, as has been said before us, he was permitted to enter into that which the Mediator had received from us mortals. But where he was able to do something, there he was overcome on every side; and from the point where he received outward power to kill the Lord's flesh, from that point his inward power by which he held us was killed. For he was overcome inwardly, while he as it were conquered outwardly; and he who held us justly as debtors to death, justly lost in us the right of death, because through his satellites he sought the destruction of the flesh of Him in whom he found nothing of the debt of fault. Our Lord therefore paid for us an undue death, so that the due death might not hurt us. Well therefore is it said: His prudence hath struck the proud one, because the ancient enemy by the excess of his presumption lost even him whom he possessed by the law of wicked persuasion; and while he boldly attacked Him in whom nothing belonged to him, he justly lost him whom he held

as if justly. By prudence therefore, not by power, was he struck, who while he is let loose to tempt God, is bound from possessing man, so that he should lose him who was under him, from the very point whence he had presumed to encounter Him who is above him. But the Lord being killed in the flesh, what glory of virtues followed His preachers is related, when it is added:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Rec. XIX].

VERSE 13.---His Spirit hath adorned the heavens.

48. The infirmity of the Apostles and of their prince, before receiving the Holy Spirit.---What heavens, but those of whom it is written: The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps. 19:1)? Which the Spirit then adorned, when He filled them. Which we have learned from the narration of Luke, who says: Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty spirit coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with various tongues, as the Holy Spirit gave them to speak (Acts 2:2-4). From Him therefore they received the ornaments of virtue, whom an immense foulness of fear had before possessed. For we know that he, the first of the Apostles, that is of the heavens, before receiving the grace of this Spirit, as often as he feared to die, denied

life. Who was prostrated not by the punishments, not by the afflictions, not by the terrible power of anyone, but by the sole interrogation of one servant. And indeed, lest a firmer sex should show him terrible, he was tempted by a maid-servant inquiring (Matt. 26:70). And again, that such infirmity of sex might also be made base by the dejection of her office, he was questioned not only by a maid-servant, but by a maid-servant who was a door-keeper (John 18:25). Behold how vile is the person required for tempting him, that it might be openly shown how great an infirmity of fear possessed him, who would not stand even before the voice of a maid-servant door-keeper.

49. The strength of Peter after receiving Him.---But now let us see what he who was a little before fearful became after the coming of the Spirit. Certainly, we have learned by the testimony of Luke with what authority he preached the Lord against the priests and princes. For when, a miracle having been done, a question had arisen (Acts 4:14), and the princes of the priests, the elders, and the scribes ran together in the persecution of the Apostles, they, setting them in the midst, took care to inquire in what virtue they had done the miracle. To whom Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said: Ye princes of the people and elders, if we this day are judged in a good deed to an infirm man, in what this man is made whole, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, in Him this man standeth

here whole before you (Ibid. 8-10). And when the fury of the persecutors increased against these things, and the priests and princes forbade them to preach Jesus, it is indicated with what authority Peter increased against the wrath of the princes, when it is there immediately added: But Peter and the Apostles said: We ought to obey God rather than men (Ibid. 5:29). But when the precepts of those resisting did not weigh down the authority of the preachers, they came to scourges. For it is added: Then the princes of the priests having beaten them, commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go (Ibid. 5:40). But that not even scourges were able to weigh down the virtue of the Apostles, is plainly shown, when it is immediately subjoined: And they indeed went rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (Ibid. 41). Soon also it is indicated what they did after the joys of the scourges: And every day in the temple and about the houses they ceased not teaching and evangelizing Christ Jesus. Behold he who was a little before fearful, now speaks with tongues, shines with miracles, rebukes with a free voice the unbelief of the priests and princes, provides to the rest an example of authority for preaching Jesus, is forbidden by beatings lest he should speak in His name, and yet is not restrained. He contemns the scourges of those beating him, who a little before had feared the words of those inquiring; and he who, being questioned, dreaded the strength of a maid-ser-

vant, being beaten, weighs down the strength of princes. For being now solidified by the virtue of the Holy Spirit, he trod down the heights of this world with the heel of liberty, so that he perceived to be in the lowest place whatever swelled high against the grace of the Creator.

50. With what gifts and virtues the Apostles shone, the Holy Spirit having been poured into them.---These are the ornaments of the heavens, these are the gifts of the Spirit, which are wont to be manifested by diverse virtues, which Paul enumerates as divided by the gift of hidden dispensation, saying: To one indeed is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith in the same Spirit, to another the grace of healings in the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discerning of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of speeches (1 Cor. 12:8-10). Which, soon concluding with a general definition, he says: But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to each one as He wills. Concerning these heavens it is also said in the Psalm: By the word of the Lord the heavens were established (Ps. 33:6). Concerning these ornaments of the Spirit it is subjoined: And all their virtue by the spirit of His mouth. Well therefore is it said: His Spirit hath adorned the heavens, because the holy preachers, unless they had received the promised gifts of the Paraclete, would have shone with no beauty of strength. But because, the holy Apostles being

adorned with the grace of virtues, the preaching of life grew strong against the hearts of the unfaithful, and the ancient enemy, being expelled by the voices of the preachers, left the obsessed minds of the unfaithful, after the ornaments of the heavens it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Rec. XX].

Ibid.---And by his hand acting as midwife, the tortuous serpent was brought forth.

51. The ancient serpent, by the hand of God, was cast out from the hearts of sinners as from his own caverns.---For who is called by the name of the serpent, but the ancient enemy, both slippery and tortuous, who for the deceiving of man spoke by the mouth of a serpent? Concerning whom it is said by the prophet: Leviathan the serpent, the tortuous bar (Isa. 27:1). Who was therefore permitted to speak by the mouth of a serpent, that from his very vessel man might know what kind of one he was who dwelt within. For a serpent is not only tortuous, but also slippery. Because therefore he stood not in the rectitude of truth, he entered into a tortuous animal. But because his suggestion, if the first be not resisted, suddenly glides in entirely to the inward parts of the heart while it is not felt, he spoke words to man by a slippery animal. But the caverns of this serpent were the hearts of the wicked. Which because he drew to his own depravity, he rested as if in their habitation. But by the hand of the Lord acting as

midwife, the tortuous serpent was expelled from his own caverns, because while divine grace heals us, that ancient enemy who had held us is cast out from us, as the incarnate Truth says: Now shall the prince of this world be cast out (John 12:31). Whence even now he possesses all the saints not by holding them, but persecutes them by tempting. For because he does not reign in them inwardly, he fights against them outwardly; and because he has lost his dominion within, he contrives wars without. For He expelled him from the carnal hearts of men, who for the sake of men came to the incarnation; and while he held the hearts of the unfaithful, He as it were put His hand into the lurking-places of the serpent. Whence it is rightly said by the prophet: The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and he that is weaned shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt, nor kill in all my holy mountain (Isa. 11:8, 9). For whom does he call the sucking child, or him who has been weaned, but the Lord? But what did he sign by the hole of the asp and the caverns of the cockatrice, but the hearts of the wicked? Because the ancient enemy, while he brought himself entirely into their consent, as if in his own hole a tortuous serpent, gathered the folds of his craftiness by coiling together. Whom he calls by the name of the asp as raging secretly, and of the cockatrice as striking openly. The Lord therefore put His hand into the hole of the cockatrice and of the asp, when He held the hearts of the wicked by divine power; and He drew out from thence the asp or

the cockatrice that was apprehended, that is, the captive devil, so that in His holy mountain, which is the Church, he might not hurt the elect faithful.

52. The devil compared to a lion.---For hence it is said in the Song of Songs, the Bridegroom coming: Thou shalt be crowned from the head of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the dens of the lions (Cant. 4:8). For what else is designated by the name of lions than the demons, who rage against us with the wrath of most atrocious cruelty? And because the sinners who were once the dens of lions were called to the faith, while the Lord is believed to have conquered death by their confession, He is as it were crowned from the dens of the lions. For a crown is the reward of victory. So often therefore the faithful offer a crown to Him, as often as they confess Him to have conquered death by His resurrection. The lion therefore is driven from his dens, because, by the hand of the Lord acting as midwife, the tortuous serpent is forbidden to dwell in the caverns which he had held. For being conquered, he went out from the hearts of the faithful, who before reigned over these with the scepter of perfidy.

53. The first advent of Christ in humility, the second in terror.---Behold in a few and brief sentences the holy man has related the order of the Lord's advent, has expressed its weights, has narrated with admiration what could be done by His incarnation. But He who did wonderful things coming in humility, it cannot be considered with how great terror He is about to come, appearing

in the strength of His majesty. The order of His first advent could be weighed and beheld in so far as, coming to redeem carnal men, He tempered the greatness of His divinity to carnal eyes. But who shall bear the terror of His highness, when the power of the second advent, exercising judgment by fire, shall shine bright in the majesty of His power? Whence the holy man relates His first advent, but is weary for the second, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIII

VERS. 14.---Behold, these are parts of His ways; and since we have scarcely heard a small drop of His words, who shall be able to look upon the thunder of His greatness?

54. The terrible description of God's judgment.---In this place, what does he call by the name of "ways" but the actions of the Lord? Whence also the Lord says through the prophet: For my ways are not as your ways (Isai. 55:8). Therefore, relating the advent of the Lord, he had reported the ways of God in part, because one was His action by which He created us, another that by which He redeemed us. Those things, therefore, which he related concerning the action of the Lord, making them light in comparison with the last judgment, he says: Behold, these are parts of His ways. Which he also calls a "small drop" (parvam stillam) of His words, because whatever high thing, whatever terrible thing we know of the consideration of Him while placed in this life, from the immensity of heavenly secrets, flows out to us as a thin drop of heavenly liquor:

And who shall be able to look upon the thunder of His greatness? As if he were to say openly: If we can scarcely bear the wonderful things of His humility, by what strength shall we tolerate the sounding and terrible advent of His majesty? The Psalmist also sounds forth this thunder of His advent, saying: God shall come manifestly, our God, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall burn in His sight, and a mighty tempest round about Him (Psal. 49:3). Hence the prophet Zephaniah denounces, saying: The great day of the Lord is near, it is near and exceeding swift. The voice of the day of the Lord is bitter, the mighty man shall be troubled there. That day is a day of wrath, a day of tribulation and distress, a day of calamity and misery, a day of darkness and obscurity, a day of mist and whirlwind, a day of the trumpet and alarm (Zeph. 1:14). Therefore, the terror of the strict examination, which Zephaniah calls the "trumpet," blessed Job calls "thunder." Which Joel also considering says: Let all the inhabitants of the land be troubled, because the day of the Lord comes, because the day of darkness and obscurity is at hand, a day of cloud and whirlwind: for great is the day of the Lord, and very terrible, and who shall be able to abide it? (Joel 2:1). But how incomprehensible and inconsiderable that greatness is, in which He is about to come in the second manifestation, we well weigh in some measure if we think upon the weights of the first advent with solicitous consideration. Certainly, that He might redeem us from death, the Lord came to die, and tolerated the failing of

our flesh in His own body and its punishments. Who, before He came to the gibbet of the cross, bore that He should be taken, spat upon, mocked, and beaten with buffets. Behold to how great reproaches He consented to come for our sakes; and yet before He permitted Himself to be taken, He questioned His persecutors, saying (John 18:4): Whom seek ye? To whom they straightway answered: Jesus of Nazareth. To whom when He suddenly said, I am He, He uttered only the voice of a most mild response, and straightway prostrated His armed persecutors to the earth. What then is He about to do when He shall come to judge, who by one voice struck down His enemies even when He came to be judged? What is that judgment which the Immortal One shall exert, who could not be borne in one voice when about to die? Who shall tolerate His wrath, whose very gentleness could not be tolerated? Let the holy man therefore consider, and say: Since we have scarcely heard a small drop of His words, who shall be able to look upon the thunder of His greatness?

BOOK EIGHTEEN.

(Contains the exposition of chapters 28 and 29 of the book of Job as far as the middle of verse 21, according to the multiple senses).

[Rec. I.] 1. The obscurity of sacred Scripture moves us to investigate its deeper sense.---For the most part, some mystical things are so described in the sacred eloquence that they nevertheless seem to be brought forth according to the historical narration. But often such sayings are mixed in that same historical narration, through which the entire surface of the history is made void: which, while they sound nothing historical, compel the reader to seek something else in them. For in those sayings which we believe to be open, when we find some things interjected more obscurely, we are pricked as if by certain goads, that we may watch for the deeper understanding of some things, and perceive the things brought forth more obscurely, even those which we thought were spoken openly. When, therefore, blessed Job was speaking of the word of the Lord and of the greatness of the thunder, it is straightway added in the same words:

CHAPTER I

[Vet. I, Rec. II].

CH. XXVII, VERS. 1.---Job also added, taking up his parable, and said.

2. Job's parabolic and mystical manner of speaking.---By which verse indeed it is shown how mystically the sayings of this most holy man are brought forth, while a parable, that is, a similitude, is narrated by him who speaks nothing inferior by comparison or similitude. For far be it from us to perceive in this place that parable to be that instrument of music. For it is not right to believe that in the affliction of punishments he would use musical instruments, when through its own Scripture the Truth says: Musick in mourning is an importunate tale (Ecclus. 22:6). A parable therefore being named, behold by the text itself speaking we already learn that we should not weigh his words according to the text alone. To that similitude, therefore, all things are to be drawn by which the Church is figuratively designated. And in the very beginning of the speech the words are brought forth openly, but they are involved with more obscure things joined to them. For he begins, as is his wont, with plain speech, but he consumes his words through mystical senses in a pregnant narration. Therefore he says:

CHAPTER II

[Rec. III].

VERS. 2.---As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty who hath brought my soul to bitterness.

3. Wisdom against the words of detractors, patience against the swords of persecutors necessary.---3. By which words, doubtless, blessed Job both relates his own case, and signifies the times of the holy Church when afflicted, in which she is pressed by the open perversity of the unfaithful, and is disturbed by the bitterness of persecution. For the Church is wont to be tempted by her adversaries in two ways, so that she suffers persecution either by words or by swords. But the holy Church is exceedingly studious to have wisdom and patience. But her wisdom is exercised when she is tempted by words, her patience is exercised when she is tempted by swords. But now he speaks of that persecution in which she is harassed not by swords, but by false assertions. Moreover, we have known many who, when they suffer any adverse things in this life, believe that there is a God. But some think that God exists, but that He by no means cares for human affairs. Concerning those indeed it is said through David: The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God (Psal. 14:1). But these say among themselves: How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the most High? (Psal. 73:11). And again: And they said, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob understand (Psal. 94:7). This man, therefore, bearing the type of the holy Church, being placed in the very bitterness of his affliction, answered against both. For because life has essence, and death has not, that he might confess that God is, he says: As God liveth. But that he might declare that He cares for human affairs, he added:

Who hath taken away my judgment, and hath brought my soul to bitterness. For he testifies that these things which he suffers, he does not suffer by chance, but by God disposing all things; nor does he attribute to his tempter the power of his bitterness, but to the Author.

4. The devil has no power of tempting except by God's permission.---For he knows that the devil, although he always desires the affliction of the just, yet if he does not receive power from our Author, he by no means attains to the point of temptation. Whence also every will of the devil is unjust, and yet every power, God permitting, is just. For of himself he unjustly desires to tempt whomsoever, but those who are to be tempted, as they are to be tempted, God does not permit them to be tempted but justly. [Vet. II.] Whence also in the books of Kings it is written concerning the devil: That the evil spirit of the Lord came upon Saul (1 Sam. 18:10). Where it is justly asked: if of the Lord, why evil; and if evil, why of the Lord? But in two words are comprehended both the just power in the devil, and the unjust will. For he himself is called an evil spirit through his most wicked will; and the same is the spirit of the Lord through the most just power received. Well therefore it is said: As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty who hath brought my soul to bitterness, because although the enemy rages, who desires to strike, yet it is the Creator who permits him to prevail to some extent. But because the holy man calls upon

something by the life of God, let us hear what he joins to his self-binding. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. IV].

VERS. 3.---As long as breath remains in me, and the Spirit of God in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak iniquity, nor my tongue meditate a lie.

5. Since every lie is iniquity, it is not even lawful to defend anyone's life by a lie.---What he first calls iniquity, he afterwards repeating calls a lie. For both every lie is iniquity, and every iniquity a lie, because whatever discordeth from the truth doubtless departeth from equity. But between that which he says, to speak, and afterwards adds, to meditate, there is a great distance. For sometimes it is worse to meditate a lie than to speak it. For to speak is for the most part of precipitation, but to meditate of studious depravity. And who knows not in how great distance the fault is distinguished, whether any one lies by precipitation or by study? But the holy man, that he may perfectly adhere to the truth, says that he lies neither by study nor by precipitation. For every lie is to be avoided with the utmost care, although sometimes there is some kind of lie of lighter fault, if any one lies for the sake of benefiting. But because it is written: The mouth that belieth killeth the soul (Wisd. 1:11). And: Thou shalt destroy all them that speak leasing (Psal. 5:6), perfect men also flee this kind of lie with the utmost care, so that not even anyone's life should

be defended by their deceit, lest they should hurt their own souls while they strive to benefit the life of another's flesh; although we believe this very kind of sin to be most easily relaxed. For if any fault is wont to be purged by the following pious operation, how much more easily is this wiped away, which piety itself, the mother of good work, accompanies?

6. An answer to the objection drawn from the lie of the Egyptian midwives.---But some from the deceit of the midwives try to assert that this kind of lie is not a sin, especially because when they lied it is written: That the Lord built them houses (Exod. 1:21). In which recompense it is rather known what the fault of the lie deserves. For the reward of their kindness, which could have been retributed to them in eternal life, was turned aside into a terrestrial recompense on account of the mixed fault of the lie, so that they should receive in their life, which they wished to protect by lying, those good things which they did, and should not have any further prize of their reward to expect. For if it be subtly weighed, they lied for the love of the present life, not with the intention of a reward. For by sparing they tried to cover the life of the infants; by lying, their own.

7. In the Old Testament a lie was a lighter fault than in the new.---And although some such things may be found in the Old Testament, yet the studious reader will find there almost never this or such a kind of lie admitted by perfect men, although a lie may seem to hold a certain image of the truth, and under the Old Testament

perhaps it could have been of less fault, in which through the victims of bulls and goats the sacrifice was not the truth itself, but the shadow of the truth. For in the New Testament we profit by the Truth manifested through the flesh with higher precepts; and it is just that we should desert certain deeds which in that people had served the shadows of the truth. [Vet. III.] If any one, indeed, wishes to protect his lie by the Old Testament, because it perhaps hurt less there to some, he must needs say that the taking away of other men's goods, and the retribution of injury, which were granted to the weak there, cannot hurt him. All which things it is clear to all with how great animadversion the Truth pursues, which is now declared to us in true flesh, the shadow of its signification being laid aside. But because the holy man promises that he will neither speak nor meditate a lie, he joins these very things in which he agrees with the truth by following them out:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 5.---Far be it from me that I should judge you to be just; till I die I will not depart from my innocence.

8. How noxious it is to flatter sinners.---For he would recede from innocence if he should think good things of evil ones, Solomon attesting, who says: He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord (Prov. 17:15). For there are some who while they extol the evil deeds of men with praises, increase those things which they ought

to have rebuked. For hence it is said through the prophet: Woe to them that sew pillows under every elbow of the hand, and make cushions under the head of every age (Ezek. 13:18). For to this end a pillow is placed, that one may rest more softly. Whoever therefore flatters those who act evilly, places a pillow under the head or elbow of the one lying down, so that he who ought to have been rebuked for his fault, being supported by praises, may rest softly in it. Hence again it is written: One built up a wall, and they daubed it (Ezek. 13:10). For by the name of a "wall" the hardness of sin is designated. To build a wall, therefore, is for anyone to construct obstacles of sin against himself. But they daub the wall who flatter those who commit sins, so that what those others by acting perversely build up, these by flattering may render as it were bright. But the holy man as he does not think evil things of good ones, so he refuses to judge good things of evil ones, saying: Far be it from me that I should judge you to be just; till I die I will not depart from my innocence. Where he openly subjoined:

VERS. 6.---My justification, which I have begun to hold, I will not desert.

For he would desert the justification he had begun, if he should decline into the praise of those who sin. But because we then more truly keep ourselves from the sins of others when we first guard ourselves from our own, he suggests the causes of his reason why he should fear to sin concerning them, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER V.

IBID.---For my heart has not reproached me in all my life.

9. He rebukes those who hear the divine precepts but do not perform them.---As if he were to say plainly: I ought not to be drawn to guilt for your sake, I who have feared to sin in my own affairs. For it must be known that whoever disagrees in work from the Lord's precepts, as often as he hears them, is reproached and confounded by his own heart, because that which he has not done is brought to remembrance. For in that wherein he considers himself to have erred, his own conscience secretly accuses him. Whence the prophet David prays, saying: Then shall I not be confounded, when I have respect unto all thy commandments (Ps. 119:6). For everyone is heavily confounded when, either by reading or hearing, he has respect to the commandments of God which he has despised in living. For hence it is said by the voice of John: If our heart reproach us not, we have confidence toward God; and whatsoever we shall ask of him, we shall receive (1 John 3:21); as if he were to say: If we do that which He commands, we shall obtain that which we ask.

10. Let action be supported by prayer, and prayer by action.---For both of these are very necessarily joined together before God, so that both operation may be supported by prayer, and prayer by operation. For hence Jeremiah says: Let us search our ways, and seek, and return to the

Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the heavens (Lam. 3:40). For to search our ways is to discuss the internal things of our thoughts. But he lifts up his heart with his hands, who strengthens his prayer by his works. For whoever prays, but dissembles working, lifts up his heart, but does not lift up his hands. But whoever works, but does not pray, lifts up his hands, but does not lift up his heart. According therefore to the voice of John, the heart then receives confidence in prayer, when no depravity of life contradicts it. Of which confidence it is now rightly said by the holy man: For my heart has not reproached me in all my life. As if he were to say plainly: He by no means remembers that he has done anything for which he should be confounded in his prayers. But it may be asked in what way he denies that he is reproached by his heart, who above accuses himself of having sinned, saying: I have sinned, what shall I do to thee, O keeper of men (Job 7:20)? Or certainly: If I would justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me (Job 9:20).

11. Certain sins cannot be avoided.---But it must be known that there are sins which can be avoided by the just, and there are some which cannot be avoided even by the just. For whose heart, consisting in this corruptible flesh, does not slide into a sinister thought, even if it be not plunged into the pit of consent? And yet to think these same depraved things is to sin. But while the thought is resisted, the mind is delivered from its own confusion. The mind of the just, therefore, although it is free from perverse work,

yet sometimes falls into perverse thought. And it slides into sin, therefore, because it is declined at least in thought; and yet it has not that for which it should afterwards reproach itself by weeping, because it repairs itself before it falls by consent. Rightly therefore he who has confessed himself a sinner, by no means confesses that he is reproached by his heart, because although by thinking perchance on some unlawful things he has ever failed of rectitude, yet by a strong conflict of the mind he has resisted the thought. It follows:

CHAPTER VI.

VERS. 7.---Let my enemy be as the impious, and my adversary as the iniquitous.

12. The Church considers as an infidel him whom, placed within her, she sees in depraved morals.---In sacred eloquence, as (sicut) and as if (quasi) are sometimes placed not for likeness, but for truth. Whence is that: We saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only-begotten of the Father (John 1:14). Whence here also as and as if seem to be said for affirmation rather than for likeness. But between the impious and the iniquitous, this is often wont to differ, that every impious man is iniquitous, yet not every iniquitous man is impious. For the impious is placed for the infidel, that is, one alien from the piety of religion; but the iniquitous is called he who by the depravity of his work disagrees from equity, even if he perchance bears the name of the Christian faith. By the typical voice of blessed Job, therefore, the holy

Church, which tolerates others who contradict the right faith, confesses that she has an impious enemy. But because she suffers others, placed within under the pretext of faith, in depraved works, she detests her iniquitous adversary. But if it is more fitting that we should feel as and as if to be placed for likeness, the holy Church notes from the likeness of the impious those whom, living carnally, she tolerates within herself. For he is an enemy to her within, who while he affirms himself faithful with his voice, denies it by his morals. And because she esteems him as an infidel who, placed within only in appearance, impugns her by the vice of a depraved action, she rightly says: Let my enemy be as the impious, and my adversary as the iniquitous. As if she were to say plainly: He also disagrees from me in faith, who does not agree with me in work. It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 8.---For what is the hope of the hypocrite, if he greedily rob, and God deliver not his soul?

13. The hypocrite is avaricious and a robber.--- The hypocrite, who in the Latin language is called a dissembler, does not desire to be just, but to seem so. And he is therefore an avaricious robber, because while acting iniquitously he desires to be venerated for sanctity, he robs the praise of another's life. For it is wont to be the study of hypocrites that they both suppress what they are, and make themselves known to men as that which they are not, in order that they may

pass beyond their own measure by estimation, and show themselves to go before others in the name of action. They fly from being seen as what they are, and before the eyes of men they clothe themselves with a certain superinduced honesty of innocence. Whence they are rightly rebuked through the Gospel by the voice of our Redeemer, when it is said to them: Woe to you, hypocrites, because you are made like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly indeed appear beautiful to men, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all filthiness. So you also outwardly indeed appear just to men, but within you are full of avarice and iniquity (Matth. 23:27; Luke 11:39). On the contrary, all who are truly saints not only do not at all desire glory beyond their measure, but they even fly from being seen as that which they have deserved to be. Whence that eminent preacher of truth, speaking against false apostles, while he related the extraordinary virtues of his own operation for the instruction of his disciples (2 Cor. 11:13, seq.), while he described himself as having tolerated so many dangers in a heaped-up persecution, and after these remembered that he was caught up even to the third heaven, and again into paradise, where he could know such things as he could by no means speak (Ibid. 12:2), was perhaps about to speak yet more admirable things of himself, but tempering himself from human praise by high consideration, he subjoins: But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or anything he heareth from me (Ibid. 12:6). He had therefore

yet something to say of himself, who forbears to speak; but the eminent doctor acted in both ways, that both by speaking he might instruct his disciples in what he had done, and by being silent he might keep himself within the limit of humility. For he would be too ungrateful, if he should keep everything concerning himself from his disciples, and perhaps too incautious, if he should disclose everything concerning himself even to his disciples. But wonderfully, as has been said, he acted in both ways, that by speaking he might erudite the life of those who heard him, and by being silent he might guard his own.

14. Saints sometimes praise themselves innocently.---It must be known that holy men, as often as they make known something concerning themselves to those following them, imitate the manner of their Creator. For God, who forbids us to be praised by our own mouth, speaks His own praises through Holy Scripture; not because He Himself needs them, who knows not how to advance by praises, but while He relates His own magnitude to us, He raises our unskilfulness to Himself; and by speaking His own good things He teaches us, whom man would not have known at all if He had willed to be silent concerning Himself. Therefore He indicates His own praises so that, hearing them, we may be able to know Him, knowing Him to love Him, loving Him to follow Him, following Him to obtain Him, and obtaining Him to enjoy His vision. Whence the Psalmist says: He will declare the power of his works to his people, that he may give them the

inheritance of the nations (Ps. 111:6). As if he were to say plainly: For this reason He suggests the fortitude of His own operation, that he who hears it may be enriched with gifts. Imitating therefore the manner of their Creator, holy men sometimes manifest certain things concerning themselves so that they may instruct their hearers, not that they themselves may profit; and yet in these they guard themselves with high consideration, lest while they raise others from earthly intention, they themselves be plunged into the desire of earthly praise. Whose words hypocrites mostly imitate, but they are entirely ignorant of the sense of the words, because what the just do for the utility of their neighbor, these do for the extension of their own name. But the holy man, looking at hypocrites, says that they by no means desire future glory, but long to hold the present: For what is the hope of the hypocrite? because while he loves present things, he least hopes for future ones. For it is written: For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (Rom. 8:24). For this reason, therefore, there is no reaching forth by hope to eternal rewards from the hypocrite, because what ought to have been sought elsewhere, he glories that he holds here. Since his fault has been brought forth, his punishment is also subjoined, when it is immediately added:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 9.---Will God hear his cry, when trouble comes upon him?

15. He who hears not God speaking in the law, will not be heard by God when praying in his last moments.---God hears not his cry in the time of trouble, because in the time of tranquility he himself did not hear the Lord crying in His precepts. For it is written: He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination (Prov. 28:9). The holy man therefore, seeing that all who now despise to work right things turn themselves in their last hour to words of petition, says: Will God hear his cry? By which words he indeed obeys the voices of our Redeemer, who says: At last come also the foolish virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us. And it is answered to them: Amen I say to you, I know you not (Matth. 25:11); because so much great severity is then exercised, as greater mercy is now extended; and He then strictly exerts judgment on those not corrected, who now patiently bestows piety on those who offend. For hence the prophet says: Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near (Isa. 55:6). For now He is not seen, and is near; then He will be seen, and will not be near. He has not yet appeared in judgment, and if He is sought, He is found. For in a wonderful manner when He shall have appeared in judgment, He both can be seen, and cannot be found. [Vet. VI.] Hence Solomon relates Wisdom both sweetly flattering and terribly judging, saying: Wisdom preacheth without, she giveth her voice in the streets (Prov. 1:20). Whose voice also he suggests, subjoining: How long, ye little ones, do ye love infancy, and

fools desire those things which are noxious to them, and the imprudent hate knowledge? (Ibid., 22). Turn ye at my reproof; behold I will utter my spirit to you, and will show my words to you (Ibid., 23). Behold with what words the sweetness of Him who calls is expressed. Let us see now in what ways the severity of Him who rebukes is suggested, that in the end the strictness of Him who punishes may at some time exert itself. Because I have called, he says, and you refused; I stretched out my hand, and there was none that regarded; you have despised all my counsel, and neglected my reproofs (Ibid., I, 24). Let him say now how He strikes those whom, in no way returning to Him, He sustains with such long-suffering. I also will laugh at your destruction and will mock, when that which you feared shall come upon you, when sudden calamity shall rush in, and destruction shall come as a tempest, when tribulation and distress shall come upon you. Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear; they shall rise in the morning, and shall not find me (Ibid., I, 26). By the mouth therefore of the most wise Solomon all things concerning the heavenly judgment are diligently expressed, because He both first sweetly calls, and afterwards terribly rebukes, and at the last unretractably damns. Well therefore is it said: Will God hear his cry, when trouble comes upon him? Because doubtless every hypocrite then finds no remedy in his cry, who now loses the fitting time for crying. Concerning whose depravity it is yet subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

VERS. 10.---Or can he delight in the Almighty?

16. Both loves, of God and of the world, do not fit in one heart.---For he who is overcome by the love of earthly things, in no way delights in God. Indeed, the soul can never be without delight, for it is delighted either by the lowest things or the highest, and by how much it is exercised with higher study toward the highest, by so much it grows torpid with greater loathing toward the lowest; and by how much it glows with sharper care toward the lowest, by so much it grows cold with damnable tepidity from the highest. For both cannot be loved together and equally. Whence John the Apostle, knowing that among the thorns of secular loves the harvest of heavenly charity cannot germinate, before he brings forth the seeds of eternal love, eradicates with the holy hand of the word the thorns of secular loves from the hearts of his hearers, saying: Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world (1 John 2:15). And he immediately subjoins: If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. As if he were to say plainly: Both loves do not fit in one heart; nor does the crop of heavenly charity sprout in that heart, in which the thorns of the lowest delight kill it. And he enumerates those pricks rising from this lowest delight, saying: For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world; and

the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof (Ibid. 2:16). Therefore the hypocrite cannot delight in God, because in his mind heavenly desires do not come forth, which the thorns of earthly love certainly press down. Of which it is aptly added:

CHAPTER X.

IBID.---And call upon God at all times?

17. The hypocrite does not call upon God, except when placed in straits.---For then indeed the hypocrite calls upon God, when the tribulation of earthly things narrows him. For when he has found the effect of sought-for felicity in this world, he does not seek the Author who bestowed this same felicity. But because, as we have said before, it ought to be the art of those who teach that they should first study to destroy perverse things in the minds of their hearers, and afterwards to preach right things, lest the good seed of holy preaching should not be received by hearts full of evil; whence it is said to Jeremiah: Behold I have set thee this day over the nations and kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to waste, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant (Jer. 1:10) (he is therefore first commanded to destroy, and afterwards to build; first to root out, and afterwards to plant, because the foundation of right truth is by no means placed, unless the fabric of error be first destroyed); blessed Job, after he has responded to the causes of the universal Church in the words of his friends as if against the words of heretics, and has destroyed their elation

by a manifold response, now declares that he teaches, that it may clearly be seen that in those things which he subjoined he plants right things, but in those things which he premised he has rooted out perverse things. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 11.---I will teach you by the hand of God, what the Almighty has, I will not hide.

18. Saints attribute their wisdom to God, the proud to themselves.---So blessed Job speaks with his words, as to signify something from ours. For the holy Church teaching, in so far as it is expedient to know, hides nothing of the truth. Because the Son is called the Hand of God (for all things were made by Him, John 1:3), he declares that he teaches by the hand of God those whom he sees remaining foolish in their own wisdom. As if he were to say plainly: I know nothing of myself; but whatever I feel concerning the truth, this I comprehend from the bounty of that same Truth. You for this reason do not savor right things, because you give this same wisdom of yours not to the hand of God, but to yourselves. For the enemies of the holy Church, if they sometimes feel anything of the truth, attribute it to their own strengths; and they deprive themselves of heavenly wisdom by so much the more, as they will to have it as their own, as if from their own genius. To whom it is sometimes given to their judgment that they indeed know some things rightly, but from this same knowledge they be-

come more bound to punishment. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

VERS. 12.---Behold you all know, and why do you speak vain things without cause?

19. To some it is given for judgment that they should know some things rightly.---It is written: That servant who knew the will of his lord, and prepared not, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes (Luke 12:47). And again it is written: To him therefore who knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin (James 4:17). To the heap of greater guilt, therefore, the holy Church declares her enemies both to know what they ought to follow, and to be unwilling to follow what they know. Of whom it is said elsewhere: Let them go down alive into hell (Ps. 55:15). They are alive who feel those things which are done concerning them. For the dead neither know at all, nor feel. The dead, therefore, who do not feel, are wont to be placed for the ignorant; but the living who do feel, for the knowing. To go down alive into hell, therefore, is to sin knowing and feeling. [Rec. X.]

It follows, VERS. 13.---This is the portion of an impious man with God, and the inheritance of the violent, which they shall receive from the Almighty. Which portion and inheritance indeed he immediately suggests, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 14.---If his sons be multiplied, they shall be for the sword, and his grandsons shall not be satisfied with bread.

20. Heretics who do violence to Holy Scripture are to be struck by God.---Not absurdly are heretics called impious, who through the error of a depraved dogma are alien from the knowledge of the truth, whom in the following word he also calls violent, as being those who endeavor to violently bend the sentences of Holy Scripture containing right dogmas to a depraved understanding. They are violent, therefore, even if not in the things of men, certainly in the senses of the precepts. But the sons of the violent are the followers of heretics, who while they consent to their error, are as it were generated from their preaching. But multiplied they shall be for the sword, because although they now grow up in immense multitude in a lost liberty, they are nevertheless struck by the sentence of the coming Judge. Whence through Moses the Lord says: My sword shall devour flesh (Deut. 32:42). For the sword of God eats flesh, because in the last judgment His sentence kills those who savor carnally. In which matter it is to be asked why it is said that the depraved perceive this portion and inheritance from the Almighty. But it is clear to those who rightly consider that although they had it from themselves to act unjustly, yet it belongs to heavenly equity to judge justly things unjustly acted, so that the divine sentence may

order for punishment those whom their own inordinate action drew to guilt. Of whom it is aptly subjoined: And his grandsons shall not be satisfied with bread.

21. They fast from the knowledge of truth who read Scripture for question, not for refreshment.---The grandsons of heretics are indeed those who are born from the preaching of erring sons. Whom by no means bread satisfies, because while in the food of the sacred word they seek to feel more than they receive, they always fast from the knowledge of the truth; and the preachings of doctrine which they study to seek for question, they cannot have for refreshment. Because indeed the holy Church gathers some from the same heretics, and leaves some persistent in their malice, it is immediately added:

CHAPTER XIV

VERS. 15.---Those who are left of him shall be buried in destruction.

22. The punishment of those dying in error.---From that people of heretics, those who are left are buried in destruction, because as long as they do not return to the light of truth, they are certainly weighed down in perpetual punishment by earthly understanding. And because sometimes while the author of erring peoples is snatched away to punishment, the seduced peoples are reformed to the knowledge of truth, and then the subjects return to true knowledge when those who had been evilly set over them reach eternal torments, it is aptly subjoined:

IBID.---And his widows shall not weep.

23. When the teachers of error are snatched away to punishment, the deceived peoples often repent. We understand his widows as none other than the subject peoples happily destitute by his death? Because often, as has been said, while the preacher of error is snatched away to eternal torments, his subject peoples return to the grace of true knowledge. For over these peoples the perverse preacher presided as a husband, because, evilly joined to them, the corrupter of the mind had clung. By no means, therefore, do the widows, or those left destitute, weep, because by the death of the depraved doctor they find the way of truth, from whose destruction they seemed able to be afflicted. Or certainly the widows do not weep because, remaining in their error, while they think their preacher was holy, they are consoled by a false hope so that they may not mourn. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI

[Vet. VIII, Rec. XI].

VERS. 16, 17.---If he shall heap up silver as the earth, and prepare garments as the clay, he shall indeed prepare, but the just shall be clothed with them, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

24. Catholics defeat heretics with the same testimonies of Holy Scripture which they bring forward.---Silver is usually understood as the brightness of the sacred eloquence, as is said elsewhere: The words of the Lord are pure

words, as silver tried by fire (Psal. 11:7). And because some desire to have the eloquence of God not inwardly through exhibition, but outwardly through show; therefore it is said by the prophet: All those involved in silver have perished (Zeph. 1:11). These are surely they who do not fill themselves with the eloquence of God by inward refreshment, but clothe themselves with it by outward show. Whence also their silver, that is, the eloquence of heretics, is compared to the earth, because they labor to know something from Holy Scripture out of appetite for earthly praise. They also prepare garments as clay, because they weave the testimonies of Holy Scripture with which they wish to protect themselves in a flowing and polluting manner. He shall indeed prepare, but the just shall be clothed with them, because a man full of right faith, which is usually deputed to the saints for justice, gathers those same testimonies of Holy Scripture which the heretic brings, and convicts the pertinacity of his error from them. For while they bring testimonies of the sacred law against us, they bring with them to us that by which they are overcome. Whence also David, signifying the type of the Lord, and Goliath signifying the pride of heretics, spoke this in deeds which we open in words. For Goliath came to the battle with a sword, but David with a shepherd's bag. But David, overcoming that same Goliath, killed him with his own sword, which we also do, who have merited to become members of the promised David by His condescension. For when we overcome the proud

heretics bringing sentences of Holy Scripture, with those same words and sentences which they bring forward, we as it were behead the elated Goliath with his own sword. The just man, therefore, is clothed with those garments which the unjust man prepares, because the holy man uses those same sentences for the truth, with which every perverse person endeavors to show himself learned against the truth.

25. The word of God ought to be expounded discreetly, and adapted to individuals. And the innocent shall divide the silver. To divide the innocent silver is to expound the words of the Lord minutely and discreetly, and to adapt to each one what worthily fits. For the eloquence of the Lord, which is here called silver, or garments, is elsewhere called spoils. Which also the Psalmist testifies by comparison, saying: I will rejoice over Thy words, as one that findeth great spoils (Psal. 119:162). Which are therefore called spoils, because as Gentility passes over to the faith of the Lord, the Jews are stripped of the sacred words with which they had been clothed. [Vet. IX.] Concerning this division of silver or spoils it is also said elsewhere: Benjamin is a ravening wolf, in the morning he shall eat the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoils (Gen. 49:27). By which words surely the Apostle Paul is designated, sprung from the stock of Benjamin, who in the morning ate the prey, because in his beginnings, snatching what faithful he could, he satisfied his own cruelty. In the evening he divided the spoils, because having afterwards

become faithful, he distributed the sacred words by expounding them.

26. Those things are to be discerned which are healthfully said by heretics.---Although this silver which the innocent divides can be understood also in another way. For heretics, so that they may easily be able to persuade perverse things, mingle certain right things with their sayings, so that they may draw the minds of the hearers from the right senses, and strike them from the perverse ones. Who in the precepts of God, because they vary in sound and unsound speech, are well designated in the Gospel by the species of the ten lepers (Luke 17:12), by whose sound color while a vicious whiteness is sprinkled, they are defiled by this immoderate whiteness. Whence we are admonished not to be more wise than it behooveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety (Rom. 12:3). Who also because they do not yet love God, of whom they think evilly, nor their neighbor, from whom they are divided, are adverse to the precepts of the decalogue, and therefore ten come to pray to the Lord. But because they have mingled unsound things with sound, they are varied by the diversity of color. But because they have offended in His precepts, they call Him from that in which they had offended, saying: Jesus, Master (Luke 17:13); whence also they soon merited to be cured. Therefore, because the Catholic man understands what things are felt rightly by them, or what depravedly, he divides the innocent silver, that is, he discerns what things have been said

healthfully by them, or what pestiferously. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERS. 18.---He hath built his house as a moth.

27. The masters of heresies corrupt the minds which they occupy.---A moth builds a house for itself by corrupting. Nor could the heretic be demonstrated by a better comparison, who makes a place for his perfidy only in the minds which he shall have corrupted, who also promises his followers to be free from the eternal fire. He promises them indeed the refreshment of eternal rest; but his words have no solidity, because they lack the fullness of truth. Whence it is subjoined: And as a keeper he hath made a booth. For the booth of a keeper is solidified by no foundation, but is soon destroyed as the time passes. And the rest promised by heretics is destroyed with time, which after this life is found by no means. And because often heretics in contempt of the universal Church are supported by the patronages of the mighty of the world, and the rich do not cease to help them with as much protection and administration as they can prevail, even he who swells against his Maker with temporal things is now touched by the sentence of the holy man, and from the special destruction of heretics the discourse is derived to the general definition of all elated ones, when it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERS. 19.---The rich man when he shall sleep, shall carry nothing with him; he shall open his eyes, and shall find nothing.

28. Temporal goods we lose by keeping them for ourselves, we keep them by bestowing them on the poor.---To which sentence surely the Psalmist concords, saying: All the foolish in heart were troubled; they have slept their sleep, and all the men of riches have found nothing in their hands (Psal. 76:5). For that the rich may find anything in their hand after death, it is said to them before death in whose hands they should place their riches: Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles (Luke 16:9). The rich man when he shall sleep, shall carry nothing with him. He would carry his things with him when he died, if while he lived he had carried them to himself at the voice of the petitioner. For all earthly things which we lose by keeping, we keep by bestowing; and our patrimony retained is lost, spent it remains. For we cannot endure long with our things, because either we desert them by dying, or they desert us while living, as it were by perishing. We must act therefore so that things absolutely about to perish, we may compel to pass into a reward that does not perish.

29. Death opens the eyes of the sinner, so that he may see temporal goods flee from him, and punishment succeed.---But it is very much to be wondered at what is said: When he shall sleep, he shall open his eyes, and shall find nothing. For

that we may sleep, we close our eyes, and waking we open them. But in this matter, because man consists of soul and body, when the sleep of one thing is said, the vigils of the other are demonstrated, because when the body falls asleep in death, then the soul wakes up in true knowledge. And the rich man therefore sleeps, and opens his eyes, because when he dies in the flesh, his soul is compelled to see what he contemned to provide. Then surely he wakes up in true knowledge, then he beholds that it was nothing which he held. Then he finds himself empty, who was rejoicing that he was full of things above other men. He sleeps, and carries nothing with him, nothing surely of the things which he held. For the guilt of things is led together, although here all things, for which the guilt was perpetrated, are left. Let him go therefore now, and let him swell with things received, and let him extol himself above others, let him glory that he has what his neighbor has not. The time will come at some point that he may wake up, and then know how empty was that which he had held in sleep. For it often happens to the sleeping needy man that he sees himself rich through a dream, and from those same things he extols his mind, rejoices that he has what he had not, and already seeks to disdain those by whom he grieved that he was disdained. But suddenly waking up, let him grieve that he has woken up, who meanwhile held the image of riches even while sleeping. For he groans immediately under the weight of poverty, and is pressed by the straits of his want;

and that much worse, by how much for a very short time, or emptily he was rich. So, so surely are the rich of this world, who swell with things received. They know not how to work well from their abundance, they are rich as it were sleeping; but waking they find their poverty, because they carry nothing with them to that judgment that remains, and by how much now for a short time they are more sublimely elated, by so much against themselves in eternity more heavily they groan. Let him say therefore: He shall open his eyes, and shall find nothing, because there he opens them to punishments, whom here he held closed to mercy. He opens his eyes, and findeth not the fruit of piety, whom here he held closed when he found it. Late also they open their eyes, who, wisdom being witness, are related as about to say in the time of their damnation: What hath pride profited us, what hath the boasting of riches conferred on us? All those things have passed away as a shadow, and as a messenger running by (Wis. 5:8). Vile and fugitive that they had held, they now know them lost, which as long as they were present to their foolish hearts seemed both great and remaining. Late the rich man opened his eyes (Luke 16:23), when he saw Lazarus resting, whom he contemned to see lying before the gate. He understood there what he would not do here; in his damnation he was compelled to know what it was that he lost, when he did not acknowledge his needy neighbor. Of whom it is further subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 20.---Want shall apprehend him as water, a tempest shall overwhelm him in the night.

30. The stupendous want of the reprobate rich man after death.---Let us see now the want of the burning rich man, whose abundance was so great when feasting. For he says: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame (Luke 16:24). By which words this is not made known to us, that there in such heat one drop of water is then required for the sufficiency of refreshment, but that he who sinned from abundance, is there burned by an exceeding seething want. For we see in the words of the rich man from the most subtle judgment of God how worthy a punishment responded to such guilt. For want acting, there he was compelled to ask even for the least things, who here, tenacity acting, reached even to denying the least things. What can be retributed more subtly, what more strictly? He asks for a drop of water, who denied crumbs of bread. Want therefore shall apprehend him as water. Not unworthily is that want then compared to water, because it torments in hell, which, absorbing those received into the depths, is usually designated by the name of a lake. Whence through the prophet also it is said by the voice of the human race: My life is fallen into the lake (Lam. 3:53). But it is sung by the exultation of those snatched away: O Lord my God, I cried to Thee, and Thou

hast healed me; O Lord, Thou hast brought up my soul from hell, Thou hast saved me from them that go down into the lake (Psal. 30:2-3).

31. The whirlwind of divine judgment shall overwhelm him at an hour when he thinks not, and therefore at night.---A tempest shall overwhelm him in the night. What in this place does he call night, except the hidden time of a sudden departure? But by the name of a tempest, he designates the whirlwind of judgment. Which also the Psalmist testifies, saying: Our God shall come manifestly, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall burn in His sight, and a mighty tempest round about Him (Psal. 50:3). Of which tempest also Wisdom says through Solomon: I also will laugh in your destruction, and will mock, when that which you feared shall come to you, when sudden calamity shall rush in, and destruction shall come as a tempest (Prov. 1:26). And because the very ignorance of the coming departure is called night, a tempest shall overwhelm him in the night, that is, the whirlwind of divine judgment shall apprehend him while he is ignorant. For hence it is that Truth itself says through itself: If the master of the house knew at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Be you also ready, because at what hour you think not the Son of man will come (Matt. 24:43). Hence also it is said against the evil servant: But if that evil servant shall say in his heart: My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to strike his fellow-servants; and shall eat and drink with

drunkards; the lord of that servant shall come in a day in which he hopeth not, and in an hour which he knoweth not (Ibid., 48). Hence Paul says to the disciples: But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. For you are all children of light, and children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness (1 Thess. 5:4). Here to the proud rich man it is said by the voice of God: Thou fool, this night they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast prepared (Luke 12:20)? He is said to render his soul in the night who, not foreseeing death, is drawn away in the darkness of the heart. He says therefore: A tempest shall overwhelm him in the night. Because indeed he will not do the good things which he sees, he is overtaken by the tempest of his destruction which he does not see. Of whom it is further subjoined.

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 21.---A burning wind shall lift him up, and carry him away.

32. He shall be carried away by the devil, who is deservedly called a burning wind.---Who in this place is called a burning wind, except the malignant spirit, who excites the flames of desires in the heart, that he may draw to the eternity of punishments? Every perverse person, therefore, is said to be lifted up by a burning wind, because the malignant spirit, the lurker, who inflames every living person to vices, draws him when dying to torments. For that the burning wind is

usually understood as the unclean spirit, who by the breath of evil suggestion inflames the hearts of the iniquitous to earthly desires, the prophet Jeremiah testifies, saying: I see a boiling pot, and the face thereof is from the face of the North (Jer. 1:13). For the boiling pot is the human heart, fervid with the heats of secular cares, and the anxieties of desires. Which is kindled from the face of the North, that is, is inflamed by the suggestions of the devil. For he is usually called by the name of the North, who said: I will sit in the mountain of the testament, in the sides of the North, I will ascend above the height of the clouds (Isai. 14:13). To this burning wind, therefore, the mind of every elect person is tempered from burning, when the fervor of vices is extinguished in it, and the flame of carnal desires becomes cold. Whence also the holy Church in the praises of her spouse joyfully cries out: I sat down under his shadow whom I had desired (Cant. 2:3). Concerning the tempering of this heat the Lord says promising to her through Isaiah: For the briar shall come up the fir tree, and for the nettle shall grow the myrtle tree (Isai. 55:13). For for the briar in her comes up the fir tree, when in the heart of the saints instead of the abjection of earthly thought there arises the height of heavenly contemplation. But the nettle is altogether of a fiery nature. But the myrtle is said to be of a tempering virtue. For the nettle therefore the myrtle grows, when the minds of the just reach from the itch and burning of vices to the temper and tranquility of thoughts, while they no longer seek earthly things, while they

extinguish the flames of the flesh with heavenly desires.

33. Refreshment of mind given to Mary.---Because of this refreshment of mind given from heaven it is said to Mary: The power of the Most High shall overshadow thee (Luke 1:35). Although in this matter through the word of overshadowing both natures of the God to be incarnated could be signified. For a shadow is formed by light and a body. But the Lord through His divinity is light, who, by the mediation of the soul, deigned to become a body in her womb through His humanity. Because therefore the incorporeal light was to be embodied in her womb, it is said to her who conceived the Incorporeal as to a body: The power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; that is, the incorporeal light of the divinity will receive in thee a body of humanity. But now let us pursue what we began concerning any iniquitous person. The burning wind therefore lifts him up, because indeed the malignant spirit, who now shall have kindled him with the fire of depraved concupiscence, snatches him afterwards to the flames of Gehenna. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI.

IBID.---And as a whirlwind he shall snatch him out of his place.

34. What is the place of the iniquitous.---The place of the perverse is the delight of temporal life and the pleasure of the flesh. As by a whirlwind therefore each one is snatched out of his place, when he is separated from all his delights on the

last day, being terrified. Of which last day it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 22.---He shall send upon him, and shall not spare.

35. God scourges the elect here so that He may spare, the reprobate so that He may begin to punish. Every divine percussion is either a purgation of the present life, or the beginning of the following punishment.---As often as God corrects a sinner by striking, He sends a scourge for this, that He may spare. But when He concludes his life remaining in sin by striking, He sends a scourge, but by no means spares. For He who sent a scourge that He might spare, sends it at some point so that He may not spare. For in this life the Lord studies so much more that He may spare, by how much more He scourges by waiting, as He Himself says by the voice of the angel to John: Those whom I love, I rebuke and chastise (Apoc. 3:19). And as is said elsewhere: Whom the Lord loveth He chastiseth, and He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth (Hebr. 12:6). But on the contrary concerning the scourge of damnation it is written: The sinner is caught in the works of his own hands (Psal. 9:16). Of which through Jeremiah the Lord says, while He sees peoples incorrigibly delinquent, whom He no longer regards as sons under discipline, but under strict percussion He beholds as enemies: I

have struck thee with the blow of an enemy, with a cruel chastisement (Jer. 30:14). And what is said here: He shall not spare; there also is declared by other words: Why criest thou over thy destruction? thy pain is incurable (Ibid., 15). Whence the elect always provide this, that they return to justice before the wrath of the Judge kindles itself unquenchably, lest overtaken by the last scourge their life end together with their guilt. For a scourge shall then wash away guilt, when it shall have changed life. For whose manners it does not change, it does not expiate actions. Every divine percussion, therefore, is either a purgation in us of the present life, or the beginning of the following punishment. For because of those who profit from the scourge it is said: Who feignest labor in the commandment (Psal. 94:20). Because while the iniquitous is scourged and corrected; he would not hear the commandment, he hears the pain. Pain therefore is feigned in the commandment, for him who is restrained from evil works by pain as if in the place of a commandment. But concerning those whom scourges damn and do not free, it is said: Thou hast struck them, and they have not grieved; Thou hast bruised them, and they have refused to receive discipline (Jer. 5:3). For these the scourges begin from this life, and perdure in eternal percussion. Whence through Moses the Lord says: A fire is kindled from My wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell (Deut. 32:22). As much as pertains to the present percussion, it is rightly said: A fire is kindled from My wrath. But as much as to eternal

damnation, it is aptly subjoined: And shall burn even to the lowest hell. Although by some it is usually said that which is written: God does not judge twice for the same thing (Nahum 1:9). Who nevertheless do not attend to that which is said through the prophet concerning the iniquitous: And with a double confusion bruise them (Jer. 17:18). And what elsewhere is written: Jesus saving the people out of the land of Egypt, secondly destroyed them that believed not (Jude 5). To whom nevertheless if we yield consent, that any guilt cannot be struck twice, this ought to be estimated concerning those struck out of sin and dying in their sin, because their percussion begun here is perfected there, so that for the uncorrected it is one scourge which begins temporally, but is consummated in eternal torments, so that for those who altogether refuse to be corrected the percussion of present scourges is the beginning of following torments. He shall send therefore upon him, and shall not spare. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XIII].

IBID.---Fleeing he shall flee out of his hand.

36. We evade the hand of the Striker only by emendation.---For he flees out of the hand of the Striker, who corrects the depravity of his own action. Or certainly because in the sacred eloquence the hand is usually understood as operation, he flees from the hand of the struck who, while he beholds the destruction of the depraved, leaves

the ways of depravity. Whence it is further subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 23.--- He shall clasp his hands over him.

37. We behold in the punishment of others what we ought to fear for ourselves.--- For to clasp the hands is to confirm the works of one's life in rectitude. Whence also Paul says: Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees (Heb. 12:12). While, therefore, they behold the destruction of another, they are recalled to their own heart, that they may bethink them of their own; and whence one is led to torments, another is thereby delivered from torment. He clasps, therefore, his hands over him, because he beholds in the punishment of another what he should fear; and while he beholds the delinquent thus struck, he binds up his own loose works with the vigor of justice. And so it comes to pass that he who, living iniquitously, had drawn many to guilt by the delight of sin, by dying recalls some from guilt by the terror of torment. Which the Psalmist also testifies happens to the good, saying: The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance of the ungodly; he shall wash his hands in the blood of sinners (Ps. 58:10). In the blood of dying sinners the hands of the righteous are washed, because while their punishment is beheld, the life of the beholder is cleansed. It follows.

CHAPTER XXV.

IBID.--- And he shall hiss over him, beholding his place.

38. And so we are restrained from sin.--- What is expressed in hissing but the intent of admiration? But if another significance is perhaps sought in the hissing at the death of the sinner, they who behold his destruction contract their mouth in a hiss, while they turn back to those spiritual words which they had despised, so that they may now begin to believe and preach what they previously did not believe while they saw the iniquitous flourish. For it often happens that the mind of the weak trembles the more at the hearing of the truth, the more it sees the despisers of the truth flourish. But while just vengeance takes away the unjust, it restrains others from depravity. Whence it is said by Solomon: When the pestilent man is punished, the little one will be wiser (Prov. 21:11). The holy man, therefore, after he has sufficiently completed the punishments of the powerful who are extolled in the world, again turns his words to the pride of heretics, who are extolled in their eloquence. For there follows:

CAPUT XXVI

[Vet. et Rec. XIV].

CHAP. XXVIII, VERS. 1.---Silver hath beginnings of its veins: and for gold there is a place wherein it is melted.

39. Heretics to be provoked to the sacred pages and the books of the ancient fathers.---In silver eloquence, in gold the clarity of life or wisdom is wont to be designated. And because heretics so pride themselves on the luster of their eloquence, that they are solidified by no authority of the sacred books (which books are as it were certain veins of silver for us to speak, because from them we draw the origin of our speech), he recalls them to the pages of sacred authority, so that if they truly desire to speak, they ought to take from thence what they should speak. And he says: Silver hath beginnings of its veins. As if he were openly saying: He who prepares himself for the words of true preaching, must of necessity take the origins of causes from the sacred pages, so that he may recall all that he speaks to the foundation of divine authority, and in it establish the edifice of his speech. For as we have said before, often heretics, while they study to build up their own perverse things, bring forward those things which indeed are not held in the pages of the sacred books. Whence also the eminent preacher admonishes his disciple, saying: O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane novelties of words (1 Tim. 6:20); because while heretics desire to be praised as if for excellent genius, they bring forward as it were certain new things, which are not held in the old books of the ancient Fathers; and thus it happens that while they desire to be seen as wise, they scatter the seeds of folly to their miserable auditors.

40. Only the Catholic Church has martyrs.---But it is well added: And for gold there is a place wherein it is melted. As if he were openly saying: The true wisdom of the faithful, for which the universal Church is the place, suffers tribulation from you persecuting, but is purged from all the filth of sins by the fire of your persecution. Whence it is written: Gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation (Ecclus. 2:5). In which place this also can be conveniently understood, that the heretics may seem to be rebuked for their own foolish passion. For often for the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Redeemer they suffer many things, and they hope that by those same passions they become his martyrs. To whom it is now said by the voice of holy men: For gold there is a place wherein it is melted. For according to this which already and before us was said (By Cyprian, on the unity of the Church, and elsewhere), whoever suffers outside the unity of the Church, may suffer punishments, but he cannot become a martyr, because for gold there is a place wherein it is melted. What therefore do you say to these things, heretics? You wish to be melted through the affliction of the flesh, or even through martyrdom, but you know not the place in which you ought to be melted. Hear what is said by the voice of the holy preacher: For gold there is a place wherein it is melted. Seek therefore this place of melting, find this furnace, by which gold may be aptly purged.

41. Whatever is tolerated outside the Church tortures, it does not purge.---There is one Church in which he who shall have been able to be melted can also be purged from every filth of sins. If you sustain anything of bitterness for God, anything of tribulation, placed outside of her, you can only be burned, not purged. Let Jeremiah say, let him say how the fire of your melting is void of all virtue: The melter hath melted in vain, for their malices are not consumed (Jer. 6:29). Behold the fire melting outwardly, and it applies the punishment of hard passion, and yet it does not boil out the fault of error, and it gives the torments of cruel punishments, and does not make increments of good merits. How this fire of melting also, which is tolerated outside the Catholic Church, is of no virtue at all, the Apostle Paul insinuates, saying: If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Cor. 13:3). [Vet. XV.] For some feel depraved things concerning God; others hold right things concerning the author; but they do not hold unity with their brethren. The former are divided by error of faith, the latter indeed by the perpetration of schism. Whence also in that first part of the decalogue the faults of both parts are repressed, when it is said by the divine voice: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength (Deut. 6:5). And soon it is subjoined: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. For he who feels perverse things concerning God, it is clear indeed that he does not love God. But he

who, feeling right things concerning God, is divided from the unity of holy Church, it is certain that he does not love his neighbor, whom he refuses to have as a companion.

43. Because charity is lacking to both schismatics and heretics.---Whoever, therefore, is divided from this unity of mother Church, whether by feeling perverse things concerning God through heresy, or by not loving his neighbor through the error of schism, is deprived of the grace of this charity, concerning which Paul says this which we have premitted: If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Cor. 13:3). As if he were saying in open voice: The fire applied to me outside its own place of melting tortures me with torment, it does not purge with cleansing. All lovers of holy peace seek this place with the greatest study, seeking they find it, finding they hold it, knowing where, or when, or to what kind of people the remission of sins is given. Where indeed, but in the bosom of the Catholic mother? When, but before the day of the coming end? Because, behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). And: Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near (Isai. 55:6). To what kind of people, but to the converted, who are formed to the imitation of little ones, humility being their mistress? To whom it is said: Suffer the little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven (Matth. 19:14). And: Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall

not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matth. 18:3). [Rec. XV.] Because therefore not unless in the Catholic Church are true martyrs made, it is rightly said: For gold there is a place wherein it is melted, because the soul shall not shine in the luster of eternal beauty, unless, so to speak, it shall first have burned here in the workshop of charity.

42. Because charity is lacking to both schismatics and heretics.--- Whosoever, therefore, is divided from this unity of Mother Church, whether by feeling perverse things concerning God through heresy, or by not loving his neighbor through error of schism, is deprived of the grace of this charity, concerning which Paul says that which we have premised: If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Cor. 13:3). As if he should say in open voice: The fire applied to me outside its own place of refinement cruciates me with torment, it does not purge me with cleansing. All lovers of holy peace seek this place with greatest study; seeking it they find it, finding it they hold it, knowing where, or when, or to what kind of persons the remission of sins is given. Where indeed, but in the bosom of the Catholic Mother? When, but before the day of the coming exit? For, behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). And: Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near (Isa. 55:6). To what kind of persons, but to the converted, who are formed to the imitation of little ones, with humility as their teacher? To

whom it is said: Suffer little children to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:14). And: Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:3). Because therefore it is only in the Catholic Church that true martyrs are made, it is rightly said: For gold there is a place where it is refined, because the soul shall not shine in the brightness of eternal beauty, unless, so to speak, it has first burned here in the workshop of charity.

43. God saves some through innocence, others through penance.--- It is further to be considered that by a hidden counsel Almighty God, keeping some innocent from their very beginnings, advances them even to the heights of virtues, so that as their age increases, there profits in them at once both the number of years and the loftiness of merits. But others He leaves in their beginnings, and permits them to go through precipices with springing vices. Yet for the most part He regards even them, and kindles them with the fire of holy love to follow Him, and turns the ingrained itchings of vices in their hearts into the fervor of virtues, and they are ignited for the desire of seeking the piety of God so much the more, as they more blush at the memory of their own iniquity, as it often happens that in the contest of a battle a soldier set before the eyes of his leader basely yields to the hostile power, and weakly presenting his back is struck: who nevertheless blushing at this very thing which he basely did, takes greater strength from that

very shame before the eyes of his leader, and afterwards exercises such strong things, as both to achieve the present glory of virtue and to cover the past ignominy of weakness. Thus therefore sometimes some are strengthened more sharply in the service of God from past weakness, and both the desire of future things draws them and the memory of past things impels them to keep the commandments, so that from one side love provokes them to things to come, and from the other shame instigates them concerning the past. Whom nevertheless the adversaries of the Church, when they see them endowed with highest virtues, and can find nothing at all in their present life for which to detract from them, strive to accuse them concerning past things, as the Manichaean attacks our Moses, in whom he endeavors to defile the grace of following virtues with the guilt of a past homicide. In whom he does not attend how patient he was afterwards for sustaining, but how headlong he was before for striking. Blessed Job, therefore, meeting such adversaries with most subtle consideration, after he had said: Silver hath the beginnings of its veins, and for gold there is a place where it is refined, aptly added:

CAPUT XXVII

[Rec. XVI].

VERS. 2.---Iron is taken out of the earth.

44. We are not to look at what the teachers of the Church are by themselves, but what they

have become through grace.---Heretics are wont to glory in the elation of their own justice against us, and to boast of their own works with the inflation of ostentation, and they criminate us, as we have said, either as being or having been wicked. Through a most humble confession, therefore, and a true defense, the holy man speaks against them, saying: Iron is taken out of the earth. As if he were openly saying: Strong men, who become iron in this line of battle for defending the faith with the most sharp swords of their tongues, were sometimes earth in the lowest actions. For to the sinning man it was said: Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go (Gen. 3:19). But iron is taken out of the earth, when a strong champion of the Church is separated from the earthly action which he held before. Therefore he ought not to be despised for whatever he was, who has already begun to be what he was not. Was not Matthew found in the earth, who, entangled in earthly business, served the uses of the custom-house (Matth. 9:9)? But lifted up from the earth, he grew strong into the fortitude of iron, by whose tongue namely as if by a most sharp sword of the administration of the Gospel the Lord transfixed the hearts of the infidels; and he who before had been weak and despised through earthly business, afterwards was made strong for celestial preachings. Whence still it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[New XVII].

IBID.--- And a stone dissolved by heat, is turned into brass.

45. By the infusion of grace the heart is softened to love, and strengthened for operation.--- Then is a stone dissolved by heat, when the hard heart and one cold to the fire of divine love is touched by the same fire of divine love, and is melted in the fervor of the spirit, so that it may burn with a glow of desires for the life to come, to which before, hearing it, it remained insensible. From which glow, namely, it is both softened to love and strengthened for operation, so that as it had been hard before in the love of the world, it may afterwards put itself forth strong in the love of God; and what it before refused to hear, it may now begin both to believe and to preach. A stone, therefore, dissolved by heat, is turned into brass, because the hard mind being liquefied by the fire of celestial love is changed into true fortitude, so that the sinner, who before had stood insensible, may afterwards become both strong through authority and sonorous through preaching. Which is well said by Isaiah: They that trust in the Lord shall change their strength (Isa. 40:31). We change our strength, when being converted we flee from the present world with as much virtue as we before sought it. But because the past life is ill-regarded by the adversaries of Catholic manners, it is rightly subjoined:

CAPUT XXIX.

VERS. 3.---He hath set a time for darkness, and he himself considereth the end of all.

46. God beholds the end of the elect and of the reprobate. He makes and ordains good things; he does not make, but ordains evil things.---He himself has set a time for darkness, namely a limit for the wicked by which the wicked may cease to be. Whence it is said to them by the Apostle: You were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. As to other disciples also the same eminent teacher says: The night is passed, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light; let us walk honestly, as in the day (Ephes. 5:8; Rom. 13:12). Whence also in the Canticle of Canticles it is said of the Church coming: Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising (Cant. 6:9)? For aptly is the Church described compared to the morning, which through the knowledge of faith is changed from the darkness of her sins into the clear light of justice. He hath set a time for darkness, therefore, and he himself considereth the end of all. By the name of all, he wished both the elect and the reprobate to be comprehended. For God, making and ordaining good things, but not making evil things, but disposing those things done by the wicked lest they should happen inordinately, considereth the end of all, and patiently tolerates all things, and beholds the end of the elect, that they may be changed from evil to good. He beholds also the end of the reprobate, that for their evil work they may be drawn to worthy punishment. He saw the end of the persecuting Saul, by which prostrate he would say: Lord, what wilt thou have me to do (Acts 9:6)? He saw the

end of the as it were obedient disciple, that for the committed crime he would bind his throat with a noose, and would both punish himself sinning, and deceive himself by punishing worse. He saw the Ninevites delinquent, but he considered the end of the delinquent, the penance of those corrected. He saw also Sodom delinquent, but he considered the end of the heat of luxury, the fire of Gehenna. He saw the end of Gentility, that possessed by the darkness of iniquities, it would at some time shine with the light of faith. He saw also the end of Judea, that it would blind itself with darkness from that light of faith which it held of hardened perfidy. Whence still congruously is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXX

[Rec. XVIII].

IBID. VERS. 4.---A torrent also divideth the stone of darkness and the shadow of death from the pilgrimaging people.

47. Fire in the last judgment will divide the good and the bad. --- What was that people of the Jews, hard in their perfidy, who would not see the Author of life by faith, whom he foretold by prophecy, but a stone of darkness? because they both stood out as hard in cruelty, and clouded in infidelity. Which by another name also is called the shadow of death. For such a shadow is expressed, as the lineaments of that thing from which it is drawn shall have been. But who is called by the name of death, but the devil? Of

whom it is said by a certain signification of his minister: And his name is death (Rev. 6:8). Whose shadow that people stood out to be, because following his iniquity, it expressed his image in itself. But what is called by the name of a torrent, but that fire which, coming forth from the sight of the tremendous Judge through the last examination, and dividing the elect and the reprobate? Whence also it is said by the prophet: A river of fire and rapid went forth from his face (Dan. 7:10).

[Vet. XVIII, Rec. XIX.] 48. All the elect are pilgrims in the world. --- But what people is a pilgrim in this world, but that which, running to the lot of the elect, knoweth that it hath a country in the heavens; and so much the more hopeth to find there its own, as it accounteth as alien here all things that pass away? Therefore the pilgrimaging people is the number of all the elect, who, accounting this life a certain exile for themselves, sigh toward the supernal country with the whole intention of the heart, of whom Paul saith: Confessing that they are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth (Heb. 11:13). For they that say these things, signify that they seek a country. The same Apostle also tolerated this pilgrimage, when he said: While we are in the body, we are pilgrims from the Lord. For we walk by faith, and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:6). He was busy to escape the miseries of this pilgrimage, when he said: Having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ (Phil. 1:23). And again: To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Ibid. 1:21). The Psalmist felt the heavy weight of this pilgrimage, when he

said: Woe is me! that my sojourning is prolonged: I have dwelt with the inhabitants of Kedar, my soul hath been much a sojourner (Ps. 119:5). He panted to be snatched from this as quickly as possible, when, burning with supernal desires, he said: My soul hath thirsted after the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God (Ps. 41:3)? But this desire they know not who fix their heart in earthly pleasures. For while they love only the things which are visible, they certainly love not the invisible, even if they believe they are, because while they follow themselves too much outwardly, they also become carnal in mind. For simultaneously both peoples run in this life, but they do not simultaneously arrive at the perpetual, because a torrent divideth the stone of darkness and the shadow of death from the pilgrimaging people. As if he should say openly: Those whom now either infidelity blindeth, or cruelty hardeneth, a river of flames going forth from the sight of the eternal Judge, then separateth from the people of the elect, that then the fire of the strict examination may divide from the good those whom now iniquity defileth in their concupiscences.

49. The irrigation of preaching as it were a torrent divides the good from the evil.--- Perhaps in the name of a torrent the irrigation of holy preaching itself may be understood, according to that which is said by Solomon: The eye that mocketh at his father, and that despiseth the birth of his mother, let the ravens of the torrents pick it out (Prov. 30:17). For the perverse, while

they reprehend divine judgments, mock at their father. And any heretics, while by deriding they contemn the preaching of holy Church and her fecundity, what else do they do but despise the birth of their mother? Whom not undeservedly we call also their mother, because they go out from her, who speak against her; as John testifies, who says: They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us (1 John 2:19). But the ravens come from the torrents, when true preachers proceed from the streams of the sacred books for the defense of holy Church. Who also are rightly called ravens, because they by no means pride themselves in the light of their own righteousness, but through the grace of humility confess the blackness of sins in themselves. Whence also it is said by the Church of the elect: I am black, but beautiful (Cant. 1:5). And John says: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves (1 John 1:8). Which ravens, namely, pick out the eye of the mocker, because they overcome the intention of perverse and headstrong men. From this testimony, therefore, if here also "torrent" ought to be understood as preaching, a torrent divideth the stone of darkness and the shadow of death from the pilgrim people, because the preaching of the saints leaves the obdurate minds of the reprobate, and turns itself to the pious hearts of the humble. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Vet. XIX].

VERSE 4.---Them whom the foot of the needy man hath forgotten, and the pathless.

50. The Jews being left, it flowed down to the Gentiles.---Who else in this place is accepted as the "needy man" (egens homo), but He of whom it is said by Paul: Who for our sakes became needy, when He was rich (2 Cor. 8:9)? Of which needy man, namely, the feet were the holy preachers, by whose presence indeed, going about Gentility, He walked through the whole world. Of whom it is said by the prophet: And I will walk in them (Lev. 26:12; 2 Cor. 6:16). Or was he not His foot, who, held in fetters, said: For which I am an ambassador in a chain (Eph. 6:20)? But of those who were a shadow of death and a stone of darkness, the foot of the needy man hath forgotten; because in the very beginning of the nascent Church, while the holy Apostles would have preached the kingdom of heaven to Judea, seeing that they profited her nothing at all, they flowed down to preaching to the Gentiles, as they themselves say in their Acts: It behoved us first to speak the word of God to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). Of whom also it is said by the Psalmist: The mountains shall be transferred into the heart of the sea (Ps. 46:2), because the Apostles, being repulsed from Judea, were transferred into this world of Gentility. Who then are they who, by immense hardness for the obscurity of the heart,

as it were a certain stone of darkness and shadow of death, are divided from the pilgrim people of the saints, but those whom the foot of the needy man hath forgotten, that is, whom the preachers of the Lord, namely through the humanity of the poor man, have left for the tumor of their pride, and have altogether forgotten them, while they transferred the seeds of their preaching to the fructification of the Gentiles alone? Whom rightly also he calls "pathless" (invios), because while they are obdurate in their unbelief, they would not afford a way to the words of life to their heart. But let us hear this Judea, which was thus obdurate, either what she was lately, or what she afterwards endured. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERSE 5.---The earth out of which bread grew, is subverted in its place by fire.

51. The Synagogue, which ministered the bread of the Law and the Scriptures, burning with envy, was destroyed.---Judea had been accustomed to give bread, she who uttered the words of the Law. Which Law, namely, because the reprobate could no longer understand and explain, the prophet Jeremiah deplores in his lamentations, saying: The little ones asked for bread, and there was no one to break it for them (Lam. 4:4). But this earth was subverted in its place by fire, because beholding the signs of the faithful, it burned itself with the torch of envy. For since envy is always wont to be born of pride, it perished by fire in its own place, she who

therefore burned with envy because she did not leave pride. The earth, then, which before had bread, was afterwards subverted by fire, since the Synagogue, which brought forth the commandments of God through the Law, persecuting the nascent Church, consumed itself with the fire of envy. Or was she not burning with the torches of her emulation, when, beholding the signs of our Redeemer, she said through certain of her members: What do we, for this man doeth many signs? or indeed: Ye see that we prevail nothing; behold, the whole world is gone after Him (John 11:47). They saw whence they ought to have been converted, and from thence they became more perverse. They sought to extinguish Him whom they saw vivify the dead. In their mouth they held the Law, but they persecuted the Author of the Law. The earth, then, out of which bread grew, was subverted in its place by fire, because Judea had in herself both first the Law which should refresh her, and afterwards envy which should burn her. Of whose description it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERSE 6.---The place of the sapphire are its stones, and its clods gold.

52. The abundance of gifts and graces with which the Jews were formerly adorned increases their fall.---The praise of the preceding glory increases the guilt of the subsequent fault. For the fall of each one is of so much the greater crime, as he could have been of greater virtue before he

fell. Let Judea be spoken of, let it be said what she was, and let the magnitude of preceding virtues grow to the heap of subsequent offenses. The place of the sapphire are its stones, and its clods gold. For what else do we understand in this place by "stones," but the minds of the holy and the strong? For in Sacred Scripture stones are sometimes wont to be understood in a bad sense, and sometimes in a good sense. For when a stone is put for insensibility, hard hearts are signified by stones. Whence also it is said by John: God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham (Matt. 3:9). Who namely by the name of stones designates the hearts of the Gentiles, then hard and insensible through unbelief. And through the prophet the Lord promises, saying: I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19). Again, the minds of the strong are wont to be designated by stones. Whence also it is said to the saints by Peter: Ye also, as living stones, are built up spiritual houses (1 Pet. 2:5). And through the prophet the Lord promises to the coming Church, saying: Behold, I will lay thy stones in order, and will found thee in sapphires, and I will make thy bulwarks of jasper, and thy gates of carved stones; and all thy borders of desirable stones, all thy children taught of the Lord (Is. 54:11). For He laid her stones in order in her, because in her He distinguished holy souls by diversity of merits. He founded her in sapphires, which stones namely hold in themselves a likeness of the color of the air, because the strength

of the Church is solidified in souls seeking heavenly things. And because jasper is of a green color, He placed jasper as her bulwarks, because those were set against adversaries for the defense of holy Church, who, being green with internal desires, wither by no dryness of reprobate lukewarmness. But He placed her gates in carved stones. These indeed are the gates of the Church, through whose life and doctrine the multitude of believers enters into her. Who, for the reason that they excel in great works, and show by living what they assert by speaking, are mentioned as being not pure, but carved stones. For in whose life right operation is discerned, as it were in themselves is expressed what they have done. Where, concluding also the whole number of the saints in a general collection, he subjoined: All thy borders in desirable stones (Ibid. 54:12). And, as if we who hear these things were asking that He would indicate these stones which He spoke of, He added: All thy children taught of the Lord. Because, therefore, from Judea there were never wanting holy souls, who should lead a heavenly life, it is said: The place of the sapphire are its stones. And because she shone with great clarity of life and wisdom through faith, it is added: And its clods gold. What is designated by "clods" (glebas), but the collections of each order and the multitudes? Now clods are bound together from moisture and dust. All those, therefore, who, being infused with the dew of grace, have by true knowledge confessed themselves to be dust from the debt of death, while they shone by the

virtue of life, lay in her as it were golden clods. This earth had clods in the prophets, clods in the doctors, clods in the ancient Fathers, who held themselves in unanimity of profession and work with a great infusion of grace. Let him say, then: And its clods gold, because in her the multitude of spiritual men shone with so much the greater virtue, as it bound itself together with greater unanimity in God and their neighbor.

53. The gold with which they shone, obscured by the darkness of perfidy.---But this gold of perfidy is afterwards obscured by the darkness. Whose blackness indeed the prophet Jeremiah beholding deplores, saying: How is the gold become obscure, the finest color changed? (Lam. 4:1). For the gold is become obscure, because in them that ancient splendor of faith and innocence, perfidy rushing in, has darkened itself with the night of malice. Because therefore we have heard what it was: Namely, the place of the sapphire its stones, and its clods gold, let us now hear why that people beloved of God lost these so great goods. It follows.

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Vet. XXI].

VERSE 7.---The bird hath not known the path, neither hath the eye of the vulture beheld it.

54. Ignorant of the ways of Christ's humility, they lost the fruit of His death.---Who in this place is signified by the name of a "bird," but He who poised the fleshly body which He assumed

by ascending to the heavens? Who also is aptly expressed even by the appellation of a "vulture." For the vulture, while it flies, if it perceives a carcass lying, lets itself down to eat the carcass; and for the most part is thus taken in death, while it comes from the highest parts to the dead animal. Rightly, therefore, the Mediator between God and men, our Redeemer, is signified by the appellation of a vulture, who, remaining in the height of His Divinity, as it were from a certain sublime flight, beheld the carcass of our mortality in the lowest parts, and submitted Himself from heavenly things to the lowest. For He deigned to be made man for our sakes, and while He sought the dead animal, He who was immortal in Himself found death among us. But the eye of this vulture was the very intention of our resurrection, because He, having been dead for three days, delivered us from eternal death. That perfidious people of Judea, then, saw the mortal; but how He by His death should destroy our death, they by no means attended to. They beheld indeed the vulture, but they did not look upon the eyes of the vulture. Who, while they would not consider the ways of His humility by which He raised us to on high, "knew not the path of the bird." For they did not study to think that His humility should raise us to heavenly things, and the intention of His death should reform us to life. The bird, therefore, hath not known the path, neither hath the eye of the vulture beheld it, because although they saw Him whom they held in death, they would not see how great glory of our life should follow from

His death. Whence also it flared up to the cruelty of persecution, refused to receive the words of life, and repulsed the preachers of the kingdom of heaven by forbidding, by raging, by smiting. Who, namely, being repulsed, leaving Judea to which they had been sent, were dispersed into the gathering of Gentility. Whence it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXV

[Rec. XX].

VERSE 8.---The children of the agents have not trodden it, neither hath the lioness passed by it.

55. The Apostles and their successors left Judea and labored for the conversion of the Gentiles.---In all the Latin Codices we find "institutors" (*institutores*) placed, but in the Greek we find "merchants" (*negotiatores*). From which fact it may be gathered that in this place for "agents" (*institoribus*), "institutors" (*institutores*) was placed by each scribe through ignorance. For we call "agents" (*institores*) merchants, for the reason that they insist upon the exercise of their work. But each word, although it may sound different in voice, does not disagree in understanding, because all who institute the morals of the faithful carry on a spiritual business, so that when they offer preaching to their hearers, they may receive from them faith and right works, as it is written of the holy Church: "She made fine linen, and sold it" (Prov. 31:24);

of which also a little after it is said there: "She saw that her negotiation is good" (Ibid. 31:18). Who in this place are called "institutors" but the holy Prophets, who took care to institute the morals of the Synagogue to faith by prophesying? Whose children, forsooth, the holy Apostles are called, who were begotten to the same faith from their preaching, that they might believe in God made man. Of whom it is said to the Church by the Psalmist: "Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all the earth" (Psalm 45:16). But because the Apostles, being repulsed, went forth from the borders of the Synagogue, it is now rightly said: "The children of the agents have not trodden it." For the children of the agents would tread it, if the holy preachers should press the vices of the same Synagogue with the heel of virtue. But if we take those same preachers of the holy Church as "agents" (*institores*), nothing hinders the pastors and doctors who followed the way of the Apostles from being understood as the children of the agents. Who by no means trood the Synagogue, because while their fathers, that is, the Apostles, were repulsed from it, they also ceased from its calling.

[Vet. XXII.] 56. The Synagogue being left, the Church studied to gather the Gentiles.--- By which Synagogue, namely, the "lioness" hath not passed through, because the holy Church, being devoted to the gathering of the Gentiles, by no means occupied herself any longer with that people of Judea. Now the Church is rightly

called a "lioness," because she slays those who live wickedly in vices with the mouth of holy preaching. Whence also it is said to that first shepherd, as it were to the mouth of this lioness: "Slay, and eat" (Acts 10:13). For that which is slain is killed from life, but that which is eaten is changed into the body of the eater. "Slay, and eat," therefore, it is said, that is, kill them from the sin in which they live, and convert them from themselves into thy members. And because this Church is the body of the Lord, the Lord Himself is also called a lion by the voice of Jacob from Himself, and a lioness from His body, while it is said to Him under the species of Judah: "To the prey, my son, thou art gone up: resting thou hast couched as a lion, and as it were a lioness; who shall rouse him up?" (Gen. 49:9). This, therefore, is by no means said to be a lioness because she "passed not through" Judea, but she "passed not through" it. For as the Apostles preached, first three thousand, afterwards five thousand from it believed. The Church, therefore, passed through the Synagogue, but she did not pass through it, because from it she snatched a few to the faith, but yet she did not utterly extinguish that unbelieving people from their perfidy. But, as we have often said already, being repulsed from the unbelief of the Jews, she turned aside to the calling of the Gentiles. Whence it is still said of the same lioness:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSE 9.---He stretched forth His hand to the flint, He hath overturned the mountains from the roots.

57. Whose hardness He softened, and whose pride He laid low.---For He stretched forth His hand to the flint, because He sent the arm of His preaching to the hardness of the Gentiles. Whence also the same blessed Job, foreknowing that the history of his passion would be made known to the Gentiles, says: "Let these things be written with an iron pen in a plate of lead, or surely be graven in the flint" (Job 19:24). But whom in this place do we take for "mountains," but the powerful ones of this world, who are highly puffed up on account of earthly substance? Of whom the Psalmist says: "Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke" (Psalm 144:5). But the mountains were overturned from the roots, because, as the holy Church preached, the highest powers of this world fell from their inward thought into the adoration of Almighty God. For the roots of the mountains are the inward thoughts of the proud. And the mountains fall from the roots, because for the worship of God the powers of the world are prostrated from their lowest thoughts. For rightly is the hidden thought signified by the root, because through that which is not discerned within, that which is seen without breaks forth. Whence also it is said for a good part by the Prophet: "He that shall be saved from the house of Judah shall go forth, and that which is left shall send root downward, and shall bear fruit upward" (Isaiah 37:31). As if

it were plainly said: The thought is born in the lowest parts, that the reward may be rendered in the highest. Let him say therefore: "He stretched forth His hand to the flint, He hath overturned the mountains from the roots," because while the holy preaching sought the hardness of the Gentiles, it utterly laid low the loftiness of the proud. But because He fills those with heavenly gifts whom He empties of earthly thoughts, and waters those with supernal streams whom He exhausts of lowest cares, it is soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

VERSE 10.---He hath cut out rivers in the rocks.

58. In the stony hearts of the Gentiles God opened the rivers of preaching.---That is, He opened the rivers of preaching in the hard hearts of the Gentiles, as it is also said by the Prophet concerning the watering of the aridity of the Gentiles: "He hath turned the wilderness into a pool of waters, and the land without water into water-springs" (Psalm 107:35). And in the Gospel the Lord promises, saying: "He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). Which promise we then heard, and even now we see fulfilled. For behold in the holy preachers, and those not begotten from Judea, through the whole Church diffused over all the world, the streams of heavenly mandates flow abundantly from the mouth of the Gentiles. Because He hath opened rivers in the rocks, the river of holy preaching

hath flowed forth even from hard hearts. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IBID.---And His eye hath seen every precious thing.

60. The world is vile to God, and precious are the souls which He hath chosen.---It is greatly to be known that each soul becomes the more precious before the eyes of God, the more it shall have been despicable before its own eyes for the love of the truth. Hence it is said to Saul: "When thou wast a little one in thine own eyes, did I not make thee the head in the tribes of Israel?" (1 Sam. 15:17). As if He should say plainly: Thou wast great to Me, because thou wast despicable to thyself; but now because thou art great to thyself, thou art made despicable to Me. Whence also it is said by the Prophet: "Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight" (Isaiah 5:21). For each one becomes the more vile to God, the more precious he is to himself; the more precious to God, the more for His sake he is vile to himself: "Because He hath respect to the lowly, and knoweth the high afar off" (Psalm 138:6). [Vet. XXIII.] "And His eye hath seen every precious thing." In holy Scripture "to see" of God is sometimes put for "to choose," as it is written in the Gospel: "When thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee" (John 1:48); that is, I chose thee placed under the shadow of the Law. He saw, therefore, the precious thing because He chose the lowly: "For God hath chosen the weak things

of the world, that He might confound the strong" (1 Cor. 1:27). He saw the precious thing, when He looked upon the human soul, wise concerning things cast away from itself, by the illumination of His grace. Concerning which soul, namely, it is said by the Prophet: "If thou shalt separate the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth" (Jer. 15:19). For the present world is vile to God, but the human soul is precious to Him. He therefore who separates the precious from the vile is called as it were the mouth of the Lord, because through him God puts forth His words, who by speaking what he can, plucks the human soul from the love of the present world. And because the doctors of the New Testament were brought even to this, that they should also search out the hidden darknesses of allegories in the Old Testament, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Rec. XXI].

VERSE 11.---The depths also of the rivers He hath searched out, and the hidden things He hath brought forth to light.

60. God hath revealed to holy doctors the depths and hidden things of the Law and the Prophets.---For what else are called "rivers" here but the sayings of the ancient Fathers? For who can suffice to think how vehement a river, while he founded the Law, broke forth from the breast of Moses; how vehement a river flowed from the heart of David; how great streams of rivers

flowed from the mouth of Solomon and of all the Prophets? But Judea held the appearance of these rivers, while observing the surface of the letter, it knew not their depths. But we who, at the coming of the Lord, seek the inward spiritual things in them, search out their depths. Which the Lord Himself is said to do, because we prevail to do it by His gift. Through us, therefore, who follow not the letter which killeth, but the spirit which giveth life, the Lord searcheth out the depths of the rivers, and bringeth forth the hidden things to light, because the spiritual exposition now illuminates the sayings of the Law, which the too dark history obscures. Whence also the Truth, speaking in parables through the Gospel, commanded the disciples, saying: "That which I tell you in darkness, speak ye in light; and that which ye hear in the ear, preach ye upon the housetops" (Matt. 10:27). For the plain sayings of those expounding them have made the sentences of the ancient Fathers to be now conspicuous to us. Whence the Prophet Isaiah, beholding the plain words of the holy Church's exposition, and not things obscure with the darkness of allegories, exclaimed saying: "The place of rivers, streams very broad and open" (Isaiah 33:21). For the sayings of the Old Testament had been as it were narrow and closed streams, which constrained the immense sentences of their knowledge in a most obscure gathering. But on the contrary, the doctrine of the holy Church is as rivers both broad and open, because its sayings are both many to those who find them, and plain to those who seek

them. He says therefore: "The depths of the rivers He hath searched out, and the hidden things He hath brought forth to light." Because while He infused the spirit of understanding into His expounders, He opened the ancient obscurities of those prophesying. And this the holy Church now recognizes through the spirit, which the Synagogue before could by no means understand through the letter. Whence also Moses, when he spoke to the people (Exod. 34:33), veiled his face, that he might forsooth designate that that people of the Jews should know the words of the Law, but should by no means see the brightness of the same Law. Whence also it is rightly said by Paul: "For until this day, when Moses is read, the veil is laid upon their heart" (2 Cor. 3:15). But because the sayings of God are by no means penetrated without His wisdom (for unless one has received His spirit, he by no means knows His words), the holy man subjoins words concerning the investigating of the same wisdom of God, saying:

CHAPTER XL

[Vet. XXIV, Rec. XXII].

VERSES 12-15.---But where is wisdom found, and what is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of them that live sweetly. The abyss saith, It is not in me, and the sea speaketh: It is not with me. Pure gold shall not be given for it, neither shall silver be weighed in exchange for it.

61. The place and price of the Wisdom of God cannot be assigned.---It is first to be noted that he proposed two things to himself, and subjoins two things by responding. For to that which he said above: "But where is wisdom found, and what is the place of understanding?" he responded by this verse: "The abyss saith: It is not in me, and the sea speaketh: It is not with me." But to that which he had said: "Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of them that live sweetly," he rendered the lower verse, saying: "Pure gold shall not be given for it, neither shall silver be weighed in exchange for it." To both, therefore, he responded, but by increasing what he had objected, not by solving it. For when he sought the place of wisdom, and thereafter responded below: "The abyss saith: It is not in me," he indicated not where it was, but where it was not. Again, when he said that its price was unknown by man, and to this rendered below: "Pure gold shall not be given for it," he showed not what its price was, but what it was not. Now it is clear to all that neither can this human wisdom be either held in a place, or bought with riches. But the holy man, full of mystic senses, sends us to understand other things, that we should seek not created but creating Wisdom. For unless we search out the secrets of allegories in these words, those things which follow are certainly worthy of contempt, if they be weighed from historical narration alone. For a little after he says: "Gold or glass shall not be equal to it." And since, as we know, glass is far and differently more vile than

gold, why after the name of gold, a precious metal forsooth, for immense praise did he say that glass also is not equal to wisdom? We are compelled, therefore, by the very difficulty of the letter, to be watchful for the mystic meanings of these words. What wisdom, then, does the holy man contemplate, but that of which the Apostle Paul says: "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24)? Concerning which it is written by Solomon: "Wisdom hath built herself a house" (Prov. 9:1); and of which the Psalmist says: "In wisdom hast Thou made all things" (Psalm 104:24). The price of this wisdom, forsooth, man knoweth not, because he findeth nothing worthy of the estimation thereof. Now this price of wisdom is not said both to be and to be unknown, but therefore to be unknown, because it is wanting: by that mode of speaking, forsooth, in which anyone caught in straits, when he finds not the remedy of subvention, is wont to confess that he knows not what he should do.

62. It is due to the merit of no good work.--- To be ignorant, therefore, of the price of this wisdom, is to find no merit of a worthy work by which one may receive it. For to this end we give a price, that in its stead we ought to possess the thing which we desire. But what did we give that we might deserve to receive this wisdom, which is Christ (Rom. 11:6)? For we are redeemed by grace. For we gave those works alone by living badly, for which if a just retribution were reserved, not Christ, but punishments would be rendered. But man deserved one thing through

justice, he received another through grace. Let Paul bear witness, before his mind received the seed of gratuitous truth, with what briers of error he was pressed: "Who before," he says, "was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim. 1:13). Let him bear witness for what kind of persons Christ deigned to die: "While we were yet sinners," he says, "according to the time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:8). We, therefore, who were found ungodly when wisdom came, what good work did we give, by which we might deserve to receive the same wisdom? Man, therefore, knoweth not the price of this wisdom, because whosoever is distinguished from brute animals by the understanding of reason, since he understands that he was not saved by his own merits, acknowledges that he gave no good work that he might come to the faith. For to give a price for the receiving of wisdom is as it were to prevent God by the reward of one's own action.

63. Grace is given freely, not from merits.---He had known that there is no price of this wisdom, who said: "Who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him?" (Rom. 11:35). Hence again it is written: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8). Hence again he speaks concerning himself, saying: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10). From the breathing of which grace, forsooth, because works of virtues

are immediately generated in the heart, so that from free will also an action follows, to which after this life eternal retribution may respond, he immediately added: "And His grace in me was not in vain" (Ibid. 15:10). [Vet. XXV.] But there are some who exult that they are sound by their own strengths, and boast that they are redeemed by their own preceding merits. Whose assertion is found certainly contrary to themselves, because while they assert themselves to be both innocent and redeemed, they evacuate this very name of redemption in themselves. For everyone who is redeemed is liberated from some captivity without doubt. Whence, therefore, was anyone who he is redeemed, if he was not first a captive under guilt? It is clear, therefore, that whosoever savors these things dotes much. For supernal grace does not find the merit of man so that it may come, but after it shall have come, it makes it; and God, coming even to an unworthy mind, exhibits it worthy to Himself by coming; and He makes in it the merit which He may remunerate, who had found this alone which He might punish.

[Ret. XXIII.] 64. An example of gratuitous predestination in the thief who attained salvation.---It is pleasing among these things to reduce the eyes of the mind to that thief, who from the jaw of the devil ascended the cross, from the cross paradise. Let us look upon what kind of man he came to the gibbet, and what kind of man he departed from the gibbet. He came guilty of brotherly blood, he came bloody, but by inward grace he was changed on the cross;

and he who brought death upon his brother, preached the life of the dying Lord, saying: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). On the cross the nails had bound his hands and feet, and nothing in him had remained free from pains but his heart and tongue. By the inspiration of God he offered to Him all that he found free in himself, so that according to that which is written: "With the heart he might believe unto righteousness, with the mouth he might confess unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). But the Apostle witnesses that three virtues especially remain in the heart of the faithful, saying: "But now remain faith, hope, charity" (1 Cor. 13:13). All which the thief, filled with sudden grace, both received and kept on the cross. For he had faith, who believed that the Lord would reign, whom he saw dying equally with himself: he had hope, who asked for an entrance to His kingdom, saying: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). Charity also he held lively in his death, who both rebuked for his iniquity his brother and fellow-thief dying for a similar crime, and preached to him the life which he had known, saying: "Neither dost thou fear God, who art in the same condemnation. And we indeed justly; for we receive things worthy of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing evil" (Ibid. 40, 41). He who came such as he was to the cross from guilt, behold what kind of man he recedes from the cross from grace. He confessed the Lord, whom he saw dying with him in human infir-

mity, when the Apostles denied Him whom they had seen doing miracles by divine power.

[Vet. XXVI.] 65. The error of those who assert that man is saved by his own strengths.---But these who assert that man is saved by his own strengths, suspect the same confession of man to be from the virtue of the man himself. But if it were so, the Psalmist would not say in the praise of God: "Confession and magnificence are His work" (Psalm 111:3). We receive, therefore, to confess right things from Him, from whom also it is given to us to work great things. Because, therefore, we gave no good work by which we might deserve to receive this wisdom, let it be rightly said: "Man knoweth not the price thereof," since whosoever already uses reason, by so much the more deeply despises himself under the understanding of this wisdom, as he more truly knows the inward things of the same wisdom, so that he may see himself unworthy to have come to it, through which it is gratuitously acted that he may become worthy. Concerning which it is well subjoined:

CAPUT XLI

[Rec. XXIV].

VERSE 13.---Neither is it found in the land of them that live sweetly.

66. Whosoever is fed with the pleasures of this life, is separated from the understanding of eternal wisdom.---What is signified in this place by the name of "earth," but the human soul?

Concerning which the Psalmist says: "My soul is as earth without water unto Thee" (Psalm 143:6). But this wisdom cannot be found in the land of them that live sweetly, because whosoever is still fed with the pleasures of this life, is separated from the understanding of eternal wisdom. For if he truly were wise, being expelled from inward joys, he would mourn concerning that into which he fell, in the blindness of his exile. For hence it is said by Solomon: "He that addeth knowledge, addeth also sorrow" (Eccl. 1:18), because the more a man shall have begun to know what he lost, the more he begins to mourn the sentence of his corruption which he found. For he considers whence and whither he has lapsed; that he came from the joys of paradise to the tribulations of the present life, from the societies of angels to the cares of necessities; he weighs in how many dangers he now lies, who before contemned to stand without danger; he mourns the exile which being condemned he suffers, and sighs for the state of heavenly glory, which he might securely enjoy if he had not willed to sin. Which the Psalmist well considering, says: "I said in my fear: I am cast out from before the face of Thine eyes" (Psalm 31:22). For having contemplated the inward joys of the vision of God, and the social frequency of the angels persisting, he reduced his eyes to the lowest parts, he saw where he lay, who had been created for this, that he might have been able to stand in heavenly things; he weighed where he was, and groaned for what he was wanting; and he grieved that he was cast out from the face of the eyes of

God, because in comparison of the inward light he had felt more heavily the darknesses of his exile which he was enduring. [Vet. XXVII.] Hence it is that he admits the consolation of no grace from the present life to his mind, saying: "My soul refused to be comforted" (Psalm 77:2). For for the most part the rich of this world are wont, when affected with weariness of mind, to behold the goods received temporally, and to soothe their sadness. For when they feel themselves touched by a certain sorrow, they look upon their horses, they contemplate their vessels of gold and silver, they go around their estates. And when they willingly draw their eyes through these temporal things, they overcome the sorrow arisen in the soul. Whence also the Truth says to them in the Gospel: "Woe to you rich, who have your consolation here" (Luke 6:24). But the holy man who mourns this, because he fell from eternal joys, admits not consolation from temporal things, saying: "My soul refused to be comforted." As if he should say plainly: I who do not mourn concerning the loss of temporal things, can by no means be comforted by the abundance of temporal things. To whom as if we hearing these things should say: What then dost thou seek, who refusest to be comforted in these things which are of the world? he immediately added: "I was mindful of God, and was delighted" (Psalm 77:3). As if he should say plainly: Neither the abundance of earthly things refreshes me, but only the memory of my Author, whom I cannot yet prevail to see, delights me. This is, therefore, the bitterness of

the wise, because while they are raised up by hope into high things, they lay low their mind by no joys here. For hence it is written: "The heart of the wise is where sadness is, and the heart of fools where mirth" (Eccl. 7:4). Hence James says: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, and let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness" (James 4:9). Hence the Truth Himself witnesses, saying: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:4). Wisdom, therefore, cannot be found in their land who live sweetly, because they are by so much the more truly fools, as losing greater things, they rejoice in the least. Hence Peter rebukes the same folly of the wicked, saying: "Accounting as pleasure the delights of the day, spots and blemishes" (2 Pet. 2:13). Hence Solomon says: "I counted laughter an error, and said to mirth: Why art thou vainly deceived?" (Eccl. 2:2). Let the holy man therefore say concerning wisdom: "Neither is it found in the land of them that live sweetly," because forsooth they who live sweetly in this world are still so foolish, that they know not even this very thing, whence they fell. It follows:

CAPUT XLII

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 14.---The abyss saith, It is not in me.

67. They are alien from the wisdom of God, who savor according to the flesh and the world.---What does he call the "abyss" in this place but the hearts of men? which are both fluid

through the fall and dark through the darkness of duplicity. Which abyss, namely, professes that this wisdom is not in itself, because the iniquitous mind, while it desires to be wise carnally, shows itself foolish as to spiritual things. For because, as Paul witnesses, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor. 3:19), by so much the more does each one become foolish within, as he endeavors to seem wise without. Concerning this abyss it is said by John: "I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand; and he apprehended the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and sent him into the abyss, and closed it, and sealed over him, that he should no longer seduce the nations, until the thousand years should be consumed" (Rev. 20:1-3). For by the number of a thousand he designated not the quantity of time, but the universality in which the Church reigns. But the old serpent, bound with a chain, is sent into the abyss, because being bound from the hearts of the good, and shut up in the minds of the reprobate, he rules over them more atrociously. Who also a little after is described as being brought forth from the pit of the abyss, because from the hearts of the iniquitous now raging secretly, then, having received power against the Church, he shall break forth into the force of open persecution. This abyss, therefore, in which the devil is now kept hidden, says that wisdom is not in itself, because it shows itself alien from true wisdom by iniqui-

tous works. For while each one covers malice in his heart, but exhibits flatteries with his mouth, while he clouds his thoughts with duplicity, while he avoids words of purity as it were fatuity, while he declines the ways of simple innocence, the abyss as it were refuses that it has the wisdom of God. And because minds devoted to this world are perturbed by the cares and solicitudes of the present life, and therefore can by no means enjoy the tranquility of the same wisdom, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIII.

IBID.---And the sea saith, It is not with me.

68. They do not enjoy it, who are distracted by earthly cares.---For what is signified by the name of the "sea" but the bitter restlessness of worldly minds? Which, while they attack each other in turn with hostilities, clash like opposing waves. For rightly is the life of worldly men called a sea, because while it is tossed by the tempestuous motions of actions, it is disjoined from the quiet and stability of internal wisdom. On the contrary, it is well said by the Prophet: "Upon whom shall my spirit rest, but upon the humble and quiet, and him that trembleth at my words?" (Isa. 66:2). But the spirit flees the further from earthly minds, the more it finds no rest in them. Hence it is that it is said of certain persons by the Psalmist: "Contrition and unhappiness are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known" (Ps. 14:3). From which contrition of perturbation, namely, the Lord recalls us, saying: "Come to me

all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29). For what in this life is more laborious than to be in a heat with earthly desires? or what here is more quiet than to desire nothing of this world?

[Vet. XXVIII.] Hence it is that the Israelitish people received the keeping of the Sabbath as a gift (Exod. 16:29); hence on the contrary is Egypt struck with a multitude of flies (Exod. 8:21). For the people that follows God receives the Sabbath, that is, rest of mind, so that it may be fatigued by no appetite for carnal desires in this life. But Egypt, which holds the form of this world, is struck with flies. For the fly is an exceedingly insolent and restless animal. In which what else are designated but the insolent cares of carnal desires? Whence it is said elsewhere: "Dying flies lose the sweetness of the ointment" (Eccl. 10:1), because superfluous thoughts, which are both born and fail continually in the mind thinking carnal things, lose that sweetness with which each one is anointed within by the spirit, since they do not permit him to enjoy its integrity. Egypt, therefore, is struck with flies, because the hearts of those who love earthly life, while they are struck by the restlessness of their desires, are depressed to the lowest depths by crowds of carnal thoughts, so that they are not raised to the desire of inward rest. Whence, when with the wonderful aid of piety truth comes to the heart, it first ejects from it the heat of carnal thoughts,

and afterwards disposes in it the gifts of virtues. Which the sacred history of the Gospel well intimates to us, in which, while the Lord being invited was led to raise the daughter of the ruler, it is immediately added: "And when the crowd was cast out, He went in, and took her hand, and the girl arose" (Matt. 9:25). The crowd, therefore, is cast out of doors, that the girl may be raised, because if the importunate multitude of worldly cares is not first expelled from the more secret parts of the heart, the soul which lies dead within does not arise. For while it scatters itself through innumerable thoughts of earthly desires, it by no means collects itself to the consideration of itself. Recognizing, therefore, that wisdom cannot dwell in these waves of restlessness, he says: "And the sea saith, It is not with me." For no one fully receives it, unless he strives to abstract himself from every fluctuation of carnal actions. Whence also it is said elsewhere: "Write wisdom in the time of leisure, and he that is lessened in action, he shall perceive it" (Ecclus. 38:24). And again: "Be still, and see, that I am God" (Ps. 46:10).

[Vet. XXIX.] 69. Unless they are served not with earthly study.---But what is it that we know many of the ancient fathers both to have held this wisdom lively within, and to have solemnly ministered the cares of the world without (Gen. 42:43, etc.)? Or do we say that Joseph was deprived of the perception of this wisdom, who, undertaking the cares of all Egypt in the time of famine, not only provided food for the Egyptians,

but also saved the life of the strangers coming by the art of his ministry? Or did Daniel stand alien from this wisdom, who, being made prince of the magistrates in Babylonia by the king of the Chaldeans, was occupied with so much greater cares, as he was also preferred above all by a more sublime dignity (Dan. 2:48)? Since, therefore, it is evident that even the good are for the most part implicated in earthly cares, not with earthly study, we plainly acknowledge that sometimes the citizens of Jerusalem pay forced services to Babylonia, just as often the citizens of Babylonia spend forced services on Jerusalem. For there are some who preach the word of life for the sole ostentation of wisdom, and minister the aid of alms for the appetite of vain glory. And indeed they seem to be of Jerusalem what they do, but nevertheless they are citizens of Babylonia.

70. We must desire to be at leisure for God alone, and external cares must be served out of the will of God.---Thus, then, it sometimes happens that they who love only the heavenly country, seem to be subject to the cares of the earthly country. Whose ministry, nevertheless, is for the most part discerned from the works of the wicked in act, but sometimes before the heavenly Judge in thought alone. For those full of heavenly wisdom discern how they ought both to be at leisure for one thing within, and to be occupied with another without; so that if by the secret ordination of God anything of the cares of this world is imposed on them not desiring it, they may yield to God whom they love, and for

the love of Him may desire only the vision of Him within; but for the fear of Him may humbly fulfill the action imposed on them without, so that they may both desire to be at leisure for God by the grace of love, and again may fulfill the superimposed cares by the condition of servitude. And when occupations make a noise without, a most peaceful rest is held in love within; and reason, the judge presiding within, dispenses the tumults of occupations making a noise without, and disposes with a tranquil moderation those things which around itself are less tranquil. For as the vigor of the mind presides over the motions of the flesh which are to be bridled, so often the love of quiet well rules the superimposed tumults of occupation, because exterior cares, if they are not desired with a perverse love, can be ministered not with a confused but with an ordered mind. For holy men by no means desire them, but groan at those superimposed on them by a secret order; and although they flee them by a better intention, yet they bear them by a subject mind. Which indeed they hasten to avoid to the utmost, if it be permitted; but fearing the secret dispensations of God, they hold what they flee, and exercise what they avoid. For they enter into their heart, and there they consult what the secret will of God wills; and knowing that they ought to be subject to the highest ordinations, they humble the neck of the heart to the yoke of divine dispensation. But whoever is such, whatever tumults are turned without, they never reach to his interior parts. Thus it is brought about that one

thing is held within by vow, another without by office; and with this wisdom not now turbulent and confused, but tranquil hearts are filled. Well, therefore, is it said of it, that "The abyss saith: It is not in me, and the sea saith: It is not with me." As if it were plainly said: The perturbed minds of worldly men cry out by that very fact, since they are far divided from true wisdom, in that they are not quiet. But because this wisdom of God, remaining with the Father before the ages, was to be incarnate at the end of the ages, that for the redeeming of the human race He might not send holy angels, nor just men, but might come by Himself in the manifestation of vision, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIV

[Rec. XXVI].

VERSE 15.---Pure gold shall not be given for it.

71. Angels are free from every stain of the world, not men.---For what are designated by "pure gold" but the holy angels? Who are rightly called both gold and pure: gold, because they shine with the brightness of justice; pure, because they have never had any contagion of fault. But just men, as long as they live mortally in this corruptible flesh, can indeed be gold, but they can by no means be pure, because "the body which is corrupted burdens the soul, and the earthly habitation presses down the sense thinking many things" (Wisd. 9:15). For although in this life they shine from the great brightness of justice, they

are by no means purely free from the dregs of sins; the Apostle John attesting, who says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8); and James affirming, who asserts, saying: "For in many things we all offend" (James 3:2). The Prophet also praying, who says: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. 143:2). They are called pure gold, who, enduring in that innocence in which they were created, both shine with the brightness of justice, and are stained by no dregs of fault, even the least.

[Vet. XXX.] 72. Yet none of the angels was sent to redeem man, or is sufficient.---But because for this wisdom no one of the angels was to be sent as the redeemer of the human race, lest anyone should place hope in those angels whom we have learned to have often appeared for the aid of men, it is said: "Pure gold shall not be given for it." As if it were plainly said: Wisdom shall be manifested by itself, that the human race may be redeemed from fault. No angel is sent in its stead, because it is necessary that the creature be liberated by the Creator. Whence also in the Gospel the Lord says: "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). But the holy man, filled with the spirit of the same wisdom, foresaw that there would not be wanting some in Judea who would place hope in the lawgiver, and would think Moses the author of their salvation, as also slandering a certain healed man they say: "Be thou his

disciple, for we are the disciples of Moses" (John 9:28). Whence it is still congruously subjoined:

CHAPTER XLV.

IBID.---Neither shall silver be weighed in exchange for it.

73. The madness of those who think Moses or any of the saints the author of their salvation.--- For because by silver the divine elocutions are often designated, by the word silver can also be understood the writers of the same elocution, whose life shone among the crowds of men with the light of virtues. But because the law could indicate sins, not take them away, no one of the ancient fathers, not the lawgiver Moses, stood as the redeemer of the human race. Silver, therefore, is not weighed in exchange for this wisdom, because whoever the saints might have been, in comparison of the only-begotten Son of God they are weighed to have been of no merit, who unless they had known themselves to be servants of this wisdom, would by no means have been saints. For to this end they were sent, that they might prepare the way for this wisdom in the hearts of men by preaching, not that they should rule the subject peoples in its stead, but through it. For because it was certain that through the access of times the languors of the failing age would increase, it was brought about that the eternal wisdom of God should come by itself at the end of the ages to this great patient and one of exceeding infirmity, that is, the human race lying languid through the whole world, so that preachers hav-

ing been sent first, as it were certain visitors, so much afterwards the greater power of the Physician might come, as much the more the disease of the patient had increased. But because no one is sent in its stead to save us, let it be rightly said: "Neither shall silver be weighed in exchange for it," since the life of the just preaching, with however much light of sanctity it may prevail, does not exchange for us the advent of heavenly wisdom by its presence. But there were many of the Gentiles who, being devoted to the disciplines of the wise of this world, would keep those things which are honest among men, and would believe themselves to be saved by the honesty kept, and would not now seek the Mediator of God and men, since they held as it were the sufficient doctrine of the philosophers for themselves. In contempt of whom it is presently subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVI

[Rec. XXVII].

VERSE 16.---It shall not be compared to the dyed colors of India.

74. How much the wisdom of God excels the philosophy that is painted with the brightness of speech. For what is understood by India, which sends forth a black people, but this world, in which the life of men is generated obscure through fault? Now the dyed colors of India are the wise ones of this world; who although they are foul through unbelief and mostly through action, yet before human eyes they are painted with

the color of a superficial honesty. But the coeternal wisdom of God is not compared to the dyed colors of India, because whoever understands this truly acknowledges how far it differs from those men whom the world has worshipped as wise. And the very words of its commandments differ from the wise ones of this world, who while they intend to eloquence, their sayings appear as if beautiful in appearance and by the painting of a dye; and since they lack the virtue of things, they lie that they are something other than they are by compositions of words, as if by colors laid over. But on the contrary, the doctrine of wisdom is beautiful both in preaching and conspicuous in pure truth; nor does it pretend one thing outwardly through fallacy and reserve another inwardly; nor in its sayings does it desire to seem beautiful by the brightness of speech, but by the integrity of truth. In its commandments, therefore, the wisdom of God is not compared to the dyed colors of India, because while it has not the painted ornaments of eloquence, it pleases as a garment without dye. Which painting of a dye Paul had rightly despised when he said: "Which things also we speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the doctrine of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:13). For he preferred to show this wisdom by the sole purity of truth, but not to paint it over with the dye of eloquence. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVII.

IBID.---Nor to the most precious sardonyx stone, or the sapphire.

75. No one either of men or of angels is to be compared to Christ. Who does not know that the sardonyx or the sapphire are not precious stones? And while there are many other stones that are precious, which far excel these in the estimation of their greatness, why are the sapphire or the sardonyx especially named as precious, since both these stones are very cheap in comparison with other stones? unless it be that while we know those stones which are described as precious are not precious, we should seek something else in the understanding of them. For the sardonyx holds a likeness to red earth, while the sapphire has an airy appearance. Therefore, in the sardonyx men may be designated by the red earth, and in the sapphire angels by the airy vision. For since the sardonyx stone has the appearance of red earth, not without reason does it designate man, because Adam also, who was first created, is called in the Latin language "red earth." What is it then that is said, because this wisdom is not compared to the sardonyx stone or the sapphire, except that He who is the power of God and the wisdom of God, namely the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, excels all things with such greatness that neither the first men on earth nor the angels in heaven are compared to Him? Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: "Who in the clouds shall be equal to the Lord, or who shall be like to God among the sons of God?" (Ps. 88:7).

76. How much the celibate Apostles excel the married Fathers of the Old Testament. Moreover,

by the sardonyx stone the fathers of the Old Testament may be expressed, and by the sapphire the preachers of the New Testament. For they, although they held a life of great righteousness, yet served carnal propagation. Because, therefore, it is clear that they performed certain earthly things, not without reason are they designated by the sardonyx stone, which, as we said before, holds the appearance of red earth. By the sapphire, indeed, which is of an ethereal color, we fitly understand the preachers of the New Testament, who, postponing the desires of carnal offspring, followed heavenly things alone. Whence also the Prophet, beholding the holy Apostles transcending all the desires of the flesh with spiritual ardor, said in admiration: "Who are these that fly as clouds?" (Isa. 60:8). As if he should say openly: We walk upon the earth, who are still involved in marriages and bestow the works of the flesh for the propagation of offspring; but these walk not on the earth, but fly as clouds, who while they seek heavenly things, touch nothing of earthly desires. He says, therefore, that the wisdom of God is not compared to the sardonyx or the sapphire stone, as if he should plainly insinuate, saying: To Him who is seen as a man among men, no one either among the ancient or among the new fathers is equal, because He has from His Divinity that which has no one like Him in His humanity. Whence it is further subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERSE 17.---Gold or glass shall not be equal to it.

77. The blessed shall shine in heaven like gold, and be transparent like glass. Who that is of sound mind would deign to understand this according to the letter? For glass, as we said above, is far cheaper than gold; and after it was said that gold is not equalled to this wisdom, it is still subjoined as if in increasing order that glass also cannot be equalled to it. But the letter itself, failing of a historical understanding, sends us to search out the mystery of allegory. For we know that the metal of gold shines with a brightness superior to all metals. But it is of the nature of glass that, seen from without, it shines with a pure transparency within. In another metal, whatever is contained within is hidden; but in glass, whatever liquid is contained inside is shown such from without, and, so to speak, every liquid closed in a glass vessel is open to view. What else then do we understand by gold or glass, except that heavenly country, that society of blessed citizens, whose hearts shine with brightness toward one another, and are transparent with purity? Which John had beheld in the Apocalypse when he said: "And the building of the wall thereof was of jasper stone; but the city itself was pure gold, like to clear glass" (Apoc. 21:18). For because all the saints shall shine in it with the highest brightness of beatitude, it is said to be built of gold.

78. In their countenances the innermost feelings of the mind are beheld. And because their very brightness is mutually open to one another

in their alternate hearts, and when the countenance of each one is attended to, the conscience is at the same time penetrated, this same gold is recorded to be like clear glass. For there the massiveness of the limbs will not hide the mind of each one from the eyes of another, but the soul will be open, and even the harmony of the body will be open to bodily eyes, and thus each one will then be visible to another, as he cannot now be visible to himself. But now our hearts, as long as we are in this life, because they cannot be seen by one another, are enclosed not within glass, but within earthen vessels; to which clay, indeed, through the passion of the mind the Prophet feared to adhere when he said: "Deliver me out of the mire, that I may not stick fast" (Ps. 68:15). Which habitation of bodies, doubtless, Paul calls an earthly house, saying: "For we know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1). In this earthly house, therefore, as long as we live, we by no means penetrate the very wall, so to speak, of our corruption with the eyes of the mind, and we cannot mutually see hidden things in others. Whence the holy Church, desiring to see the appearance of her Spouse in His Divinity, and yet not being able, because the assumed humanity hid from her eyes the form of that eternity which she had concupisced to behold, says mourning in the Song of Songs: "Behold, He standeth behind our wall" (Cant. 2:9). As if she should say openly: I desire to see Him now in the appearance of His

Divinity, but as yet I am excluded from the vision of Him by the wall of the assumed flesh. As long, therefore, as we live in this corruptible flesh, we do not see our thoughts in one another. Whence again it is said by the same Paul: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor. 2:11). And again: "Judge not before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5). That city, therefore, which manifests its hearts to each one in turn, is said to be of gold like to clear glass, that it may be designated as bright with gold and transparent with glass.

79. How the saints are both like and unlike God. But although all the saints in that city shine with such brightness and are transparent with such clarity, yet they cannot be equalled to that Wisdom from whose image they have all that they are. Well, therefore, is it said: "Gold or glass shall not be equal to it." For to this end all the saints arrive at those eternal joys, that they may be able to be like God, as it is written: "When He shall appear, we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). And yet it is written: "O Lord God of hosts, who is like to Thee?" (Ps. 88:9). And again: "Or who shall be like to God among the sons of God?" Whence therefore like, and whence not like, except because they shall be both like to this Wisdom according to the image, and yet they shall not be so according to equality? For by beholding the eternity of

God, it comes to them that they are eternal; and while they receive the gift of His vision, from the perception of beatitude they imitate what they see. And they are therefore like, because they are made blessed; and yet they are not like to the Creator, because they are a creature. And they have, therefore, a certain likeness to God, because they have no end; and yet they have not the equality of the Uncircumscribed, who have circumscription. Let it be rightly said, therefore: "Gold or glass shall not be equal to it," because with however much brightness and transparency the saints may shine, it is one thing for men to be wise in God, and another thing for a man to be the Wisdom of God. Which Wisdom, indeed, he truly acknowledged, who presumed not at all to compare any of the saints to the Mediator of God and men. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIX

[Vet. XXXIII].

IBID.---Neither shall high and eminent vessels of gold be exchanged for it.

80. All the saints must be passed through, that one may arrive at Christ, God and man. Indeed, Elias was a high vessel of gold, Jeremias a high vessel of gold, the former fathers were high and eminent vessels of gold. But this Wisdom of God, that He might redeem us from a carnal conversation, appeared in the flesh, and he who did not truly acknowledge it, thought that the man Jesus Christ, the Mediator of God and men, was

one of the prophets, whom the eyes of the elect held by faith to be God when they saw a man. Whence it is said by Him to His holy disciples: "Whom do men say that the Son of man is?" (Matt. 16:13). To which when they immediately replied: "Some John the Baptist, others Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets" (Ibid., 14), they are presently asked of their own sense: "But whom say ye that I am?" (Ibid., 15). To which Peter immediately replying with the voice of the whole Church, says: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Ibid., 16). Because, therefore, according to the voice of Paul, we know Christ to be the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:18, 30), Peter would not exchange high and eminent vessels of gold for this Wisdom, because he understood of it nothing other than it was. For, as has been said, John was a great vessel of gold, Elias or Jeremias was a great vessel of gold. But whoever believed the same God to be any one of them, exchanged a high and eminent vessel of gold for Wisdom. But the Church for this Wisdom does not exchange high and eminent vessels of gold, because she believes Christ the Son of God to be not one of the prophets, but the one Lord of the prophets. For seeing that Wisdom itself had come to her, she would not fix herself in those golden vessels, but she strove to pass through them with the most certain faith. Whence she says in the Song of Songs: "The watchmen who keep the city found me. Have you seen him whom my soul loveth? When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loveth" (Cant.

3:3). For whom do we understand by the watchmen who keep the city, except the former Fathers or prophets, who strove to watch for our custody with the voice of holy preaching? But when the Church sought her Redeemer, she would not fix her hope in those ancient preachers, as she says: "When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loveth" (Ibid., 3:4). For she could not have found Him if she had been unwilling to pass through them. In these watchmen the unfaithful had fixed themselves, who believed Christ the Son of God to be any one of them. By the voice, therefore, and faith of Peter, the holy Church passed by the watchmen she had found, she who contemned to believe the Lord of the prophets to be any one of the prophets. Let it be said, therefore: "Neither shall high and eminent vessels of gold be exchanged for it," because the elect both venerate the life of the saints for its sublimity, and yet do not receive it to the point of error. For those whom they know to be pure men, they by no means compare to the God-man. Whence it is further subjoined:

CHAPTER L.

VERSE 18.---Nor shall they be mentioned in comparison with it.

81. All the heavenly citizens are holy and just, but by participation in divine wisdom, not by comparison. For all the elect of the heavenly country are indeed holy and just; but by participation in wisdom, not by comparison. For what are men compared to God? Moreover, wisdom

is called light, and the servants of wisdom are also accustomed to be called light. But that is the light illuminating, these are the light illuminated, as it is written: "That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" (John 1:9). But to these it is only said: "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). Wisdom, indeed, is called justice, and the servants of wisdom are called justice; but that is justice justifying, while these are justice justified. For of God, who is wisdom, it is said: "That He Himself may be just, and the justifier" (Rom. 3:26); but these say: "That we might be made the justice of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). In one way, therefore, is the light illuminating to be venerated, in another way the light illuminated; in one way justice justifying, in another way justice justified. But Wisdom is, and is wise; nor has it one thing to be, and another to be wise; but the servants of wisdom can indeed be wise, yet they have not this as being identical with being wise; for they can be, and yet not be wise. Wisdom has life, but it has not one thing and is another, seeing that to it to be is to live. But the servants of wisdom when they have life, are one thing and have another, since to them to be is not the same as to live; for they can be according to something, and yet not live. For to them it is one thing to be, and another to live, because in their first parent they had essence by beginning, and life by accession; since man was first made of the earth, and afterwards, as it is written: "He breathed into his face the breath of life, and man was made into a living

soul" (Gen. 2:7). But Wisdom has essence, it has life; but that which it has, it is itself. Therefore it lives unchangeably, because it lives not by accident, but essentially. It alone, therefore, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, truly is, compared to whose essence our being is non-being. If we are joined to this, we are, we live, we are wise; if we are compared to this, we are not wise, nor do we live at all, nor are we.

82. The more the saints know God, the more they become vile to themselves. Hence it is that all the saints, when they profit in the vision of God, the more they behold the internal things of the Divinity, the more they know themselves to be nothing. For it is nowhere read that Abraham professed himself to be ashes and dust, except when he merited to have speech with God. For he says: "I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27). For perhaps he would believe himself to be something, if he had least felt the true essence which is above him. But in truth when he was snatched up to contemplate the Unchangeable above himself, filled with such power of contemplation, while he saw Him, he saw himself to be nothing but dust. Hence it is also that the Prophet, filled with the same wisdom, exclaims: "Remember, O Lord, that we are dust" (Ps. 102:15). Who again, having contemplated the unchangeability of the same essence, says: "All of them shall grow old like a garment, and as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (Ps. 101:27, 28). Hence it

is said to Moses: "I AM WHO I AM; and thou shalt say to the children of Israel: HE WHO IS hath sent me to you" (Exod. 3:14, 15). For He alone truly is, who alone remains unchangeably. For everything that is now thus, and now otherwise, is close to non-being. For it cannot remain in its own state. And in some way one goes toward non-being, while from that which one had been, one is always led to something else through moments of time. That we may therefore be something in the participation of that essence, let us know ourselves, because we are almost nothing. Well, therefore, is it said: "Neither shall they be mentioned in comparison with it," because the high and eminent vessels of gold, which are to be venerated by us from their participation in wisdom, are not even to be mentioned in comparison with wisdom. But because this wisdom is infused secretly into human hearts, even as it was also said of the Holy Spirit: "The Spirit breatheth where He will, and thou hearest His voice, and thou knowest not whence He cometh, or whither He goeth" (John 3:8), therefore it is subjoined:

CHAPTER LI.

IBID.---For wisdom is drawn from hidden places.

83. The wisdom of God revealed from hidden places. The Church, when open enemies were wanting, began to be tempted by her own. Wisdom is drawn from hidden places, because, since it is invisible, it is not found except invisibly. Which is also rightly said to be drawn, because as

we draw breath that the body may live, so from the inmost parts the spirit of wisdom is drawn, that the soul may subsist unto life. Whence the Psalmist says: "I opened my mouth, and drew in the spirit" (Ps. 118:131). Because, indeed, Wisdom, having taken human flesh with a rational soul, when it had appeared openly from the inmost parts, this world, because it could not see its invisible Author, acknowledged Him as invisible God whom it beheld as visible man. The Gentiles, formerly proud in their aversion, were converted from the darkness of their unbelief; faith increased as signs and wonders were shown; and faith being propagated, the height of the holy Church shone forth in the veneration of all. When open adversaries were wanting to her, she began to be tempted by her own. For many heresies also, having arisen in her, prepared wars of hard contest against her. For she must be exercised by labor at this time, who in the following time tends toward reward. From which circumstance it came to pass that some came forth in her, who said that the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, was a pure man created, but deified by grace; and they attributed to Him only as much sanctity as they had acknowledged in the rest of the saints, His servants. Whom blessed Job, inspired with the spirit of prophecy, refuted by the definition of his sentence, saying:

CHAPTER LII

[Vet. XXXV].

VERSE 19.---The topaz from Ethiopia shall not be equal to it.

84. They are refuted who teach that Christ is like the rest of the saints, as a pure man. What do we understand by Ethiopia but this present world? which by its blackness of color designates a sinful people, by the foulness of their merits. But sometimes by the name of Ethiopia the Gentiles are specifically designated, formerly black with the sins of unbelief. Whom the prophet Habakkuk saw terrified with fear at the coming of the Lord, and said: "The tents of Ethiopia are in dread, the curtains of the land of Midian" (Habak. 3:7). David also the prophet, seeing that the Lord would come to redeem Judea, but that the Gentiles would believe first, and Judea would follow afterwards, as it is written: "Until the fullness of the Gentiles should come in, and so all Israel should be saved" (Rom. 11:25); says: "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God" (Ps. 67:32); that is, before Judea believes, the black Gentility of sins offers herself to be saved by Almighty God. Now the topaz is a precious stone; and because in the Greek language *pan* means "all," because it shines with every color, it is called *topazium*, as if *topantium*. But while the Gentiles, converted to God, believed, many of them were so enriched by the gift of His Spirit that, as if with many colors, so they shine with many virtues. But lest anyone should be extolled by the virtues he has received, it is now said by the holy man: "The topaz from Ethiopia shall not be equal to it." As if he should say openly: No one of the saints, full

of whatever virtues, yet gathered from that blackness of the world, can be equal to Him of whom it is written: "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). For we, although we are made holy, yet are not born holy, because we are bound by the very condition of our corruptible nature, so that we say with the Prophet: "For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 50:7). But He alone was truly born holy, who, that He might overcome that very condition of corruptible nature, was not conceived from the mixture of carnal union.

85. The insanity of Nestorius against Christ. Who taught that He, although a pure man, attained by merits to become God. It is refuted. The manner of the Incarnation of the Word. Christ is one thing from the Father, another from His mother, but not another person. To this Wisdom a certain heresiarch wished to equal himself, as if a certain topaz from Ethiopia, when he said: "I envy not Christ made God, since if I will, I myself can become so." Who thought Jesus Christ our Lord to be God, not through the mystery of conception, but through the progress of grace, asserting by a perverse allegation that He was born a pure man, but had progressed through merit to be God, and on this account estimating that both he and any others could be co-equalled to Him, who are made sons of God by grace, not understanding, not attending to the fact that "the topaz from Ethiopia shall not be equal to it." For it is one thing for born men to receive

the grace of adoption, another for one uniquely to have come forth as God from the very conception by the power of the Divinity. Nor can the glory of the Only-begotten had by nature be equalled by another glory received by grace; for the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5), is not as this heretic dotes, one in humanity and another in Divinity. He was not conceived and brought forth a pure man, receiving afterwards through merit to be God, but at the announcement of the angel and the coming of the Spirit, presently the Word was in the womb, presently within the womb the Word was flesh, and while the unchangeable essence remained, which is coeternal with Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit, He assumed within the virginal bowels that from which He might both be able as impassible to suffer, and as immortal to die, and as eternal before ages to be temporal in the end of ages, so that through an ineffable sacrament, by a holy conception and an inviolable birth, according to the truth of both natures, the same Virgin was both the handmaid of the Lord and His mother. For so it was said to her by Elizabeth: "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43). And the Virgin herself conceiving said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word" (Ibid., 1:38). And although He is one thing from the Father, another from the Virgin, yet He is not another person from the Father, another from the Virgin, but He is the same who is eternal from the Father, the same who is temporal from His

mother; the same who made, the same who was made; the same who is beautiful in form above the sons of men through His Divinity, and the same of whom it is said: "We have seen Him, and there was no sightliness, and there is no sightliness in Him, nor comeliness" (Isa. 53:2), through His humanity. He is the same before the ages from the Father without a mother, the same in the end of the ages from His mother without a father. He is the same temple, the same builder of the temple; the same author of the work, the same work of the author; remaining one from both and in both natures, neither confused by the coupling of the natures, nor doubled by the distinction of the natures. But because we have not undertaken to treat of these things, let us return to the order of exposition.

86. Recapitulation of the things said above. We must note that the holy man, that he might demonstrate the angels to be far distant from this Wisdom, says: "Pure gold shall not be given for it." Who that he might also show the ancient Fathers, the treaters of sacred eloquence, to be inferior, added: "Neither shall silver be weighed in exchange for it." That he might show the wisdom of philosophers also to be far beneath this, he brought in: "It shall not be compared to the dyed colors of India." And he subjoined: "Nor to the most precious sardonyx stone, or the sapphire." That he might demonstrate that in that heavenly city also no one arrives at the equality of the Only-begotten, he added: "Gold or glass shall not be equal to it." That he might show

the prophets also to be beneath Him, he added: "Neither shall high and eminent vessels of gold be exchanged for it, nor shall they be mentioned in comparison with it. For wisdom is drawn from hidden places." At the last, indeed, that he might also rebuke those heretics in the Church, who coming from the error of Gentility, rend by pride the faith which they receive, he added: "The topaz from Ethiopia shall not be equal to it." As if he should plainly insinuate, saying: These who from the blackness of sin come to conversion, cannot be equalled to the God-man, although they may seem to resplend with many virtues of colors. Whose pride that it may be refuted, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER LIII.

IBID.--- "Neither shall the purest dyes be matched [with it]."

87. The truly humble and holy are those who attribute nothing to their own merits.--- For those are called "purest dyes" (tincturae mundissimae) who are truly humble and truly holy, who indeed know that they do not have the appearance of virtues from themselves, but hold this from the gift of supervening grace. For they would not be "dyed" (tincti) if they had possessed holiness by nature. But they are "purest dyes," because they humbly guard the grace of virtues supervening in them which they have received. Hence it is that it is said of the holy Church by the voice of the Bridegroom: "Who is she that cometh up whitened?" (Cant. 6:9;

3:6). For because the holy Church does not have heavenly life by nature, but by the supervening Spirit is composed in the beauty of gifts, she is mentioned not as "white," but as "whitened" (dealbata). And it is to be noted that when he had said above, "It shall not be compared to the dyed colors of India," he did not bring in those same colors as "pure." But in this place, that he might distinguish the dye of true virtues from that painting of philosophers, in saying "dyes," he added "purest." For those are rightly named "purest dyes" who were previously foul through wicked works, yet by the supervening Spirit are clothed with the brightness of grace, so that they appear to be far other than they were. Whence also baptism, that is, "dyeing" (tinctio), is called our very descent into the water. For we are dyed, and we who were previously uncomely by the deformity of vices, upon the reception of faith are rendered beautiful by the grace and ornament of virtues. It follows:

CHAPTER LIV

[Rec. XXVIII].

VERSES 20, 21.--- "Whence then cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding? It is hidden from the eyes of all living."

88. As long as we live mortally, we see God not in His own nature, but through certain images, unless we first die to carnal life, its love being utterly extinguished.---It is to be considered with great care that it is asked by the holy man whence

wisdom comes. For it comes from Him from whom it arose. But because it is born from the invisible and coeternal Father, its way is hidden. Whence also it is said by the prophet: "Who shall declare His generation?" (Isa. 53:8). But the place of its understanding is the human mind, which this wisdom of God, while it shall have filled it, makes holy. Because therefore both He from whom it proceeded is invisible, and it is uncertain to us in whose mind understood it rests, it is rightly now said: "Whence then cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding?" (Vet. 37). But this is very wonderful which is immediately subjoined: "It is hidden from the eyes of all living." For the wisdom which is God, if it were hidden from the eyes of all living, none of the saints would doubtless have seen it. But behold, I hear John agreeing with this sentence, who says: "No man hath seen God at any time" (1 John 4:12). And again when I look upon the fathers of the Old Testament, I know many of them to have seen God, as the history of the sacred reading itself testifies. For Jacob saw the Lord, who says: "I have seen the Lord face to face, and my soul has been saved" (Gen. 32:30). Moses saw God, of whom it is written: "The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend" (Exod. 33:11). The same Job saw the Lord, who says: "With the hearing of the ear I have heard thee, but now mine eye seeth thee" (Job 42:5). Isaiah saw the Lord, who says: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated" (Isa. 6:1). Micah saw the Lord,

who says: "I saw the Lord sitting upon His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on the right hand and on the left" (1 Kings 22:19). What is it then that so many fathers of the Old Testament testified that they had seen God, and yet of this wisdom which is God, it is said: "It is hidden from the eyes of all living"; and John says: "No man hath seen God at any time" (1 John 4:12), unless this which is plainly given to be understood, because as long as it is lived mortally here, God can be seen through certain images, but through the very appearance of His nature He cannot be, so that the soul, inspired by the grace of the Spirit, may see God through certain figures, but may not reach to the very force of His essence? Hence it is that Jacob, who testifies that he had seen God, saw Him not but in an angel (Exod. 33:11). Hence it is that Moses, who spoke with God face to face, as a man is wont to speak with his friend, says to Him in the midst of the very words of his speaking: "If I have found grace in thy sight, show me thyself manifestly, that I may see thee" (Exod. 33:13). For surely if it were not God with whom he was speaking, he would say "show me God," and not "show me thyself." But if it were God with whom he was speaking face to face, why did he ask to see Him whom he saw? But from this his petition it is gathered that he thirsted to behold Him through the brightness of His uncircumscribed nature, whom he had already begun to see through certain images, so that the heavenly essence might be present to the eyes of his mind, in such wise that no created image

might intervene temporally for him for the vision of eternity. And therefore the fathers of the Old Testament saw the Lord, and yet, according to the voice of John: "No man hath seen God at any time" (John 4:12); and according to the sentence of blessed Job, the wisdom which is God is hidden from the eyes of all living, because to those consisting in this mortal flesh, He could both be seen through certain circumscribed images, and could not be seen through the uncircumscribed light of eternity.

89. But if by some still living in this corruptible flesh, but yet increasing in inestimable virtue, the eternal brightness of God can be seen by a certain sharpness of contemplation; this also is not abhorrent to the sentence of blessed Job, who says: "It is hidden from the eyes of all living"; since whoever sees the wisdom which is God, dies utterly to this life, lest he be held now by its love. For no one has seen it who still lives carnally, because no one can at the same time embrace God and the world. For he who sees God, by that very fact dies, in that either by the intention of the heart, or by the effect of the work, he is separated with his whole mind from the delights of this life. Whence it is said as yet to the same Moses: "For man shall not see me, and live" (Exod. 33:21). As if it were plainly said: No one ever sees God spiritually, and lives carnally to the world. Whence Paul the apostle also, who as yet had known the invisible things of God in part, as he himself testifies (1 Cor. 13:12), already declared himself to be altogether dead to this world, saying: "To me the

world is crucified, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14). For as we have said far above, it was not enough that he should say, "I am crucified to the world," unless he also premised, "To me the world is crucified," that he might testify not only that he was dead to the world, but also that the world was dead to him, in so far as neither he should seek the world, nor the world now seek him. For if by chance two be in one place, of whom one is alive, but the other be dead, although the dead man sees not the living, yet the living man sees the dead. But the preacher of God, that he might show that through the rejection by which he had cast himself down by humbling himself, he had already become such that neither he should covet the world, nor the world him, not only said that he was crucified to the world, so that he himself should not see the glory of the world which he should seek, as one dead, but also asserted the world to be crucified to him, in whom he had cast himself down in so great humility, that even the world as if dead to him could by no means now see the humble and despised Paul.

90. Those are refuted who assert that God is seen by the blessed only in brightness, not in His nature.---But it is to be known that there were some who said that God even in that region of beatitude is indeed beheld in His brightness, but by no means seen in His nature. Whom doubtless a lesser subtlety of inquisition deceived. For to that simple and unchangeable essence, brightness is not one thing and nature another, but His very nature is His brightness, His very brightness

is His nature. For because this wisdom of God would some time show itself to its lovers, He Himself promises, saying: "He that loveth me, shall be loved by my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21). As if He should plainly say: You who behold me in yours [nature], it remains that you should see me in my nature. Hence again He says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Hence Paul says: "Now we see through a glass in a riddle, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know as I also am known" (1 Cor. 13:12).

91. Those are also refuted who dream that the angels are void of the divine vision.---But because it is said of God by the first preacher of the Church: "Into whom the angels desire to look" (1 Pet. 1:12), there are some who by no means suspect that the angels see God, and yet we know it was said by the sentence of the Truth: "Their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10). Does therefore the Truth sound one thing, and the preacher of the Truth another? But if both sentences are compared, it is recognized that they by no means disagree with each other. For the angels both see God, and desire to see Him; and they thirst to behold Him, and they behold Him. For if they so desire to see that they do not at all enjoy the effect of their desire, desire without fruit has anxiety, and anxiety has punishment. But the blessed angels are far from all punishment of anxiety, because punishment and beatitude never meet together.

Again, when we say that they are satiated with the vision of God, because the Psalmist also says: "I shall be satiated when thy glory shall be manifested" (Ps. 16:15), we must consider that fastidiousness [boredom] is wont to follow satiety. That therefore both may rightly agree together, let the Truth say: "Because they always see"; let the eminent preacher say: "Because they always desire to see." For lest there should be anxiety in desire, those desiring are satiated; but lest there should be fastidiousness in satiety, those satiated desire. And therefore they desire without labor, because satiety accompanies desire; and they are satiated without fastidiousness, because satiety itself is always kindled from desire. So also we shall be when we shall have come to the very fountain of life. There will be to us a thirst and satiety delightfully imprinted at the same time. But necessity is far from that thirst, and fastidiousness far from satiety, because both thirsting we shall be satiated, and satiated we shall thirst. We shall see God therefore, and He Himself will be the reward of our labor, so that after the darkness of this mortality, we may rejoice in His light having been approached.

92. In what sense God dwells in light inaccessible.---But when we say that His light is approached, it opposes the mind what Paul says: "Who dwelleth in light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (1 Tim. 6:16). And again I hear what the Psalmist says: "Approach to Him, and be enlightened" (Ps. 33:6). How then by approaching are we enlightened, if we see not

that very light by which we can be enlightened? But if by approaching to Him we see that very light by which we are enlightened, how is it asserted to be inaccessible? In which matter it is to be considered that he said "inaccessible" indeed to every man, to human wisdom. For sacred Scripture is wont to note all followers of carnal things by the name of humanity. Whence the same apostle says to certain disagreeing ones: "For whereas there is among you zeal and contention, are you not carnal, and walk according to man?" (1 Cor. 3:3, 4). To whom a little after he subjoins: "Are you not men?" And whence in another place he brought forth testimony: "That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). And when he had said this was hidden from men, he presently added: "But to us God hath revealed them by His Spirit" (Ibid.); discerning himself from the vocation of man, who being caught up above man already tasted divine things. So also in this place when he should assert the light of God to be inaccessible, that he might show to whom, he subjoined: "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see." Calling all who are wise according to human things "men" after his manner, because those who are wise according to divine things are surely above men. We shall see God therefore, if we deserve to be above men through heavenly conversation. Nor yet shall we see Him so as He sees Himself. For the Creator sees Himself far differently than the creature sees the Creator. For

as much as concerns the immensity of God, a certain measure of contemplation is fixed for us, because we are circumscribed by that very weight by which we are creatures.

BOOK NINETEEN.

Having brought the exposition from the last part of verse 21 of chapter 28 to verse 21 of the following chapter exclusively, various senses no less learnedly than piously are opened, especially concerning Christ and the Church. [Vet. et Rec. I] 1. What wonder if the eternal wisdom of God cannot be beheld, when even the invisible things themselves which were created by it cannot be comprehended by human eyes? In created things therefore we learn with how great humility the Creator of all is to be venerated, so that in this life the human mind may dare nothing for itself concerning the appearance of almighty God, which reward alone He keeps for His elect in the subsequent remuneration. Whence well after it was said: "It is hidden from the eyes of all living," it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER I.

JOB 28:21.--- "It is hidden also from the birds of the heaven."

2. The birds of heaven are sometimes taken in a bad part, sometimes in a good.---For in sacred Scripture the birds are sometimes understood in a bad, sometimes in a good sense. For by the birds are sometimes designated the powers of the air,

adverse to the studies of the good. Whence it is said by the mouth of the Truth: "Because the seed which fell by the way side, the birds came and ate it" (Matt. 13:4; Luke 8:5); because doubtless the malignant spirits, besieging human minds, while they suggest noxious thoughts, pluck away the word of life from the memory. Hence again it is said to a certain one wise in pride: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. 8:20; Luke 9:58). Foxes are very fraudulent animals, which hide themselves in ditches or caves; and when they have appeared, they never run by straight paths, but by tortuous windings. But birds, as we know, raise themselves into the air by a high flight. By the name of foxes therefore are designated the deceitful and fraudulent, but by the name of birds, these same proud demons. As if He should say: Fraudulent and elated demons find their habitation in your heart, that is, in the thought of pride; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head, that is, my humility findeth not rest in your proud mind. For as if by a certain flight of a bird that first one [Lucifer] lifted himself up, who said through elated thought: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the North, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:13). Behold how high he sought by flying proudly. Which flight he also persuaded to the first men. For they by flying as if attempted to go

above themselves, when it was said to them that they should taste, and be as gods (Gen. 3:5, 19). And while they sought the likeness of divinity, they lost the gifts of immortality (Ibid. 19). Who would not have gone into the earth by dying, if they had willed to stand humbly upon the earth.

3. But on the contrary, birds are wont to be put in a good sense, as in the Gospel the Lord, when He denounced the similitude of the kingdom of heaven from a grain of mustard seed, said: "To what is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? It is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew, and became a great tree, and the birds of the air rested in its branches" (Matt. 13:31). For He Himself is the grain of mustard seed who, being planted in the burial of the garden, rose a great tree. For it was a grain when He died, a tree when He rose again. A grain through the humility of the flesh, a tree through the power of majesty. A grain, because "we saw Him, and there was no sightliness" (Isa. 53:2); but a tree, because "beautiful in form above the sons of men" (Ps. 44:3). [Vet. II.] The branches of this tree are holy preachers. And let us see how widely they are stretched. For what is said of them? "Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world" (Ps. 18:5). In these branches the birds rest, because holy souls, which by certain wings of virtues raise themselves from earthly thought, breathe from the fatigue of this life in their sayings and consolations. In this place therefore, after it was said of

wisdom: "It is hidden from the eyes of all living," it is rightly subjoined: "It is hidden also from the birds of the heaven," because they also, consisting in this corruptible flesh, do not penetrate by seeing the power of its nature, who already fly through the merit of holy contemplation. Where it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER II

[Rec. II].

VERSE 22.--- "Destruction and death said: With our ears we have heard the fame thereof."

4. The proud angels, because they do not enjoy it, by no means see divine wisdom.--- Who are designated by the name of destruction and death but the malignant spirits? who stood forth as the inventors of death and destruction, as is said of their very prince under the appearance of his minister by John: "And his name was Death" (Rev. 6:8). To whom all the spirits of pride being subject say of this wisdom which is God: "With our ears we have heard the fame thereof"; because doubtless they were unable to have the vision of it in full beatitude. For to see the wisdom coeternal with God perfectly, this is what it is to have [it]. Whence it is said to John concerning the gift of the winner: "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth" (Rev. 2:17). For in this life we can know or see something even which we have not received; but to have a new name written in a stone, is to have in the

eternal reward a notice of God unusual to human senses, which no one can know but he who receives it. Because therefore, as we have said, to see God, this is what it is to have [Him], therefore the iniquitous spirits do not see this wisdom, because being repelled through pride they were by no means able to have it. For they closed the eyes of the heart to its light, resisting its superinfused rays, as can also be understood of those same malignant spirits, that which is written: "They themselves were rebels to the light" (Job 24:13). For the malignant spirits to have heard the fame of wisdom, but not to have seen the same wisdom, is both to have known its power from its virtue, and yet not to have willed to stand humbly under it. Whence also it is said by the voice of the Truth of the very head of the malignant spirits: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth" (John 8:44). It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSE 23.--- "God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof."

5. It was hidden from men when Wisdom was to come to men through the flesh; or how appearing without He should remain invisible with the Father.---This wisdom coeternal with God has a way in one sense, and a place in another. But if anyone understands a "place," it is not a local one. For God cannot be held corporally; but, as was said, a place is understood which is not local.

The place of wisdom is the Father, the place of the Father is wisdom, as is said by the testimony of Wisdom itself: "I in the Father, and the Father in me." In one way therefore wisdom itself has a way, and in another way a place. A way through the passage of humanity, but a place through the breath of divinity. [Vet. III.] For it does not pass from where it is eternal; but it passes from where it appeared temporal for us. For so it is written in the Gospel: "Because Jesus departing from Jericho was passing by; and two blind men sitting by the way side cried out, saying: Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David" (John 14:10, 11; Matt. 20:29, 30). At whose voice, as is written there, Jesus stood, and restored light. But what is it to hear in passing, to restore light while standing, unless that He had mercy on us through His humanity, who through the power of His divinity excluded from us the darkness of our mind? For that He was born and suffered for us, that He rose again, ascended into heaven, Jesus as it were passes, because this action is doubtless temporal. But standing He touched and enlightened them, because not as that temporal dispensation, so does the eternity of the Word pass, which remaining in itself renews all things. For the standing of God is to dispose all mutable things by unchangeable thought. He therefore who heard the voices of the petitioners in passing, restored light while standing, because although He bore temporal things for us, yet He bestowed light on us from where He knows not the passage of mutability. Because therefore when He should appear through the

flesh to men was uncertain, it is rightly now said: "God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof." As if it were plainly said: They are hidden to human thought, both when wisdom should come to men through the flesh, and how it should persist invisible with the Father, even when it shall have appeared without.

6. His coming and dwelling in the hearts of men are unknown.---Although this can also be understood otherwise. For His way is not inconveniently taken as this very thing that He comes to the heart, and pours Himself into us from within. But His place becomes the heart, to which coming He remains. Of this His way it is said: "The voice of one crying in the desert: Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (Matt. 3:3); that is, open the entrance in your heart to Wisdom as He comes, as is said elsewhere: "Make a way for Him who ascendeth above the setting" (Ps. 67:5). To ascend above the setting was to have overcome by rising again that very death which He had endured. He says therefore: "For Him who ascendeth above the setting, make a way"; that is, provide a way in your hearts through faith to the rising Lord. Hence it is said to John through the Spirit: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways" (Luke 1:76). For whoever by preaching cleanses the hearts of the hearers from the filth of vices, prepares a way for the coming wisdom. This wisdom therefore has a way, it has also a place: A way by which it comes, a place in which it remains, as He Himself says: "If any man love

me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him" (John 14:23). It is therefore a way by which He comes, a place in which He remains. But where does He come, who is everywhere? Or is the coming of wisdom to indicate the presence of its majesty through the enlightenment of our mind? And because it is uncertain to men either into whose heart He comes, or in whom having come He rests by remaining, it is rightly now said: "God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof," because it belongs to the divine vision alone to discern either in what ways the understanding of wisdom comes to the heart of man, or whose mind does not lose the understanding of life, which it has perceived, through deadly thoughts. And because this same wisdom manifested through the grace of humanity was about to fill the hearts of the elect in all parts of the world, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER IV

[Vet. IV].

VERSE 24.--- "For He beholdeth the ends of the world, and looketh upon all things that are under heaven."

God by looking upon us through grace reforms us.---7. For God to look back is to reform those things which had been lost and perished to His grace. Whence it is written: "A king that sitteth on the throne of judgment, dissipateth all evil

with his look" (Prov. 20:8). For by looking back He coerced the evils of our levity, and gave great merits of maturity. Whence it is subjoined:

CHAPTER V

[Rec. IV].

VERSE 25.---Who made a weight for the winds,

8. He fixes wandering souls and endows them with gravity.---For by the velocity and subtlety of the winds, souls are wont to be designated in Holy Scripture, as it is said of God by the Psalmist: "Who walketh upon the wings of the winds" (Ps. 104:3); that is, who transcends the virtues of souls. He therefore "made a weight for the winds," because while heavenly wisdom fills souls, it renders them grave by an implanted maturity; not with that gravity of which it is said: "O ye sons of men, how long will ye be dull (heavy) of heart?" (Ps. 4:2). For it is one thing to be grave through counsel, another through sin; one thing to be grave through constancy, another through fault. For this gravity has the weight of a burden, that of virtue. Therefore souls receive weight, that they may no longer leap away from the intention of God by a light motion, but may stand fast in Him, fixed by the gravity of constancy. That people was still moved lightly, of whom it is said by the prophet: "He went on wandering in the way of his own heart; I have seen his ways, and I have dismissed him" (Isai. 57:17). But the grave counsel of the heart expels all the

inconstancy of wandering. And since there are souls which by a light motion desire now these things, now those, Almighty God, because He does not lightly weigh those very light fluctuations of minds, judges the wandering of the heart by leaving it. But when through grace He looks upon a wandering mind, He fixes it in the stability of counsel. Rightly therefore is it now said: "Who made a weight for the winds," because when He mercifully deigns to look upon the light motions of the soul, He straightway forms it to the maturity of constancy. Or surely, to make a weight for the winds is to temper the glory of virtues granted here to the elect, by an intermixture of infirmity. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VI.

IBID.---And He weighed the waters by measure.

9. He tempers the virtues of the elect by an intermixture of infirmity, lest they be extolled. Waters in Holy Scripture are wont to designate sometimes the Holy Spirit, sometimes sacred knowledge, sometimes evil knowledge, sometimes tribulation, sometimes flowing peoples, sometimes the minds of those following the faith. For by water the infusion of the Holy Spirit is designated, as it is said in the Gospel: "He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). Where the Evangelist followed and added: "But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." Again,

by water sacred knowledge is designated, as it is said: "The water of wholesome wisdom shall give them to drink" (Ecclus. 15:3). By water also evil knowledge is wont to be called, as in Solomon the woman, who holds the type of heresy, flatters with crafty persuasions, saying: "Stolen waters are sweeter" (Prov. 9:17). By the name of waters also tribulations are sometimes wont to be understood, as it is said by the Psalmist: "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul" (Ps. 69:1). By water peoples are designated, as it is said by John: "The waters are peoples" (Rev. 17:15). By water also is designated not only the flux of decurrent peoples, but also the minds of the good, following the preachings of the faith, as the prophet says: "Blessed are ye that sow upon all waters" (Isai. 32:20). And it is said by the Psalmist: "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters" (Ps. 29:3). What therefore is signified in this place by the name of waters but the hearts of the elect, which have already received the hearing of the heavenly voice through the understanding of wisdom? Of whom it is rightly said: "And He weighed the waters by measure" [Vet. et Rec. V]. Because the saints themselves, who are snatched up to the highest things by the lifting up of the Holy Spirit, as long as they are in this life, are repressed by certain temptations, lest they should be proud with any elation, so that they may by no means be able to profit as much as they wish; but lest they should be extolled by pride, there is in them a certain measure of those very virtues.

10. Which is confirmed by the example of Elijah fleeing from Jezebel.---For hence it is that Elijah, while he had profited in high things by so many virtues, was suspended by a certain measure, while he afterwards fled from Jezebel, though a queen, yet but a weak woman (1 Kings 19:3). For I consider this man of wonderful virtue, drawing down fire from heaven, and twice consuming the fifties with all their men by a sudden petition, closing the heavens from rains by a word, opening the heavens to rains by a word, raising the dead, foreseeing all things to come; and behold, there occurs again to my mind, with what fear he fled before one weak woman. I consider the man, struck with fear, seeking death from the hand of God, and not receiving it; avoiding death by fleeing from the hand of a woman. For he sought death while he fled, saying: "It is enough for me, take away my soul; for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4). Whence then was he so powerful, as to do all those virtues? whence so infirm, as to so greatly fear a woman, except because "the waters are weighed by measure," that the very holy men of God may both be of great power through the potency of God, and again be moderated by a certain measure through their own infirmity? In those virtues Elijah recognized what he had received from God; in those infirmities, what he could be of himself. That potency was virtue, that infirmity was the keeper of virtue. In those virtues he showed what he had received, in those infirmities he guarded that which he had received. Elijah

was manifested in miracles, he was preserved in infirmities.

11. And of Paul declining death, or suffering the temptations of Satan.---So I see Paul sustaining dangers of rivers and robbers, of the city and the wilderness, of the sea and the land (2 Cor. 11:26), curbing his body by fastings and watchings, sustaining the trouble of cold and nakedness, vigilantly and pastorally exercising himself for the keeping of the churches, caught up to the third heaven, and again caught up into paradise (Ibid. 12:4), and having heard secret words which it is not lawful for a man to utter; and yet he is given to an angel of Satan to be tempted (Ibid. 12:7), he prays that he may be delivered, and is not heard. When I look upon the very beginnings of his conversion, I consider that heavenly piety opens the heavens to him, and Jesus shows Himself to him from on high. He who lost the light of the body for a time, received the light of the heart forever. He is sent to Ananias (Acts 9:7), he is called a vessel of election; and yet he recedes fleeing from the same city which he had entered after the vision of Jesus, as he himself testifies, saying: "In Damascus the governor of the nation under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes, that he might apprehend me; and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands" (2 Cor. 11:32). To whom I might freely say: O Paul, dost thou already behold Jesus in heaven, and dost thou still flee from a man on earth? Art thou led into paradise, dost thou know the secret words of God, and art thou still

tempted by an angel of Satan? Whence art thou so strong, as to be caught up to heavenly things? Whence so infirm, as to flee from a man on earth, and still to tolerate adversities from an angel of Satan, except because He who lifts thee up again moderates thee by a most subtle measure, that both in thy miracles thou mayest preach to us the virtue of God, and again in thy fear He may make us remember our own infirmity? Which infirmity, however, lest it should draw us into despair when it knocks, while thou didst ask the Lord concerning thy infirmity, because thou wast not heard, thou hast spoken to us also what thou didst hear: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for virtue is perfected in infirmity" (2 Cor. 12:9).

12 Infirmity is the keeper of virtue.---By the open voice of God, therefore, it is shown that infirmity is the keeper of virtue. For then we are well kept within, when by the dispensation of God we are tolerably tempted without, sometimes by vices, sometimes by pressures. For to those also whom we know to have been men of virtues, temptations and conflicts of vices were not wanting. For hence it is that for our consolation the same eminent preacher deigns to bring forth some such things concerning himself, saying: "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. 7:23). For the flesh draws down to the lowest things, lest the spirit should be extolled: and the spirit draws to the highest things, lest the flesh should prostrate. The spirit lifts up,

lest we lie in the lowest things; the flesh weighs down, lest we be extolled from the highest. If the flesh tempted us without the spirit lifting us up, it would beyond doubt cast us down into the lowest things by the perfection of its temptation. But again, if the spirit lifted us up to the highest things without the flesh tempting, it would prostrate us in the fall of pride by that very lifting up. But it is done by a certain moderation that while each one of the saints is already indeed snatched up within to the highest things, but is still tempted without, he incurs neither the lapse of despair nor of elation; since neither does the exterior temptation perfect the fault, because the interior intention draws upward; nor again does the interior intention elevate into pride, because the exterior temptation humiliates while it weighs down. And thus in great order we recognize in interior progress what we receive, in exterior defect what we are. And in a wonderful way it is acted, that neither should anyone be extolled for virtue, nor despair for temptation, because while the spirit draws, and the flesh draws back, by a most subtle moderation of internal judgment, the soul is balanced in a certain mean below the highest and above the lowest things. Well therefore is it said: "And He weighed the waters by measure." It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 26, 27.---When He made a law for the rain, and a way for the sounding storms, then did

He see it, and declare it, and prepare it, and search it out.

13. A law is imposed on the heralds of the Word of God, that they may fulfill by work what they preach. To those who keep this law, the entrance to the hearts of men lies open.--- The sayings of those who preach are wont to be signified by rains. Whence it is said by Moses: "Let my speech be expected as the rain" (Deut. 32:2). Whose words, forsooth, when they gently persuade, are rains; but when they thunder forth terrible things concerning the future judgment, they are sounding storms. And it is to be noted that a law is imposed on the rains, that a way may be opened for the sounding storms. For a law is imposed on the preachers themselves, that they may fulfill by living what they hasten to persuade by speaking. For the authority of speaking is lost, when the voice is not assisted by work. For hence it is said by the Psalmist: "But unto the sinner God said: Why dost thou declare My justices, and take My covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest discipline, and hast cast My words behind thee" (Ps. 50:16). For a preacher casts the words of God behind him, when he contemns doing that which he says. But when should another obey his sayings, while he himself rejects by work what he preaches by voice, and dissembles hearing what he relates? Concerning this law of preaching it is written: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and

so teach, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:19). Forsooth, He calls the present Church the kingdom of heaven, of which it is written: "And they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals" (Matt. 13:41). For in the heavenly kingdom there are no scandals which ought to be gathered out of it. He therefore who breaks by work, and so teaches by voice, shall be the least in this kingdom of heaven, and in that other not even the least. But He made a way for the sounding storms, when He made an entrance for His preachers to the hearts of men struck with the terror of the future judgment. A law therefore is first imposed, that afterwards a way may be opened, because that voice penetrates the heart of the hearer, which preserves by work that which it has sounded by mouth. But when He made a law for the rain and a way for the sounding storms, then did God see this Wisdom, declare it, prepare it, and search it out. By a common mode of speech of sacred eloquence, God is said to see, when He makes us to see, as the Lord says to the just man: "Now I know that thou fearest God" (Gen. 22:12). And the Israelites are forewarned: "The Lord your God trieth you, to know if ye love Him" (Deut. 13:3); that is, to make you to know. Then therefore when He made a law for the rains, that is, gave the commandment of keeping it to the preachers, He made this incarnate Wisdom to be seen and declared by the preachers, to be prepared and searched out by the hearers. For he prepares it for himself, whosoever prepares it propitious for the day of

judgment by living well. And it is to be noted that four things are said of it. For He says: "He saw, He declared, He prepared, He searched out." For He saw it, because it is the Image (Form); He declared it, because it is the Word; He prepared it, because it is the Remedy; He searched it out, because it is Hidden. But when is it penetrated by the human mind, that the eternal Wisdom of God is called the Image (Form) of the Father and the Word? For who should understand either a Word without time, or an Image without circumscription? Something therefore was to be said which man might recognize of it in himself. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. VI].

VERSE 28.---And He said unto man: Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

14. He who fears God begins to possess His wisdom, and recognizes it in himself, which he cannot recognize in His own nature.---As if it were openly said: Return to thyself, O man, search the secrets of thy heart. If thou findest that thou fearest God, it certainly is clear that thou art full of this wisdom. Which if thou canst not yet know what it is in itself, thou already knowest meanwhile what it is in thee. For she who is feared among the angels for herself, is called among thee the fear of the Lord, because it is certain that thou hast her, if it is not uncertain

that thou fearest God. Hence also it is said by the Psalmist: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps. 111:10); because it then begins to penetrate the heart, when it perturbs it with this dread of the extreme judgment. The divine word, therefore, draws itself down to our littleness; as a father speaks with his little son, that he may be understood by him, he of his own accord lisps (stammers). For because we cannot penetrate the nature of wisdom as to what it is in itself, we have heard out of the condescension of God what it is in us, when it is said: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." But because he truly understands the force of divine fear, who keeps himself from all evil works, it is rightly subjoined: "And to depart from evil is understanding." Therefore those things which follow, because they are full of the spirit of prophecy, the very words of the sacred history testify, when it is said:

CHAPTER IX

[Vet. VIII, Rec. VII].

CHAP. XXIX, VER. 1.---Job also added, taking up his parable, and said.

15. Job foretells the last times of the Church, in which she is to suffer from carnal men and heretics.---For since a parable is called a similitude, it is clearly evident that he speaks mysteries through the form of exterior words, who is remembered to have taken up a parable for speaking. For while he relates his own things, he denounces whatsoever things are to come upon

Holy Church; and by that which he himself suffers, he indicates what she suffers. Sometimes, indeed, he so intermixes the words of his history, that nothing allegorical sounds; but sometimes he so speaks his own griefs, as if he spoke from the voice of the grieving Church. But in this last part of his speech he designates the last time of the Church, when she is compelled to tolerate with derision her adversaries, that is, all carnal men, or heretics and gentiles, whom she now studies to repress by the authority of wisdom, when they are puffed up with unbridled boastfulness. Whence also in this speech it is said: "But now they that are younger than I in time have me in derision, whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock" (Job 30:1). And the very reason of the order requires that by the words of blessed Job the last days of Holy Church should be designated, when, persecution increasing, she is compelled to tolerate the open voices of heretics, when the motions of their heart, which they now cover within the bosoms of their thoughts, they then open in the voice of manifested error. For now, as it is said by John (Rev. 20:3), the dragon is kept shut up in the abyss, because diabolical malice is hidden in their crafty hearts. But as it is there said, the dragon shall be brought out of the pit of the abyss, because that which is now covered through fear, then against the Church all the serpentine poison is opened publicly from the hearts of the iniquitous. For now the raging conscience hides itself under a flattering tongue, and

the malice of craftiness covers itself as if with an abyss of simulation; now the Lord, as it is said by the voice of the Psalmist, "gathereth the waters of the sea together as in a skin" (Ps. 33:7). For a skin (bottle) is carnal thought. The waters of the sea, therefore, are gathered in a skin, when the bitterness of a perverse mind does not break out exteriorly into the voice of depraved liberty. The time will certainly come, when against this the perverse and carnal will preach with an open voice what they now plot with secret thought. The time will come, when they shall press the Catholic Church not only with unjust voices, but also with cruel blows.

16. In two ways the Church suffers persecution, by words and by swords.---For from her adversaries the Church suffers persecution in two ways, namely, either by words or by swords. But when she sustains persecution by words, her wisdom is exercised; but when by swords, her patience is exercised. But we tolerate daily even now the persecutions of words from heretics, when the heretics themselves flatter us with crafty tongues and false humility. But the persecutions of swords are to follow near the end of the world, that the grains which are to be stored in the heavenly barns may be the more truly stripped from the chaff of sins, the more straitly they are afflicted. Then all the elect who shall be caught in that tribulation remember these times in which the Church now holds the peace of faith, and represses the proud necks of heretics, not by the potency of high place, but by the yoke of rea-

son. They remember us, who lead quiet times of faith; who although we are straitened in the wars of nations, yet are not vanquished in the sayings of the fathers. Blessed Job therefore holding the type of Holy Church, which is then found in those straits; and yet remembering, as I said, our quiet, relates his past things, and denounces to others things to come, saying:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. VIII].

VERSE 2.---Who will grant me, that I might be as in the months of old?

17. Although the Church has already suffered heavy things, she is to suffer far heavier.---For Holy Church, pressed with griefs, will say many such things. For it is to come to pass that she shall be straitened with so great tribulations, that she shall desire with a great sigh these times which we tolerate with great grief. Let her say therefore, let her say by the voice of blessed Job: "Who will grant me that I might be as in the months of old?" For since a certain number of days are called months, what else does he signify by the name of months but the collections of souls? For while days are collected in months, they are withdrawn, because also in this time Holy Church, while she collects souls shining with the light of truth, hides them in her inmost parts. Sometimes also a month is put for perfection, as the prophet says: "There shall be month from month" (Isai. 66:23); namely, perfection in rest to them, to

whom there has now been perfection in work. Let her therefore remember the former perfection, let her bring back to memory how great gains she used to bring back to souls collected by her preaching, and straitened by tribulations let her say: "Who will grant me, that I might be as in the months of old?" In which months forsooth what she was, she subjoins by enumerating, saying:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 2, 3.---As in the days when God preserved me, when His lamp shined upon my head, and by His light I walked through darkness.

18.---Then many weak ones shall fall, the strong grieving for their fall.---For then she sees of herself, persecution compelling, many of the weak fall, whom now as a mother she cherishes as little ones within the bosom of peace, and contains within the quiet cradles of faith, because being mixed with the strong, they are nourished by that very tranquility of faith. But then many such are about to fall, and through the bowels of charity, the mind of the perfect grieves that it suffers whatever it sustains in the loss of the little ones. For the losses of the weak pass over to the hearts of the strong through compassion. Whence it is said by Paul: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is scandalized, and I burn not?" (2 Cor. 11:29). For each one is so much the more perfect, as he perfectly feels the griefs of others. Whence Holy Church, straitened by the weak then falling, when she remembers these times, will rightly say: "As in the days when God

preserved me," because she then estimates herself to fall in those, who she now regards herself to be preserved in these. But it is well said: "When His lamp shined upon my head, and by His light I walked through darkness." For by the name of a lamp, the light of Holy Scripture is signified, of which the pastor of the Church himself says: "We have a more firm prophetical word, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts" (2 Pet. 1:19). And the Psalmist says: "Thy word, O Lord, is a lamp unto my feet" (Ps. 119:105). But because our principal part is the mind, the mind is called by the appellation of the head. Whence it is said by the Psalmist: "Thou hast anointed my head with oil" (Ps. 23:5). As if he should say openly: Thou hast filled my mind with the fatness of charity. Now therefore the lamp shines upon the head of the Church, because the sacred elocutions irradiate the darkness of our mind, so that in this dark place of the present life, while we perceive the light of the words of God, we may see what things are to be done. Now she walks in darkness by His light, because the holy universal Church, although she does not penetrate the hidden things of another's thought, because as it were she does not recognize a face in the night, yet she sets the steps of good work, directed by the light of the heavenly elocution. It follows:

CHAPTER XII

[Rec. IX].

VERSE 4.---As I was in the days of my youth, when God was secretly in my tabernacle.

19. The various ages of the Church: infancy, youth, old age. In the end, however, she is to receive many sons.---As of each individual man, so the age of Holy Church is described. For she was a little one then, when fresh from her birth she could not preach the word of life. For hence it is said of her: "Our sister is a little one, and she hath no breasts" (Cant. 8:8), because forsooth Holy Church, before she profited by the increments of virtue, could not offer the breasts of preaching to any weak hearers. But the Church is called adult, when coupled to the Word of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, she is made fruitful in the conception of sons through the ministry of preaching, whom by exhorting she travails with, by converting she brings forth. Of this her age it is said to the Lord: "The young maidens have loved thee" (Cant. 1:3). For all the churches which make up the one Catholic Church are called young maidens, not now aged by fault, but new by grace; not sterile through old age, but by the age of the mind congruous to spiritual fecundity. Then therefore, when in those days the Church, as if debilitated by a certain old age, is not able to bring forth sons by preaching, she remembers her ancient fecundity, saying: "As I was in the days of my youth." Although after those same days in which she is depressed, she shall nevertheless already about the very end of time be strengthened with great virtue of preaching. For having received the gentiles to the full, she draws into the bosom of

faith all the Israelite people that shall then be found. For it is written: "Until the fullness of the gentiles should come in, and so all Israel should be saved" (Rom. 11:25). But before those times there will be days in which she will seem for a little while oppressed by her adversaries, when she also remembers these days, saying: "As I was in the days of my youth, when God was secretly in my tabernacle."

20. [Vet. X]. He who meditates on the commandments of God, has God inhabiting him. The saints look around themselves within and without.---What do we receive in this place by the tabernacle, but the habitation of the mind? Because by all that we do in thinking, we inhabit the counsel of our heart. But whosoever silently thinks on the commandments of God, God is secretly in his tabernacle. For he had seen the habitation of his heart to be before the eyes of God, who said: "And the meditation of my heart always in Thy sight" (Ps. 19:14). For exterior works lie open to the eyes of men, but far and incomparably lie open to the eyes of God our interior and most subtle thoughts. For all things, as it is written, are naked and open to His eyes (Heb. 4:13). And often in exterior work we fear to appear inordinate before the eyes of men, and in interior thought we fear not the regard of Him, whom seeing all things we see not. For we are much more conspicuous within to God than without to men. Whence also all the saints look around themselves within and without, and fear either to be reprehended by themselves exteriorly, or to

be seen invisibly iniquitous within. Hence it is that the animals which are seen by the prophet, are remembered to be full of eyes round about and within (Ezek. 1:18; 10:12). For whosoever disposes his exterior things honestly, but neglects his interior things, has eyes round about, but has them not within. But all the saints, because they both look around their exterior things, that they may offer good examples of themselves to their brethren, and vigilantly attend to their interior things, because they prepare themselves irreproachable for the gazes of the internal Judge, are said to have eyes round about and within; and they rather compose themselves in their internal parts, that they may please God, as it is also said by the Psalmist of Holy Church: "All the glory of her, the daughter of the king, is from within" (Ps. 45:13). But because she also keeps her exterior things irreprehensible, he rightly subjoined concerning her: "In golden fringes clothed round about with variety," that she may be both beautiful to herself within, and to others without; both advancing herself through internal glory, and instructing others through the exterior examples of works. Let blessed Job therefore say of himself, let him say from the person of the universal Church: "When God was secretly in my tabernacle." For that he may demonstrate how much he profited within, he asserts that God was secretly in his tabernacle. That he may also show how much he guarded the works of rectitude without, he adds:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 5.---When the Omnipotent was with me, and my children were round about me.

21. While the saints are at leisure for God within, the wicked seek only outward things. They have not religion, but simulate it. ---But all who fear the divine precepts become the tabernacle of God. Wherefore, as we have already said above (Num. 6), Truth says by Himself of him who keeps His commandments: We will come and make our abode with him (John 14:23). Contrariwise, the perverse, while they do not desire internal things, pour themselves forth in their thoughts. Whence it is said to them by the prophet: Return, ye transgressors, to the heart (Is. 46:8). And again: Woe to you that devise that which is unprofitable (Mic. 2:1). For in their actions they fear men, whom they see corporally, and do not think that God is present to them, whom they do not see. On the other hand it is said in praise of the just man, when he despised the king of Egypt and obeyed the commands of God: For he endured as seeing Him who is invisible (Heb. 11:27). For he as it were saw not the perverse prince of the earth, whom he cast out from the eyes of his heart. But he endured the invisible King as seeing Him, because he did not turn away the eye of his mind from the intuition of His fear. The holy Church therefore, being then caught in great tribulations, when she beholds many departing from God by a depraved thought, sees indeed that the habitation of their mind remains empty, God departing, and justly deploring says: When God was secretly in my tabernacle. [Vet.

XI.] By which words not without reason is the simulation of religion also lamented, because some even now do not desire to be Christians, but to seem so. To these indeed God is in public, not in secret. But the holy Church desires to have God in secret, because she regards those truly faithful, whom she knows to remain in the life of faith with a full heart. She also says, according to the outward rectitude of her vigor: When the Omnipotent was with me, and my children were round about me. For they are called children, who serve the heavenly commands. Wherefore the Lord says by the prophet: Behold I and my children whom God hath given me (Is. 8:18). And again in the Gospel: Children, have ye any meat? (John 21:5). Now therefore her children are round about her, because there are found in almost all nations those who keep the heavenly commands, and obey the rules of spiritual discipline. Who truly will then be wanting to the obedience of children, when the wicked who shall be found shall despise her spiritual commands. It follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. X].

VERS. 6.---When I washed my feet with butter.

22. The feet of the Lord are the preachers, whom He anoints and cleanses. ---Since we have already frequently said that Christ and the Church are one person, namely, Him the head of this body, and her the body of that head, these

words must be understood in one way according to the voice of the head, and in another according to the voice of the body. Whom then do we accept as the feet of the Lord, but the holy preachers? Of whom He says: And I will walk in them (Lev. 26:12). Therefore the feet are washed with butter, because holy preachers are filled with the fatness of good works. For, as we have already said above (Book I, n. 30), preaching itself can scarcely be passed through without some fault. For any preacher is either drawn to some small degree of indignation, if he is despised; or to some small degree of glory, if he is venerated by his hearers. Wherefore also the feet of the apostles were washed, that they might be cleansed from any small contagion contracted in preaching itself, as from dust collected on a journey. And blessed James says: My brethren, be not many masters (James 3:1). And a little after: For in many things we offend all (Ibid., 2). The feet then are washed with butter, because by the fatness of a good work the collected dust of the glory of preaching is poured over and cleansed. Or certainly the feet are washed with butter, while the due stipends are conferred on the holy preachers by the hearers, and the fatness of the good work exhibited by the disciples cherishes those whom the enjoined labor of preaching fatigues, not that they should preach in order to be fed, but that they should be fed in order to preach; that is, that they may subsist to preach, not that the action of the preacher should pass into the intention of receiving food, but that the ministries of support

should serve the utility of preaching. Wherefore by good preachers preaching is not bestowed for the sake of food, but food is received for the sake of preaching. And as often as necessaries are conferred on the preachers by the hearers, they are not wont to rejoice for the gift of the things, but for the reward of those who confer them. Wherefore it is said by Paul: I seek not the gift, but I require the fruit (Phil. 4:17). For the gift is the thing itself which is bestowed; but the fruit of the gift is, if anything be bestowed with a benign mind for the sake of the future reward. Therefore we receive the gift in the thing, the fruit in the heart. And because the Apostle was fed rather by the reward than by the gift of his disciples, he confesses that he by no means sought the gift, but the fruit. Wherefore also he added immediately, saying: But I have all, and abound (Ibid., 18). The feet then are washed with butter, when holy preachers, as we have said, fatigued by preaching itself, are cherished by the good works of their hearers. For he had anointed the weary feet with butter, who heard: The bowels of the saints have been refreshed by thee, brother (Philem. 7). With this butter had been anointed the foot which was held in the chain, saying: The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain (2 Tim. 1:16). If therefore we weigh these words from the voice of the head, we rightly accept the preachers as the feet, as has been said.

[Vet. XII.] 23. The feet of the Church are the inferior ministers, who take care of earthly things.

---But if we ought to understand these things from the voice of the body alone, doubtless the feet of the Church are the ministers of inferior works, who while they exercise for necessary uses those things which are without, by their extreme ministry adhere to the earth like feet. But they who preside, who watch over the study of doctrine, ought with skillful care to seek the hearts of those who are occupied, and to minister to them that infusion of fatness which they themselves perceive in their leisure, by the voice of frequent admonition. For because in one body the members are solicitous for one another, as by their ministries our extreme parts are supported, so it is necessary that by our studies their inner parts should be filled. When therefore holy doctors preach the unction of the Lord's incarnation to some who are devoted to extreme ministries, they wash the feet with the butter of eloquence. The feet also are wont to be lacerated by the very roughness of the journey. Wherefore it is also altogether difficult to go the journey of this life in earthly actions, and to sustain no wounds from the labor of the journey. When therefore watchful prelates recall their hearers, who are intent on outward cares, to the heart, so that they may know the evils they have admitted among those very lawful works, and weep for what they have known, they wash the feet with butter, because they minister the ointments of penance to their wounds. Let the Church then, vehemently afflicted, remember how in the time of her peace, by the word of exhortation, she cleansed in her-

self even her extreme members, and let her say: When I washed my feet with butter. Which it is pleasant to behold admirably in blessed Job, who among so many cares of things, among so many affections for children, among so many studies of sacrifices, preached the goods of the following life to his subjects however extreme, that he might imbue them with heavenly things, who served him in earthly works. What do we bishops say to these things, who do not care to bestow the word of life on those committed to us, when neither secular habit nor the occupation of a great estate could prohibit a married man from the office of preaching? [Rec. XI]. But, the truth of history being preserved, let us now return to the words of the holy Church, which speaks by blessed Job, that is, by the mouth of her member, how great are the things she will suffer at the last time, when she remembers her past deeds, when forsooth by that fatness of the word the life of those who worked was washed. Which also following out more fully the same vigilance of her preachers, adds:

CHAPTER XV.

IBID. And the rock poured me out rivers of oil.

24. In the Church the rivers of oil are either the sacred dogmas, or the grace of the Holy Spirit. --- Because by the name of the rock Christ is understood, as the eminent preacher confesses, saying: And the rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). Which rock indeed now pours out rivers of oil for the use of the holy Church, because the Lord speaking in

her, emanates the preachings of inward unction. From this rock a river of oil came forth, the book of Matthew, the book of Mark, the book of Luke, and the book of John. In the diverse parts of this world where she gave forth preachings, so many rivers of oil did this rock pour forth through the mouths of all the apostles. So often still is a river of oil poured from this rock, as often as the things which were said of Christ in the ancient books are explained by the Holy Spirit to anoint the minds of the hearers. And they are called rivers of oil, because they run down and anoint. In which whosoever is dipped is anointed, whosoever is anointed is inwardly made fat [Vet. XIII]. Of which fatness forsooth the Psalmist says: My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness (Ps. 62:6). By the name of oil the unction of the Holy Spirit itself may be designated, of which it is said by the prophet: The yoke shall rot because of the oil (Is. 10:27). For the yoke rots because of the oil, because while we are anointed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we are delivered from the servitude of our captivity; and while the proud dominion of the malignant spirit is repelled, the yoke is broken, with which the necks of our liberty were oppressed. Of this oil again it is written: My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill [literally, in a horn, a son of oil] (Is. 5:1). For the faithful people is called the son of oil, who are begotten for the faith of God by the internal unction of the Holy Spirit. Let the holy Church then, depressed by many tribulations, recall to memory the gifts of the Spirit, and the wonderful

preachings she now has, and deplore her silence, saying: The rock poured me out rivers of oil. To which words she congruously adds:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 7-10.---When I went out to the gate of the city, and they prepared me a seat in the street. The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the old men rose up and stood. The princes refrained from talking, and laid their finger on their mouth. The leaders held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

25. Good works and the chair of doctrine are the insignia of the Church. ---It was the custom of the ancients that the elders should sit in the gate, and judge the causes of those entering, so that the people of the city might be so much more peaceful, as the discordant were not allowed to enter it. But we, venerating the sacred history, hold it certain that blessed Job did these things for the service of justice, and are led to investigate the mysteries of allegory. What then is designated by the gate of the city, but every good action, through which the soul enters into the assembly of the heavenly kingdom? Whence also the Prophet says: Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death, that I may declare all Thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Sion (Ps. 9:15). For the gates of death are depraved actions, which draw to destruction. But because Sion is called speculation, we accept the gates of Sion as good actions, through which we enter the supernal country, that we may contemplate the glory of

our King. But what is designated by the chair, but the authority of teaching? But in the Greek word platea is put for breadth. Now therefore the holy Church goes forth to the gate of the city, because that she may perceive the access to the heavenly kingdom, she exerts herself in holy actions. For her a chair is prepared in the street, because in the breadth of great authority she exhibits the freedom of her teaching. For she preaches with a public voice the right things which she feels, as if sitting in a chair in the street, when she fears nothing for her preaching, and, not oppressed by the terrors of any one, she does not hide herself under silence. Does she not preside in public for teaching, whom at the same time the truth of feeling and the power of teaching support? But having said that she went out to the gate, and sat in a chair in the street, she adds what was done by the light, or by the grave, saying:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERS. 8.---The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the old men rose up and stood.

618 26. The imperfect fear the vigor and rectitude of the Church; the perfect love them. ---If we attend to the history, we believe what he said; if to the allegory, we see what he foretold. For they are wont to be called young men who are not weighed down by any gravity of counsel. But the sacred Scripture has not been accustomed to call them old men who are mature by the quantity of time alone, but by the antiquity of their manners. Whence it is said by a certain

wise man: For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by number of years. But the understanding of a man is grey hairs, and a spotless life is old age (Wisdom 4:8). Wherefore also the Lord rightly says to Moses: Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people (Num. 11:16). In whom what else but old age of the heart is required, since such are ordered to be chosen who are known to be old men? For if old age of the body were sought in them, they could be known by as many as they could be seen by. But when it is said: Whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, it is indeed clear that an old age of the mind, not of the body, is announced to be chosen. [Vet. XIV.] The young men then now see the holy Church and hide themselves, but the old men rising up assist her, because the immature fear her vigor and rectitude, but the aged glorify them. All who are light flee; but the grave and perfect venerate her by rising up by the merits of their life. For the perfect love her discipline, the imperfect reprove it. The young then see her and hide themselves, because they fear to be detected in their secret actions. But the old men rise up and stand, because all the perfect indicate by their humility how much they have profited in good work. But because she speaks these things of her own, let her also relate how she is feared by strangers:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERS. 9, 10.---The princes refrained from talking, and laid their finger on their mouth. The leaders held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

27. Heretics were forced to be silent in the times of St. Gregory. Heretics agree in guilt, but differ in their opinions. In the adversities of the Church, heretics preach freely. ---Who else can be understood in this place as leaders or princes, but the authors of heretical depravity? Of whom it is said by the Psalmist: Contempt was poured upon their princes, and He caused them to wander in the pathless place, and not in the way (Ps. 106:40). For while they do not fear to interpret the dispensation of God perversely, they indeed draw the subject peoples not into that way which is Christ, but into the pathless place. Over whom also contention is rightly said to be poured out, because they contradict one another with their allegations in turn. For Arius, receiving three persons in the divinity, believed also in three gods. Against whom Sabellius, receiving one God, believed that there was one person. Between whom the holy Church, holding indeclinably the right path of her preaching, and preaching one God, asserts three persons against Sabellius, and asserting three persons, confesses one God against Arius. But because Manichaeus found virginity praised in the sacred eloquence, he condemned marriages. On the other hand, Jovinianus, because he knew that marriages were allowed, despised the cleanness of virginity. Whence it comes to pass that, heretics being always con-

fused by a perverse understanding, their wickedness in turn agrees in guilt and differs in opinion. But on the other hand the holy Church walks with ordered peace through the midst of the strifes of both parties, and so knows how to receive superior goods, that she knows also how to venerate inferior ones, so that she neither equals the highest to the lowest, nor again despises the lowest when she venerates the highest. Now therefore the princes of the heretical peoples, weighing the authority of the holy Church, refrain from talking, and as it were lay their finger on their mouth, while they signify by false complaints that they are repressed not by reason of voice, but by the hand of power. The leaders held their peace, because indeed these who endeavor to draw wandering peoples after them, that they may not now dare to speak perverse things, are curbed both by the weight of authority and by the power of reason. Whose tongue cleaved to their throat, because although they dare not speak perverse things with a free voice, yet they hide within themselves all the falsehoods they strive to propose against the true faith. Remembering these times, the Church, being caught in the following tribulation, deplores, saying: When I went out to the gate of the city, and they prepared me a seat in the street. The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the old men rose up and stood. The princes refrained from talking, and laid their finger on their mouth. The leaders held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. As if she said openly: When it was

allowed me to preach with a public voice, everyone who was not subject to the truth was afraid of me. For in that time when the holy Church is pressed by adversity, license of speech is given to all depraved preachers. [Vet. XV.] Which Jeremiah beholding long before, says: Even the sea-monsters [lamiae] draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones (Lam. 4:3). For whom does he call sea-monsters [lamiae] but heretics, who carry indeed a human face, but bestial hearts through impiety? Who then draw out the breast, when they freely preach their error. Then they give suck to their young ones, because while they insinuate perverse things to the souls of the little ones who follow them evilly, they confirm them in impiety by nourishing them. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. XII].

VERS. 11.---When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me.

28. We ought to give witness to the Church by living well. ---While blessed Job confesses that he was blessed by his hearers, and that witness was given to him by those who saw him, it is shown what he was in speech, and what in work. For neither is he yet perfect in work, whom the depravity of the tongue still contradicts; nor is he laudable in speech, who does not show by work what he speaks. That therefore blessed Job, being driven by the rebukes of his friends, may show

that he possessed both, he manifests that he was an object of veneration both to his hearers and to those who saw him. Which if we refer to the voice of the holy Church, he blesses her words who consummates by work what he has heard. He gives witness to her, who responds to her by living well according to the examples of life. For he truly sees the holy Church, whose life witnesses that he sees her. For to this end is the rectitude of the good within her discerned, that whosoever shall see it may be corrected from their depravities. He does not yet then see the good within the holy Church, who has not been amended from his evils. But whence witness is given to her, is shown when he adds:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 12, 13.---Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy [literally, I comforted the widow's heart].

29. The Church both feeds and protects her children. ---These are works of great mercy: to deliver the poor man that cries, to minister help to the fatherless, to rescue him that is perishing, to comfort the heart of the widow. For above it was said what he exhibited by doctrine. For he says: The ear that heard me blessed me. But now he relates what he bestowed through mercy, saying: Because I delivered the poor man that cried, and the fatherless who had no helper.

For the voice necessarily agrees with its work. These things blessed Job both exhibited to his subjects, and yet signified that they were to be exhibited by the holy Church. Which now incessantly exercises both, namely, that she may both feed her children by speaking, and protect them by defending, so that she may both satisfy the good by words, and guard them from the evil by patronages. But it is well written: Let the earth bring forth green herb, and yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind (Gen. 1:11). Which was so done in truth, that it might signify something that was to be done in truth. For by the earth the Church is figured, which both refreshes us with the food of the word, and guards us with the shadow of patronage; which both feeds us by speaking, and protects us by helping, so that she may not only bring forth the herb of refreshment, but also with the fruit of work the tree of protection.

[Vet. XVI.] 30. In the rulers of the Church let there be neither rigid vigor, nor dissolute mildness. ---I see that this also ought to be weighed by those who preside over the governments of the people, that having said above: The young men saw me and hid themselves; he now adds: I comforted the heart of the widow. How great discipline of government, that the young men should hide themselves before him; how great mildness of pity, that the hearts of widows should be comforted by him! For there are some so strict, that they lose even all mildness of benignity, and there are some so mild, that they lose the rights

of strict government. Wherefore by all rulers both are to be held in the highest degree, so that they neither desert the benignity of mildness in the vigor of discipline, nor again desert the strictness of discipline in mildness, that they may neither grow hard through the compassion of pity, when they correct the contumacious; nor soften the vigor of discipline, when they comfort the minds of the infirm. Let the vigor of discipline then rule mildness, and let mildness adorn vigor, and so let the one be commended by the other, that neither vigor be rigid, nor mildness dissolute.

31. The works of piety are exhibited both corporally and spiritually by the Church. ---And these works of piety which we have mentioned above, the holy Church both exhibits corporally, and does not cease to exhibit spiritually. For she delivers the poor man that cries, when she releases to the sinner entreating pardon those faults which he had committed. For of such poor it is said: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). And the cry of such poor is that of those saying by the voice of the Psalmist: Let Thy tender mercies speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low [literally, made very poor] (Ps. 79:8). She delivers the fatherless who has no helper, when everyone, the old father the devil being dead, running to the bosom of the holy Church, finds in her the help of exhortation, who now flees the desires of the world that pursues him. By the name of the fatherless every faithful person may also be understood on account of the death of the good

father, of whose vision he is for a time deprived, although he is not deprived of comfort. The blessing of him that is ready to perish also comes upon her, when she prevents the destruction of the sinner, and with holy exhortations brings him back from the pit of fault. Whence it is written: He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (James 5:20). For if it is of great reward to rescue from death the flesh that must some time die, of how great merit is it to deliver from death the soul, that is to live without end in the heavenly country? But she comforts the heart of the widow, while to every faithful soul she relates the eternal retributions of the Lord, as it were bringing to memory the goods of her husband. To whom because the soul is spiritually joined, He being dead [according to the flesh], she is called a widow, but is refreshed by the voices of the holy Church from His resurrection. Great comfort then the heart of the widow receives, when the faithful soul knows in the words of the Church something of the advent of Him to whom she is spiritually joined. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 14.---I was clad with justice, and I clothed myself as with a garment.

32. No good works are good, if they be stained by certain wicked ones.---When we are clad with a garment, we are surely encompassed on every side. He, therefore, is clothed with justice as with a garment, who protects himself on every side

with good work, and leaves no part of his action naked to sin. For he who is just in some actions, but unjust in others; as it were, has covered this side, but left that one naked, nor are those now good works, which are defiled by other wicked works that have arisen. For hence it is said by Solomon: He that shall offend in one point, shall lose many good things (Eccl. 9:18). Hence James says: Whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, is become guilty of all (James 2:10). Which sentence of his he himself diligently explained, when he added: For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law (Ibid. 11).

33. Hence custody and vigilance must be applied on every side. In vain are the rest fortified, when even one approach is opened to the enemy.---Therefore, our eyes of the heart being stretched out all around, we must apply custody to ourselves on every side. Whence also it is rightly said by Solomon: With all custody keep thy heart, because out of it proceedeth life (Prov. 4:23). For when he was about to say custody, he prefixed all, so that surely everyone should diligently inspect himself on this side and on that, and as long as he is in this life, should know that he is placed in battle array against spiritual enemies, lest he should lose the reward which he gathers by these actions through others, lest he should block the doors to the enemy on one side, and open an approach on another. For if any city be intrenched with a great mound against

lying-in-wait enemies, be girt with strong walls, and be fortified on every side with sleepless custody, but only one hole in it be left unfortified through negligence; there without doubt the enemy enters, who seemed excluded on every side. For that Pharisee, who went up into the temple to pray, let us hear with how great fortification he intrenched the city of his mind: I fast, says he, twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess (Luke 18:12). Who prefixed: I give Thee thanks; he certainly applied great fortifications. But let us see where he left an unfortified hole for the lying-in-wait enemy: Because I am not as this publican (Ibid. 11). Behold, he opened the city of his heart to lying-in-wait enemies through elation, which in vain he closed through fasting and alms. In vain are the rest fortified, when one place, from which an approach is open to the enemy, is not fortified. He rightly gave thanks, but perversely exalted himself above the publican. By exalting himself he betrayed the city of his heart, which by abstaining and bestowing he had kept. Gluttony was conquered through abstinence, the voracity of the belly destroyed, tenacity was overcome by largess, avarice depressed. By what labors do we believe this was done? But O how many labors, struck by one vice, have fallen; how many good things have been destroyed by the sword of one fault! Whence it is greatly necessary both to do good always, and to guard ourselves cautiously in thought from those very good works, lest if they lift up the mind, they be not good, which do not fight for the Author, but for elation.

34. We must especially beware of pride.---Concerning which matter we do not act inordinately, if we bring forward a testimony from the books, though not canonical, yet published for the edification of the Church. For Eleazar, in battle, striking an elephant, overthrew it, but fell under the very one which he slew (1 Maccabees 6:46). Whom then does that one signify, whom his own victory oppressed, except those who overcome vices, but succumb by pride under those very things which they subdue? For he dies as it were under the enemy whom he prostrates, who is puffed up by the fault which he overcomes. It must, therefore, be greatly weighed, that good things cannot profit, if the evil things which creep in are not avoided. All that is done perishes, if it be not anxiously guarded in humility. Whence it is well said also of that first parent himself: The Lord placed him in the paradise of pleasure, that he might work it and keep it (Gen. 2:15). For he works who does the good that is commanded, but he does not keep what he has worked, in whom that creeps which is forbidden. Therefore, let the blessed Job, because he had covered himself on every side with good work, say: I was clad with justice, and I clothed myself as with a garment. Where it is immediately added:

CHAPTER XXII

IBID.---Et diademate, judicio meo.

35. Justi sollicite attendunt, quid Deo, quid proximo debeant.---The judgments of the just

are rightly compared to a diadem, because through the glory of a great work they lead to the crown of retribution. Which judgments they surely carry on daily within themselves; they skillfully look at what they owe to God, and what to their neighbor, and they vehemently kindle themselves to doing good things, and strictly reprove themselves for the evil things they have committed. Whence also it is well said by Solomon: The thoughts of the just are judgments (Prov. 12:5). Within, from all secular noise, they return to their own hearts, and there they ascend the tribunal of the mind, and place themselves and their neighbor before their eyes, they bring to the midst the rule of the testament, by which it is said: Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them (Matt. 7:12). They transfer into themselves the person of their neighbor, and anxiously attend to what they would have wished justly to be done or not to be done to themselves if they were so; and thus with strict law and judgment they examine the cause of themselves and of their neighbor according to the tables of the divine law in the forum of the heart. Well therefore is it said: The thoughts of the just are judgments, because that very inward motion of their heart is as it were a certain balance of judicial power. Which being performed, because they do not seek retribution below, their judgments are rightly compared to a diadem. Diadema quippe in superiori parte corporis ponitur. The judgment of the just, therefore, is called a diadem, because through this they

desire to be rewarded not in earthly and lowest things, but above.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERS. 15, 16.---I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame. I was a father of the poor, and the cause which I knew not, I searched out most diligently.

36. Good works, although they are to be hidden by humility, must nevertheless sometimes be made public by necessity.---In the midst of these things, the mind of the reader may perhaps ask why the blessed Job enumerates his virtues so subtly. For it is the part of holy men to hide the good things which they have done, lest it happen that they incur the fall of elation. Whence Truth says through Itself: Take heed that ye do not your justice before men, to be seen of them (Matt. 6:1). Hence it is also that when He enlightened two blind men sitting by the way, He commanded them, saying: See that no man know it (Matt. 9:30). Of whom it is immediately written that they, departing, spread abroad His fame in all that country. But we must ask what this is, that the Almighty Himself, to whom to will is to be able, both wished His virtues to be kept silent, and yet is indicated by those who were enlightened, as it were against His will; except that He gave an example to His servants following Him, that they indeed should desire their virtues to be hidden, and yet, that others may profit by their example, they should be brought forth against their will; and that by hiding their deeds

they should guard themselves, but while they are brought forth against their will, they should transmit good examples to their neighbors. Let them be hidden, therefore, by study, but be made public by necessity; and let their occultation be their own custody, and their publication be another's utility. Again, because it is written: Neither do they light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matt. 5:15, 16). Sometimes holy men are also compelled to do good things before men, or to relate those same deeds of theirs to men; but referring all things to that end, that not they themselves should be glorified in those same works, but their Father who is in heaven. For while they preach holy things, perhaps their very preaching is despised, whose life is not known. They are compelled, therefore, to tell their life, that they may be able to change the life of their hearers. And they relate their deeds, that they may be held in veneration; they seek to be venerated, that they may be heard with reverence. For it is written: When the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up likewise (Ezek. 1:19); because surely when the minds of hearers respect the life of those who preach, they necessarily also admire the force of preaching.

[Vet. XIX]. 37. Which the holy Paul proved by his example. They who imitate him do not serve elation, but humility.---Hence it is, therefore,

that good preachers both flee honor on account of elation, and yet wish to be honored on account of imitation. So surely the Apostle Paul, speaking to his disciples, both flees honor, and yet shows how much he was to be honored. For when he said to the Thessalonians: Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness (1 Thess. 2:5), he followed and added: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome to you, as the apostles of Christ, but we were gentle [literally, little ones] in the midst of you (Ibid. 6, 7). Again to the Corinthians, fleeing honor, he says: For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake (2 Cor. 4:5). Whom nevertheless seeing to deviate from the path of true faith by the persuasions of false apostles, he showed them with the greatest effort how much he was to be venerated, saying: Whereinsoever any is bold, I speak foolishly, I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? so am I. I speak as a fool, I am more (2 Cor. 11:21-23). To which he also subjoins that the secrets of the third heaven were open to him, that his rapture also penetrated the secrets of paradise. Behold, fleeing honor, he preaches himself a servant of the disciples. Behold, seeking honor for the utility of the hearers, he places the merits of his life above the false apostles. For the excellent doctor acted so that while he himself was recognized as what

he was, both the life and tongue of those preaching badly should become vile by comparison with him. Forsooth he would have commended them, if he had hidden himself; and when he did not show himself, he would have given place to error. In a wonderful way, therefore, he both exhibits the grace of humility, and seeks the increments of utility, that he both preaches himself a servant of the disciples, and shows himself superior to his adversaries. He shows his disciples what of humility he has received; he shows his adversaries what of sublimity. It becomes known against adversaries what they have from gift; it becomes known to disciples what he remains within himself in thought; it becomes known to adversaries what he appears without in operation. Holy men, therefore, when they are compelled to relate the good things they do, do not serve elation, but utility. Whence the blessed Job opens his good things by speaking to his friends who were unjustly rebuking him, and therefore ignorant of them, so that surely they might learn not to be lifted up rebuking against his life, but to imitate this in silence; although, as we have already said above, the despair brought in by those rebuking him compelled him to bring back his deeds to memory. For in the midst of so many pains of his wound and words of despair, when he relates the good things he has done, he reforms his mind to hope, which had collapsed through words and stripes. Let him tell therefore the good things he has done, lest he be compelled to despair of himself in the midst of so many evil things which

he hears. I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame.

38. The works of justice ought to be prefixed to the works of mercy. He who bestows alms, and does not abstain from sin, bestows his thing on God, and himself on sin.---When we weigh the examples of holy work, we must first behold how right an order of narration is preserved, so that the works of justice are described first, and after them the works of mercy. For he surely does well those things which are pious, who knows how first to keep those which are just, so that the river of mercy poured out upon neighbors may be derived from the fountain of justice. For many bestow as it were works of mercy on their neighbors, but do not desert deeds of injustice. Who, if they truly study to do mercy to their neighbors, ought first to have pitied themselves by living justly. Whence it is written: Have pity on thy own soul, pleasing God (Ecclus. 30:24). He, therefore, who wishes to pity his neighbor, must necessarily draw from himself the origin of pitying. For it is written: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Matt. 19:19). How then is he pious in pitying another, who by still living unjustly becomes impious to himself? Whence it is said by a certain wise man: He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good? (Ecclus. 14:5)? To exhibit mercy, indeed, so that it may be able to be fully bestowed outwardly on the indigent, two things meet together as necessary for it, that is, the man who should bestow, and the thing which should be bestowed. But the

man is incomparably better than the thing. He, therefore, who bestows his outward substance on an indigent neighbor, but does not guard his life from wickedness, has given his thing to God, and himself to sin. He has offered to the Author that which is less, and has kept for iniquity that which is greater. Well therefore is it said first by the blessed Job: I was clad with justice, and I clothed myself as with a garment; and as with a diadem, my judgment. And then it is subjoined: I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame. Because then is the offering of true rectitude before God, when the branches of piety come forth from the root of justice. But because in the very work of mercy the mind is more accustomed to be weighed before the inward Judge than the deed, it must be noted that he asserts that he had been an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame. For in saying these things, he surely indicates that he had both offered his hand through himself to the former, and supported the latter by carrying him. From which thing it is gathered, how greatly the bowels of his mercy were poured out over the needy and the weak. Whence it is also added: I was a father of the poor.

39. The Church enlightens the blind, and supports the lame.---Which words surely if we refer to the voice of the holy Church by a typical interpretation, she herself is an eye to the blind, because she shines through the word; she herself is a foot to the lame, because she contains through help. For she enlightens the blind by preaching, but she supports the lame by

helping. For he surely is blind who as yet sees not whither he should go; but he is lame, who cannot go whither he sees. For frequently sin is perpetrated either through ignorance or through infirmity, so that either a man knows not what he ought to will, or he is not able to do all that he has willed. On the contrary wherefore it is rightly said by the Psalmist: The Lord is my light and my salvation (Ps. 27:1). For because the Lord bestows both knowledge and virtue, He is called both light against ignorance, and salvation against infirmity. Hence also it is said of the wicked: Let their way be dark and slippery (Ps. 35:6), so that forsooth through darkness they should not see whither they ought to go, who even if they saw right things, yet could not stand in them through the slippery way. These, therefore, through the slippery way halt among good things; those through darkness know not what good things they should follow. The holy Church, therefore, overtaken by extreme tribulations, remembers the ancient times, when she had been accustomed both to enlighten by teaching, and to strengthen by helping, and speaks by the mouth of her preceding member, saying: I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame.

40. The Gentiles are the blind, but the Jews the lame.---Because she has gathered into herself two peoples, namely, the Jewish and the Gentile, the Gentile people may also rightly be designated by the blind, but the Jewish people by the lame. For the Gentile as it were had no eyes, because not having received the Law he did not see whither

he ought to have gone. But on the other hand, the Jewish [people] having eyes, was lame, because it held the Law indeed by knowing it, but did not stretch out the step of right work in it. For if the Gentile people had not been blind, the prophet would not have said: The people that sat in darkness saw a great light (Is. 9:2). Again, if the Israelite people had not halted from good work, the Psalmist would by no means have said by the voice of the Lord: The strange children have lied unto Me, the strange children have faded away, and have halted from their paths (Ps. 18:45, 46). Which people is surely named lame, because it had not a healthy step in operation, forsooth because it would not use both feet, while it received one Testament, but despised the other. Whom when the holy Church receives coming to her, because she inserts the New Testament also into it already holding the Old, she joins as it were another foot for directing its steps. Which faithful people of the holy Church rightly subjoins: I was a father of the poor, because surely the humble, who are called poor in spirit, are generated from her preaching. But it is necessary that in all these things we weigh subtly the very words of the history. For he says:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERS. 16.---I was a father of the poor, and the cause which I knew not I searched out most diligently.

41. It is better to do a good work from affection, than from precept.---For mostly men bestow

many things on the poor, not because they love those same poor, but because if they should not bestow, they dread the wrath of the heavenly Judge; who if they did not fear God, would have been unwilling to give what they have. And indeed in a good work the first step of those beginning is that he who as yet knows not how to love his neighbor as himself, should nevertheless now begin to dread the heavenly judgments. Because, therefore, it is one thing to do a good work from precept, but another even from affection, the holy man, that he might insinuate the mind of his operation to us, should say: I was a father of the poor. For he does not witness that he had been a patron, or a neighbor, or a helper of the poor, but a father, because surely with a great office of charity he turned the study of mercy into an affection of nature, so that he should look upon them as children through love, over whom as a father he was set through protection. Because, therefore, the force of his mercy had imitated nature, he records that he had been a father of the poor. Where also he subjoins.

CHAPTER XXV.

IBID.---And the cause which I knew not I searched out most diligently.

42. Although no good works are to be neglected, yet smaller ones ought to be postponed to better ones.---In which words truly it must be weighed how distinctly all things are related, that no reward is passed over by him. For he is just in his actions, pious in the infirmities of his

neighbors, strenuous in the business of the poor. For he who thinks on the good things of eternal retribution, must necessarily extend himself to every cause of a following reward. Hence it is said by Solomon: He that feareth God, neglecteth nothing (Eccl. 7:18). Hence also Paul says: Prepared unto every good work (2 Tim. 2:21). But in the midst of these things it is to be known that sometimes in our actions smaller good things are to be passed over for the utility of greater ones. For who knows not that it is a merit of good work to bury the dead? and yet to a certain one who had asked to be dismissed to bury his father, it was said: Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God (Luke 9:60). For the service of this ministry was to be postponed to the office of preaching, because in that he would hide the dead in flesh in the earth, but in this he would raise up the dead in soul to life. By the prophet also it is said to the chief men of the synagogue: Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed (Is. 1:17). And yet the Apostle Paul says: Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church (1 Cor. 6:4). For he kindled his hearers to the virtue of wisdom, to kinds of tongues, to searching out also the mysteries of prophecy, saying: Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy (1 Cor. 14:1). But because they would not receive spiritual gifts, if earthly business had depressed them, he prefixed long before, saying: Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church (1 Cor. 6:4). As if he should say openly, those who are of less merit in the Church, and are endowed

with no virtues of great gifts, let them judge concerning earthly business, so that through those through whom great things cannot [be done], smaller good things may be supplied. Whom he both names least esteemed, and yet calls wise, when he says: Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? (Ibid. 5). From which thing what is gathered, except that those should examine earthly causes, who have perceived the wisdom of outward things? But those who are enriched with spiritual gifts, surely ought not to be entangled in earthly business, so that while they are not compelled to dispose of inferior good things, being exercised they may be able to serve superior good things.

[Vet. XXII.] 43. Those who are not able by themselves, are bound to exercise the offices of charity through others.---But it must be greatly cared for, that those who shine with spiritual gifts should by no means fundamentally desert the business of their infirm neighbors, but should commit these things to be handled by others for whom it is worthy. Whence Moses also appointed seventy men for himself over the people, that by as much as he should hide himself from outward causes, by so much he might more ardently penetrate internal things. And so it is brought to pass that supreme men more profit unto spiritual gifts, while the lowest things do not trample their minds; and again the last men in the Church should not live without good work, while in outward things they find right things

which they may do. For the holy Church so consists in the unity of the faithful, as our body is united by the framework of members. For some are members in the body which serve for beholding the light, others which are by no means disjoined from the touch of the earth. For the eye is intended for the light, and that it may be able to be blinded, is guarded from the dust. But the foot then rightly performs its office, when it does not flee the dust of the earth to be received. Which members of the body nevertheless are coupled by imparting their offices to themselves in turn, so that the foot runs for the eyes, and the eye looks out for the foot.

44. The members of the Church, although distinct in office, are joined in charity.---So therefore, so the members of the holy Church ought to be both distinct in office, and joined in charity, that the supreme men should provide the way for those who are vacant in earthly business, so that the foot may walk as if to the light of the eyes; and again whatever those entangled in earthly business do, they should refer this to the utility of the greater ones, so that the foot whose way is looked out for, should walk not for itself only, but also for the eyes. While therefore they agree among themselves by mutual administration, it is done in a wonderful way, that because all the elect do what they are able by bestowing on themselves in turn, their works should become even those which they themselves are not able to do.

45. Necessity persuading, contemplation is to be interrupted, that the utility of the neighbor

may be served.---But in the midst of these things it is to be known that when those are wanting who should aptly serve the outward causes of neighbors, those also who are full of spiritual gifts ought to condescend to their infirmity and serve their earthly necessities, as far as they decently may be able, by the condescension of charity. Nor ought it to tire the mind, if its sense always intent on the contemplation of spiritual things is sometimes bent, as if minorated, to disposing of the smallest things, when that Word through which all created things consist, that He might profit men, assuming humanity, wished to be made a little less than the angels. What wonder therefore if a man attracts himself on account of a man, while the Creator of men and angels took the form of a man on account of a man? Nor nevertheless is the sense minorated when it is so attracted, because it penetrates superior things so much more subtly, as it does not despise even inferior ones more humbly for the love of the Creator. What is unworthy to us or difficult, if we lead our mind above and below, who wash the face of the body with the same hand, with which also we shoe the foot? Therefore, the blessed Job, because while he did great things he did not despise the smallest, let him say: [Vet. XXIII.] And the cause which I knew not I searched out most diligently.

46. In judgments we should not be headlong. Greater crimes are to be believed more slowly; but when they are acknowledged, more quickly punished.---In which matter I see it is to be

noted that we ought never to be headlong to bring forth a sentence, lest we judge unexamined things rashly, lest any heard evils move us, lest we believe things said everywhere without proof. Which indeed we fear to perpetrate, if we weigh more subtly the deeds of our Author. For He Himself, that He might restrain us from a headlong bringing forth of a sentence, although all things are naked and open to His eyes, nevertheless did not wish to judge the heard evils of Sodom, who says: The cry of the Sodomites and Gomorrahites is multiplied, and their sin is aggravated exceedingly; I will go down and see whether they have completed in work the cry which has come to me, or if it is not so, that I may know (Gen. XVIII, 20). Therefore the Almighty Lord and All-knowing, why does He doubt as it were before proof, unless that He might propose to us an example of gravity, lest we should presume to believe the evils of men before we prove them? Behold, He goes down by angels to know the evils, and soon strikes the wicked; and He, patient, He, mild, He of whom it is written: But Thou, Lord, judgest with tranquillity (Wisd. XII, 18), He of whom it is written again: The Lord is a patient rewarder (Ecclus. V, 4); finding them involved in so great a crime, as if He passed over patience, and did not wish to wait for the day of extreme judgment for vengeance, but He forestalled them with the fire of judgment, before the day of judgment. Behold, He believed the evil as if with difficulty when He heard it, and nevertheless He struck without delay, when He found it by knowing the truth, that

He might give us an example, that greater crimes are both to be believed slowly when they are heard, and are to be punished more quickly when they are truly acknowledged. Of this diligence the blessed Job, bearing the solicitude, says: And the cause which I knew not, I searched out most diligently. Which words indeed we can not inconveniently refer also through the voice of the Church to a typical interpretation. For she herself, when she judges the evils of carnal men through her elect, investigates this which she knows not, because she investigates the evils which she knows not by working, by correcting through judgment. Therefore the holy Church, when she shall have been for a time compressed by the impropriety of the unjust, remembers saying: The cause which I knew not I searched out most diligently. As if he should say plainly: The evils which I did not know by doing in my elect, I punished in wicked men by judging strictly. And because now by the virtue of her preaching she crushes the devil, and snatches from his mouth the soul of each one whom she receives, it follows saying:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Rec. XV]. VERS. 17.---I broke the jaws of the wicked, and from his teeth I snatched the prey.

47. The Church snatches prey from the devil when she recalls anyone from error or sin.--- O what a prey she took from the mouth of the devil, when she snatched that same robber Saul by converting him, when still breathing threats,

having received letters, he was going to Damascus; and while by persecuting the faithful he was gathering prey for the devil, by knowing the faith he himself was gathered to Christ (Acts IX, 2)! So many times the Church has taken prey from the teeth of the wicked, as many times as she has snatched away a soul from the bite of error by preaching. For who can more truly be called wicked than the devil? Whose jaw-teeth (molas) we break as often as by discussing against his snares we show his hidden machinations; and we take the prey as it were from his teeth, because the mind which he had already bitten for sin by breaking it, we recall by converting it to the salvation of life. By the jaw-teeth (molas) indeed his hidden snares, but by the teeth the open perpetration of fault is demonstrated. Of which jaw-teeth and teeth indeed it is written by the Psalmist: But God shall break their teeth in their mouth, the Lord shall break the jaw-teeth of the lions (Psal. LVII, 7). But the holy man asserts that he first breaks the jaw-teeth, that afterwards he might be able to take the prey from his teeth, because then we truly take the prey from his teeth, when we first know how to break his jaw-teeth. For it is first necessary to bring forth the hidden machinations of his counsels, that we may afterwards be able to recall the soul of our hearer from an open fall. The supreme Shepherd of the Church himself was breaking the jaw-teeth of this wicked one by preaching, when he said: Be sober and watch, because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom

he may devour; whom resist ye strong in faith (I Pet. V, 8). Against this lion the holy Church, because she beholds his snares, fortifies the folds of faith. Whose jaw-teeth she breaks as many times as she destroys the arguments of heretics; and she snatches prey from his teeth as many times as she converts anyone from error by preaching. And because there will then be many of the just who believed themselves about to depart from this world in the time of ecclesiastical peace, the blessed Job, while he relates his own things, indicates also the voices of the following just, saying:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XVI]. VERS. 18.---And I was saying: In my nest I shall die, and as a palm tree I shall multiply my days.

48. Her sons, if they desire to enjoy peace, should remain in her nest and bosom.---What is expressed in this place by the name of the nest, but the tranquil rest of faith, by which each weak one is nourished? For that multitude of good men, which shall have been caught in the times of persecutions, believed themselves to fulfill the days of their nourishments as if in a nest, so in a place of rest. For unless the holy Church now nourished all her weak sons in the nest of peace, the Psalmist would not say: For the sparrow hath found herself a house, and the turtle-dove a nest, where she may lay her young ones (Psal. LXXXIII, 4). For now the sparrow hath found himself a house, because our Redeemer hath entered the eternal habitation of heaven. And the turtle-

dove hath found a nest, because the holy Church affected by the love of the Creator, employs frequent groanings, and builds for herself as it were a nest, that is, the most peaceful rest of faith, in which she cherishes her growing sons as if fledging young ones, warmed in the bosom of charity, until they may fly away to the things above. Therefore because there will then be those who in the time of peace believed themselves to migrate to the heavenly things, that is, to fly away from the nest, their voice is forestalled by the voice of the blessed Job, when he says: And I was saying: In my nest I shall die. But because they were promising to themselves this very leisure of peace from the length of many days, he rightly subjoins, saying: And as a palm tree I shall multiply my days. For the palm tree profits slowly, but remains long in greenness. But with many difficulties the holy Church comes to the state of faith, and for the collection of many she desires to stand longer in the glory of the same faith. As a palm tree therefore she believed her days to multiply, she who, the point of sudden temptation emerging, grieves that the grace of her peace was both slowly obtained from the faithful, and more quickly intercepted by the unfaithful.

[Vet. XXV.] 49. Why the just are compared to the palm.---Nor is the life of the just compared to the palm without merit, because, to wit, the palm is rough to the touch below, and as if wrapped in dry barks; but beautiful above and in sight with fruits; below it is narrowed by the involvements of its barks, but above it is expanded in the ampli-

tude of beautiful greenness. So indeed is the life of the elect, despised below, beautiful above; in the lowest part it is as if wrapped in many barks, while it is narrowed by innumerable tribulations, but in the highest part it is as if expanded in the amplitude of retribution by the leaves of beautiful greenness. The palm indeed has another thing by which it differs from all kinds of trees. For every tree subsists vast in its strength near the earth, but by growing is narrowed above, and when it is a little more sublime, it is rendered so much more subtle on high. But the palm begins from the lowest part with less amplitude, and rises with greater strength near the branches and fruits; and that which profits thin from the lowest parts, grows more vast to the highest. To what therefore are other shrubs found to be similar but to earthly minds, vast below, narrow above? because indeed all the lovers of this world are strong in earthly things, but weak in heavenly ones. For for temporal glory they desire to labor even unto death, and for perpetual hope they do not subsist even a little in labor. For earthly gains they tolerate any injuries, and for heavenly reward they refuse to bear the contumelies even of the thinnest word; they are strong to assist even the whole day a terrestrial judge, but in prayer before the Lord they are tired even in the moment of one hour. Often they tolerate nakedness, dejection, hunger, for acquiring riches and honors, and they torture themselves with abstinence from those things to which they hasten to attain; but they dissemble to seek superior things

laboriously, so much the more as they think them to be repaid more slowly. These therefore, as if in the manner of other trees, are vast downwards, narrow upwards, because they subsist strong in the inferior things, but fail in the superior ones. But on the contrary from the quality of palms is designated the profiting life of the just, who are by no means strong in earthly studies, and weak in heavenly ones; but more longly and distantly they exhibit themselves studious to God than they remembered to have been to the world. For when it is said to some by our preacher: I speak a human thing, because of the infirmity of your flesh; for as you exhibited your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity, so now exhibit your members to serve justice unto sanctification (Rom. VI, 19); it is condescended to their infirmity without doubt, as if it were said to them more plainly: If you can by no means do more, at least be such in the fruit of good works, as you were lately in the action of vices, lest the holy liberty of charity should have you more weak, whom the use of earthly pleasure had valid in the flesh.

[Vet. XXVI.] 50. But they are not compared to palms who, when they have begun well, by no means persevere.---There are indeed some who, when they desire heavenly things, and leave behind the noxious deeds of this world, from their beginning daily fail by the pusillanimity of inconstancy. To what but the rest of the shrubs should I say these are similar, who by no means rise such above as they arise below? For these

coming to conversion do not persevere such as they began, and in the manner of trees are vast in the beginning, but grow thin, because by little and little through the increases of times they suffer detriments of virtues. For insensibly the heavenly desires languish in them; and they who had proposed robust and strong things, consummate weak and infirm ones; and while they profit by the increase of age, they grow as if flexible. But the palm, as has been said, is of more vast quantity in the summit than it began to be from the root, because often the conversion of the elect performs more by finishing than it proposes by beginning; and if it begins more tepidly at first, it consummates more fervently at the last, for it always judges itself to be beginning, and therefore indefatigable it endures in novelty. Beholding this constancy of the just, the prophet says: They that trust in the Lord shall change their strength, they shall take wings as eagles, they shall run and not labor, they shall walk and not fail (Isai. XL, 31). For they change their strength, because they study to be strong in spiritual work, who lately had been strong in the flesh. But they take wings as eagles, because by contemplating they fly. They run and do not labor, because with great speed they preach to the swift. They walk and do not fail, because they retain the speed of their understanding, that they may condescend to the slower ones. But in all things the good which they receive, as much as they freely accommodate to others, so much they themselves endure unchangeable in novelty; and they who come

out thin from the root of beginning, grow strong in the perfection of the summit. Let the blessed Job therefore speak from his own person, let him speak from the voice of the holy Church for those whom in the time of peace he had had converted to himself, and believed about to persevere in good morals: And I was saying: In my nest I shall die, and as a palm tree I shall multiply my days. For as a palm tree she believed her days to multiply, she who thought the minds of the faithful to rise up more robust even to the end. For when the hearts of many shall have begun to grow soft, being tired by persecutions, she grieves that they now tend as it were to debility in her, whom she was wondering to have proposed strong things. And because she always intends with the mind to spiritual knowledge, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VERS. 19.---My root is opened beside the waters.

51. The Church always intends to spiritual knowledge.---For beside the waters the root is opened, when for perceiving the floods of truth the thought of the mind is expanded secretly. For as we have already said in the superior book (Lib. VIII, n. 81), the hidden thought is accustomed to be designated in sacred eloquence by the name of the root. We open therefore our root beside the waters, when we intend the thought of the silent heart to the inward infusion. [Vet. XXVII.] Which words indeed if we lead to the voice of the holy Church, her root itself ought to be understood

as the incarnation of the Redeemer. Which was opened beside the waters, while the invisible God through the assumption of His humanity lay open to the aspects of our vision. For the Creator who could not be seen in His divinity, assumed from us that from which He might be seen by us. The root therefore is opened beside the waters, because the Author of the human race is demonstrated to men through His humanity. Whence also it is rightly said by the Psalmist: And he shall be like a tree which is planted beside the runnings of waters (Psal. I, 3). For the runnings of waters are the daily passages of failing peoples. And concerning itself the Truth says: If in the green wood they do these things, in the dry what shall be done (Luke XXIII, 51)? A tree therefore beside the runnings of waters is, because bringing forth the fruit and protection of His shelter (umbraculi) for us, the Creator appeared in the flesh, that He might fix the human race through resurrection, which through failing was daily going into death. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID.---And the dew shall abide in my harvest.

52. Her harvest is to be attributed to the dew of grace.---Understand, I was saying. For the harvest of the holy Church is not inconveniently received, when perfect souls abstracted from bodies, like ripe corn cut from the earth, migrate to the heavenly barns; which because it is done not by our virtue, but by the largess of

heavenly grace, he well says: And the dew shall abide in my harvest. For the dew falls from above, the harvest is gathered below. Therefore the dew abides in the harvest, because the grace coming from above acts so that we may be worthy who are gathered from the lower things. She herself infusing us from above, we bear the fruit of good works. Whence also it is rightly said by Paul: By the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace in me hath not been void (I Cor. XV, 10). For if it be sought what is the dew coming from above, he says: By the grace of God I am what I am. If we behold the harvest growing under the dew, he says: And His grace in me hath not been void, but I have labored more abundantly than all they. It follows:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERS. 20.---My glory shall always be renewed, and my bow shall be restored in my hand.

53. The Church bewails her sons whom she knows to return to the old life.---Understand, I was saying. For to the superior sentence is joined what is subjoined by continuous speech, when he says: And I was saying: In my nest I shall die, and as a palm tree I shall multiply my days. And then it is subjoined: My root is opened beside the waters, and the dew shall abide in my harvest. My glory shall always be renewed, and my bow shall be restored in my hand. It is clear to all who know the truth that vices pertain to the old life, virtues to the new. Hence indeed

Paul says: Putting off the old man with his acts, and putting on the new (Coloss. III, 9). Hence again he says: Our old man is crucified together (Rom. VI, 6). Hence the Psalmist, speaking from the type of the human race, found among malignant spirits, says: I have grown old among all my enemies (Psal. VI, 8). For from the fervor of the mind, either among spiritual enemies, or among any carnal neighbors, by the very use of living in some way we grow old, and we dim the appearance of the assumed novelty. From which old age nevertheless we are daily renewed, if the studies of circumspection watch, by praying, by reading, by living well; because our life, while it is washed by tears, is exercised by good works, and is stretched by holy meditations, is repaired without cessation to its novelty. The blessed Job therefore so relates his own things, that he may signify ours; because the holy Church, when she beholds her faithful return to the faults of the old life, is compelled to weep for those whom she beholds lose the novelty of the mind. For the eminent preacher says to his disciples: For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glory? are not you before the Lord? (I Thess. II, 19). The holy Church therefore bewails as it were a lost glory, when she considers her faithful return to the old life. For she says: I was saying: My glory shall always be renewed, because those whom she believed to serve in her for the new life, she knows to serve old desires.

[Vers. XXVIII.] 54. How many things are signified in the sacred Scriptures by the name of the

bow.---But by the name of the bow in sacred eloquence sometimes the snares of the wicked, sometimes the day of judgment, but sometimes the same sacred eloquences themselves are designated. For by the bow snares are figured, as it is said by the Psalmist: They have bent their bow, a bitter thing (Psal. LXIII, 4). By the bow also the day of extreme judgment is designated, as it is said by the same Psalmist again: Thou hast shown thy people hard things, thou hast made us drink the wine of compunction; thou hast given a sign to them that fear thee, that they may flee from the face of the bow (Psal. LIX, 5). For in the bow, as much as the string is drawn long, so much more strictly the arrow goes out from it. So indeed, so the day of extreme judgment, as much as it is long deferred that it may come, so much more strict the sentence proceeds from it when it shall have come. But for this reason we are now struck by diverse slaughters, that being corrected by these we may be able to be found more prepared then. Whence it is there premised: Thou hast shown thy people hard things, to wit, the scourges of the world, which go before the more grave day of judgment that is to follow. Thou hast made us drink the wine of compunction, that earthly joys might be turned into tears. Thou hast given a sign to them that fear thee, that they may flee from the face of the bow. As if he should say plainly: This is the time of mercy, that will be the time of judgment. By these scourges of this time therefore thou signifiest how thou art about to

strike then when thou judgest not sparing, who now strikest so strictly when thou sparest.

55. Sacred Scripture itself is the Church's bow.---Sometimes also by the bow even sacred Scripture is signed. For she herself is the bow of the Church, she herself is the bow of the Lord, from which as striking arrows, so terrifying sentences come to the hearts of men. Whence also it is rightly said by the Psalmist: He hath bent His bow and prepared it, and in it He hath prepared the vessels of death, He hath made His arrows for them that burn (Psal. VII, 13). For the Lord hath bent His bow; because He exhibited threats to all sinners through sacred Scripture. In which bow to wit He prepares the vessels of death, because according to the sentence of His eloquence He damns as reprobates those who now neglect to be corrected. In which also He hath made His arrows for them that burn, because into those whom He corrects through terror, He emits kindled sentences of words. Of this bow of preachers it is said by Isaiah: With arrows and bow they enter in thither (Isai. VII, 24), because indeed the holy apostles came with strict points of words to strike the hardness of Gentile life. What therefore in this place except sacred eloquence ought to be understood by the name of the bow? For in the string the New Testament, but in the horn the Old Testament is received. But in the bow while the string is drawn, the horn is curved; so in this same sacred eloquence while the New Testament is read, the hardness of the Old Testament is softened. For its rigor inclines itself to

its spiritual and bland precepts, because the New Testament, while it is drawn as it were by a certain arm of good operation, the laws of severity in the Old Testament are bent. Nor do we say indecently that the string corresponds to the New Testament, which is certain to have existed from the Lord's incarnation. As if therefore the string is drawn, and the horns are curved, because while in the New Testament the incarnation of the Mediator is acknowledged, the rigor of the Old Testament is inclined to spiritual understanding. The holy man says therefore: I was saying: My glory shall always be renewed, and my bow shall be restored in my hand.

56. He uses this bow rightly who, understanding the divine eloquences, fulfills them in work.---The bow in the hand is the sacred Scripture in operation. For he holds the bow in the hand who fulfills by operation the divine eloquences which he knows by understanding. The bow is restored in the hand, therefore, while whatever is known by studying from sacred eloquence, is completed by living. Hence also Solomon, when he would describe the strong warriors of spiritual fight, says: All holding swords, and most learned to wars (Cant. III, 8). For what is figured by the sword in divine Scripture, Paul opened, saying: And the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Ephes. VI, 17). [Vet. XXIX.] But Solomon did not say: All having swords, but holding, because to wit the word of God is not wonderful only to know, but to do. For he has, but does not hold the sword, who indeed

knows the divine eloquence, but neglects to live according to it. And he is not able now to be learned to wars, who by no means exercises this spiritual sword which he has. For he by no means suffices to resist temptations, who postpones holding this sword of the word of God by living badly. The holy Church therefore, which is depressed by the following persecution, weighing the abundance of the wicked and the want of the good, may pre-announce her losses by the voices of the blessed Job, saying: And I was saying: In my nest I shall die, and as a palm tree I shall multiply my days. My root is opened beside the waters, and the dew shall abide in my harvest. My glory shall always be renewed, and my bow shall be restored in my hand. All which indeed considering, she was by no means deceived by a void hope. For all the perfect now behold many of her helpers, but they weigh without doubt that, the point of persecution emerging, many of these become her enemies, who in the time of peace seem to be her citizens. But they do not so despair of all, but nevertheless it happens for the most part that those of whom they had had greater confidence of faith, themselves become the more atrocious enemies of the same faith, so that they see those then act against the sacred eloquences, from whose operation they had believed these same sacred eloquences to be restored to the grace of preaching. Which times nevertheless we now groan to have begun, when we behold many placed within the Church, who either will not work what they understand, or also contemn to understand and

know this same sacred eloquence. For turning away the hearing from the truth, they are converted to fables, while all seek those things which are their own, not those which are of Jesus Christ (Phil. II, 21). The writings of God found everywhere are opposed to the eyes, but men deign not to know these. Almost no one seeks to know what he has believed. Therefore the multitude of good men preceding may bewail that their bow is destroyed, which believed the sacred eloquence to be always restored through the study of those following.

BOOK TWENTY.

The five last verses of the twenty-ninth chapter of the Book of Job are explained more at large, with the whole of the thirtieth chapter, chiefly concerning heretics and carnal men troubling the Church.

CHAPTER I.

635 1. Holy Scripture is to be preferred to all other books.---Although Holy Scripture transcends every science and doctrine without any comparison, to say nothing of the fact that it preaches what is true, that it calls to the heavenly country; that it changes the heart of the reader from earthly desires to the embracing of things above; that it exercises the strong with its darker sayings, and with humble speech allures the little ones; that it is not so closed as that it should be feared, nor so open as that it should become cheap; that it takes away loathing by use, and is loved so much the more as it is more meditated upon; that it helps the mind of the reader with humble words, and raises it with sublime senses; that it grows in a certain manner with the readers; that it is recognized as it were by rude readers, and yet is found ever new by the learned; that I may say nothing therefore of the

weight of things, yet it transcends all sciences and doctrines even by the very mode of its speech, because in one and the same speech while it tells the text, it brings forth a mystery; and it knows how to speak of the past so that by that very thing it knows how to preach of the future; and, the order of speaking not being changed, it knows how to describe things gone by and to announce things to be done in the same words; just as these very words of the blessed Job are, who while he speaks his own things, preaches ours; and while he indicates his own laments by speech, sounds the causes of the holy Church by understanding. For he says:

CHAPTER II.

CAP. XXIX. VERS. 21-23.---They that heard me, waited for my sentence, and being attentive, held their peace at my counsel. To my words they durst add nothing, and my speech dropped upon them. They waited for me as for rain, and they opened their mouth as for the latter rain.

2. The faithful hear the Church teaching, to follow her words, not to judge them.---For we believe without doubt that this reverence of subjects existed in the case of the blessed Job. But, as we have now often said, the holy Church, pressed by the tribulations of heretics or carnal men, remembers the past times, in which all that is said by her is heard with fear by the faithful, and bewailing the insolence of her adversaries, says: [Rec. II.] They that heard me, waited for my sentence, and being attentive, held their peace

at my counsel. As if she should say openly: Not as these insolent and puffed up men, who while they refuse to receive the words of truth, forestall the sentences of my preaching as if by teaching. Whose disciples now being attentive to her counsel are silent, because they dare not to impugn her words, but to believe them. For that they may be able to profit from them, they hear them without doubt not to judge them, but to follow them.

3. They add nothing to her doctrine. Otherwise heretics.---Of whom it is rightly subjoined: To my words they durst add nothing, because forsooth heretics then, when they have been unbridled against her with the worst liberty, presume to add something to her sayings, while they strive as it were to emend the rectitude of her predicaments. Which things she yet subjoins concerning good hearers: And my speech dropped upon them.

4. Preachers ought to contract themselves to the capacity of the hearers.---In this dropping of speech what else 636 is understood but the measure of holy preaching? because it is behoving that the grace of exhortation be conferred on each according to the capacity of their wit. By this therefore which is said: To my words they durst add nothing, the reverence of the hearers is praised. But by this which is subjoined: And my speech dropped upon them, the dispensation of the masters is indicated. For he who teaches ought subtly to look through, lest he study to preach more than is taken in by the hearer. For he ought to descend to the infirmity of the hear-

ers by contracting himself, lest while he speaks sublime things to little ones, and therefore not likely to profit them, he care more to show himself than to profit the hearers. [Vet. II.] But at the command of the Lord, not only vials for the table of the tabernacle, but also cups are prepared (Exod. XXXVII, 16). For what is designed by vials but large preaching, but what by cups but a very small and thin speaking concerning God? In the table of the Lord therefore both vials are prepared and cups, because to wit in the doctrine of sacred eloquence, there are not only to be exhibited great and secret things which inebriate, but also small and subtle things which as if by taste afford knowledge. Of this her most discrete dispensation therefore let the holy Church, pressed in the last times, remember, and say: My speech dropped upon them.

5. The humble open their mouth to receive their doctrine as the latter rain.---Where also it is aptly subjoined: They waited for me as for rain, and they opened their mouth as for the latter rain. For we sustain the words of holy preaching as rain, when with true humility we acknowledge the drought of our heart, that we may be watered by the drink of holy preaching. Whence it is rightly said to God by the Psalmist: My soul is as earth without water to Thee (Ps. CXLII. 6). The Prophet admonishes us to be infused by these streams of doctrine, saying: Ye thirsty, come to the waters (Isai. LV. 1). Who while we receive the words of holy preaching now in the last part of the world, open the mouth of the heart as for

the latter rain. For if there were not a mouth in the heart, the Psalmist would not say: Deceitful lips in the heart, and with the heart they have spoken evil things (Ps. XI. 3). The mouth of the heart therefore, because we attend to the words of the last preaching, we open as it were for the latter streams. Which preaching indeed proceeded from His sacrifice for us, Who says by the Psalmist: The lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice (Ps. CXL. 2). For because our Redeemer at the end of the world endured the violence of those persecuting Him, He gave Himself for us an evening sacrifice. Concerning this latter rain it is written elsewhere: I will give you rain, the timely and the latter (Jer. V. 24). For He gave the timely rain, because He conferred on His elect in the prior time the understanding of the Law. He bestowed also the latter rain, because He caused the mystery of His incarnation to be preached in the last days. Which because the holy Church ceases not daily to announce, she infuses the mouths of the hearts of the hearers as if from the latter rain. It follows:

CHAPTER III.

[Rec. III.]

VERS. 24.---If I laughed on them, they believed it not; and the light of my countenance fell not on the earth.

637 6. A Prelate should so show himself grave, as not to be hateful; so cheerful, as not to be cheap.---If we perceive this according to

the words of history, it must needs be believed that the holy man showed himself such to his subjects, that even laughing he might have been feared. But since he above asserts that he was a father of the poor, and a consoler of widows, the matter needs very great discretion, how in so great terror of government, there was also present so great lenity, and mildness of piety. For without great lenity of benignity this was not, that he calls himself a father of the poor and a consoler of widows. But again without great severity he could not even laughing be feared. In which thing what else are we taught, but that such ought to be the dispensation of government, that he who is set over should moderate himself by such a measure towards his subjects, so that both smiling he ought to be feared, and being angry he ought to be loved? so that neither too much gladness should render him cheap, nor immoderate severity hateful. For often we break our subjects, while more than is just we hold the vigor of justice. Which vigor indeed will not now be of justice, if it keeps not itself under a just moderation. And often we relax our subjects from the fear of discipline, if we loosen the reins of cheerfulness to our government, because while they behold us as it were licentiously glad, they themselves are boldly relaxed to things unlawful. [Vet. III.] But that the countenance of the ruler even glad ought to be feared, it is necessary that he himself should fear the countenance of his Maker without ceasing. For to that mind gladness is with difficulty believed, which is known by the

subjects to afflict itself continually for the love of the Lord. For he who with incessant heat of spiritual desire seeks things above, very much comes into doubt concerning him this, that he sometimes becomes cheerful before men. Whence also the same blessed Job not long after is about to say: For I always feared God like waves swelling over me (Job. XXXI. 23). For so indeed he feared his Judge, as it were the imminent impulses of waves, even now about to die. Upon whose mind therefore the sorrow of divine fear had infused itself, his subjects rightly believed not his cheerfulness, because they were compelled not to believe him laughing, whose heart they knew in the fear of his Maker with how continual a sadness it was held.

7. Our light falls to the earth when we desire earthly things.---This also according to history is not inconveniently taken, which is immediately subjoined: And the light of my countenance fell not on the earth. [Rec. IV.] For it is written: The eyes of fools are in the ends of the earth (Prov. XVII. 24). And again it is said by the same Solomon: The eyes of a wise man are in his head (Eccl. II. 14). The eyes of a wise man therefore are in his head, while he always contemplates the works of his Redeemer which he ought to imitate. The light of his countenance therefore fell not on the earth, because he did not look through concupiscence at those things which are earthly.

8. The Saints are never secure. Incautious security is a grave danger.---But because we have discussed the surface of history with brevity, let

us weigh what lies hid in these as to the mystical understanding. We have now for the most part said that Christ and the Church are one person, and often the voice of the head passes to the voice of the body, often the voice of the body to the voice of the head. For those who are in one flesh, nothing hinders but that they should agree also in one voice. Let the Church say therefore from the voice of the head concerning her elect: If I laughed on them, they believed it not. For to laugh, on the part of God, is for the ways of the Saints to be prospered by following favor, as it is also said by use concerning those whom in this world the 638 blandishments of happiness accompany: Fortune smiled on them. Whence on the contrary, the wrath of the Lord is called, to be weakened from good actions, as it is written: Lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the right way (Ps. II. 12). If therefore the Lord is asserted to be angry when men lose the way of justice, rightly is the Lord said to smile, when the favor of heavenly grace accompanies our good works.

[Res. V.] But all the elect, as long as they are in this life, do not promise themselves the confidence of security. For being suspect of temptations at all hours, they fear the snares of the hidden enemy, who even when temptation ceases, are disturbed by a heavy suspicion alone. For often incautious security has been a grave danger to many, so that they knew the snares of the crafty enemy not being tempted, but now being prostrate. For one must always watch, that

the mind, continually solicitous, may never be relaxed from heavenly intention, lest deserting laborious things, lying in flux thoughts, as if on some soft straw-beds, the relaxed mind prostitute itself to the coming corrupter the devil. But always the mind is to be raised to the contest with the adversary; always against hidden snares caution is to be provided. For hence the prophet Habakkuk says: Upon my watch I will stand (Hab. II. 1). Hence again it is written: Set thee up a watchtower; place bitterness to thyself, thou that evangelizest Sion (Jer. XXXI. 21). Hence it is said by Solomon: Blessed is the man that is always fearful; but he that is of a hard mind shall fall into evil (Prov. XXVIII. 14). Hence again he says: Every man's sword upon his thigh, because of nightly fears (Cant. III. 8). For nightly fears are the snares of hidden temptation. But the sword upon the thigh is vigilant custody, pressing down the allurements of the flesh. Lest therefore nightly fear, that is, a hidden and sudden temptation steal on, it is always necessary that our sword placed over our custody should press.

[Vet. IV.] For holy men are so certain of hope, that nevertheless they are always suspect of temptation; as to whom it is said: Serve the Lord in fear, and exult to Him with trembling (Ps. II. 11), so that both exultation may be born from hope, and trembling from suspicion. In whose voice again the Psalmist says: Let my heart rejoice, that it may fear Thy name (Ps. LXXXV. 11). In which thing it is to be noted that he says not: Let it rejoice that it may be secure, but, Let it rejoice

that it may fear. For they remember, although their action be prospered, that they are still in this life; concerning which it is said by the same Job: Human life upon earth is a temptation (Job VII. 1). They remember again what is written: The body which is corrupted burdens the soul, and the earthly habitation depresses the sense thinking many things (Wisd. IX. 15). They remember and they fear, and they presume not to promise to themselves certainty in themselves; but placed between the joy of hope and the fear of temptation, they trust, and they fear; they are comforted, and they waver; they are certified, and they are suspect. Well therefore is it said by the voice of the elect member under the figure of our Head: If I laughed on them, they believed it not, because we believe not our Redeemer as if smiling, while now many of His gifts witnessing, we both receive the grace of His favor, and nevertheless we still waver concerning our infirmity under His judgment.

9. St. Paul though now caught up to the third heaven was not free from fear.---Let us see how Paul is both smiled upon now by heavenly grace, and himself yet as if believes not through the fear of suspicion. Already the Lord speaking to him from heaven, 639 and opening his inner eyes, closing the outer ones, had shown the power of His majesty (Acts IX. 4); already He had said concerning him to Ananias, He is a vessel of election to Me (Ibid. IX. 15), already he had been caught up above himself to the third heaven (II Cor. XII. 2); already led into paradise he had heard secret words which he could not speak; and neverthe-

less still fearful he says: I chastise my body, and bring it into servitude, lest perhaps preaching to others I myself should become a reprobate (I Cor. IX. 27). Behold he both now believes by hope in the divine grace smiling upon him, and yet does not yet believe by security. For because these words agree well with the voices of our Redeemer, those subjoined also witness, when it is said: And the light of my countenance fell not on the earth. For what is called earth but the sinner, to whom it was said in the first sentence: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou go (Gen. III. 19)? The light of the countenance of the Lord therefore by no means falls on the earth, because the brightness of His vision appears not to sinners. For it is written: Let the impious be taken away, lest he see the glory of God (Isai. XXVI. 10). For it would be as if light fell on the earth, if coming in the last judgment, He should open the brightness of His majesty to sinners.

10. Strong things are not to be preached to the weak.---But if we receive these words from the voice of holy Church, we shall be able not incongruously to understand that the light of her countenance falls not on the earth, because she forbids to preach the highest mysteries of her contemplation to those occupied in earthly actions. For she prohibits strong things to be told to the weak, lest while they hear things they are incapable of, they be oppressed by the words of preaching by which they ought to have been raised. For the very bodily light, which irradiates healthy eyes, obscures the weak; and while the

brightness of the sun is gazed at by blear eyes, blindness is for the most part generated for them from the light. Let the holy Church therefore, pressed in the time of persecution, but mindful of her past discretion, say: The light of my countenance fell not on the earth. But because we have begun to understand these words from her Head, let us follow out in Him that which follows. For it is subjoined:

CHAPTER IV.

[Rec. VI.]

VERS. 25.---If I had a mind to go to them, I sat first.

11. In the heart of carnal men Christ sits last, in the heart of the just first.---Because in the heart of the reprobate the actions of the flesh are in the prior place, and the actions of the soul in the posterior, in their thoughts without doubt Christ sits not first, but last. But all the elect, because they think of those things which are eternal before all, and dispose by a posterior and very small care if there are any things temporal, to whom it is also said by the master voice of Truth: Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you (Matth. VI. 33), in their heart the Lord sits first. Where it is aptly premised: If I had a mind to go to them. For because, as it is written (Eph. I. 5), He works all things according to the counsel of His will; not according to our merit, but because He Himself so wills, the Lord illustrates us by His visitation.

Therefore both when He wills He comes; and when He has come, He sits first, because both His advent in our heart is gratuitous, and the appetite for the desire of Him is not equal to other desires in our thought. It follows:

CHAPTER V.

[Rec. VII.]

IBID.---And when I sat as a king with an army standing round, yet was I a comforter of them that mourned.

12. Christ sitting in us as a king comforts the mourning. The Church performs the same.---The Lord sits in the heart as a king, because He rules the noisy motions of the minds in our thought. For in the mind which He inhabits, 640 while He excites the torpid, reins the unquiet, kindles the cold, moderates the kindled, softens the rigid, restrains the flux; from this very diversity of thoughts as it were a certain army stands round Him. Or certainly He sits as a king with an army standing round, because the crowd of virtues stands round Him presiding over the minds of the elect. Who also is a comforter of the mourning, from that promise in which He says: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted (Matth. V. 5). And again: I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you (John XVI. 22). But those things which we have said concerning the Head of the holy Church, nothing hinders if we refer also to the voice of the same Church. For in her the order

of doctors presides as a king, whom the crowd of her faithful stands round. Which multitude of faithful indeed is rightly also called an army, because in the girt of good works it is incessantly prepared daily against the wars of temptations. [Vet. V.] The holy Church also comforts the hearts of the mourning, while she weighs the minds of the elect afflicted by the distress of the present pilgrimage, and gladdens these by the promise of the eternal country. She considers also that the thoughts of the faithful are struck by divine fear; and those whom she beholds to have heard strict things concerning God that they might fear, she acts also that they might hear the mildness of His piety that they might presume.

13. She mixes hope and fear, lest we should incautiously trust in mercy, or desperately fear justice.---For so the holy Church mixes hope and fear for her faithful concerning the piety and justice of the Redeemer in the series of preaching, so that they may neither incautiously trust in mercy, nor desperately fear justice. For by the words of her Head she refreshes those fearing, saying: Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you the kingdom (Luke XII. 32). And again she terrifies those presuming when she says: Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation (Mark XIV. 38). Again she refreshes those fearing, saying: Rejoice because your names are written in heaven (Luke X. 20). But she deters those presuming in themselves, when she says: I was beholding Satan as lightning falling from heaven (Ibid. X. 18). She refreshes those fearing,

when she says: My sheep hear My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give to them eternal life; and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall snatch them out of My hand (John X. 27). But she deters those presuming in themselves, saying: They shall give great signs and wonders, so that even the elect, if it be possible, should be led into error (Matth. XXIV. 24). She refreshes those fearing, saying: He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved (Ibid. 13). She deters those presuming, saying: When the Son of man shall come, thinkest thou He shall find faith on the earth (Luke XVIII. 8)? She refreshes those fearing, when she says to the thief: To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise (Luke XXIII. 43). But she terrifies those presuming, while Judas from the glory of the apostleship falls into tartarus. Concerning whom it is said by the definition of the sentence: Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil (John VI. 70)? She refreshes the fearing, when she says: If a man shall put away his wife, and she going from him shall marry another man, shall he return to her any more? Shall not that woman be polluted and defiled? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return to Me, saith the Lord (Jer. III. 1). But she deters the presuming, when she says: Why criest thou over thy contrition? thy sorrow is incurable (Jer. XXX. 12). She refreshes the fearing, saying: Therefore at least from henceforth call Me: My father, Thou art the guide of my virginity (Jer. III. 4). But she deters the presuming, saying: Thy father was an Amorite, and thy

mother a Hittite (Ezek. XVI. 3). She refreshes the fearing, when she says: Return, O thou backsliding Israel, and I will not turn away My face from you, for I am holy, saith the Lord, and I will not be angry for ever (Jer. III. 12). But she deters the presuming, when she prohibits her prophet from intercession, saying: Lift not up praise and prayer for them, for I will not hear in the time of their cry to Me in the time of affliction, for if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My soul is not toward this people (Jer. VII. 16).

[Rec. VIII.] The holy Church therefore both raises the mind of her hearers by the benignity of mercy, and perturbs them by the strictness of judgment, so that in her preaching while she well mixes both, her elect may neither presume concerning exhibited justice, nor despair concerning past iniquity.

14. In good pastors, kindness and authority, mercy and discipline are joined.---But as to what he says: When I sat as a king with an army standing round, yet was I a comforter of them that mourned; we must know that it can greatly edify the reader even according to the history, if he considers how in good rulers there is mixed both the authority of ruling and the kindness of comforting. For he says: And when I sat as a king with an army standing round, behold the authority of governance: Yet was I a comforter of them that mourned; behold the ministry of piety. [Vet. VI.] For discipline (Dist. 45, chap. Discipline) or mercy is much destitute, if one be held without the other. But toward their subjects there ought

to be in rulers both mercy justly comforting, and discipline piously raging. Hence it is that to the wounds of that half-dead man, who was led by the Samaritan into the inn, both wine and oil are applied (Luke 10:33, 34), that by the wine the wounds may be bitten, by the oil they may be cherished, so that everyone who is set over the healing of wounds, should apply in the wine the bite of strictness, in the oil the softness of piety; by the wine let the rotten parts be cleansed, by the oil let those to be healed be cherished. Therefore lenity is to be mixed with severity, and a certain temperament made from both, so that neither by much asperity the subjects be exasperated, nor by too much kindness be relaxed. This surely that ark of the tabernacle signifies, in which with the tables the rod is together, and the manna (Heb. 9:4), because when the knowledge of Sacred Scripture is in the breast of a good ruler, if there is the rod of strictness, let there be also the manna of sweetness. Hence also David says: Thy rod and Thy staff they have comforted me (Psalm 23:4). For by the rod we are struck, and by the staff we are sustained. If therefore there is the strictness of the rod which strikes, let there be also the consolation of the staff which sustains. Let there be therefore love, but not softening; let there be vigor, but not exasperating; let there be zeal, but not immoderately raging; let there be piety, but not sparing more than is expedient. It is pleasing to behold in the breast of Moses mercy joined with severity. Let us see him loving piously, and strictly raging. Certainly when the

Israelite people had contracted an almost unpardonable offense before the eyes of God, so that its ruler heard: Go down, thy people hath sinned (Exod. 32:7); as if the Divine voice presently said to him: He who has fallen into such sin, is no longer Mine, and should subjoin: Let me alone, that My fury may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation; he once and again opposing himself as an obstacle to the onset of the raging God for the people over whom he was set, says: Either forgive them this trespass; or if Thou do not, blot me out of Thy book which Thou hast written (Ibid. 32:32). Let us weigh then with what bowels he loved that same people, for whose life he asked himself to be blotted out of the book of life. But yet let us weigh with how great zeal of rectitude he is kindled against their faults. For as soon as by the first petition, that they should not be destroyed, he obtained pardon for the fault, coming to the same people, he says: Put every man his sword upon his thigh. Go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and his friend, and his neighbor. And there fell of the people that day about twenty-three thousand men (Ibid. 32:27). Behold he who asked the life of all even with his own death, extinguished the life of a few with the sword. Within he burned with the fire of love, without he was kindled with the zeal of severity. So great was the piety, that he did not hesitate to offer himself to death for them before the Lord; so great the severity, that those whom he had

feared should be struck by God, he himself struck with the sword of judgment. He so loved those over whom he was set, that for them he spared not even himself; and yet he so persecuted the delinquents, whom he loved, that he prostrated them even while the Lord was sparing. On both sides a strong legate, on both sides an admirable mediator, he pleaded the cause of the people before God with prayers, the cause of God before the people with swords. Within loving, he resisted the divine wrath by supplicating; without raging, he consumed the fault by striking. He succored all more quickly, by showing the death of a few. And therefore Almighty God more quickly heard His faithful servant acting for the people, because He saw what he himself was about to do upon the people for God. In the governance of the people, therefore, Moses mixed both, so that neither discipline should be wanting to mercy, nor mercy to discipline. Hence here also according to both virtues it is said: And when I sat as a king with an army standing round, yet was I a comforter of them that mourned. For to sit with an army standing round, is the vigor and discipline of governance; but to comfort the hearts of the mourning, is the ministry of piety. But because among these things it is necessary that the word of exposition should recur to the spiritual understanding, the holy Church, pressed by her adversaries in the last times, remembers the rights of past governance; she remembers also how great benefits of piety she exhibited to the afflicted. Whose discipline and mercy, namely, is

then derided by the light-minded. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VI

[Vet. VII, Rec. IX].

CHAP. XXX, VER. 1.---But now they that are younger than I in time have me in derision.

15. All heretics are younger than the Church.---All heretics, compared to the age of the Universal Church, are fittingly called younger in time, because they went out from her, but she did not go out from them. Whence also it is rightly said by John: They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us (1 John 2:19). Those younger in time, therefore, deride the holy Church, when they who have gone out from her despise the words of her doctrine, of whom it is further added:

IBID.---Whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock.

Who is the flock of the holy Church, but the multitude of the faithful? Or who else are called the dogs of this flock, but the holy teachers, who have stood as keepers of those same faithful? Who, while intent on day and night watches for their Lord, have given out, so to speak, great barkings of preaching. Concerning whom it is said to the same Church by the Psalmist: The tongue of Thy dogs from the enemies by himself (Psalm 68:23). For some, being recalled from the worship of idols, were made preachers of God. The tongue

of the dogs of the Church, therefore, comes forth from the enemies, because the Lord makes even converted Gentiles to be preachers. Whence the slowness of the Jews, who would not speak for God, is rebuked by the prophet, who says: Dumb dogs, not being able to bark (Isaiah 56:10).

16. Their leaders, even in those things which seem well done, are reprobated.---We call those the fathers of heretics, namely, whom we call heresiarchs; from whose perverse preaching, that is, the seed of speech, the following peoples were generated in error. The holy Church therefore disdains to set the fathers of heretics with the dogs of her flock, because in judging she rejects the inventors of errors, and scorns to number them among the true fathers. Who, even if they seemed to have recalled some from the error of Gentilism, or to have taught the manners of some to act honestly, yet because they did not feel rightly concerning God, she does not set them with the dogs of her flock, because she does not ascribe them with the upright preachers. For it is clear that Arius, Photinus, Macedonius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Dioscorus, Severus, and many like these, by teaching and persuading endeavored to seem fathers; but the holy Universal Church, judging their errors with strict severity, does not number them among the keepers of her flock, whom she condemns as dissipating the unity of the same flock. Concerning whom it is said by the voice of Paul to the Ephesians: I know that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock (Acts 20:29).

And because sometimes heretics, the more they slide into the error of perfidy, the more they keep themselves in exterior operation, so that they seem to act great things above others, the holy Universal Church despises all their works, which she perceives do not come forth from the authority of faith. Whence rightly also by the voice of blessed Job it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 2.---The strength of their hands was to me as nothing: and they were thought unworthy of life itself.

17. Because they have forsaken the charity of God and neighbor. Some heretics have done miracles. Heretics are unworthy of life, because under the name of Christ they fight against Christ.---The strength in the hand is greatness in operation. But the strength of the hands of heretics is accounted as nothing by the holy Church, because whatever they work is seen to be of no merit, true faith being lost. For they forsake the charity of God and neighbor, who both feel falsely concerning God, and are divided by brawling from their neighbors. But the eminent preacher testifies that the strength of hands without charity is of no avail, saying: If I distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Cor. 13:3). [Vet. VIII.] But sometimes heretics also do signs and miracles, but that they may here receive the rewards of their affliction and abstinence, namely, the

praises which they seek. Whence also it is said by the voice of the Redeemer: Many will say to Me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I confess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity. By which sentence what is to be understood, but that the humility of charity, and not the signs of virtues, ought to be venerated in men? Whence now the holy Church, even if any miracles are done by heretics, despises them, because she knows that these are not a specimen of holiness. For the proof of holiness is not to do signs, but to love everyone as oneself, and to feel true things concerning God, and better things concerning one's neighbor than concerning oneself. For because true virtue is in love, and not in the showing of a miracle, Truth demonstrates, which says: By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35). For He who said not: By this shall it be known that ye are My disciples, if ye do signs, but said: If ye have love one to another, clearly indicates that not miracles, but charity alone, proves the true servants of God. The testimony therefore of heavenly discipleship is the gift of fraternal love. Which love, namely, because all heretics refuse to have, while they are divided from the unity of the Universal Church, it is rightly said of them: The strength of their hands was to me as nothing. And because they do not agree with the same signs which they exhibit in any humility, it is rightly subjoined: And they

were thought unworthy of life itself. Or certainly the holy Church confesses all heretics unworthy of life itself, because namely under the name of Christ they fight against the name of Christ. Concerning whom it is further added:

CAPUT VIII

[Rec. X].

VERS. 3.---Barren with want and hunger.

18. Curiously scrutinizing divine things, they labor with want and sterility.---All heretics, while in the sacred word they study to scrutinize the secrets of God more than they can grasp, become barren with their hunger. For they do not seek those things by which they may instruct themselves to humility, dispose their manners in tranquility, keep patience, or exhibit long-suffering; but only those things which may show them learned and talkative, those things they desire to know by which they may seem singularly erudite. For they often boldly treat of the nature of the Divinity, while the wretches know not themselves. They become barren therefore with want and hunger, because they desire to scrutinize those things from which they produce no germs of a good life. For those things are beyond them which they scrutinize, and while they tend to that which they cannot comprehend, they neglect to know those things by which they might have been instructed. How well the eminent preacher restrains their audacity, saying: Not to be more wise than it behooveth to be wise, but to be

wise unto sobriety (Rom. 12:3). Hence Solomon says: Put a bound to thy prudence (Prov. 23:4). Hence again he says: Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it (Prov. 25:16). For he who desires to eat the sweetness of spiritual understanding beyond what he can grasp, even vomits that which he had eaten, because while he seeks to understand the highest things beyond his strength, he loses even those which he had understood well. Hence again he says: As it is not good for him that eats much honey, so he that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory (Ibid. 27). For the glory of the invisible Creator, which being moderately sought erects us, being scrutinized beyond our strength oppresses us. Therefore heretics, because the more they ambition to be filled with sublime understanding, the more they become empty, it is well said of them: Barren with want and hunger. For by immoderate attempts, the more they desire the knowledge of heavenly science, the more they lose it.

[Vet. IX.] 19. The humble understand heavenly things, or venerate what is not understood.---But on the contrary, they who in the holy Church are truly humble, and truly learned, know both how to understand some things considered from the heavenly secrets, and to venerate some things not understood, so that they may both hold venerably those which they understand, and humbly expect those which they do not yet understand. Whence it is said to us by Moses: That

eating the lamb, whatever shall remain of it we should burn with fire (Exod. 12:10). For we eat the lamb, when by understanding we recondite many things of the Lord's humanity in the belly of the mind. From which some things remain to us, which cannot be eaten, because many things still remain of Him, which can by no means be understood. Which yet are to be burned with fire, because those things which we cannot grasp of Him, we humbly reserve for the Holy Spirit. Which humility often opens even to the senses of the elect those things which seemed to be impossible to be understood. For the perverse minds of heretics while they proudly attribute understanding to themselves, presume to give certain sentences even concerning unknown things. Whence it comes that that very elation, which raises them within themselves, repels them without from the truth, and they scarcely grasp the exterior things in the words of God, who thought they had singularly penetrated the spiritual secrets. Whence here also it is subjoined:

CAPUT IX

[Rec. XI].

VERS. 3, 4.---Who gnawed in solitude, squalid with calamity and misery; and ate herbs, and the barks of trees.

20. Heretics do not eat the marrow of Sacred Scripture, but gnaw the bark.---That which cannot be eaten is wont to be gnawed. But heretics, because they strive to understand Sacred Scrip-

ture by their own strength, can by no means apprehend it; which while they do not understand, they as it were do not eat. And because not helped by supernal grace they cannot eat this, they as it were gnaw it by certain efforts. For they handle it exteriorly, when indeed they endeavor, but do not reach its interior parts. Who because they are disjoined from the society of the Universal Church, are recorded not to gnaw anywhere, but in solitude. To which solitude, namely, because false preachers would draw their followers, Truth forewarned long before, saying: If they shall say unto you: Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth (Matt. 24:26). Who are rightly reported squalid with calamity and misery, because they are despicable both by the destruction of their manners, and by the depravity of their senses. Who also eat herbs and the barks of trees, because repelled by the obstacle of their own elation, they cannot perceive great and intimate things in the sacred word, but scarcely know some tender and exterior things in it. For by herbs the plainer words, by the barks of trees the exterior words of the Fathers are signified. They therefore who desire to know those things from which they may by no means be learned, but may seem to be, while in the sacred volumes they do not heartily seek the force of charity toward God and neighbor, are fed as it were from herb and bark, because they are either low or exterior things, which nourish the minds of the proud. Or certainly to eat herbs is to keep the least precepts of Sacred Scripture, and to despise the

greater. Whom Truth well rebukes, saying: Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye tithe mint, and anise, and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the law (Matt. 23:23). Who also eat the barks of trees, because there are some who in the sacred volumes venerate only the surface of the letter, nor keep anything of the spiritual understanding, when they suspect nothing further in the words of God than this which they have heard exteriorly. Whom yet in all their errors the appetite of vain glory possesses, and the ambition of honor holds captive, and often through those very things which they speak they desire nothing else than earthly gains. Of whom it is said by Paul: For such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly (Rom. 16:18). Whence rightly also it is subjoined:

CAPUT X

[Rec. XII]

VERS. 4.---And the root of junipers was their food.

21. They seek only temporal gains.---For the juniper tree has prickles instead of leaves. For those things which it brings forth are so hairy, that like thorns they are able to prick him who handles them. But a thorn is every sin, because while it draws to delight, it as it were lacerates the mind by pricking. Whence it is said by the voice of the just and penitent one: I was turned in my anguish while the thorn is broken (Psalm 32:4), because namely the mind is turned to lamenta-

tion, that the pricking of sin may be broken by repenting. But in another translation the thorn is reported not to be broken, but to be fixed, which namely does not differ from the same sense, because the mind of the penitent is led to grief, while the committed fault is held fixed in the memory [Vet. X]. What then is signified by the root of the juniper but avarice, from which the thorns of all sins are produced? Concerning which it is said by Paul: The root of all evils is cupidity (1 Tim. 6:10). For it arises latently in the mind, but patently produces the prickings of all sins in operation. Which prickings rising from this root, the eminent preacher immediately insinuates, when he subjoins: Which some coveting have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows (Ibid. 10). For he who said many sorrows, made known as it were the prickings rising from this root. In junipers, therefore, we understand sins, but in the root of junipers what else than avarice, that is, the matter of sins? Because therefore heretics often follow only exterior gains in their words, nor are ignorant that they assert perverse things, but do not desert the predicaments of error, while they wish to receive expenses as it were of teachers, it is well said now by the voice of the holy man: And the root of junipers was their food, because while they think of avarice with all the senses of their mind, they are as it were fed by that nourishment, from which the prickings of following sins are wont undoubtedly to be born. Who if ever they find some things as it were prudently in

the sacred word, which while they do not understand, they suspect to be for their own assertions, presently they sprinkle these crying out to their wretched hearers, whose substances, not souls, they desire. Whence congruously it is subjoined:

CAPUT XI

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 5.---Who snatching these things from the valleys, when they had found each one, ran to them with a cry.

22. They distort and draw to themselves the obscure sentences of the Sacred Scripture and the Fathers.---They snatch those things from the valleys, because they gather these from the humble sayings of the Fathers with a proud spirit. Which while they glory to have found for their own parts, they run to them with cries, because namely they endeavor to publish everything they feel to the ears of men with the appetite of praise. It follows:

CHAPTER XII

VERS. 6.---In the deserts of torrents they dwelt, and in the caves of the earth, or upon the gravel.

23. Heretics are noted for lurking places and instability.---We call torrents the streams which are gathered by winter waters, which also dry up at certain times. Rightly therefore are the inventors of perverse dogmas called torrents, because

cold from the heat of charity, they grow large as it were in the numbness of winter time, because they do not flow with perpetual fullness, but are dried up by the allegations of Catholics as by summer suns. And indeed the inventors of perverse dogmas having arisen against the holy Church, are now extinct from the fervor of truth, but yet their disciples do not cease to hold and defend those things which they taught. These therefore who follow their errors, dwell in the deserts of torrents, that is, they trust in their preaching, whose words are now dried up by the response and reasoning of Catholics. [Vet. XI.] But what else do we understand by the caves of the earth than the secret preachings of heretics? For heretics thus come together among themselves in clandestine meetings, that they may provide to their error a reverence which they cannot from reason, from concealment, and to weak souls the word of depravity may appear the more to be revered, the more it is secret. Whence in Solomon the woman from the type of heresy persuades, saying: Stolen waters are sweeter, and hidden bread is more pleasant (Prov. 9:17). Which secret preachings Truth detests, saying: If any man shall say to you: Behold, here is Christ, or behold, there, believe it not. And again: If they shall say to you: Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be (Matt. 24:23, 26). This therefore there in the

secret chambers, which is here said in the caves. In caves therefore heretics dwell, because they often conceal their error with secret preachings, that by which they do not indicate themselves to the more learned and prudent, by that they may the more vehemently draw the unskilful to themselves. Whence also it is well subjoined: Or upon the gravel. For we call gravel those very minute stones which the river water draws. The teachers therefore of perverse dogmas dwell upon the gravel, because they draw those minds of men, which are solidified by no stability of gravity, which as if from place to place the rivers of errors always lead. Whence also the eminent preacher, when he desired his hearers not to be led temporally, but to be solidified with strong gravity, admonished saying: That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine (Ephes. 4:14). The holy Church therefore, for a little while depressed by her adversaries, when she shall see the bold minds of the erring insult her; she recalls to memory what their conversation was, saying: In the deserts of torrents they dwelt, and in the caves of the earth, or upon the gravel. For because their perverse preaching, having lost the fire of charity, grew strong from the coldness of the mind, it surely dwelt in the deserts of torrents. Because truly it was not open and free, it lurked in caves. But because it held a people not fixed, but movable, it remained not upon a rock, but upon the gravel; of whom it is further added:

CAPUT XIII

[Rec. XIV].

VERS. 7.---Who among such as these rejoiced, and computed it a delight to be under the briers.

24. They exult and take pleasure in the worst things.---What do we understand by the name of briers but those prickings of sins which we have already mentioned above (Num. 21 of this book)? But because perverse minds rejoice in iniquities, which they ought to have wept over, all heretics extol themselves with so much the more vain joy, the more they grow strong in worse things; and they compute it a delight to be under the briers, because from that they raise their perverse mind to joy, whence they bear the thorns of sins. For if ever they have been able to draw anyone to their error, they boast themselves through joy; and whence they gather sins for themselves daily, even by losing others, thence they exult themselves as it were leaders to justice. Well therefore is it said: Who among such as these rejoiced, and computed it a delight to be under the briers. For they draw whom they can to their own destruction, and believe that to be under sins, or to add faults to faults, is to accumulate an opulence of virtues.

CAPUT XIV

[Rec. XV].

VERS. 8.---Children of fools and of ignoble men, and in the earth not appearing at all.

25. The parents of heretics are fools and ignoble.---The children of those, namely, who were masters of errors. They are called children, therefore, not generated from their seed, but from imitation, who by teaching perverse things, were fools through ignorance; by living wickedly, ignoble through action. Who are joined to our Redeemer by no kinship of wisdom, by no kinship of life. Of whom it is said by the voice of Solomon in the praise of the holy Church: Her husband is noble in the gates (Prov. 31:23). These therefore because they followed the perverse examples of the erring, are recorded to be children of fools and of ignoble men. But it is rightly subjoined: And in the earth not appearing at all, because while they desire to be seen as something here, they surely become excluded from the land of the living.

26. The same things can be said of carnal men which are said of heretics.---But this which we have said in the type of heretics, nothing at all prevents if we also feel it concerning perverse and carnal men, although placed in the right faith. For the holy Church of the elect does not account as her adversaries only those who being placed without her faith dissent, but those also who press her life within by living ill. Let her consider therefore, afflicted with the distress of rushing adversity, how in the time of her prosperity she was burdened by the depravity of the wicked and of those living within her. Let her consider that by the exigency of the merits of some, not unjustly the life of all was disturbed in her, and let her say: Who gnawed in solitude, squalid with calamity

and misery. As I have prefaced in the first part of this work, by the virtue of contemplation the solitude of the mind is sometimes wont to be understood. But in this place when solitude is said through rebuke, what else is shown but the destitution of good? Whence also under the type of Judea Jeremiah deplores the soul of the sinner, saying: How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people (Lam. 1:1)? But when it is said by blessed Job concerning the wicked: They gnawed in solitude, it is pleasing to behold this also which was said by the Psalmist: His enemies shall lick the earth (Psalm 72:9).

649 27. [Old Ed. XII]. Some study flattery, others open force of avarice. For there are two kinds of men serving their own ambition: one, namely, which always uses flatteries of the tongue for avarice; the other indeed which intends rapine by open force. For we gnaw, when we wear away something externally with strong effort. For a thing is licked when that which cannot easily be eaten is tasted by the applied smoothness of the tongue. All therefore, even living wickedly under the appearance of faith, who lust after the things of others, but are by no means able to seize those things which they lust after, yet try to draw away the desired things by smooth speeches and as it were by the softness of sweetness, what else do they do but lick the earth? because whatever earthly things they cannot take away by force, they attempt by the softness of the tongue. But they who in this world are supported by some power, and lusting after the things of others, de-

spise indeed to flatter out of fraud, because even by unjust strength they can fulfill what they will, these do not lick this which they lust after, but gnaw it, since they demolish the life of those near them by the strength of their powers as if by the effort of their teeth. Let the holy Church therefore behold the true riches of the heavenly country; let her behold the frequency of the supernal citizens; let her behold in her elect the cultivation of the mind, and the goods of innumerable virtues, and from them let her recall the eye of the mind to the life of the wicked, destitute of every good; and from the comparison of those let her see how this life is void of all virtues, because it has deserted heavenly things, and has lusted after the lowest things. Let her see how for the most part that which it lusts after, if perchance it prevails, it even seizes violently. Let her see that such men, placed as it were within her, she has long endured, and from their faults she has come even to the perils and detriments of the good also, and let her say: Who gnawed in solitude. As if she should openly complain, saying: They would not gnaw even by seizing the things of others violently, unless they themselves first remained in their inner parts alone and empty from the cultivation of virtues. But he well explains their quality, saying: Squalid with calamity and misery. For sick flesh, if it is neglected to be carefully tended, is burdened more heavily in infirmity with squalor drawn over it; and while to the calamity of sickness the misery of negligence is added, a heavier trouble is endured with the squalor that has arisen.

28. Serving the necessities of nature more than is right, we increase its infirmities. Human nature therefore, well established, but fallen into infirmity by the fault of its own will, fell into calamity, because, pressed by innumerable necessities, it found nothing in this life but whence it might be afflicted. But when we serve these same necessities of our nature for the most part more than is expedient, and neglect the care of the mind, we add the squalor of fault from the misery of negligence. For natural necessities are wont to have this very dangerous quality, that often in them it is least discerned what is done about them through the study of utility and what through the vice of pleasure. For frequently, the occasion of seduction being found, while we render the debts due to necessity, we serve the vice of pleasure, and under the veil of infirmity our excuse cloaks itself before the eyes of discretion, and hides itself as it were under the patronage of fulfilling utility. But to relax the infirmity of our nature through negligence, is nothing else than to add misery to calamity, and to multiply the squalor of vices from the same misery. Whence holy men in all that they do discern with most studious intention, 650 lest the infirmity of their nature should exact from them more than is due, lest under the cover of necessity the vice of pleasure should increase in them. For they endure one thing from infirmity, another from the suggestion of temptation; and like certain most upright arbiters placed between necessity and pleasure, they relieve the one by consoling, they

curb the other by pressing. Whence it happens that even if they endure the calamity of their infirmity, yet they do not descend to the squalor of misery through negligence. For to be in calamity is this itself, to endure the necessities of nature from the infirmity of the flesh as yet corruptible. Which necessities namely he desired to escape, who said: Deliver me from my necessities (Psalm 25:17). For he knew that for the most part the faults of pleasures burst forth from the occasion of necessities; and lest he should admit anything illicit of his own will, he was busy that this itself should be plucked out, which he endured unwillingly from the root.

29. Carnal men, while they seem to obey necessity, serve pleasure. Would that their own death alone were enough for the wicked. But on the contrary the wicked rejoice in these necessities of their corruption, because surely they turn them back to the use of pleasures. For when they serve nature for refreshing their bodies with food, they are distended in the gluttony of pleasure through the delight of the throat. When they seek garments for covering their limbs, they seek not only what may cover, but also what may extol; and against the numbness of cold, not only what may fortify through thickness, but also what may delight through softness; not only what may soothe the touch through softness, but also what may seduce the eyes through color. To turn the cause of necessity therefore into the use of pleasure, what else is it than to associate the squalor of misery with one's calamity? The Church there-

fore, pressed by the time of adversity, let her remember those from whose merit she endures such things, and let her say: Who gnawed in solitude, squalid with calamity and misery. They would not indeed be squalid with calamity, if they did not superadd the misery of pleasures to the innate necessities. Which necessities namely we have merited from the fault of the first parent. But these who join the misery of negligence to their calamity, burst forth from the torture of punishment to the increases of fault. But would that such men, when they despise to be changed for the better, did so act perversely, as not to proffer those same things also to others. Would that their own death alone were enough for them, and they did not kill also the life of another by poisonous persuasions. For they envy others for being what they are not, they grieve that others obtain what they lose. For if perchance they behold any good things arise in the acts of others, they soon pluck them out by the hand of pestiferous reproach. Whence also follows [Old Ed. XIII]: And they ate herbs, and the barks of trees.

30. They endeavor to pervert those beginning and profiting in good. For what is signified by herbs but the tender life of those beginning well and close to the earth, and what by the barks of trees but the exterior works of those who already desire sublime things? For the wicked, when they behold those beginning right things, contradict either by mocking or by as it were counseling. But when they already weigh that some are profiting to the highest things, because they are

utterly unable to dissipate their profiting, they turn them aside from some of their works. To chew herbs therefore and the barks of trees to them, is to dissipate by poisonous persuasions, as if by certain teeth of their malice, 651 either the studies of those beginning well, or the operations of some already tending to higher things after the manner of trees. The reprobate chew herbs when they consume the beginnings of the weak by mocking. They also chew the barks of trees when by the hand of perverse counsel they withdraw the covering of good works from the life of those rightly growing. But they despoil these in certain acts like trees; but those they draw as it were like herbs, because despising them, they as it were eat what they trample. They demolish in part the strength of some already rising on high; but the tenderness of some even as yet placed in the lowest things they utterly crush. Let her say therefore: They ate herbs, and the barks of trees, because by perverse mockings they dissipated in some their exterior works, but in some their hearts flourishing through hope.

31. Some feed on only the appearance of virtue, as it were on the bark. Or certainly to eat herbs is to imitate certain light and tender things of the ancient fathers. But to eat the barks of trees is to perform their works superficially, but not to hold a right intention in the same works. For there are some, who while they cannot obtain the glory of the present world by the actions of the same world, desire the appearance of sanctity, take the habit of veneration, desire to be seen as imi-

tators of the ancient fathers, and indeed perform certain small and light things, but they despise to imitate their strong things, and those which come forth from the root of charity alone. These namely eat herbs, because they neglect great things, and are satiated with vile things. For the most part however they also exercise certain as it were more robust works, but they do not hold a right intention in the same works. To whom indeed to chew the barks of trees is to assume the exterior acts of the elect, and not to have a good intention in good acts. For while for human praise they seek out right works, but neglect to imitate the heart of those working rightly, they are filled from the barks of trees alone. For with all desire they seek the glory of the present life, or abundance. Whence also is rightly subjoined: And the root of junipers was their food.

32. A perverse action which delights in the fault, pricks in the punishment. For within although placed by faith, while for the most part they serve the thoughts of avarice, they eat that, as it were, whence in the end of life the sharp things of torments are brought forth. Who while they do not desire the fruit of divine eloquence, but serve the ambition of temporal things, are by no means satiated with the bread of wheat, but with the root of juniper. Those very things namely occupy them, arisen from the lowest and deepest parts, which should afterwards prick them after the manner of a juniper from the hardness of retributions as if from the roughness of the leaves. For despising God here, they least

feel how great an evil it is which they do. For as yet they eat the root of the juniper, but they do not attend how sharp the branches of this root are, because surely a perverse action now as if from the root delights in the fault, but afterwards as it were from the branches it pricks in the punishment. Where also is well subjoined: Who snatching these from the valleys, when they had found each thing, ran to them with a cry.

33. In the valley of the present life, there is often litigation with a great cry for a vile stipend. In comparison namely of the heavenly things, all present life is a valley. But these, because they know not how to contemplate the heights of the mountains, that is, the strong acts of the saints, always converse in the lowest delight as if in valleys; and while they find any gain even of a small stipend, they run with 652 a cry, because they strive to draw this away even by brawling. For to run with a cry to each thing found in the valley, is to litigate even for a small stipend upon the occasions of causes that have arisen. For the most part however, when a good action shows a man to be holy, the occasion of earthly advantage that has arisen examines him. For you may see some already doing sublime things, already following the examples of the preceding fathers in the work of abstinence, now in the work of doctrine; but when suddenly they have found the gain of the present life as if the fruit of a valley, they run to this with a cry, because having broken the tranquility of the sanctity that was brought over them, they leap forth to it.

Because therefore they seek here the flatteries of transitory consolation, they eat herbs, because in their thoughts they meditate upon their exterior glory, they chew the barks of trees. And because in all these they serve only avarice with their whole intention, they are filled with the root of juniper. All which they snatch from the valleys, because from the love of this lowest and corruptible life they burn with immense desires. And when they find each thing, they run to them with cries, because namely they strive to apprehend the places and governments of the holy fathers, whose merits they do not seek to obtain; and when they cannot for the most part obtain these tranquilly, they strive even by breaking the peace of concord.

35. What the just despise, those they especially desire. Who for the reason that they are disjoined far from the action of the preceding fathers, it is rightly subjoined: They dwelt in the deserts of torrents, and in the caverns of the earth, or upon the gravel. In a good part indeed we rightly take torrents for the holy preachers, who while they flow into us in the present life with divine speeches, are gathered as if in winter by a multitude of waters. Who also withdraw themselves when the summer sun comes, because when the light of the eternal country shall have shone forth, they will cease to preach. The deserts of these torrents are the advantages of temporal life. For these they desert, and turn themselves to obtaining heavenly gains. But all these things that torrent had left, who said: For

whom I have made all things a detriment, and I account them as dung (Phil. 3:8). But because the minds of the wicked desire to obtain those things in this life, which the just leave behind despising them, they are recorded to dwell in the deserts of the torrents. For those things which are unworthy of the saints, they themselves desire as a great thing to perceive. But the caverns of the earth are perverse thoughts, in which they hide themselves from human eyes. For the wicked as they are shun to be seen by men, and while they simulate something other than what they are, they hide themselves in the hiding-places of their conscience as if in the caverns of the earth. All which they would not do, unless they despaired of the eternal and solid life, unless they fixed their mind in this uncertainty of temporality. Whence it is well subjoined: Or upon the gravel.

36. Clinging to the flowing things, they are rolled down to the lowest parts. For gravel is the present life, which is led incessantly to its end by the very defect of mutability, as if by the impulse of a river. To dwell upon the gravel therefore, is both to cling to the flow of the present life, and to place one's intention there, where a step cannot solidify by standing fixed. There is another thing in gravel which ought by no means to be passed over in silence, because when a foot is placed on its surface, it slips by its very volubility, and is rolled down to the lowest parts. From which thing indeed the life of the wicked differs in nothing, because when for the love of the world they study to do some lawful and honest things,

they place as it were a level foot on the surface; but suddenly the foot slips to the lowest parts, because their action while it always desires more things, descends even to unjust and illicit things. When therefore holy Church endures the contraries of this time, let her recur through memory to the life of the carnal, whom she sustained as adversaries to her even in prosperous things, and let her recognize by whose merits she suffers these things, saying: They dwelt in the deserts of torrents, and in the caverns of the earth, or upon the gravel. For because they are destitute of the doctrine of the fathers, they are recorded to dwell in the deserts of the torrents; because they cover themselves in hidden thoughts, in the caverns of the earth; but because they desire to fix their intention in the mobility of the present world, upon the gravel. But would that such men, because they will not attack the temptations that attack them, would at least wash away by weeping the things committed! would that they would at least recognize their evils perpetrated, and apply to the barren fig-tree a basket of dung, that is, to the unfruitful mind the fatness of lamentation!

[Old Ed. XV]. 37. The evil which we do places an obstacle to the eye of the mind. But the human mind has for the most part this proper quality, that as soon as it falls into fault, it is separated further from the knowledge of itself. For this very evil which it does interposes itself as an obstacle to the mind before the eye of reason. Whence it happens that the soul, first obsessed by voluntary darkness, afterwards does not even recognize the

good which it should seek. For the more it clings to evils, the less it understands the goods which it loses. For the light of truth, because it examines with subtlety the faults of the reprobate, by how much being possessed it is neglected, by so much it permits more strictly judging, that even what is lost is not sought; and when it is repelled from the act, it flees from the sense, so that of her whose face as it were is despised in the work, her back-parts even may no longer be seen through recordation. Hence therefore it is that the reprobate, subjected to bewailable crimes, rejoice, of whom it is said through Solomon: Who rejoice when they have done evil, and exult in the worst things (Prov. 2:14). Hence it is that they perform the causes of tears dancing; hence it is that they execute the business of their death laughing. Whence here also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XV

[Rec. XVI].

VERSE 7. --- Who rejoiced among such like, and accounted it delights to be under the briars.

38. Rejoicing in transitory things, they are afflicted by heavy cares. --- They rejoice among such like, because indeed they attend to the transitory things which they perceive, and neglect to look upon the permanent goods which they lose. And while they burn with the love of temporal things, they willfully ignore true joy. Which if they sought to know studiously, they would see how much to be bewailed are the joys which

they desire. But while they despise to know better things, they choose for themselves alone, as if the highest, those things which visibly flatter the eyes with a fleeting seduction. Following visible things indeed, they fix their heart; and they rejoice as much outwardly, as they have no recordation of themselves inwardly. Yet tribulations are for the most part mixed with their joys, and they are scourged by those very things from which they take pride. For neither can they, without the heavy molestations of cares, either seek the temporal things which they desire when not possessed, or preserve them when sought, or desire a more excellent glory among equals, or exact more reverence than is proper from inferiors, or exhibit less of the same than they ought to superiors; for the most part to show power through impotence; always to do base things, and yet, lest they have a reputation for baseness, to guard themselves fearfully. All these things indeed sting the wretched ones, but they do not feel those same stings, being overcome by the love of temporal things themselves. Whence also it is rightly said now: And they accounted it delights to be under the briars, because being pressed by the delights of sins, from the affection of the present life they are ignorant of how harsh are the things which they suffer.

39. They estimate it a delight to remain under the briars. --- They rejoice therefore, but under the briars, because they rejoice indeed in temporal things, but yet while they are not able to dispense those same temporal things without tribu-

lation, they are stung, wretched ones, by that care by which they are pressed. They remain under the briars, and they estimate this very thing to be delights, because they both endure harsh things indeed from the love of the present life, and yet, bound by the affection of excessive cupidity, they think the labor of that same endurance to be pleasure. Whence rightly Jeremiah, taking into himself the figure of the whole human conversation, complains through lamentation, saying: He hath filled me with bitterness (Lam. 3:15). For as we have said before in a former part (Lib. VII, n. 25), every drunkard knows not what he suffers. But he who is drunk with wormwood (absynthio), both that which he has taken is bitter, and yet he does not understand that same bitterness with which he is filled. The human race therefore, by the right judgment of God, being left to itself in its pleasures, and handed over through those same pleasures to spontaneous tribulations, is drunk with wormwood, because those things are bitter which it endures for the love of this life, and yet it ignores that same bitterness through the blindness of cupidity as if by the insensibility of drunkenness. For thirsting for the glory of the world, while it finds many tribulations for it, that which it drinks is bitter. But because it has taken this too greedily, it does not suffice to discern the evil of that same bitterness already before the drunkenness itself. [Old Ed. XVI.] For perverse men love even tribulations for the glory of this world, and they willingly serve with all toils for it, and they most devotedly submit their necks to

the yoke of heavy labors. Which is well described under the figure of Ephraim by Hosea prophesying, who says: Ephraim is a heifer taught to love threshing (Hosea 10:11). For a heifer accustomed to the labors of threshing, when released, for the most part returns to the same use of labor even when not compelled. So the mind of the wicked, given to the services of this world, and accustomed to the fatigues of temporal things, even if it be permitted to be freely at leisure for itself, nevertheless hastens to be under earthly labors, and seeks the threshing of labor as the use of a wretched conversation, so that it may not please it to cease from the yoke of worldly servitude, even if it be permitted. Which yoke indeed the Lord was loosening from the neck of the disciples, when He said: Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness (Luke 21:34), He immediately added: And in the cares of this life; and that day come upon you suddenly. And again: Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart (Matt. 11:28). For what is it for the Lord to call Himself meek in His mastership and humble, except to demonstrate certain level paths of living well, the difficulties of exercising elation being left behind? But because the minds of the wicked are delighted more through the harsh things of elation than through the mild things of humility and gentleness, they reckon it to be delights to be under the briars. For they are prepared to

bear harsh things as if certain soft and delectable things for the love of the world, while they strive to apprehend the summits of things in this life.

40. They are delighted more by the harshness of labor than by the sweetness of rest. --- The Lord commands cessation from the labors of the world, He persuades the sweetness of holy rest; and yet the insane mind of the wicked rejoices more to follow harsh things carnally than to hold mild things spiritually, it is fed more by the bitterness of fatigue than by the sweetness of rest. Which the Israelitish people clearly showed to us in itself (Exod. 16:3), who while they perceived the refreshment of manna from above, lusted after the pots of flesh, the melons, the leeks, and the onions from Egypt. For what is signified in the manna, except the food of grace, tasting sweet, given from above for the refreshment of the interior life to those well at leisure? And what by the pots of flesh, except carnal works, hardly to be cooked through by the labors of tribulations as if by fires? What by the melons, except earthly sweetnesses? What is expressed by the leeks and onions, which for the most part those who eat them emit tears, except the difficulty of the present life, which is both spent not without mourning by its lovers, and yet is loved with tears? Leaving the manna therefore, they sought the leeks and onions with the melons and flesh, because indeed perverse minds despise the sweet gifts through the grace of rest, and for carnal pleasures they lust after the laborious paths of this life, even full of tears;

they despise to have where they may spiritually rejoice, and they longingly desire where they may also carnally groan. Let Job therefore reprove the madness of these men with a truthful voice, because indeed by a perverse judgment they prefer disturbed things to tranquil, harsh to level, rough to mild, transitory to eternal, suspected to secure. Let holy Church record the madness of these men, when she is pressed from without by cruel adversities, whom she contained within herself as if faithful, but she long tolerated their life adverse to the faith, and let her say: Who rejoiced among such like, and accounted it delights to be under the briars, because indeed they learned the evils which they do from the depravity of the preceding wicked ones. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI

[Old Ed. XVII].

VERSE 8. --- Children of fools and base men.

41. Folly is twofold; one joined to the highest nobility. --- We must know that some within the holy Church are called fools, but yet noble, while others truly are fools and base. For those are called fools, but cannot be base, who, despising the prudence of the flesh, desire the folly that will be profitable to them, and are raised to the novelty of an internal offspring by the nobility of virtue; who despise the foolish wisdom of the world, and lust after the wise folly of God. For it is written: For the foolishness of God is wiser

than men (1 Cor. 1:25). Paul admonishes us to embrace this folly, saying: If any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise (Ibid. 3:18). Those who have perfectly followed this folly, have merited to hear from the voice of Wisdom: You who have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). Behold, leaving temporal things, they have purchased the glory of eternal power. What therefore is more foolish in this world than to desert one's own? And what in eternity more noble than to come as judges with God? The nobility of these judges indeed is recorded by the witness of Solomon, when that which I have already mentioned is said: Her husband is noble in the gates, when he sitteth with the senators of the land (Prov. 31:23). For he considers them very noble indeed, whom he calls senators. Paul had seen this nobility in himself, when, joined by the spirit to the kinship of the Creator, he said: Being therefore the offspring of God, we ought not to suppose that the divinity is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, the graving of art, and the device of man (Acts 17:29). For we are called the offspring of God, not as brought forth from His nature, but by His spirit, and voluntarily created, and adoptively recreated. Therefore, by so much is each one raised to this nobility, as he is renewed by imitation through the received image to His likeness.

42. Another is base, by which heavenly wisdom is left. --- But on the contrary there are fools and base men, who while they flee heavenly wisdom, following themselves, are put to sleep in their own ignorance as if in the vileness of an abject offspring. For by how much they do not understand that for which they were created, by so much also they lose the kinship of the generosity received through the image. They are fools therefore and base, whom the servitude of the mind repels from the fellowship of the eternal inheritance. For it is written: Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin (John 8:34). And by the voice of the excellent preacher it is said: The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (1 Cor. 3:19). Those therefore who, while they were wise in earthly things, were repelled from the inward generosity, were fools and base at the same time. While many imitate their acts, they become the children of fools and base men; and while they follow them in senses and morals, they are both fools, because they do not understand true wisdom, and base, because they are renewed by no liberty of the spirit. But these, although they exercise the acts of the wicked, yet for the most part in this life occupy the places of the just, and estimate themselves to be their children whose offices they administer outwardly through the cupidity of honor. Whom holy correction recalls to the knowledge of themselves, so that, placed indeed in base desires, they may attend to whose children they are. For they are not their children whose places they hold, but whose works they

exercise. Let it be said therefore rightly: Children of fools and base men. Where it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SAME. --- And in the earth not appearing at all.

43. They are fools and base, whom God professes not to know. Many by knowing the truth press it, they do not touch it. --- For just as many are in the earth, and are hidden from the knowledge of men by the abjection of their vileness as if by a certain superinduction of a veil, so there are some in the Church who, while they subject themselves to the abjection of perverse works, are not known to the divine sight. To whom also it is sometimes to be said: Amen I say to you, I know you not (Matt. 25:12). To be in the earth therefore and to appear, is to show the nobility of the mind through the virtue of the work in the right faith. But to be in the earth and not to appear at all, is to consist indeed in the faith in the Church, but to demonstrate nothing worthy of the faith in the work. These therefore within the holy Church are both seen by the eyes of the divinity through judgment, and yet are not seen through the merit of a good life, because those things which they hold by confessing, they do not exhibit by living. Of whom Paul says: They profess that they know God: but in their works they deny Him (Tit. 1:16). These in the holy Church press rather than venerate the faith which they assert they hold, while they desire to acquire their own gains more in His

name than His own. [Old Ed. XVIII]. But the elect, while they care to preserve the merit of faith by right works, approach to the knowledge of their Author even among the tumults of the reprobate. Which was well signified in the Gospel in the woman laboring with an issue of blood, of whom when the Lord said: Who touched Me (Luke 8:45)? Peter answered by reasoning: The multitudes throng Thee and press Thee, and sayest Thou: Who touched Me? But he merited to hear the causes of true reason, when the Lord said to him: Somebody hath touched Me; for I know that virtue is gone out of Me. Behold the multitudes pressed the Lord, but yet she alone touched Him who came to Him humbly, because indeed many reprobates even in the holy Church by knowing the truth press it, which they neglect to touch by living well. They press, and are far off, because they follow the divine knowledge by professions, they flee it by morals. They press, I say, but are far off, because they contradict by acting that same faith which they build up by speaking. As therefore we are taught by this testimony that some by touching the Lord do not touch Him, so some are not seen by the Lord even when they are seen, because to His hidden gazes they both appear for the punishment of damnation, and they do not appear for the merit of election. Let it be said therefore rightly: And in the earth not appearing at all, because even if the Church held them as far as appearance, yet the Creator within her saw them as if not seeing those whom He knew not. Who in the time of tranquility therefore hold the

faith as far as the word, because they see the same faith flourishing generally. But when a sudden storm of adversity arises against it, they are immediately disjoined from it by public negation, and whatever they had before held as if venerating, against this they afterwards fight laughing. Whence aptly is subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Old Ed. XVII].

VERS. 9.---Now I am turned into their song, and am become their proverb.

44. In the growth of the wicked, faith shall be for a reproach, and truth for a crime.---By which words indeed that time of holy Church is expressed, in which she is publicly derided by the reprobate, when, in the growth of the wicked, faith shall be for a reproach, and truth shall be for a crime. For each one shall be so much more despicable, as he shall have been able to be more just; so much more abominable, as more laudable. And so the holy Church of the elect in the time of affliction is made a proverb to the wicked, because when they behold the good die through torments, they take from them a similitude of malediction. For in that they see transitory death, but see not permanent life; they so much the more flee present evils by deriding them, as they do not reach through understanding inwardly to permanent goods. But those things which are subjoined, because they are not involved in more obscure sentences, we ought to run through

briefly, so that we may be able to arrive more quickly at those things in which we must labor. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 10.---They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.

45. The Church is not cast down but is raised and grows by the mockeries of the wicked.---All the wicked flee far from the holy Church, not by the steps of their feet, but by the qualities of their morals; they flee far not in place, but in merit; while, with increasing pride, they despise her with open reproach. For to spit on her face is not only to slander the good in their absence, but also to refute each just man even in his presence. Whom then the perverse, while they despise them by openly deriding, emit in their insults flowing words like flowing spittle. [Old Ed. XIX.] But the holy Church knows how to grow in passions, and to hold an honorable life among reproaches; she knows how neither to be cast down by adverse things, nor to glory in prosperous things; she knows how to lay down her mind in dejection against prosperous things, she knows how to exalt her soul to the hope of the heavenly height against adverse things; she knows how to attribute her good things to the mercy of the Redeemer, she knows how to attribute her evil things to the justice of the Judge; because she both has good things by His bounty, and suffers evil things by His permission. Whence also she

immediately subjoins concerning the Lord, saying:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 11.---For He hath opened His quiver, and afflicted me.

46. By God's permission, although by a hidden judgment, she knows that she suffers evils.---What is designated by the quiver of God, but His hidden counsel? But the Lord casts an arrow from the quiver, when He emits an open sentence from His hidden counsel. For that each one is scourged, we know; but for what cause the scourge comes, we are ignorant. But when after the scourges followeth the correction of life, then even the virtue of the counsel itself is opened. The quiver therefore is closed, which is a hidden counsel. But by the open quiver we are afflicted, when through that which follows after the scourge we see by what counsel we are scourged. When the Lord sees sins, and yet does not move His hand to vengeance, He holds as it were a closed quiver; but by striking He indicates how much that which He tolerated for a long time in seeing displeased Him in us. And so let the holy Church of the elect, pressed by tribulations, say: For He hath opened His quiver, and afflicted me. Which sustaining the insolent voices of her adversaries, while she perceives that her preaching is not admitted, deserting the hardness of some, she moderates the words of her preaching. For considering her persecutors to exist worse at the voice of her exhortation, she chooses rather to be

silent. And when she beholds those who are unworthy to hear, she binds up her preaching with a covering of silence. Whence she aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER XXI.

IBID.---And He hath put a bridle in my mouth.

47. One must cease from preaching, when those who receive the word of God become worse thereby.---They knew that a bridle was placed on them among some, who said: It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46). Holy men behold a bridle of silence imposed upon themselves among the hard hearts of the reprobate, who say through the Prophet: How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land (Psal. 136:4)? Paul also admonished that a bridle be placed, who commanded his disciple, saying: A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition avoid, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment (Tit. 3:10). For holy doctors often with deep consideration behold the hearts of those who resist, and while they see them deserted by the divinity, they being afflicted and groaning become silent. Does not Solomon sometimes impose a bridle on doctors, who says: Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee (Prov. 9:8)? But if we therefore keep silence from rebuke, because we fear the hatred of the scorner rising against us, we no longer seek the gains of God,

but our own. In which matter it is to be known that sometimes when the wicked are rebuked, they become worse. We spare them therefore and not ourselves, if we cease from their rebuke for their love. Whence it is necessary that sometimes we should tolerate by being silent what they are, in order that they may learn in us by living well what they are not. Because therefore the holy Church, which always puts forth her words through charity, sometimes also restrains them out of charity, let her say: He hath put a bridle in my mouth. As if she should openly confess, saying: Because in some I did not see the progress of preaching, I tempered the impulse from them, that they might at least learn my life through patience, since they would not admit my words through the offered preaching. [Old Ed. XX.] But this most of all grieves us in tribulations, that we suffer them from those in whom we trusted with brotherly love. Whence also is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII

[Old Ed. XVII].

VERS. 12.---To the right of the orient my calamities immediately arose.

48. By the left hand the Gentiles, by the right the Jews are to be understood.---For calamities would rise to the left hand, if she sustained the adversities of persecution from any placed outside religion, and openly denying Christ. But when she suffers the temptation of torments from some as if faithful, her calamities arise as

it were to the right hand, because those who fight under Christ's name impugn Christ's name in her. For by the very use of speech we say we hold for the right what we weigh as great, but for the left that which we despise; which Zechariah openly insinuates, saying: And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him (Zach. 3:1). Who that he might more plainly show this which he premised, following added: And the Lord said to Satan: The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, who hath chosen Jerusalem. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? And Joshua was clothed with filthy garments (Ibid. 2). For Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, because although alien from all sin, yet He came in the likeness of the flesh of sin. To Whom coming Satan stood at His right hand. For the Lord seemed to have the Jewish people for great, and the Gentiles for nothing. But after He appeared incarnate, the Gentility which had been held for the left hand believed; but the Jewish people turned aside to perfidy. Satan therefore stood at His right hand, because he snatched from Him that people which for a long time was beloved. But because the Jewish people itself, now lost, is at some time to believe in the end, the prophet witnessing, who says: The remnant shall be saved (Isa. 10:21), the Lord removes Satan from his right hand, saying: The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan (Zach. 3:1). And indicating the liberation of the same people, He subjoins: Because He hath chosen Jerusalem (Ibid. 2). Which people indeed,

because it was flowing down to the burnings of Gehenna, perfidy being the guide, but while it is reduced to the faith it is liberated from the same burning of eternal fire, it is immediately subjoined of it there: Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

49. Also those following the faith of the Church, from whom she sometimes suffers violence.---As therefore there the Jewish people for the right hand, so in this place by the word of the right hand the faithful people of holy Church is designated. Whence also the Judge to come will place the goats to the left, the lambs to the right (Matth. 25:33). But when those also who seemed to be faithful provoke the holy Church in the time of adversity, her calamities undoubtedly rise to the right hand. [Old Ed. XXI.] But this same right hand is well called of the Orient. Of its very head it is written: The Orient is His name (Zach. 6:12). For because the light rises from the Orient, He is rightly called the Orient by the light of whose justice the night of our injustice is illustrated. To the right hand of the Orient therefore calamities rise, because those also spring forth to persecution, who were believed to be elect members of our Redeemer. Which calamities indeed he rightly asserts to rise immediately, because while those who persecute were not strangers, evils are done by them suddenly and immediately. But if those who are truly faithful are called the right hand, calamities rise to the right hand of the Orient, because the just suffer the cruel impulses of

the wicked when the point of persecution breaks forth. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Old Ed. XIX].

IBID. They have subverted my feet, and they have overwhelmed me by their paths as with waves.

50. Her outermost members as it were her feet are sometimes subverted.---What is signified by the feet of the Church, but her outermost members? Which, while they serve for earthly works, can be so much more quickly deceived by adversaries, as they understand less of sublime things. These feet, therefore, the adversaries subvert, namely when they draw her outermost members to the error of their own dogma. Subverted feet cannot hold the way, when the weak, whether persuaded by the promises of their persecutors, or terrified by threats, or broken by torments, deviate from the right path. But the paths of the adversaries are well compared to waves, when it is said: And they have overwhelmed me by their paths as with waves, because namely the life of the wicked, troublesome with insolent disquietude, flows in like a tempest to overwhelm, as I might say, the ship of the heart. Of which tempest it is said by Solomon: As a tempest passing by, the wicked shall be no more (Prov. 10:25). And when any weak person beholds the perverse to flourish, the wave of a miserable imitation drowns him in the sea of perversity. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERS. 13.---They have marred my paths, they have lied in wait for me, and they have prevailed, and there was none that would bring help.

51. By the hidden snares of enemies her ways are marred, God for a time profitably forsaking her.---Blessed Job may say these things of malignant spirits, namely hidden enemies; the whole Church may say them of the wicked who persecute, namely open adversaries. For they mar her paths, when in the minds of some weak ones they disturb the ways of truth by crafty persuasion. They themselves lying in wait prevail, when those whom they cannot openly draw to evil, they pervert by feigning good things. But it is very wonderful what he subjoins: There was none that would bring help, since the Psalmist cries of divine help: A helper in opportunities, in tribulation (Psal. 9:10); and: Let them trust in Thee, who have known Thy name, because Thou wilt not forsake them that seek Thee, O Lord. And when again it is written: Who hath hoped in the Lord, and was confounded; or hath remained in His commandments, and was forsaken? Or who hath called upon Him, and He despised him? (Ecclus. 2:11, 12). For what reason then is it now said: There was none that would bring help, except because Almighty God sometimes for a time leaves those whom He loves for eternity? Whence it is written: For a small moment have I forsaken thee, and in great mercies will I gather thee. In a moment of indignation have I hid My face a

little while from thee, and in everlasting mercy have I had mercy on thee (Isai. 54:7). Hence also the Psalmist deprecated, saying: Forsake me not utterly (Psal. 119:8). He knew therefore that he could be profitably forsaken for a little while, who prayed that he might not be forsaken utterly. For the Lord helps His saints by coming to them, He proves them by leaving them; He confirms them by gifts, He tries them by tribulations. Whence also it is rightly said by a certain wise man: At the first He chooseth him, He will bring fear and dread and trial upon him, and He will torture him in the tribulation of His doctrine, until He try him in his thoughts (Ecclus. 4:18). For grace calls the soul of the just, temptation interrogates it. And Almighty God permits the adversaries of His elect to increase for a time, that by the cruelty of the wicked the life of the good may be purged.

52. The power of the wicked also fights for the utility of the just.---For the Lord would never permit any to be adverse to the good, unless He also saw how much they might profit them. For while the unjust rage, the just are purged, and the life of the wicked fights for the utility of the innocent, while it both humbles it by pressing upon it, and by humbling always forms it to better things. Whence it is also rightly said by Solomon: He that is a fool shall serve the wise (Prov. 11:29). And yet we often behold the wise to be subject, but the fools to hold the citadel of dominion; the wise to obey servilely, the fools to dominate with tyrannical elation. How therefore, by the definition of the divine sentence, does the fool serve the wise,

while for the most part he oppresses him by the right of temporal dominion? But it is to be known that against the life of the wise man, while the pre-eminent fool exercises the terror of power, while he fatigues him with labors, lacerates him with contumelies, he surely purges him from all the rust of vices by burning him. The fool therefore serves the wise man even by dominating, whom by pressing upon he promotes to a better state. Thus sometimes servants are set over young masters for the mastery of discipline, they terrify, they press upon, they strike, and yet they in no way cease to be servants, because they are ordained for this very thing, that they may serve their profiting masters even by striking them. Because therefore the evils of the reprobate purge the good while they torment them, the power of the iniquitous also fights for the utility of the just. But for the most part the just, caught in tribulation, estimate the hand of the one helping to be slow, when the immensity of those persecuting narrows them a little too long. And the remedies of the deliverer are indeed stirred up, but that which is done more quickly by the deliverer, seems slow to the one grieving. And when help is sought to be present to the petition, if it does not immediately follow the voice, it is estimated to be wanting. Whence it is now said: And there was none that would bring help. In which voice indeed the very force of passion is expressed, because heavenly help, although it is present as to the ordained providence of the protector, is yet

believed to be wanting as to the stirred-up vows of the sufferer. It follows:

CHAPTER XXV

[Old Ed. XXII, Rec. XX].

VERS. 14.---As if the wall were broken and the gate opened they have rushed in upon me, and they have devolved to my miseries.

53. The state of the soul is to be lamented, when enemies rush into it, the wall of faith being broken, or the matter of discipline destroyed.--- What is called by the name of a wall in this place but the Redeemer of the human race? Of Whom it is said for the building up of the holy Church by the prophet: A wall and a bulwark shall be set in her (Isai. 26:1). For He Himself is a wall to us, Who forbids the course of malignant spirits to reach our hearts. Who also set a bulwark for our faith, because before He showed Himself through the flesh He sent the prophets as preachers of His mystery. Rightly indeed are they called by the name of a bulwark, because while they preached the Lord who was to follow, they stood as it were before the wall. But the wall is as it were broken when by the persuasions of the wicked the faith which is in our Redeemer is dissipated in the hearts of some. And when power is granted to the perverse in this life, what else is opened than the gate of error? As if therefore the wall were broken, and the gate opened, the evil rush in upon the good, when, power being temporally accepted, the perverse endeavor to destroy the very fortifi-

cations of faith in the hearts of some. Of whom it is aptly said: And they have devolved to my miseries, because namely first, to their own. For unless by living perversely they fell to their own miseries before, they would in no way afterwards persuade others to them. But after their own the reprobate devolve also to our miseries, when they draw some united to us to those evils in which they themselves are already implicated.

54. The fortification of discipline can also be understood by the name of a wall; Solomon attesting, who says: I passed by the field of the slothful man, and by the vineyard of the foolish man; and behold, nettles had filled it all, thorns had covered the surface thereof, and the stone wall was destroyed (Prov. 24:30, 31). For to pass by the field of the slothful man and by the vineyard of the foolish man is to look upon the life of any negligent person, and to consider his works. Which nettles or thorns fill, because in the heart of the negligent the itching earthly desires and the pricking of vices bud forth, forasmuch as it is written: Every idle man is in desires (Prov. 28:19, sec. LXX). The stone wall was destroyed, that is, the discipline of the fathers was dissolved from his heart. For because he saw that the stone wall being destroyed, discipline was dissolved, he immediately added there following: Which when I had seen, I laid it up in my heart, and by the example I learned discipline (Prov. 24:32). As if therefore the wall were broken the enemy enters, when whether by the crafty persuasion of malignant spirits, or of wicked men, the fortifications

of discipline are dissipated in the heart. But when the vigor of the same discipline is loosed in the heart of the reprobate, all the works of the good are held in contempt before their eyes, and they estimate as nothing whatever they see of the virtues of the elect. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERS. 15.---I am reduced to nothing.

55. True goods being despised, the carnal lean upon fleeting things, with which they perish.--- In the estimation of the wicked, indeed, we are reduced to nothing, when we do not hold those temporal goods which they themselves love as the highest. For despising heavenly promises, they desire earthly things; and if at any time anything of the appetite for eternity arises in their mind, it is more quickly dissipated by the transistory delight that has arisen. Whence also it is immediately subjoined:

IBID.---Thou hast taken away my desire like the wind.

The faithful people indeed denounces that it suffers, what it grieves that those whom it loves suffer. The wind, therefore, takes away desire, when any transitory thing destroys the appetite for eternity. Whence it is yet congruously subjoined:

IBID.---And my safety hath passed away as a cloud.

A cloud indeed towers on high, but the breath of the wind impels it to its course. So indeed, so are the temporal goods of the iniquitous. They

seem to dwell as it were on high through the loftiness of honor; but they are daily impelled to the course of life, as if by certain breaths of their own mortality. Safety therefore passes as a cloud, because the glory of the perverse, in that it is high, is not fixed. But the desires and acts of the infirm being fulfilled, the speech is converted to the voice of the elect, when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERS. 16.---But now my soul withereth in myself, and the days of affliction possess me.

56. Now the elect wither in themselves, but they are green in God.---For the soul of the elect now withereth, because it afterward becometh green in that eternal exultation. Now the days of affliction possess them, because the days of joy follow afterward. For it is written: With him that feareth God it shall go well in the latter end (Ecclus. 1:13). And again it is said of the Church: She shall laugh in the last day (Prov. 31:25). For now is the time of affliction for the good, that exultation without time may follow them at some time. Hence it is said by them elsewhere: Thou hast humbled us in the place of affliction (Psal. 44:19). For the place of affliction is the present life. The just therefore are humbled here, that is, in the place of affliction, because they are sublimated in eternal life, that is, in the place of joy. But when he said that the soul withered, he also rightly premised: *In myself*, because in ourselves indeed it is afflicted, but in God our mind

is refreshed; and it becomes so much farther from the greenness of joy, as it yet recedes to itself, repelled from the light of its Author. But then it arrives at the greenness of true joy, when, being raised up by the grace of eternal contemplation, it even passes beyond itself. But these things which we run through by allegorical investigation, it behooves that we also hold through all things according to the history. Which yet I now pass over, because I am not ignorant that these are open to those who read. But in the days of the last persecution, because there are many who perish, and few who are saved; therefore the holy man in the time of his passion speaks both a few things of the good, and many things of the perverse. Whence also he presently converts his words to the person of those who fall; and so insinuates his own things, that those which he narrates may be able to agree with those who are falling. For it follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Rec. XXI, Old Ed. XXIII].

VERS. 17.---In the night my bone is pierced with sorrows, and they that feed upon me do not sleep.

57. When persecution rages, the strong and those who are in the body of the Church fail like bones.---If we attend to the history itself, the cause is open, because a multitude of worms gushing through the cavities of the ulcers was lacerating the body of the holy man. But if we

scrutinize the mystery of the allegory, what is signified by the bones but the strong ones in the body of the holy Church? Who as it were by their own strength contain the members, while they stably bear the manners of the infirm. But when the fervor of the last tribulation shall have grown against her, in the night her bone is pierced with sorrows, because sometimes being overcome by torments, even those themselves flow down to perfidy, who seemed to hold others to the faith. He says therefore: *In the night my bone is pierced with sorrows*. As if he should say openly: Pressed by the darkness of tribulation, they are so bored through by affliction, that even those who had in me the vigor of fortitude, as if now have a certain hole of fear. But it is well said: *And they that feed upon me do not sleep*, because the malignant spirits, who consume the carnal ones of the Church, so much more know not how to rest from temptation, as they are burdened by no weight of flesh. But would that the persecutors of the holy Church, because they are very perverse, were few. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XXII].

VERS. 18.---By the multitude of them my garment is consumed, and they have girded me about as with the collar of my coat.

58. Those who adhere to the Church like a garment, are sometimes separated from her by the force of torments.---If we attend to the history,

what else do we take for the garment of blessed Job than his body? whose garment indeed is consumed while the flesh is tortured. But according to the mystery of allegory, the garment is the life of the faithful of the holy Church. For as the whole Church together is the garment of Christ, so all the faithful are accounted the garments of the same Church. For if the holy Church were not the garment of Christ, Paul surely would not say: *That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle* (Ephes. 5:27); that is, neither having spot through sin, nor wrinkle through doubleness, because she is both clean through justice, and stretched through simple intention. She therefore who is washed that she may not have spot, and stretched that she may not have wrinkle, is certainly a garment. As therefore the whole Church generally is called the clothing of Christ, so the souls of individuals are the clothing of the Church, which, being converted from error, surround the same Church by believing and by faithfully adhering to her. Of whom the Lord says to the same Church by the prophet: *As I live, for with all these thou shalt be clothed as with an ornament* (Isai. 49:18). But when the storm of cruel persecution arises, many of the faithful are separated from her love, who seemed to adhere to her sedulously. Let him say therefore: *By the multitude of them my garment is consumed*, because while there are many who torture, most of those who adhered to her by the connection of love are destroyed.

59. The reprobate endeavor to extinguish the life of faith and the voice of preaching in the Church.---But it is well subjoined: *And they have girded me about as with the collar of my coat*. For the collar of a tunic surrounds the neck of the wearer. But if the neck is constricted, the use of the voice and the vital breath are killed. The reprobate therefore constrict the holy Church as if with the collar of a tunic, because in her by their persecutions they endeavor to extinguish the life of faith, and the voice of preaching. The persecutors of her are specially wont to endeavor this, that they may take away from her above all things the word of preaching. Whence also those who resisted the first beginnings of the holy faith, when the Apostles had been beaten, denounced them, saying: *Commanding we commanded you that you should not teach in this name, and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine* (Acts 5:28). They had therefore girded the body of the holy Church as if with the collar of a tunic, who, having constricted the preachers, as it were pressing her neck, wished to close in her the way of the voice. But the elect are more ready to die than to be silent in the time of their persecution. Who while they fall corporally in death, are estimated as despised and vile by any foolish and carnal men, because when the reprobate cannot see what goods the elect hold spiritually, they judge those unhappy whom they behold to be extinguished carnally. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERS. 19.---I am compared to mud, and I am become like embers and ashes.

60. They tread upon her as mud, embers, and ashes.---In the judgment of the reprobate, indeed, the holy Church of the elect is compared to mud, because being temporally trodden upon she is despised. She is likened to embers and ashes, because while they do not see her interior goods, they estimate that she has arrived at those evils alone, which they see to be exhibited in her corporally. But the faithful people of the elect, when it beholds many of itself to fall, wishes, if it might be able to obtain it, that the times of its adversity might be changed. Because the prayer of this people is deferred, its groaning is increased. Whence it is yet subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXI

[Old Ed. XXIV].

VERS. 20.---I will cry to Thee, and Thou wilt not hear me; I stand, and Thou dost not regard me.

61. The prayer of the Church seeking to be delivered is not continuously heard. For what reason.---The holy Church indeed in the time of her persecution stands by faith, cries by desires. But she grieves that she is as it were not regarded, while she sees her vows in tribulations to be deferred. For by a deep counsel Almighty God, when His saints are compressed by the persecutions of adversaries, and they cry to Him with assiduous interpellations that they may be delivered, is

wont to defer the voices of those petitioning, that the merits of those suffering may grow, so that they may be so much more heard as to merit, as they are not more quickly heard as to their vow. Whence elsewhere it is written: *O my God, I will cry by day, and Thou wilt not hear, and by night* (Psal. 22:2). And the utility itself of the delay of being heard is soon subjoined, when it is immediately added there: *And not to foolishness to me* (Ibid.). For it profits to the multiplying of the wisdom of the saints that they perceive the things petitioned for slowly, so that from the dilation desire may grow, and from desire understanding may be increased. But when understanding is intended, a more ardent affection of it is opened toward God. But affection becomes so much more capable of earning heavenly things, as it shall have been long-suffering in expecting. But yet between these things sorrow urges the patience of the saints to the voice, and when being delayed they profit, they fear lest, their strengths failing, they may be reprobated as despised. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII

(Rec. XXIII).

VERSE 21. Thou art changed to be cruel to me, and in the hardness of thy hand thou art against me.

62. We can say or think nothing worthy of God.--- The old translation differs widely from this sentence, because what is said in this one concerning God, is mentioned in that one con-

cerning adversaries and persecutors. But yet, because this new translation is held to have more truly transfused everything for us from the Hebrew and Arabic eloquence, whatever is said in it must be believed, and it is necessary that our exposition should subtilely search into its words. He says therefore: Thou art changed to be cruel to me, and in the hardness of thy hand thou art against me. In Holy Scripture, when anything unworthy is said of God, the mind of the reader is moved, as if anything worthy of God could ever be said. For almost everything that is said of God is already unworthy by the very fact that it could be said. For when the amazed conscience is not sufficient for His praise, when shall the speaking tongue be sufficient? But the Holy Spirit, insinuating this very thing to men of understanding—how ineffable are the highest and divine things—sometimes uses even those words concerning God which among men are held as a vice, so that from these things which seem unworthy to men, and yet are said of God, men may be admonished to know that those things are not even now worthy of God which, while they are held worthy among men, are thought worthy of God.

63. In what sense He is said to be jealous, to be angry, to repent, to have mercy, to foreknow. To God nothing is past or future. Things are not seen by God because they are, but they are because they are seen.--- For God is called jealous, as it is written: The Lord, whose name is Jealous (Exod. xxxiv. 14). He is called angry, whence it is written: The Lord's anger was kindled against

Israel (Numb. xxxii. 13). God is said to repent, as it is written: It repenteth me that I have made man upon the earth (Gen. vi. 7). And again: It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king over Israel (1 Sam. xv. 11). He is called merciful, as it is written: The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy (Ps. lxxxvi. 15). He is called foreknowing, as the Apostle says of Him: Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. viii. 29); while yet neither jealousy, nor anger, nor repentance, nor mercy properly so called, nor foreknowledge, can be in God. For all these are drawn into Him from human qualities, while there is a descent to the words of our infirmity, so that, as it were, certain steps being made for us, and placed near us, we may be able some time to ascend to His highest things by those which we behold near to ourselves. For he is said to be jealous, who with torment of mind guards the chastity of his wife. He is said to be angry, who is kindled by the fervor of his spirit against a vice that is to be punished. He is said to repent, whom that which he has done displeases, and on the contrary he does something else by changing it. He is called merciful, who is moved by piety toward his neighbor. But mercy is so called from a miserable heart (misericordia from misero corde), because each one beholds someone who is miserable, and sympathizing with him, while he is touched by the pain of his mind, he himself makes a miserable heart, that he may deliver from misery him whom he intends. He is

said to foreknow, who sees each thing before it comes, and foresees that which is future before it becomes present. How then is God jealous, who in guarding our chastity is touched by no torment of mind? How is He angry, who in avenging our vices is moved by no perturbation of spirit? How does He repent, who in no wise grieves that He has done that which He once did? How has He mercy, who never has a miserable heart? How is He foreknowing, while nothing but what is future is foreknown? And we know that to God nothing is future, before whose eyes nothing is past, things present do not pass away, things future do not come; because surely everything which was and shall be to us, is at hand in His sight; and everything which is present, He can know rather than foreknow. And yet He is called jealous, He is called angry, He is called repentant, He is called merciful, He is called foreknowing, so that because He guards the chastity of each soul, He may be called jealous after the manner of man, although He is not touched by torment of mind. And because He smites faults, He is said to be angry, although He is moved by no perturbation of spirit. And because He, being Himself unchangeable, changes that which He has willed, He is said to repent, although He changes the thing, but does not change His counsel. And when He succors our misery, He is called merciful, although He succors the miserable, and never has a miserable heart. And because He sees those things which are future to us, which yet are always at hand to Him, He is called foreknowing, although

He by no means foresees a future thing, which He sees as present. For also whatever things are, are not seen in His eternity because they are, but they are, because they are seen. While then there is a descent to the words of our mutability, let him who can, by certain steps made from them, ascend to the unchangeableness of God, that he may see Him jealous without jealousy, angry without anger, repenting without sorrow and repentance, merciful without a miserable heart, foreknowing without forevisions. For in Him neither past nor future things can be found, but all changeable things unchangeably endure, and those things which in themselves cannot exist together, all stand together before Him, and nothing in Him passes away which is transitory, because in His eternity, in a certain incomprehensible manner, all the volumes of passing ages remain, and the running ones stand still.

[Vet. XXV.] 64. God seems cruel when, although smiting justly, He does not spare.--- As therefore we receive Him as jealous without jealousy, angry without anger, so by the holy man He could be called cruel even without cruelty. For he is called cruel who, by smiting strictly, does not spare; so that, forsooth, in this place he who smites strictly can be understood as cruel, and not sparing the fault that is to be avenged. Whence Isaiah also, when he saw that the day of the last judgment would come not now with pardon, but with strictness, says: Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He shall

destroy the sinners thereof out of it (Is. xiii. 9). The holy man, therefore, that he might assert that this same cruelty could rather agree with himself than with God, says: Thou art changed to be cruel to me. As if he were to say openly: Thou who in Thyself hast nothing of cruelty, to me, whom Thou dost not suffer to breathe from the stroke, seemest cruel. For so God cannot be cruel, as He cannot be changed in any wise. But since in God neither cruelty nor mutability ever comes, when he says to me, he shows that in Himself he feels God neither cruel nor mutable. For while certain prosperous and adverse things are varied around us, in that we are changed, we suspect, as it were, His mind changed toward us. But He, remaining unchangeable in Himself, is felt differently and differently in the thought of men, according to the quality of their merits. For also the light of the sun, when it is by no means unlike itself, seems harsh to weak eyes, but gentle to healthy ones—by their change, forsooth, not its own. Whence, as we have said before, saying: Thou art changed, he added, to me, so that this very cruelty and change may not be in the quality of the judge, but in the mind of the sufferer. Which also he unfolded in other words, saying: And in the hardness of thy hand thou art against me. For the hand of God is believed hard when, contrary to our will, it follows up by smiting that which displeases it in us, and redoubles the scourges when the soul of the sufferer expects clemency. Which things, however, according to the mystery of allegory, agree well with the words of the holy

Church from the voices of the weak, who for the most part think themselves more smitten than they think they deserve, and regard as cruelty, as it were, the most equitable strictness of the judge's cutting; because also when the wound of the sick man is cut away with the medicinal iron, the physician is called cruel, who yet by the hardness of the cutting hand is against the wound, but agrees with the health.

It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIII

(Rec. XXIV).

VERSE 22. Thou liftedst me up, and as it were setting me upon the wind, thou dashedst me down strongly.

65. He sits upon the wind, who rejoices in transitory successes. Adversity does not cast down him, whom prosperity does not corrupt.--- Because the glory of the present life is seen as if on high, but is solidified by no stability, he who rejoices in transitory prosperity is set as if lifted up upon the wind; because the breeze of fugitive happiness raises him up for this only, that it may suddenly prostrate him more miserably in the depths. For because the holy Church is in honor with all, who are the weak in her who rejoice in transitory successes, but those who, being set upon the wind, seem to be lifted up? because in the following time of persecution, while the breeze of prosperity passes by, their elevation immediately falls, and falling suddenly

they learn that, having been lifted up, they before sat upon the wind. Which words, forsooth, agree specially even to the person of the holy man, not as to that which he was, but as to that which he seemed to be. For fugitive prosperity had not raised his mind, which among so many affluences of things he always pressed down with the wonderful weight of virtue; but according to this which could be seen outwardly, he who was humble in his own eyes, was lifted up in the eyes of others, and as if set upon the wind, was dashed down strongly, because being supported by exterior things, he seemed to have fallen from whence he was thought to rise. Which fall, forsooth, the holy man did not endure in his mind, because no adversity casts down him whom no prosperity corrupts. For he who cleaves to the truth, in no wise succumbs to vanity, because while he has fixed his intention within with the strong foot of thought, everything which is done changeably without, by no means reaches to the citadel of the mind. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIV

(Vet. XXVI, Rec. XXV).

VERSE 23. For I know that thou wilt deliver me to death, where a house is appointed for all living.

66. No one escapes death; few the pit of pleasures and destruction. Elias deferred death, he did not escape it.--- In a former part of this work (Book XII. chap. 6) it was treated that before the coming of the Lord even the just descended to the

receptacles of hell, although they were kept not in torments, but in rest. Which we now neglect to teach with testimonies, because we think it has already been sufficiently proved therein. This, therefore, which is said: I know that thou wilt deliver me to death, where a house is appointed for all living, rightly agrees with blessed Job even according to the history, since it is forsooth certain that before the grace of the Redeemer even the just were led to the bars of hell. For that reception of hell itself is called the house of all living, because no one came hither who before the coming of the Mediator did not pass through thither by the very condition of his corruption, no one came hither who did not tend to the death of the flesh by the steps of that same corruption of his. Concerning which death forsooth it is said by the Psalmist: What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? (Ps. lxxxix. 48). For although Elias is said to have been caught up into heaven, he yet deferred death, he did not escape it. For of him it is said by the very mouth of Truth: Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things (Matth. xvii. 11). For he shall come to restore all things, because surely he is restored to this world for this, that he may both fulfill the offices of preaching, and pay the debt of the flesh. Which sentence of the holy man, however, according to the mystery of allegory, agrees with the voices of the holy Church from the person of the weak, who hold the faith only as far as the word, but serve their own desires against the precepts of the faith. For he says: I know that

thou wilt deliver me to death, where a house is appointed for all living. For because he beholds many in her given up to pleasures, and already foreknows their destruction, he considers that in the way of this present life they indeed serve their own desires, but yet all who live carnally therein arrive at the house of death. But there are some who fall into the pit of their pleasures, but yet by the lamentations of penance they more quickly withdraw their foot from the depths, whom the scourges of heavenly smiting cut for instruction rather than for extinction. From whom it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERSE 24. Howbeit thou stretchest not out thy hand to their consumption; and if they fall, thou thyself wilt save.

67. Some smitten by God for instruction, not for extinction, are delivered from sin.--- In which words truly this should be skilfully understood, that blessed Job, while he relates his own things, transfigures others in himself. For as he was saying specially of himself: Thou liftedst me up, and as it were setting me upon the wind, thou dashedst me down strongly; I know that thou wilt deliver me to death, where a house is appointed for all living; and yet not of himself, but of others he adds: Howbeit thou stretchest not out thy hand to their consumption. For while speaking of himself he subjoins by reasoning the causes of others, he shows how many persons he signifies in himself. Therefore the Lord does

not stretch out His hand to the consumption of sinners, when by smiting He corrects them from their sins, and saves them when falling, while He wounds those who are falling into fault for the health of the body, so that they who are prostrate outwardly, may rise inwardly; that they lying down in the body may return to their interior state, who while standing outwardly were lying down from the state of their mind. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

(Rec. XXVI).

VERSE 25. I wept once over him that was afflicted, and my soul sympathized with the poor.

68. Almsgiving is to be estimated chiefly from the affection of mind with which it is done. Not abundance of things, but compassion, should make the giver.--- Although true compassion is to concur with the passion of a neighbor from bounty, yet sometimes, when all exterior things are abundantly at hand for giving, the hand of the giver more quickly finds the giving than the mind finds the sorrow. Whence it is necessary to know that he gives perfectly, who with that which he reaches out to the afflicted takes also the mind of the afflicted in himself, so that he first transfers to himself the passion of the sufferer, and then concurs through ministry against his sorrow. For often, as we have said before, abundance of things makes the giver of a gift, and not the virtue of compassion. For he who perfectly sympathizes with the afflicted, for the most part gives even

that to the needy, in giving which he himself is straitened. And then the compassion of our heart is full, when we do not fear to take upon ourselves the evil of want for our neighbor, that we may deliver him from passion.

69. Christ gave us the form of piety, and Paul taught it.--- Which form of piety forsooth the Mediator of God and men gave to us. Who while He could concur for us even without dying, yet willed to succor men by dying, because surely He would have loved us less, unless He had taken also our wounds; nor would He have shown to us the force of His love, unless He Himself sustained for a time that which He took away from us. For He found us passible and mortal, and He who made us to exist out of nothing, could surely have recalled us from passion even without His death. But that He might show how great was the virtue of compassion, He deigned to become for us what He willed us not to be, that in Himself He might receive death temporally, which He might put to flight from us forever. Could He not, remaining invisible to us in the riches of His divinity, have enriched us with wonderful virtues? [Vet. XXVII.] But that man might return to interior riches, God deigned to appear poor without. Whence also the eminent preacher, that he might kindle the bowels of our compassion to the grace of bounty, said: For your sakes He became poor, when He was rich (2 Cor. viii. 9). Who also speaks thus: Not that there be remission to others, but to you tribulation (Ibid. 13). These things he doubtless brought in by condescending to the weak, since to some

who are not able to bear want it is more tolerable to give less, than after their bounty to murmur from the strait of want. For that he might kindle the minds of the hearers to great studies of giving, he added a little after, saying: But this I say: He who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly (2 Cor. ix. 6). But we say that it is sometimes more to sympathize from the heart than to give, because whoever perfectly sympathizes with the needy, estimates less everything that he gives. For unless a good will overcame the hand of the giver, the same eminent preacher would not have said to his disciples: Who have begun not only to do, but also to be willing since a year ago (2 Cor. viii. 10). For it is easy to obey in a good work even against one's will. But this great virtue had existed in the disciples, that they had willed also before the good which was commanded them.

70. He who gives exterior things, gives something of his own; he who bestows compassion, gives something of himself.--- Because therefore the holy man knew that with almighty God a gift of the mind was sometimes greater than a gift of a thing, let him say: I wept once over him that was afflicted, and my soul sympathized with the poor. For giving exterior things, he offered a thing outside himself. But he who gave weeping and compassion to a neighbor, gave to him something even of himself. But on this account we say that compassion is more than a gift, because for the most part even he gives a thing who does not sympathize, but he who truly sympathizes never

denies what he sees to be necessary for a neighbor.

71. The Church, sympathizing with her penitent children, joins her tears and prayers.---Which sentence truly agrees well also with the voices of the holy Church: which, while she beholds all who are afflicted by the lamentations of penance, joins her weepings to them by continual prayer, and as often sympathizes with the needy, as she helps the mind stripped of virtues by the prayers of her intercession. For we bewail sympathizing over the afflicted, when we reckon the losses of others as our own, and strive to cleanse the faults of the delinquent with our own tears. Doing which, forsooth, we for the most part succor ourselves more than those for whom it is done, because with the inward Judge, who inspires the grace of charity, he perfectly washes away his own committed sins, who purely bewails those of others. The holy Church, therefore, overtaken by the tribulation of the last persecution, may recall to memory the good things which she did in the time of peace, saying: I wept once over him that was afflicted, and my soul sympathized with the poor. Who, desiring the eternal joys of interior light, but yet they being still delayed, because she is pressed by exterior evils, may join to the voices of the holy man:

CHAPTER XXXVII

(Rec. XXVII).

VERSE 26. I looked for good, and evil came to me; I waited for light, and darkness broke forth.

72. The sorrow of the elect and of the Church, even in the time of peace, from those of their own whom they tolerate.--- For the faithful people look for good, but receive evil; they wait for light, and incur darkness, because through the grace of remuneration they hope to share already in the joys of the angels, and yet being still longer delayed here, they tolerate the hands of persecutors; and they who think they shall enjoy as soon as possible the retribution of eternal light, are here still compelled to suffer the darkness of their persecutors. Which evils of persecutors would forsooth grieve less, if they arose from infidels and adversaries. But they torture the mind of the elect so much more miserably, as they come from those from whom they presumed good things. Whence it is still added:

VERSE 27. My bowels boiled without any rest.

For the bowels of the holy Church to boil is for her to tolerate also in the atrocity of persecution those very ones whom through the love of the faith she had before carried as it were her own bowels. Who having before known her secrets, the more they know where she may more grieve, so much more miserably do they not at all rest from her affliction. Whom however she tolerates heavily even in her time of peace, because by her preachings she considers their contrary manners. For she groans, when she beholds their life unlike her own. Concerning whom also it is aptly subjoined:

IBID. The days of affliction prevented me.

[Vet. XXVIII.] For the holy Church of the elect knows that in the last persecution she shall suffer many evils; but the days of her affliction prevent this, because she carries the life of the wicked heavily within herself even in the time of peace. For although in the last days open persecution of the infidels follows, yet before this appears, those who are faithful in her only as far as the word, precede it with their depraved manners. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII

(Rec. XXVIII).

VERSE 28. I went mourning, rising without fury I cried in the crowd.

73. The saints in the height of honor preserve humility, in joyful things they preserve mourning. They fight inwardly against prosperity. Everything which abounds without the vision of God is want.--- I see it is to be carefully noted according to the history that the holy man, who a little above said: Thou liftedst me up, adds below: I went mourning. For by a wonderful order, it is wont to happen at one and the same time in the acts of the good, both honor of the height without, and mourning of afflicted humility within. Whence the holy man also, being lifted up by things and honors, went mourning, because although the glory of power had shown him a prelate to men, yet within by his mourning he offered a secret sacrifice to the Lord of a contrite

heart. For a sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit (Ps. li. 17). But all the elect know how to fight by inward consideration against the temptations of outward excellence. Who, if they set their heart upon their outward happiness, would surely not be just. But because the human heart cannot be in no wise tempted by any glory whatever of the very prosperities of things, the holy men fight inwardly against their very prosperity, I do not say lest they should succumb in elation, but lest they should at least succumb in the love of it. To which it is greatly to have succumbed, to have subjected the captive mind to its desires. But who, being wise in earthly things and embracing temporal ones, would not believe blessed Job happy among so many prosperities, when he had at hand health of body, life of children, safety of family, integrity of flocks? But because he did not rejoice in all these, he is a witness to himself, who says: I went mourning. For to a holy man still placed in this pilgrimage, everything which abounds without the vision of God is want, because when the elect see everything present to themselves, they groan that they do not see the Author of all; and all this is less to them, because as yet the sight of the One is wanting; and thus the grace of heavenly dispensation so exalts them without, that yet the mourning of mistress charity may keep them under discipline within. Through which forsooth they learn that from those things which they receive outwardly, they should always be more humbled with themselves, keep the mind under the yoke of discipline, and never break

forth into impatience from the license of power. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: Rising without fury I cried in the crowd. For often the tumults of seditious men provoke the mind of those set over them, and they exceed the limit of their order by inordinate motions.

74. Impatience is almost always a friend to power, which the good overcome.---And for the most part, those who are set over others, unless they be held by the bridle of the Holy Spirit in the mouth of the heart, break forth into the atrocity of an angry retribution; and as much as they are able to do, so much they think is lawful for them to do upon their subjects. For impatience is almost always a friend to power; and it also commands the evil subject to it, because what it feels, power executes. But holy men subject themselves more within to the yoke of patience than they are set over men without; and they exhibit a more true princedom without, by how much they hold a more humble service to God within; and therefore they often tolerate some the more, the more they are able to take vengeance on them; and lest they should ever pass over to illicit things, they for the most part refuse to execute for themselves even what is lawful; they suffer the noise of their subjects, and through love they rebuke those whom they bear through gentleness. Whence it is now rightly said: *Rising without fury I cried in the crowd,* because doubtless the good have a cry against the tumults of the insolent, and have not fury, since they cease not to teach those whom they mildly

tolerate. But these things which we have said according to the history of one man, it is necessary that according to the allegory we should feel concerning the different elect of the Church. For she herself in her elect goes mourning even through prosperities, because she accounts nothing truly prosperous to herself, until she may apprehend the good which she singularly seeks. For her faithful ones indeed enjoy temporal peace, but they sigh perpetually; they are honored, and they are afflicted; because for the most part they are seen to be in the height there, where they are not citizens. She also rises in the crowd without fury, and cries, because she follows the life of the wicked with the study of right emulation, but not with the madness of fury. She is angry and loves, she rages and is tranquil, that she may correct her weak ones from emulation, and favor them from piety. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIX

(Rec. XXIX).

VERSE 29. I was a brother of dragons, and a companion of ostriches.

75. No true sanctity, unless it has been proved among the evil.---What is signified by the name of dragons, but the life of malicious men? Of whom it is also said by the Prophet: *They drew the wind like dragons* (Jerem. xiv. 6). For all the perverse draw the wind like dragons, when they are puffed up with malicious pride. But who are wont to be understood by the appellation of os-

triches, but hypocrites? For the ostrich has wings, but has not flight; because all hypocrites have the appearance of sanctity, but have not the virtue of sanctity. For the vision of good action adorns them, but the wing of virtue by no means lifts them from the earth. Therefore the elect people of the holy Church, because in the time of its peace it suffers within itself some malicious persons and hypocrites, let it say: *I was a brother of dragons, and a companion of ostriches.* Which also specially agrees with the words of blessed Job, who to the height of great fortitude was good among the evil. No one indeed is perfect, who is not patient among the evils of his neighbors. For he who does not bear the evils of others with equanimity, is himself a witness to himself by impatience that he is far distant from the fullness of good. For he refuses to be Abel, whom the malice of Cain does not exercise (Gen. iv. 3 seq.).

76. The evil mixed with the good here, why?--- Thus in the threshing of the floor the grains are pressed under the chaff, thus flowers come forth among thorns, and the rose which smells sweet grows with the thorn which pricks. For the first man had two sons, but one was elect, the other was reprobate (Gen. iv. 1, 2). The ark also contained three sons of Noah, but while two persisted in humility, one fell to the derision of his father (Ibid. ix. 18). Abraham had two sons, but one was innocent, the other was a persecutor of his brother (Ibid. xvi. 15; xxi. 9). Isaac also had two sons, one preserved in humility, the other reprobated even before he was born (Ibid. xxv.

24 seq.). Jacob begat twelve sons, but of these one was sold through innocence, while the others were the sellers of their brother through malice (Ibid. xxxvii. 27). Twelve apostles also were chosen in the holy Church, but lest they should remain unproved, one was mixed with them, who by persecuting them should prove them. For thus the sinner is joined with malice to the just, as in the furnace chaff is associated with fire to gold, that by that which the chaff burns, the gold may be purged. These then are truly good, who can persist in goodness even among the evil. Hence also it is said by the voice of the Bridegroom to the holy Church: *As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters* (Cant. ii. 2). Hence the Lord says to Ezekiel: *Son of man, unbelievers and subverters are with thee, and thou dwellest with scorpions* (Ezek. ii. 6). Hence Peter glorifies the life of blessed Lot, saying: *And delivered just Lot, oppressed by the injury of the conversation of the wicked* (2 Pet. ii. 7). For in sight and hearing he was just, dwelling among those who from day to day vexed the soul of the just with their unrighteous deeds. Hence Paul glorifies the life of the disciples, and by glorifying confirms it, saying: *In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life* (Philip. ii. 15). Hence through John the angel testifies to the Church of Pergamus, saying: *I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is, and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith* (Rev. ii. 13). Blessed Job therefore,

that he may show of what fortitude he was, let him intimate with whom he lived, saying: *I was a brother of dragons, and a companion of ostriches.* Because it would be less that he himself did good things, unless to the heap of his goodness he also tolerated evil things from others. It follows:

CHAPTER XL

(Rec. XXX).

VERSE 30. My skin is become black upon me, and my bones are dried up with heat.

77. Because of the fall of the weak, the strong are burned with the fire of their zeal.---We neglect to weigh these things according to the history, because the virtue of the speech is evident from the punishment of the passion. But because, as we have already often said, blessed Job often so relates things done as to foretell things to be done, this well agrees with the words of the holy Church, which feels the grief of the last persecution heavily in the weak. And when some perish from it, all the more valiant are tortured with mourning. For the outward cause of it is earthly dispensation, but the inward care is heavenly. By the name of skin, therefore, the weak are signified, who now in her serve for outward utility. But by the bones her strong ones are figured, in whom the whole compagination of that body is solidified. Because, therefore, either provoked by gifts or afflicted by persecutions, many weak ones in her fall from the state of faith, and they

themselves, after they have fallen, persecute her; what else does she suffer than the blackness of her skin, so that she may afterwards appear foul in those in whom she previously seemed beautiful? For while those who previously were wont to dispense outward things well, afterwards rage against the elect of God, as it were the skin of the Church has lost the color of its former justice, which has come to the blackness of iniquity. Which Jeremiah also deplores under the appearance of the principal metal, saying: *How is the gold become dim, the most excellent color is changed* (Lam. iv. 1). For the perverse, while they go out from her sacraments, for the most part take a place of honor among the reprobate, that they themselves may rage against the holy Church with authority, who more cruelly contemn her as if by knowing her. Whence also when he said: *My skin is become black,* he added, *upon me,* because those whom she previously had as it were white to the beauty of justice, she afterwards carries as worse black ones. But when the skin is turned to blackness, the strong who are in it pine away with the zeal of faith. Whence he aptly subjoins: *And my bones are dried up with heat.* For thus also in the former time that most strong bone of the holy Church, Paul, was parched with a certain aridity of weariness, when he said to some who were falling: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is scandalized, and I burn not?* (2 Cor. xi. 29). The skin therefore is blackened, and the bones are dried up with heat, because while the weak break forth into iniquity,

all the strong are tortured with the fire of their zeal. It follows:

CHAPTER XLI

[Vet. XXX, Rec. XXXI].

VERSE 31. My harp is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of those that weep.

78. Let the ministers of the divine word, when they are despised, be silent, and fly to the mourning of penance. Let discretion moderate abstinence. Let the vices of the flesh be extinguished, not the flesh.---Because the organ sounds through pipes, and the harp through strings, right operation can be signified by the harp, and holy preaching by the organ. For we not inaptly receive the mouths of those preaching by the pipes of the organ, but the intention of those living rightly by the strings of the harp. Which, while it is stretched to another life through the affliction of the flesh, sounds as it were a thinned string in the harp through the admiration of those beholding. For the string is dried, that it may return a congruous song in the harp, because holy men also chastise their body, and bring it into subjection (1 Cor. ix. 27), and are stretched from the lowest things to the highest. It is also to be weighed that the string in the harp, if it be stretched too little, does not sound; if too much, it sounds hoarse; because doubtless the virtue of abstinence is either altogether none, if one does not subdue the body as much as he is able; or it is very inordinate, if it wears down the

body more than he is able. For by abstinence the vices of the flesh are to be extinguished, not the flesh; and everyone ought to preside over himself with such moderation, that both the flesh may not grow proud to fault, and yet may subsist for the effect of rectitude in operation. It is pleasant to behold the eminent preacher among these things, with how much art of mastery he thins the souls of the faithful like stretched strings in a harp, by stretching some more, and preserves others by relaxing them from their tension. For to some he says: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness* (Rom. xiii. 13). And again he says: *Mortify your members which are upon the earth* (Coloss. iii. 5). And yet he writes to his dearest fellow-preacher, saying: *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities* (1 Tim. v. 23). Those strings, therefore, he stretches by thinning them, lest if not stretched they should not sound at all; but this one he tempers from tension, lest while it is stretched more, it should sound less.

79. A double mode of exhortation, one by words, the other by works.---Either then holy preachers in the Church, or any simple and abstinent persons, as they receive strength, return in it to their neighbors the song of good exhortation. For both all the prudent watch skillfully for the fruit of preaching, and that they may draw others to life, they labor with the sound of great persuasion; and they who in it seem of slower wit, from the very merit of their life as far as they

see themselves able, take the authority of exhortation toward others, and do not cease to draw whom they are able to the heavenly country. But the holy Church, pressed by extreme persecutions, when she considers her words contemned by the reprobate, forms the grace of her love into only lamentations, because doubtless she bewails those whom by exhorting she is not able to draw. Let her say therefore: *My harp is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of those that weep.* As if she should openly confess, saying: In the time of my peace indeed I preached through some small things after the manner of a harp, but through others great and sonorous things after the manner of an organ, but now the harp is turned to mourning, and the organ into the voice of those that weep, because while I behold myself contemned, I deplore those who do not hear the song of preaching. These things the holy Church is to do through some in the end; these things she did through some in her very beginnings. For the first martyr Stephen tried to profit by preaching to the persecuting Jews, whom yet after the words of preaching, when he saw them to have run together to cast stones, he prayed for on his bended knees, saying: *Lord Jesus, lay not this sin to their charge* (Acts vii. 60). What then for him, who for a long time had related both small and great things, but that already the songs of his harp and organ were silent and had been turned into mourning, because those whom he had not drawn by preaching, he wept for by loving? Which doubtless the holy

Church does not cease to do daily, which beholds the word of preaching to have already become silent almost everywhere. For some dissemble speaking, others contemn hearing right things. But the mind of the elect, while it beholds the song of preaching to be silent, groaning and silent returns to weeping. Let it say therefore: *My harp is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of those that weep,* because every elect one, by how much the voice of holy preaching has become silent, by so much more heavily he bewails the losses of the Church.

Hitherto blessed Job has described the evils which he endured, but from this place he begins to relate more subtly the good things which he did. But we have run through the historical and allegorical exposition of the words of grief, but the works of the virtues we hold for the most part according to the text of the history alone, lest if we draw these to investigating mysteries, we should perhaps seem to make void the truth of the work.

Book twenty

FIRST.

Chapter XXXI of the book of Job is explained, as far as verse 24 exclusive, and having first praised chastity, humility, and mercy, many things are taught especially concerning the avoiding of the occasion of sin.

CHAPTER I.

1. In explaining the sacred Scriptures, neither the historical sense alone is to be followed, nor always the allegorical.---The understanding of the sacred eloquence is to be weighed with such a balancing between the text and the mystery, that the moderate scale of each part being weighed, neither the weight of too much discussion should depress it, nor again the torpor of neglect leave it empty. For many of its sentences are pregnant with such a conception of allegories, that whosoever strives to hold them to the history alone, is deprived of their knowledge through his own neglect. But some so serve outward precepts, that if anyone desires to penetrate them more subtly, he may indeed find nothing within, but even hide from himself that which they speak without.

2. The former proposition is proved.--- Whence also it is well said by historical narration through signification: *Jacob taking green rods of poplar, and of almond, and of plane trees, in part peeled them, and the barks being drawn off, in those which had been spoiled whiteness appeared; but those which were entire remained green, and in this manner the color was made various* (Gen. xxx. 37). Where it is also subjoined: *And he set them in the channels where the water was poured out, that when the flocks should come to drink, they should have the rods before their eyes, and should conceive in the sight of them.* *And it came to pass that in the very heat of coition the sheep looked at the rods, and brought forth spotted and various, and sprinkled with diverse color* (Ibid. 38, 39). For what is it to set green rods of poplar, and almond, and plane trees before the eyes of the flocks, but to provide for the people through the series of sacred Scripture the lives and sentences of the ancient Fathers for an example? Which doubtless because according to the examination of reason they are right, are called rods. From which in part he withdraws the bark, that in those which are spoiled, the inward whiteness may appear; and in part he preserves the bark, that as they had been outwardly, they may remain in greenness; and the color of the rods is made various, while the bark is in part withdrawn, and in part retained. For before the eyes of our consideration the sentences of the preceding fathers are set as various rods. In which while for the most part we

fly from the understanding of the letter, we as it were withdraw the bark; and while for the most part we follow the understanding of the letter, we as it were reserve the bark. And while the bark of the letter is withdrawn from them, the inward whiteness of allegory is shown; and while the bark is left, the green examples of outward intelligence are shown. Which Jacob well set in the water channels, because our Redeemer also fixed them in the books of sacred science, with which we are inwardly infused. Looking at these the rams copulate with the sheep, because our rational spirits, while they are fixed in their intention, are mixed with each and every action, that they may procreate such offspring of works as they see examples of the preceding ones in the voices of the precepts; and the offspring of good work may have a diverse color, because both sometimes, the bark of the letter being withdrawn, it considers internal things more sharply, and sometimes, the covering of history being reserved, it forms itself well in outward things.

3. The other is proved.---For because the divine sentences are sometimes to be examined within, and sometimes to be observed without, it is also said by Solomon: *He that strongly presseth the breasts to elicit milk, expresseth butter; and he that vehemently bloweth his nose, eliciteth blood* (Prov. xxx. 33). For we strongly press the breasts, when we weigh the words of sacred eloquence with subtle understanding, by which pressure while we seek milk, we find butter, because while we seek to be nourished even

by a thin understanding, we are anointed by the fatness of internal richness. Which nevertheless is not to be done too much nor always, lest while milk is sought from the breasts, blood should follow. For for the most part some, while they discuss the words of sacred eloquence more than they ought, fall into carnal understanding. For he eliciteth blood, who vehemently bloweth his nose, because that which is felt from too much discussion of the spirit is made carnal. Whence it is necessary that we should search out the works of blessed Job, which he therefore relates among the words of his upbraiding friends, lest his afflicted mind should fail in despair, according to the weight of history, lest if the mind investigate these more than is necessary spiritually, blood should answer to us for milk from the breasts of his words. If ever indeed he mixes some mystical things in the narration of his works, to these it is necessary that the excited mind should return, to which the order of the speaker himself, as it is given to be understood, calls it. For the holy man, after he has related those things which had been inflicted on him by the scourge of the Lord, now by enumerating his own virtues in order, makes known what he was before the scourge; so weaving the history of his life, as to interweave in it some very rare thing which can be understood allegorically, so that those which he records may be for the most part historical, and yet sometimes through these same things he may rise to spiritual intelligence. In what fortitude, therefore, he constrained his outward things by the discipline

of inward custody from every fall, he intimates, saying:

CHAPTER II.

JOB CHAPTER XXXI, VERSE 1.---I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not even think upon a virgin.

4. That the mind may not lust for illicit things, the outward senses, which are the entrances of the mind, are to be restrained. It is not becoming to look at what it is not lawful to lust after.--- Since the soul is invisible, it is in no wise touched by the delectation of corporeal things, except that being inherent in the body, it has as it were certain outlets of the same body, the senses. For sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch, are as it were certain ways of the mind, by which it may come forth, and lust after those things which are without its substance. For through these senses of the body, as through certain windows, the soul beholds each of the outward things, and beholding, it lusts. For hence Jeremiah says: *Death is come up through our windows, and entered into our houses* (Jerem. ix. 21). For death comes up through the windows, and enters the house, when concupiscence coming through the senses of the body, enters the habitation of the mind. Which against this which we have already often said of the just, is said by Isaiah: *Who are these that fly as clouds, and as doves to their windows? * (Isai. lx. 8). For the just are said to fly as clouds, because they are raised from earthly contagions; and are as it were doves to their windows, be-

cause through the senses of the body they do not behold any outward things with the intention of rapacity, and carnal concupiscence does not snatch them forth. But whosoever through these windows of the body incautiously looks outward, for the most part falls into the delectation of sin even against his will; and being bound by desires, begins to will what he did not will. For the headlong soul, while it does not provide before lest it look incautiously at what it may lust after, begins afterward blindly to desire what it saw. Whence also the mind of the Prophet, which often being raised was present at inward mysteries, because it saw another's wife incautiously, was afterward darkened and joined her to itself illicitly (2 Sam. xi. 2). But the holy man, who having received the senses of the body as it were subject ministers, presides as a certain most equitable judge, beholds faults before they come, and as it were closes the windows of the body against the waylaying enemy, saying: *I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not even think upon a virgin.* For that he might be able to keep the thoughts of the heart chaste, he made a covenant with his eyes, lest he should first incautiously behold what afterward he would unwillingly love. For it is very much that the flesh draws downward, and the species of form once bound to the heart through the eyes is scarcely loosed by the hand of a great struggle. Lest therefore we should turn over any slippery things in thought, we must provide for ourselves; because it is not becoming to look at what it is not lawful to lust

after. For that a pure mind may be kept in thought from the wantonness of its pleasure, the eyes are to be depressed, as it were certain robbers to fault. For neither would Eve have touched the forbidden tree, unless she had first incautiously looked at it. For it is written: *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and beautiful to the eyes, and delectable to the sight; and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat* (Gen. iii. 6). From this therefore it is to be weighed with how much moderation we who live mortally ought to restrain our sight toward illicit things, if even the mother of the living came to death through her eyes. Hence also under the voice of Judea, which by seeing outward things and lusting after them had lost inward goods, the prophet says: *Mine eye hath spoiled my soul* (Lam. iii. 51). For by lusting after visible things, she lost invisible virtues. She therefore who lost the inward fruit through the outward sight, suffered the prey of the heart through the eye of the body. Whence for us to guard the purity of the heart, the discipline of the outward senses is to be kept. For by how great virtue soever the mind may prevail, by how great gravity soever it may flourish, yet the carnal senses make as it were a certain childish noise without, and unless they be restrained by the weight of inward gravity and by a certain youthful vigor, they draw the enervated mind to all fluxy and light things.

Whence also it is said by the Lord to the serpent: *Upon thy breast and thy belly shalt thou go* (Gen. iii. 14). 5. The example of Job refraining

not only from the luxury of the flesh, but also of the heart and mind. By Moses luxury perpetrated, by Christ also thought is condemned. Let him who is a citizen of heaven desert luxury, not by fear, but by charity.---Let us see therefore how blessed Job restrained that which in him could taste of the fluxy and childish flesh, by the youthful vigor of wisdom. For he says: *I made a covenant with mine eyes.* And because he extinguished in himself not only the action, but also the thought of luxury, he subjoined in following: *That I should not even think upon a virgin.* He knew doubtless that luxury was to be restrained in the heart, he knew, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, that our Redeemer coming would transcend the precepts of the law, and would abolish from his elect not only the luxury of the flesh, but also of the heart, saying: *It is written: Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart* (Matth. v. 27). For by Moses luxury perpetrated, but by the Author of purity luxury thought is condemned. For hence it is that the first pastor of the Church says to the disciples: *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you* (1 Pet. i. 13). For to gird the loins of the flesh is to restrain luxury from the effect. But to gird the loins of the mind is to restrain this also from thought. Hence it is that the angel, who speaks to John (Rev. i. 13), is related to be girt with a golden zone upon the breasts. Because the purity

of the New Testament also restrains the luxury of the heart, the angel who appeared in it came girt in the breast. Whom the golden zone well binds, because whosoever is a citizen of the heavenly country, no longer by fear of punishment, but by the love of charity deserts uncleanness. But the evil of luxury is either perpetrated by thought, or by work. For our crafty enemy, when he is expelled from the effect of work, strives to pollute secret things by thought. The serpent doubtless goes upon his belly, when the slippery enemy through human members subjected to himself exercises luxury even to the fulfillment of the work. But the serpent goes upon his breast, when those whom he is not able to pollute in the work of luxury he pollutes in thought. Therefore one already perpetrates luxury by action, to him the serpent goes from the belly. But another turns over that to be perpetrated in the mind, to him the serpent goes from the breast. But because through thought one comes to the fulfilling of works, rightly the serpent is described first to go upon the breast, and afterward upon the belly. Whence blessed Job, because he held discipline also in thought, by one custody overcame the breast and belly of the serpent, saying: *I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not even think upon a virgin.* Which purity of heart whosoever does not appete to attain, what else does he but repel from himself the Author of the same purity? Whence also blessed Job immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 2.---For what part should God have in me from above, and what inheritance the Almighty from on high?

6. That we may be the inheritance of God, let not sin reign in us. Neither proud chastity, nor unchaste humility is of any avail.---As if he should say openly: If I pollute my mind in thought, I can by no means be the inheritance of Him who is the author of purity. For no other good things are of any value, if they are not approved by the testimony of chastity in the eyes of the occult Judge. For all virtues in the sight of the Creator support each other by reciprocal aid, so that because one virtue without another is either nothing at all, or very small, they are mutually supported by their conjunction. For if humility should desert chastity, or chastity should leave humility, what can either proud chastity or defiled humility avail before the author of humility and purity? Therefore, that the holy man may deserve to be possessed by his Author in his other good qualities, keeping purity of heart, let him say: *I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not even think upon a virgin.* *For what part should God have in me from above, and what inheritance the Almighty from on high?* As if he should openly confess, saying: The Creator of the high ones refuses to have me as His possession, if my mind wastes away in the lowest desires before His sight.

7. An impure thought does not defile when it knocks, but when it subjugates through delight. In corruptible flesh it suffices that sin should not reign.---But among these things it is to be known that it is one thing which the mind suffers from the temptation of the flesh, and another when it is bound to delights by consent. For for the most part it is knocked upon by a wicked thought, but it resists; but for the most part when it conceives anything perverse, it turns this over within itself even through desire. And doubtless an impure thought by no means defiles the mind when it knocks, but when it subjugates this to itself through delight. For hence the eminent preacher says: *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is human* (1 Cor. x. 13). For it is a human temptation by which for the most part we are touched in thought even against our will, because that sometimes even unlawful things come to the mind, this certainly we have in ourselves from the weight of corruptible humanity. But now it is a demoniacal, and not a human temptation, when the mind binds itself by consent to that which the corruptibility of the flesh suggests. Hence again he says: *Let not sin reign in your mortal body* (Rom. vi. 12). For he forbade not that sin should be in the mortal body, but that it should reign; because in corruptible flesh it cannot not reign, but it cannot not be. For this very thing to be tempted by it concerning sin is sin, which because as long as we live we are not perfectly free from in every way; the holy preaching since it could not fully expel this,

took away its kingdom from the habitation of our heart, so that an unlawful appetite, although for the most part it inserts itself secretly as a thief into our good thoughts, at least if it enters, it may not dominate. Therefore the holy man saying: *I made a covenant with mine eyes, that I should not even think upon a virgin,* by no means wishes it to be understood that fault did not touch his mind in thought, but that it never overcame him by consent. For as if an entire possession of God he vindicates his mind against the depredation of the adversary, who immediately subjoins: *For what part should God have in me from above, and what inheritance the Almighty from on high?* As if he should say openly: I am subject indeed to the condition of corruption in mortal flesh, but whence do I serve the Author, if I do not defend for Him a mind entire from the consent of fault? It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 3.---Is not destruction to the wicked, and alienation to the workers of iniquity?

8. The just through a rough way tend to the country of salvation, the reprobate through pleasant meadows to the pit.---A hasty consolation of the good is the considered end of the bad. For while from their destruction they behold the evil which they escape, they think light whatever of adversity they suffer in this life. Let the reprobate go therefore now, and fulfill the desires of their delights; in the damnation of their end they shall perceive that living badly they loved death.

But let the elect be afflicted with a transitory scourge, that the scourges may correct from depravity those whom paternal piety keeps for the inheritance. For now the just man is scourged, and is corrected by the scourge of discipline, because he is prepared for the patrimony of the eternal inheritance. But the unjust man is relaxed in his pleasures, because temporal goods are supplied to him in so great a measure as eternal ones are denied. The unjust man running to his due death, uses unbridled pleasures, because also the bullocks which are to be slaughtered are left in free pastures. But on the contrary the just man is restrained from the joy of transitory delight, because also indeed the bullock deputed to the use of labor of life is retained under the yoke. Earthly goods are denied to the elect in this life, because also to the sick, to whom there is hope of living, by no means all things which they appete are granted by the physician. But to the reprobate are given the goods which they appete in this life, because also to the desperate sick every thing which they desire is not denied. Let the just therefore weigh what are the evils which await the iniquitous, and let them by no means envy their felicity which runs through. For what is it that they should wonder at their joys, when both they themselves through a rough way tend to the country of salvation, and those as if through pleasant meadows tend to the pit? Let the holy man say therefore: *Is not destruction to the wicked, and alienation to the workers of iniquity? * Which word of alienation would indeed sound

more harshly, if the interpreter had held this in the voice of his own language. For what among us is alienation, this among the Hebrews is called anathema. Therefore there shall be alienation to the reprobate, when from the inheritance of the strict Judge they behold themselves to be anathema, because here they contemned Him with perverse manners. Let the iniquitous flourish therefore, alien from the flower of the eternal inheritance; but let the just providently inspect themselves, and in all their actions let them fear to be seen by the Lord. Whence also it is aptly subjoined soon:

CHAPTER V.

VERS. 4. Doth not He consider my ways, and count all my steps?

9. The most minute thoughts, and the most slender words which we think little of, shall not be passed over in the judgment of God. Through degrees of fault, grows the order of the condemnatory sentence.---What does He announce by the name of ways but actions? For hence it is said by Jeremiah: *Make your ways and your studies good* (Jerem. vii. 3). But what do we accept by the appellation of steps, but either the movements of minds, or the progress of merits? To which steps indeed the Truth calls us to Himself, saying: *Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden* (Matth. xi. 28). For the Lord commands us to come to Him, doubtless not by steps of the body, but by progress of the heart. For He says: *The hour cometh, when ye shall neither

in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father* (John iv. 21). And a little after: *The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him* (Ibid. 23). He insinuates therefore that the steps are in the heart, when He both calls that we should come, and yet by movement of the body He by no means announces us to pass to other things. [Vet. V.] But thus the Lord considers the ways of each one, thus He counts the steps, so that not even the most minute thoughts of him, and most slender words, which have become cheap among us by use, should remain undiscussed by His judgment. For hence He says: *Whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment:* *and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire* (Matth. v. 22). For *Raca* in the Hebrew eloquence is a voice of interjection, which indeed shows the mind of the one being angry, yet does not express a full word of wrath. First therefore anger is reprehended without voice, afterward indeed anger with voice, but not yet formed in a full word; at the extreme also when it is said: *Thou fool*, anger is redargued, which with excess of voice is fulfilled even by the perfection of speech. And it is to be noted that in anger he relates him to be in danger of the judgment; in the voice of anger, which is *raca*, in danger of the council; in the word of the voice which is *fool*, in danger of hell fire. For through the degrees of fault the order of the sentence

grew, because in the judgment the cause is still discussed, but in the council the sentence of the cause is already defined, but in the hell of fire that sentence which goes out from the council is fulfilled. Because therefore the Lord counts the steps of human acts by a subtle examination, anger without voice is assigned to the judgment; anger in voice, to the council; but anger indeed in voice and speech, to the fires of hell. The prophet had looked upon this subtlety of His consideration, when he said: *The most strong, the great, the powerful Lord of hosts; Thy name is, Great in counsel, and incomprehensible in thought: whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of Adam: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his devices* (Jerem. xxxii. 18, 19).

10. No good without reward, no evil without punishment. Thus the Lord considers the same ways by subtle examination, so that in each one of us He neither passes over the good things which He may remunerate, nor leaves without increpation the evil things, which doubtless are displeasing. For hence it is that the angel of the Church of Pergamus He both praises in certain things, and in certain things redargues, saying: *I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith* (Rev. ii. 13). And a little after: *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam* (Ibid. 14). Hence it is said to the angel of the Church of Thyatira: *I know thy works, and

charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols* (Ibid. 19, 20). Behold He mentions the good things, yet He does not relax the evil things to be cut off without penitence, because doubtless He thus considers the ways of each, thus He weighs counting the steps, so that by subtle examination He weighs either how much each one profits toward good things, or how much deviating toward evil things he contradicts his own progress. For the increase of merits, which is augmented by the studies of a good life, for the most part is drawn back by the admixture of evil; and the good which the mind constructs by working, this it perverts by perpetrating other things. Whence holy men constrain themselves so much the more subtly in thought, as they behold themselves to be considered more strictly by the supreme Judge. For they discuss the mind, they seek to find if they have left any things, so that they may become so much the more irreprehensible to the Judge, as they reprehend themselves daily and without ceasing. Yet they do not from this matter now take the joys of security, because they consider themselves to be seen by Him who also sees in them those things which they themselves are not able to see in themselves. And indeed blessed Job held the life of perfection among the ancients; but because his

intention through the prophetic spirit breaks out in the advent of the Redeemer, in His precepts he himself weighs how many things he has less of perfection. Whence also he subjoins:

CHAPTER VI.

VERS. 5, 6.---If I have walked in vanity, and my foot has hasted in deceit, let Him weigh me in a just balance, and let God know my simplicity.

11. Let the saints care to weigh their merits in Christ as in a balance, that they may acknowledge what they have less of.---God is said to know, to make us to know, in the usual mode of our speech, who call a day glad, from which it happens that we are gladdened. For hence it is that the Lord says to Abraham: *Now I know that thou fearest God* (Gen. xxii. 12). For neither did the Creator of times know anything from time; but His knowing is from the article of any emerging cause to provide knowledge to us. But who is designated by the name of the balance but the Mediator of God and men? In whom all our merits are weighed by an even scale, and in whose precepts we acknowledge what we have less of in our life. But in this balance we are weighed, as often as we are provoked to the examples of His life. For hence it is written: *Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example, that ye should follow His footsteps; who did no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not* (1 Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23). Hence it is said by Paul: *Let us run with patience

to the fight proposed to us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith; who for the joy proposed to Him endured the cross, despising the confusion* (Heb. xii. 1, 2). To this end therefore the Lord appeared in the flesh, that He might excite human life by admonishing, kindle it by providing examples, redeem it by dying, repair it by rising again. When therefore blessed Job finds no things in himself to be justly redargued, he tends the eyes of his mind to the life of the Redeemer exceeding all things, so that in that he himself may acknowledge what he has less of, when he says: *If I have walked in vanity, and my foot has hasted in deceit, let Him weigh me in a just balance, and let God know my simplicity.* As if he should say openly: If I have ever perpetrated any things lightly, if any things perniciously, let the Mediator of God and men appear, so that in His life I may acknowledge whether I have been truly simple. For he who, as we have said, had exceeded the men of his own times, sought the Mediator of God and men, so that weighed in Him he might acknowledge if he had truly held a simple life. Let him say therefore: *Let Him weigh me in a just balance, and let God know my simplicity.* Which is, let Him make me to know. As if he should patently confess, saying: As much as to the mode of human life, I now see no things in me to be reprehended; but unless the Mediator of God and men appear with the precepts of a more subtle life, I do not acknowledge how much I still differ from true simplicity. But the right order is served, if first he be said to have walked in vanity,

and afterward his foot to have hasted in deceit. For vanity pertains to levity, but deceit to malice. And some for the most part arrive at certain malicious things afterward, because first they do not decline light things. It follows.

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 7.---If my step has declined from the way.

12. We decline from the way, as often as we consent to error.---The step declines from the way as often as our thought leaves the path of rectitude through the consent of error. For as it were, we place as many steps outside the way, as we are separated from the delight of heavenly life by perverse desires. For as we have said before, being still weighed down by the weight of corruptible flesh, we are by no means able so to live, that no delight of sin can knock at us. But it is one thing for one unwilling to be touched, another for a consenting mind to be destroyed. But holy men keep themselves with so much the more vigilant circumspection, as they disdain to be struck by sinister motions or transitory delight. Whence it is further added:

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SAME.---If my eye has followed my heart.

13. Let the eye deny to serve the heart that covets unlawful things. Temptation is sometimes drawn through the eyes, sometimes conceived within. He who uses the exterior eye negligently,

is justly blinded in the interior eye. ---Behold again he returns to the discipline of the exterior members through the custody of the interior vigor, so that if perhaps the heart should covet anything unlawful, the eye, pressed by the mastery of discipline, would refuse to see. For as temptation is often drawn through the eyes, so sometimes when conceived within it compels the exterior eyes to serve it. For for the most part any object is looked upon with an innocent mind, but by the very sight the soul is pierced by the sword of concupiscence. For, as we have already said for example's sake, David did not therefore look studiously upon the wife of Uriah, because he had coveted her, but rather he therefore coveted because he looked incautiously. But it comes to pass by the examination of righteous retribution, that he who uses the exterior eye negligently, is not unjustly blinded in the interior eye. But often concupiscence dominates within, and the enticed soul exacts the bodily senses to serve its uses after the manner of a tyranny, and compels the eyes to serve its pleasures, and, as I may so say, opens the windows of light to the darkness of blindness. Whence holy men, when they feel themselves to be struck by sinister delight, restrain those same lights by which the species of form enters to the mind, by the mastery of discipline, lest a pandering vision should serve a depraved thought. Which if it is ever neglected to be subtly guarded, the impurity of thought immediately passes over to operation. Whence also it is soon added:

CHAPTER IX.

THE SAME.---And if a spot has cleaved to my hands.

14. Lest guilt should go forth to the work, let it be extinguished within where it is born.--- The holy man therefore, knowing that for the most part depraved thought comes to the mind through the eyes, said a little above: *I made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not even think upon a virgin.* Considering also that sometimes it arises in the mind, but the eyes perversely serve this that has arisen, he says: *If my eye has followed my heart.* As if he should say openly: I neither wished to see everywhere what I might covet, nor by seeing did I ever follow what I coveted. Let him say therefore: *If my eye has followed my heart,* because even if his mind, as being human, ever conceived anything unlawful, he would not have his eyes, constrained by the mastery of higher discipline, follow him through unlawful things and serve him. Let us weigh our consciences in these things, and let us see from the dejection of our heart of what height this man was. Behold, if he ever thought any unlawful things, because he more quickly extinguished them within the secrets of the heart with the sword of holy vigor, he did not permit them to arrive even to works. Whence, as we have premised, he immediately subjoins: *And if a spot has cleaved to my hands.* For when does a spot cleave to the hands, that is, guilt to the actions, which the censure of discipline did not

permit to proceed in the thought? For neither is guilt permitted to go forth to the work, if it be extinguished within where it is born. But if resistance is not made quickly to the temptation born in the heart, it is strengthened by the very delay by which it is nourished; and existing without in the works, it can scarcely be overcome, because it holds captive within the mind itself, the mistress of the members. But because the holy man brought in all the former things under a condition, if he should ever have perpetrated these things, he binds himself with a sentence of malediction, saying:

CHAPTER X.

VERS. 8.---Let me sow, and let another eat, and let my offspring be rooted out.

15. The fasting preacher sows, and another eats, when he does not work those things which he teaches.---In the manner of sacred eloquence we call to sow, to preach the words of life. For hence the prophet says: *Blessed are ye that sow upon all waters* (Is. xxxii. 20). For he beheld the preachers of the Holy Church sowing upon all waters, because they delivered to all peoples far and wide the words of life, as it were grains of heavenly bread. But to eat is to be satiated with good works. Whence Truth says through itself: *My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me* (John iv. 34). If therefore he has omitted to do those things which he brought forth, he says: *Let me sow, and let another eat.* As if he should say openly: What my mouth speaks, let not me,

but another work. For the preacher who differs in manners from his own voices, sows fasting that which another may eat, because he is not himself fed by his own seed, when he is made void of the rectitude of his word by depraved action. And because for the most part disciples hear good things in vain, when they are destroyed by the example of works from the master's life, it is rightly subjoined: *And let my offspring be rooted out.*

16. His offspring is rooted out, because those whom he begets by the word, he kills by example.---For the offspring of a teacher is rooted out when he who is born through the word is killed through example, because him whom a vigilant tongue begets, the negligence of life kills. For we must not pass over with a torpid mind that with Solomon the woman killed the son, whom when vigilant she had been accustomed to suckle, while sleeping (1 Kings iii. 19), because doubtless masters vigilant indeed in knowledge, but sleeping in life, kill their auditors whom they nourish through the vigils of preaching, while they neglect to do what they say, through the sleep of torpor, and by neglecting they oppress those whom they seemed to feed with the milk of words. Whence for the most part while they themselves live reprehensibly, and cannot have disciples of a laudable life, they also endeavor to attract to themselves those of others, in order that while they show themselves to have good followers, they may excuse before the judgments of men the evil things which they do, and as it were cover their negligence by the deadly

life of their subjects. Whence in that place the woman, because she had extinguished her own son, sought that of another. But yet the sword of Solomon found the true mother, because namely the extreme examination of the wrath of the strict Judge demonstrates whose fruit lives, or whose perishes. Where also that is to be skillfully considered, that the living son is first commanded to be divided, that afterward he may be restored to the mother alone, because in this life the life of a disciple is as it were allowed to be shared, while from it sometimes one is permitted to have merit with God, and another praise with men.

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 9.---If my heart has been deceived upon a woman, and if I have laid wait at my friend's door.

18. In sacred letters adultery and fornication are sometimes distinguished, sometimes they sound the same. Both are prohibited. Job abstained from even the thought of both.--- Although sometimes the fault of fornication does by no means differ from the guilt of adultery, since Truth says: *Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart* (Matth. v. 28). (For because by the Greek word *moechus* an adulterer is called, when not another's wife, but a woman is prohibited from being looked upon, Truth openly shows that even by the sight alone when an unmarried woman is basely

coveted, adultery is perpetrated.) Yet for the most part it is discerned from the place, or the order of the one coveting, because namely so a studious concupiscence in the sacred order, as the guilt of adultery in that other, defiles. Yet in persons not dissimilar the same guilt of luxury is distinguished, in whom the fault of fornication, because it is discerned from the guilt of adultery, is testified by the tongue of the eminent preacher, who among other things asserts, saying: *Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, shall possess the kingdom of God* (1 Cor. vi. 9). For in that he subjoins the sentence to the disjoined guilt, he shows how much it differs from itself. By this therefore which is said: *If my heart has been deceived upon a woman,* the holy man is demonstrated not even to have thought of the spot of fornication. But by this which he subjoins: *And if I have laid wait at my friend's door,* it is patently made known that he was free from the guilt of adultery. But to these things perhaps someone may say: What wonder does the holy man assert of himself, if he kept himself free not only from the crime of adultery, but also from the defilement of fornication? But we value these things little, if we do not at all weigh the times of his virtues. For not yet had the stricter censure of revealed grace proceeded to the restriction of the flesh, which reprehends the lasciviousness not only of the body, but also of the heart. Not yet had the goods of chastity of many continent persons come forth to be imitated, and yet blessed Job delivered examples of purity, which he had not

received. But by many even now after the prohibition of God the impurity of the flesh is perpetrated. Hence therefore it is to be gathered, with how much fault even now after the precept it is offended in heavy things, with how much praise formerly it was abstained from heavy things. Who if he ever did this, expects the same fault to be turned to him for punishment, saying:

CHAPTER XII.

VERS. 10.---Let my wife be the harlot of another, and let others bow down upon her.

19. The crime of luxury devours even to destruction, and destroys all virtues. No one here is without sin.---And because for the most part that which we do not weigh how grave it is in doing, we weigh by suffering the force of the same deed; which he denounces that he ought to suffer, if he be guilty, he manifests by expressing it, saying:

VERS. 11, 12.---For this is a nefarious deed and a most great iniquity; it is a fire devouring even to destruction, and rooting out all offspring.

This differs between sin and crime, that every crime is a sin, yet not every sin is a crime. And in this life many are without crime, but no one is able to be without sins. Whence also the holy preacher, when he described a man worthy of sacerdotal grace, by no means said: *If any be without sin;* but, *If any be without crime* (Tit. i. 6). But who can be without sin, when John says: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us* (1 John i. 8)? In which distinction namely of sins

and crimes it is to be weighed that some sins defile the soul, which crimes extinguish. Whence blessed Job, defining the crime of luxury, says: *It is a fire devouring even to destruction,* because doubtless the guilt of this deed not only defiles even to defilement, but devours even to destruction. And because whatever other good works there have been, if the wickedness of luxury is not washed away, they are overwhelmed by the immensity of this crime, he subjoined following: *And rooting out all offspring.* For the offspring are the good operations of the soul. To which yet if the flesh dominates by a perverse order, all things well brought forth are burnt up by the fire of luxury. For there are no works of justice and piety before the eyes of Almighty God, which are shown to be impure by the contagion of corruption. For what does it profit if anyone piously compassionates the necessity of his neighbor, when he impiously destroys himself, the habitation of God? If therefore the flame of lust is not extinguished by purity of heart, any virtues arise in vain, as is said through Moses: *A fire is kindled in My wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell; it shall consume the earth and its increase* (Deut. xxxii. 22). For the fire consumes the earth and its increase, when lust consumes the flesh, and through this all things well done. For whatever comes forth from the fruit of rectitude, this doubtless the flame of corruption burns up. Let him say therefore: *It is a fire devouring even to destruction, and rooting out all offspring,* because if the evil of corruption

is not resisted, those things also undoubtedly perish which seemed good. But vices are wont to prostrate some to humility, and virtues to elevate them to tumor of mind. We must therefore seek, if blessed Job in so much purity of chastity was also humble. But the holy man, while he holds the high things of virtues, how humble things he feels of himself, he suddenly opens, when he subjoins:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERS. 13.---If I have despised to undergo judgment with my manservant and my maidservant, when they pleaded against me.

20. The wonderful humility of Job in so much innocence of life.---For he who did not refuse to be judged with manservants and maidservants, clearly indicates that he was never proud in himself against any neighbor. But among these things it is pleasant to look upon with how much discretion the holy man guarded his life in all things. For did he not say a little above: *The young men saw me, and hid themselves; and the old men rose up and stood; the princes ceased to speak, and laid their finger upon their mouth; the leaders held their voice, and their tongue cleaved to their throat*? Now indeed he says: *If I have despised to undergo judgment with my manservant and my maidservant, when they pleaded against me.* Who can worthily consider such sublime orderings of virtues in this man? In whom there is so much authority of governance, that the leaders are restrained to silence; so much

humility of heart, that the maidservants are permitted to come to judgment on equal terms. Behold he appears in a wonderful manner more powerful than princes in power, equal to servants in the contest; in the assembly of princes mindful of governance, in the contest of servants mindful of his condition. For he beholds himself a servant under the true Lord, and therefore he does not extol himself above servants by the loftiness of his heart. Whence also he immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERS. 14.---For what shall I do when God shall rise up to judge? and when He shall seek, what shall I answer Him?

21. Let those who are set over others always attend that they are under God.---He who thinks upon the Judge to come, incessantly every day prepares the causes of his accounts for the better; he who beholds the eternal Lord with trembling of heart, is compelled to moderate the laws of temporal dominion over his subjects. For he considers that it is nothing that he is temporally over others, when he is under Him to render an account who dominates without end. For often transitory power carries away the soul through the precipices of elation. And because everyone is extolled by that, by which he sees himself to be over some, it behooves him to look always upon Him who is over him, that by the fear of Him who is over all things he may press down the increasing tumor of the mind within. For he beholds who are under himself, but let him con-

sider under whom he himself is, that from the consideration of the true Lord, the tumor of false domination may decrease. Whence blessed Job, because he feared the judgment of Him who is over all things, came here to temporal judgment equal to his servants, saying: *If I have despised to undergo judgment with my manservant and my maidservant, when they pleaded against me. For what shall I do when God shall rise up to judge? and when He shall seek, what shall I answer Him?* Who that he might always depress his heart in humility, by no means beholds in those same servants that his status is unequal, but that their nature is common. Whence also he subjoins:

CHAPTER XV.

VERS. 15.---Did not He that made me in the womb make him also? and did not One form us in the womb?

22. Let them consider equality of condition, not power of order; and let them study to benefit more than to be over.---To powerful men equality of condition considered is a great virtue of humility. For all we men are equal by nature; but it has been added by a dispensatory order, that we seem set over some. If therefore we depress from the mind that which has been added temporally, we find more quickly what we are naturally. For for the most part power received objects itself to the soul, and deceives it with proud thoughts. Therefore the tumor of elation is to be depressed by the hand of most humble consideration. For if

the mind descends from the summit of its height within itself, it more quickly finds the plain of natural equality. For, as we have said before, nature begat all men equal, but the varying order of merits, a hidden dispensation postpones some to others. But that very diversity, which has been added from vice, is rightly ordered by divine judgments, that because every man does not walk the way of life equally, one may be ruled by another. But holy men when they are over others, do not attend in themselves to the power of order, but the equality of condition, nor do they rejoice to be over men, but to benefit them. For they know that our ancient fathers are recorded to have been not so much kings of men as shepherds of cattle. And when the Lord said to Noah and his sons: *Increase and multiply and fill the earth,* He subjoins: *And let your terror and trembling be upon all the animals of the earth* (Gen. ix. 1, 2). For He did not say: Let it be upon the men, who are to be; but, *Let it be upon all the animals of the earth.*

23. Man is by nature set over irrational animals, but not over other men.---For man is by nature set over irrational animals, but not over other men; and therefore it is said to him, that he should be feared by animals and not by man, because it is to be proud against nature, to wish to be feared by an equal, although for the most part holy men also desire to be feared by their subjects, but when they find God to be very little feared by those same subjects, that they may at least fear to sin by human dread, who do not fear

divine judgments. Therefore those set over do by no means pride themselves from this sought fear, in which they seek not their own glory, but the justice of their subjects. For in that they exact fear to themselves from those living perversely, they dominate as it were over non-men, but brute animals, because namely from that part that the subjects are beast-like, from that they ought also to lie prostrate to dread.

24. When no necessity of correcting vice compels, let prelates flee from being feared and from being esteemed more than is right. ---But when vice that should be corrected is absent, they rejoice not in the excellence of power, but in the equality of condition; and they flee not only from being feared by them, but also from being honored more than is necessary. For they do not believe that they suffer a light loss of humility, if they be esteemed more than perhaps for the merit of their order. Hence it is that the first pastor of the Church, when, as Cornelius was adoring him, he saw honor offered to him above himself, he more quickly recurred to the equality of his condition, saying: Arise, I myself also am a man (Acts x. 26). For who does not know that man ought to be prostrated to his Creator and not to man? Because therefore he saw his neighbor humbled to him more than he ought, lest his mind should swell beyond the bounds of humanity, he recognized himself to be a man, so that he might break the elation of the honor brought upon him from the considered equality of condition. Hence an angel adored by John, recognized

himself to be a creature, saying: See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren (Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 9). Hence the prophet, when he is snatched to see sublime things, is called son of man (Ezek. iii. 1), so that being led to heavenly things, he might remember that he is a man. As if the divine voice should admonish him with more open words saying: Remember what thou art, lest thou be extolled by these things to which thou art snatched, but temper the height of revelation by the memory of thy condition. From that therefore it is to be gathered with how much memory of common nature the tumor of earthly power ought to be depressed in the heart, if it be treated of the name of humanity, lest the elation of thought should be generated from heavenly secrets. Of which humanity namely blessed Job always held the record, who says: Did not He that made me in the womb make him also? and did not One form us in the womb? As if he should say openly: Why ought we not to be discussed equally in the judgment of any business, we who are made equally by the power of the Creator? But because we have known the acts of his chastity and humility, now let us know the works of his liberality. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERS. 16.---If I have denied what the poor desired, and have made the eyes of the widow to wait.

25. The liberality of Job giving to the poor according to their wish. Those who ask beyond

the bounds of want, do not deserve to obtain. --- By these words the holy man is shown, not only to have served the poor in their want, but also in their desire of having. But what if the poor should wish for those things which perhaps it would not be expedient to receive? Or because in sacred Scripture the humble are wont to be called poor, are those things only to be esteemed which the poor wish to receive, which the humble ask? And without doubt it is necessary that whatever is required with true humility be given without delay; that is, what is asked not from desire, but from necessity. For it is already to be very proud, to desire anything beyond the bounds of want. Whence also it is said to those asking proudly: Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss (James iv. 3). Because therefore those are truly poor, who are not puffed up by the spirit of pride, whom Truth openly expresses, when He says: Blessed are the poor in spirit (Matth. v. 3); it is rightly said now by the holy man: If I have denied what the poor desired, since those who wish for those things which it is surely clear are not expedient for them, by that very fact that they abound in the spirit of pride, are no longer poor. But while blessed Job calls the humble poor, whatever a poor man wished to receive from him, he did not deny, because truly everyone humble neither wished what he could not be right.

26. The munificence of Job is to be weighed not only from the gift, but from the speed of giving. ---But when he indicates the largeness of his mind, because he manifests that he has run to

the wish of the poor, it is necessary that we seek lest he should have darkened the light of mercy by the slowness of giving. Whence he subjoins: And have made the eyes of the widow to wait. He would not make a widow asking him to wait, so that not only from the gift, but also from the speed of the gift, he might increase the merits of good works. Whence it is written elsewhere: Say not to thy friend, Go and return, to-morrow I will give to thee, when thou canst give immediately (Prov. iii. 28). But some are wont to bestow many things outwardly, but rejecting the grace of common life, they flee from having the poor as associates in domestic conversation. Whence blessed Job, that he may not only insinuate that he has provided many things outwardly, but has received even any needy ones in domestic conversation with himself, immediately adds:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERS. 17.---If I have eaten my morsel alone, and the fatherless has not eaten thereof.

27. The needy are to be received into hospitality and admitted to the table. ---Namely, thinking that he did an injury to piety, if he alone should eat what the Lord of all had created in common. Which communion of conversation truly ought to be with such within the domestic walls, from which the merits of eternal retribution may profit. Whence the holy man shows that he had as a companion for eating, not just anyone, but a fatherless child. But let it be made known whether he had these so great bowels of piety

from himself, or attained them by the grace of his Creator. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERS. 18.---For from my infancy mercy grew with me, and it came out with me from my mother's womb.

28. Holy men attribute their good things not to themselves, but to God. Some while they grow in age, decrease from innocence. ---For although mercy may have been of his will, so that it profited with him, it is clear however that it was not of his will that it should come out with him from the womb. It is certain therefore that he attributes nothing to his own virtue, who surely testifies that he received this from the gift of condition. Therefore the good which he intimates that he had from condition, it is clear without doubt that he tells to the praise of the Creator, indicating that he received from Him to be pious, from whom he received to be, because as he was not created in the womb by his own work, so neither was he pious from the womb by his own virtue. But we must consider what he asserts: It grew with me. For some as they grow in respect of age, decrease from innocence. But for the elect when without is the age of the body, within, if it may be said, grows the age of virtue. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 19, 20.---If I have despised the passer-by, because he had no garment, and the poor man

without covering; if his sides have not blessed me, and he was warmed with the fleeces of my sheep.

29. Humility should accompany mercy towards the poor. Those who bestow alms with prior reproaches, hardly satisfy for the injury inflicted. ---In that he did not despise the poor man, he exhibited the virtue of humility; but in that he covered him, that of piety. For these two virtues ought to be so connected to each other, that they are always supported by a reciprocal work; so that neither humility, when it venerates a neighbor, should desert the grace of largess, nor piety when it bestows should swell. Therefore towards the indigence of a neighbor let piety support humility, and humility piety, so that when you see a sharer of your nature needing necessary things, you may neither through impiety cease to cover him, nor through pride neglect to venerate him whom you cover. For there are some who as soon as necessary things have been asked of them by needy brethren, after about to bestow gifts, first hurl insulting words at them. Who although by things they perform the ministry of piety, yet by words they lose the grace of humility; so that for the most part they seem to pay satisfaction for an injury already inflicted, when after insults they bestow gifts. Nor is it of great work that they give what is asked, because by the very gift of their giving they hardly cover that same excess of speech. To whom it is well said through the book of Ecclesiasticus: In every gift give not the sadness of an evil word (Eccli. xviii. 16). And

again: Behold, a word is above a good gift, and both are with a justified man (Ibid. 17), namely, that the gift ought to be exhibited through piety, and a good word bestowed through humility. But on the contrary, others do not study to support needy brethren with things when they can, but only to cherish them with smooth words. Whom the holy preaching of James vehemently reproves, saying: But if a brother or sister be naked, and want daily food, and one of you say to them: Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; but you have not given them those things which are necessary for the body, what will it profit you? Whom John the Apostle also admonishes, saying: My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth (1 John iii. 13). For our love is always to be exhibited both by the veneration of speech, and by the ministry of largess.

[Vet. XIV.] Giving alms to the poor, we offer gifts to patrons. We sow what we shall afterwards reap with great interest. ---Moreover, it avails much to tame the pride of the giver, if when he bestows earthly things he should solicitously weigh the words of the heavenly Master, who says: Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into eternal tabernacles (Luke xvi. 9). For if by their friendships we acquire eternal tabernacles, we givers ought without doubt to weigh, that we offer gifts to patrons rather than bestow gifts on the needy. Hence it is said through Paul: Let your abundance supply their

want, that their abundance also may be a supplement to your want (2 Cor. viii. 14). That namely we should solicitously weigh because both those whom we now see needy, we shall sometime see abounding; and we who are seen abounding, if we neglect to bestow, shall sometime be needy. He therefore who now bestows temporal support on the poor, being to receive from him afterwards perpetual support, so to speak, as it were cultivates the earth for fruit, which returns more abundantly what it has received. It remains therefore that elation should never rise from a gift when namely the rich man from that which he bestows on the poor acts so that for ever he may not be poor. Therefore blessed Job, that he might diligently show how much humility and mercy were associated in him in consideration, says: If I have despised the passer-by, because he had no garment, and the poor man without covering; if his sides have not blessed me, and he was warmed with the fleeces of my sheep. As if he should say openly: In the love of a neighbor pressing by one and the same order both the vice of pride and of impiety, looking humbly upon any passer-by I did not despise him, and mercifully I warmed him. For whoever extols himself with the pride of elation over him on whom he bestows anything, performs a greater fault within by being proud, than he performs a reward without by bestowing, and he himself becomes naked of interior goods, when he despises the naked while clothing him; and by that he acts so that he becomes worse than himself, by which he thinks

himself better than his needy neighbor. For he is less needy who has not a garment than he who has not humility. Whence it is necessary that when we see the sharers of our nature not having exterior things, we should weigh how many interior goods are wanting to us; so that thought may not elevate itself over the needy, when it skillfully sees that we are so much more truly needy as we are also more interiorly so.

31. Alms should be bestowed even on the unknown. ---And because there are some who know not how to extend the bowels of their piety even to the unknown, but have mercy only on those whom they have learned through assiduitatem of acquaintance, with whom surely familiarity avails more than nature, while they bestow necessary things on some not because they are men, but because they are known, it is well said now by blessed Job: If I have despised the passer-by, because he had no garment. For he indicates that he has had mercy on an unknown neighbor, whom he calls a passer-by, because namely with a pious mind nature avails more than acquaintance. For also everyone who needs, by that very thing that he is a man, is already not unknown to him. It follows:

CHAPTER XX.

VERS. 21.---If I have lifted my hand against the fatherless, even when I saw myself superior in the gate.

32. Holy men willingly suffer injury, and are carefully cautious of exacting what is due to them

more strictly. ---It was a custom among the ancients that the elders should sit at the gate, who might discern the disputes of those contending by a judicial examination; so that those disagreeing might by no means enter the city, in which it was necessary to live concordantly. Whence also through the prophet the Lord says: Establish judgment in the gate (Amos v. 15). In this place therefore what is expressed by the name of the gate unless that which was done in the gate? For as we say a camp fights, for that it is fought from a camp; so judgment, which was wont to be done in the gate, is named the gate. In the gate therefore he sees himself superior, who by merit of equity in judgment sees himself to be of the better part. Blessed Job therefore, because neither then did he exert his hand against the fatherless, when he saw himself also by merit of justice more powerful, instilling in us the rule of fear, says: If I have lifted my hand against the fatherless, even when I saw myself superior in the gate. As if he should say plainly: Nor then did I wish to pursue the business of my utility by force against the fatherless, when I saw myself in judgment also from justice more powerful. [Vet. XV.] For holy men when they undergo business of contentions with lesser persons, while they fear to grieve them even in the least things, they themselves by no means flee from being grieved and suffering unjustly against justice. For they know that all human justice is reproved as injustice, if it be strictly judged by God. Whence that which competes to them they are vehemently cautious of

exacting, lest their acts should happen to be subtilely examined by heavenly rectitude. But that they may be able to be found just in the divine examination, for the most part they suffer themselves to be grieved and suffer unjustly at human judgments. But blessed Job telling the height of his life, both many and wonderful are the things which he said. But because for the most part the human mind refuses to believe good things, which it knows not how to work, he immediately subjoins the sentence of a curse upon himself, if he has not fulfilled in work any of these things which he had said, saying:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 22.---Let my shoulder fall from its joint, and let my arm be broken with its bones.

33. Concord in society cannot persevere without patience. ---Because bodily operation is acted through the shoulder and the arm, those good things which he brought forth with his mouth, if he did not fulfill in work, he wishes for his shoulder to fall and his arm to be broken. As if he should say plainly: If those things which I have said I have refused to work, let me lose that very member of the body which was given to me for working, so that namely that should fall from the body which I would not exercise for utility. But if this sentence of a curse is to be referred to spiritual understanding, it is clear surely that the arm is joined to the body through the shoulder. Whence the prophet also beholding the holy peoples of the universal Church about to serve

God concordantly, says: And they shall serve Him with one shoulder (Zeph. iii. 9). In that therefore which he says: If I have lifted my hand against the fatherless, even when I saw myself superior in the gate, he asserts that he has kept a wonderful virtue of patience, who did not decline to be grieved by the smallest persons, nor against this which could justly compete to him. Which however if he has by no means done, he adds: Let my shoulder fall from its joint. Because surely he who contemns to keep patience more quickly deserts social life through impatience. And as through the arm good operation, so through the shoulder the conjunction of social life is designated. For from the joint the shoulder falls, when the mind not being able to bear something of adversity, relinquishes fraternal concord; and as a member is separated from the body, when he who could work good things is cut off from the universality of all good things. Nor can concord ever be kept except through patience alone. For it arises frequently in human action, whence the minds of men are in turn separated from their unity and love; and unless the mind prepares itself to tolerate adverse things, without doubt the shoulder does not adhere to the body. Hence forsooth Paul says: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. vi. 2). Hence through itself Truth says: In your patience you shall possess your souls (Luke xxi. 19).

[Vet. XVI.] 34. Without patience joined to charity good works perish. ---But rightly, the shoulder falling, it is subjoined: And let my arm

be broken with its bones: because surely all our operation, although it may be seen with any virtues, is dissolved, unless patience be preserved through the bond of charity. For he loses his good things to work who refuses to suffer the evil things of others. For by the fervor of an angry spirit everyone being hurt leaps back from love, and when he does not tolerate being grieved outwardly, within he obscures himself through the lost light of charity; nor does he see now whither he may stretch the foot of good work, who has lost the eye of love. But the shoulder of a holy man does not fall from its joint, because namely his love does not recede from the concord of social life through impatience. And his arm is by no means broken, because all his operation is guarded in the conjunction of the shoulder, that is, in the connection of charity. But with what consideration he has done these so great good things, and has abstained from all evils, he adds saying.

CHAPTER XXII.

VERS. 23.---For I have always feared God like waves swelling over me, and I could not bear His weight.

35. How great is the force of the fear of God to persuade the contempt of all things. Preceding signs of the last judgment. ---From the dread of so great a similitude let us weigh, if we can, how great was the force of fear in the holy man. For waves when they hang over swelling from above, and when they threaten the death which they

bring, then to those sailing there is no care of temporal things, no delight of the flesh is reduced to the mind; they also cast those very things from the ship, for which they undertook long voyages; all things come into the contempt of the mind, from the love of living. As if therefore waves swelling over him he feared God, who while he desires true life, despises all things which he carries possessing here. For as if caught in a storm we cast away the weight of the ship, when we remove from the oppressed mind earthly desires. And it happens that the lightened ship floats, which being loaded was merging, because surely the cares which in this life depress the mind draw it into the deep. Which mind namely is raised so much higher among the waves of temptations, as it is more solicitously emptied from the thought of this world. But there is also another thing which should be skillfully beheld concerning the concussion of the sea. For when a storm arises, first gentle waves, and afterwards greater volumes are stirred up; at the last the waves raise themselves on high, and subvert any sailors by their very height. So, so surely that last storm of souls hastens, which subverts the universal world. For now by wars and slaughters as if by certain waves it shows us its beginnings, and by how much we are made daily nearer to the end, by so much we see heavier volumes of tribulations rush in. At the last truly all elements being moved, the heavenly Judge coming brings the end of all, because namely then the storm raises waves into heaven. Whence also it is said: Yet a

little while, and I will move not only the earth, but also the heaven (Hag. ii. 7). Which storm because holy men vigilantly behold they dread daily like waves swelling over them, and from these tribulations which strike the world they foresee those things which follow.

36. Holy men dread the last judgment; how much more ought sinners to be terrified. Well moreover it is subjoined: And I could not bear His weight, since he who considers with intent mind the coming of the last judgment, surely sees that so great a dread hangs over, as much as he should very much fear not only then to see, but even now to foresee. For by the consideration of so great a terror the mind palpitates with fear, and turning away the eyes of its intention, refuses to behold what it foresees. Well therefore it is said: And I could not bear His weight, because when the mind endeavors to search out the force of heavenly majesty coming to judgment and the terror of so great an examination, immediately returning to itself, it dreads to have found itself. But among these things it is to be weighed that blessed Job speaks these things of himself, praised and scourged. If therefore he who so feared was so struck at least to the profit of merits, how is he to be struck who contemns? How shall the judgments of God depress those who elevate themselves, if they depress for a time even those who always dread these things in humility? How shall he be able to bear the weight of God who despises, if he also bore this in the scourge who foresaw through fear? Whence we

must dread with the greatest power that examination of so great strictness. For it is certain that in this life when He strikes, if correction follows the striking, it is the discipline of a father, not the wrath of a judge; it is the love of one correcting, not the strictness of one punishing. From the present scourge therefore the eternal judgments are to be weighed. Hence forsooth we ought with the greatest power to consider how that is borne which reproves, if that can hardly be borne now whose wrath purges.

Book twenty

SECOND.

What remained of the thirty-first chapter of the book of Job is explained, and especially humility and moderation of mind, patience, charity, and solicitude towards subjects are commended.

CHAPTER I.

1. To avoid despair, it is lawful to remember what has been done rightly. What has already been said by me often, it is not burdensome for me to repeat frequently, because even the eminent preacher says: To write the same things to you is not indeed irksome to me, and for you it is necessary (Phil. III, 1). Blessed Job for this reason relates the virtues he performed, because, caught between the words of rebuke and the blows of the scourge, he considers his mind to be weakened in the confidence of hope. For he had heard many evils that he had done from the friends rebuking him, and lest the mind, pressed equally by words and scourges, should fall into despair, he reforms it to hope through the memory of his virtues, so that it ought in no way to cast itself down in calamity, which in the time of its tranquility remembered that it had done such sublime things.

Since, therefore, we have stated the cause of his intention, it remains that we subtly weigh those virtues heard of his.

2. One virtue without others is either nothing or very small. This, however, must first be known, that whoever is believed to be powerful in any virtue, then he truly is powerful when he is not subject to vices on another side. For if on another point he is subject to vices, not even this is solid where he was thought to stand. For each virtue is so much the less as the others are missing: For we have often happened to see some indeed chaste, but not humble; some truly as if humble, but not merciful; some as if merciful, but in no way just; and some truly as if just, but trusting in themselves rather than in the Lord. And it is certain that not even chastity in his heart is true, to whom humility is lacking, because pride, corrupting itself inwardly, commits fornication if, loving himself, he departs from divine love. Nor is humility true to which mercy is not joined, because it ought not to be called humility which does not know how to be inclined to compassion for a brother's misery. Nor is mercy true which exists alienated from the rectitude of justice, because that which can be polluted through injustice, knows not without doubt how to pity itself. Nor is justice true which places its confidence not in the Creator of all, but perhaps in itself or in created things, because while it withdraws hope from the Creator, it perverts for itself the order of principal justice. Therefore one virtue without the others is either altogether nothing or

imperfect. For that I may speak, as it has seemed to some, of the first four virtues, prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice; each is so much the more perfect as they are in turn joined to one another. But when disjoined they can by no means be perfect, because neither is prudence true which is not just, temperate and brave, nor is temperance perfect which is not brave, just and prudent, nor is fortitude complete which is not prudent, temperate and just, nor true justice which is not prudent, brave and temperate.

3. All met in Job. Blessed Job, therefore, makes it known by enumerating each one, that he did not have one without another, but virtues joined in himself. For insinuating the goods of chastity, he says: If my heart has been deceived about a woman (Ch. XXXI, 9). And so that he might demonstrate that the grace of humility was in no way lacking to the same chastity, he adds after the rest: If I have despised to undergo judgment with my servant (Verse 13). Who, that he might show that mercy was joined to his humility, says a little later: If I have denied what they wanted to the poor (Verse 16). And that he might show his mercy to descend from the root of justice, he premised a little above, saying: If I have walked in vanity, and my foot has hastened in deceit (Verse 5). And so that it might be shown how fearful he was towards all things, and circumspect towards everything, he asserts below, saying: For I have always feared the Lord like waves swelling over me (Verse 25). Who, namely, placed in prosperity and supported by the abundance of things, if he

placed hope either in his acts or in the things flowing around him, would surely not be just. But when did this holy man place hope in himself, who openly says: Behold, there is no help for me in me (Job VI, 13)? What therefore now remains, but that it should be made known with what mind he possessed the riches themselves also? For he says:

CHAPTER II.

4. Confidence should be placed not in fleeting riches, but in God alone. We call 'obryzum' very pure gold. The holy man therefore believed neither that gold was his strength, nor that very pure gold, that is, a mass of raw gold, was his confidence, because fixing his hope and his delight in the grace of the Creator alone, he sinned neither in the quantity of the gold nor in its appearance. For to have placed hope in a creature would have been to despair of the Creator. But in doubtful things that rich man had fixed his hope, who said: Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry. But the heavenly voice rebukes him, saying: Fool, this night they require your soul of you; and the things you have prepared, whose shall they be (Luke XII, 19, 20)? For in the same night he was taken away, who in the abundance of things for himself had waited for a long time, so that namely he who looked forward for a long time by collecting supports for himself, might not see even one subsequent day. For it is like placing a foundation in flowing waters to want to solidify the confidence of hope

in fleeting things. For while God stands forever, all things pass away. What therefore is it to flee from Him who stands, but to adhere to passing things? For who, snatched away by the swollen whirlpools of running rivers, was ever able to remain fixed himself, while the wave flowed downward? Whoever therefore avoids flowing away, it remains that he flee from what flows, lest through this which he loves he be forced to reach this which he avoids. For he who adheres to fleeting things is namely drawn to that place where what he holds tends. Therefore care must first be taken lest anyone love temporal things, and then lest he place confidence in those same temporal things which he retains not for his delight but for use, since the mind joined to running things soon loses its state. For the wave of the present life draws him whom it lifts up, and he is very insane who is rolled in the wave and tries to fix his foot. But there are many who, even if they in no way place confidence in passing things, yet when they are abundantly present for their necessary uses, rejoice with a silent mind. In which matter there is no doubt, that each one so much the less grieves that eternal things are missing, as he more rejoices that temporal things are present; and he who less grieves that temporal things are missing, more certainly expects that eternal things will be present. Testifying therefore that he did not have this joy in earthly things, blessed Job adds, saying:

CHAPTER III

[Vet. III].

VERSE 25.---If I have rejoiced over my great riches, and because my hand has found very many things.

5. The saints either share the burden of temporal goods by bestowing them, or lay it all down by despising it. For holy men in the distress of this pilgrimage, since they are by no means permitted to contemplate as yet that form of their Creator which they desire, account all the plenty of the present life as want, because namely nothing outside of God suffices for a mind which truly seeks God; and for the most part their very abundance becomes vehemently burdensome to them, because they bear this itself with heaviness, that while hastening to their country they carry many things on the journey. Hence it comes that they devoutly share these things with needy neighbors, so that while the one takes what he has not, the other may lay down what he had in excess; and neither may the fellow-traveler walk empty-handed, nor may the excessive load weigh down him whom it could retard on the way. The elect therefore rejoice very little in great abundance, which namely for the love of the heavenly inheritance they either disperse by bestowing it or desert by despising it. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 26-28.---If I beheld the sun when it shined, and the moon walking clearly; and my heart has been glad in secret, and I have kissed

my hand with my mouth, which is a very great iniquity, and a denial against the most high God.

6. They coerce the senses, and with continual study gather themselves within their mind. It is not uncertain that both these luminaries, assigned to human ministries, are called the host of heaven. In whose worship we know many to have fallen, as Scripture testifies, as it is written: They worshipped all the host of heaven (4 Kings XVII, 16). And because the sun and the moon are seen in one way for use, and in another for veneration, in that manner by which they are accustomed to be venerated by their worshippers, blessed Job asserts that he in no way beheld the sun and the moon, nor was his heart glad, nor did he kiss his hand with his mouth. In which kissing, namely, what else is expressed but the sake of veneration? Which if he had ever done, he calls this very great iniquity and a denial of God. But after he has related such great summits of virtues of himself in the former places, what wonderful thing does he mention now, if he manifests that he did not worship the sun and the moon? Whence it is to be considered that after he testifies that he did not have confidence in gold, nor was glad in great riches, he is still led to more sublime things, that he may the more instruct us, as he relates some things of himself more subtly. For he says: If I beheld the sun when it shined, and the moon walking clearly, and my heart has been glad in secret. What is said to 'see' in this place, but to gaze longingly? Whence the Psalmist says: If I have looked at iniquity in my heart, let not God hear (Psalm

LXV, 18). Which iniquity certainly could not be expressed in the mouth, if it were not beheld in the heart. But it is one thing to see by judgment, another by appetite. Blessed Job therefore asserts that he in no way beheld the shining sun and the moon walking clearly, that he may demonstrate himself not to have desired the appearance of the present light. As if after the contempt of his earthly abundance he plainly insinuates: What shall I say, that I was in no way glad in gold, who was not even delighted in bodily light itself? For holy men, after they despise all the delights of the present life, for the sake of the sweetness of that internal light, avert their mind from this external light as if from darkness; and they contend much with themselves inwardly, lest they be snatched away by the delight of this light which shines externally. For if visible light is incautiously loved, the heart is blinded from the invisible light, because the more the mind, gaping outside itself, is poured out, the more it is beaten back in internal sights. Whence all the skilful, lest they slide too much toward external things by bodily senses, with continual study gather themselves within their mind with the hidden discipline of custody, that they may be found so much the more whole within, as they are less poured out without. For with this vigor of discipline he had constrained himself within the secrets of his mind, who, fleeing the appetite of external life, said: The day of man I have not desired, You know (Jerem. XVII, 16). That therefore which is said in the prophet: The day of man I have not desired, You know,

this blessed Job asserts of himself in other words, that he did not see the shining sun and the moon walking clearly, and by these he was not glad in the hidden parts of the heart, because namely he could not rejoice in those things which he did not see through the desire of delight.

[Old IV.] 7. They take care not to lean on their own prudence.---But if we examine through the mysteries of allegory also all these things which we have run through by treating them according to history, what do we take for gold in this place, but the brilliance of a clear understanding; what for refined gold (obryzum), but the mind? which while it is boiled down by the fire of love, always preserves in itself the brightness of beauty by a daily renewal of fervor. For the mind knows not how to grow old through torpor, which studies to always begin through desire. For hence it is said by Paul: Be renewed in the spirit of your mind (Ephes. IV, 23). Hence the Psalmist, who had already arrived at the summit of perfection, as if beginning said: I said, now I have begun (Psal. LXXVI, 11), because namely if we are unwilling to grow weary from the good things begun, it is very necessary that we believe ourselves to begin daily. Nor does it abhor from the order of reason that we say genius is designated by gold, because as gold is placed under in an ornament, so that an order of gems may be arranged above, so the clear geniuses of the saints are humbly spread under divine gifts, and perceive distinct gifts of graces above themselves. And unless gold had something similar with wisdom,

a certain wise man would by no means have said: Wisdom hidden, and a treasure unseen, what utility is in either (Ecclus. XX, 32; XLI, 17)? But holy men do not reckon their strength to be gold, because with whatever genius they may shine, they weigh themselves to be nothing from their own powers. And when they are able to perceive all things strongly, they first desire to understand themselves, so that the light of genius, after the manner of the sun, may first illustrate the place in which it arises, and afterwards the other things, to which it is dilated by proceeding, lest if by intending to know other things they know not themselves, the ray of the sun may grow dark there where it arises. Therefore they direct the virtue of genius to knowing their own infirmity, and from the knowledge of their infirmity they the better grow strong. Gold therefore is not believed to be strength, if confidence is not had in the genius received. Which Solomon well admonishing, says: Have confidence in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own prudence (Prov. III, 3). Let him say therefore: If I have thought gold my strength, and have said to refined gold, my confidence. As if he should openly confess, saying: Neither those things which I have truly understood, did I attribute to my genius, nor to my own mind, if it happened that I did any good things, did I principally reckon these. Who, still more subtly insinuating to us the humility of his heart, adds saying:

CHAPTER V

[Rec. III].

VERSE 25.---If I rejoiced over my many riches, and because my hand found very many things.

8. It is dangerous to understand many things in sacred letters, unless the things understood are guarded.---What do we believe are called "many riches" through signification, but the abundance of the sharp points of counsels? Which the hand of the seeker finds, when the thought of the one treating produces these. For Solomon, beholding these riches of wisdom, says: The crown of the wise is their riches (Prov. XIV, 24). Who, because he names prudence as riches, and not earthly metals, immediately adds by contrariety: The fatuity of fools is imprudence (Ibid., 24). For if he called earthly riches the crown of the wise, without doubt he would have confessed the fatuity of fools to be poverty rather than imprudence. But while he added the fatuity of fools to be imprudence, he indicated that he had called the riches of the wise prudence. Paul, beholding these riches of knowledge in himself, and humbling his contemplation by the consideration of human frailty, says: We have this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor. IV, 7). We find therefore many riches with us, when we perceive the gifts of abundant understanding by investigating the sacred eloquences, and in these we feel many things, yet not diverse among themselves. But it is not a secure joy to know either strong or many things in the divine pages, but to guard the things known. For he who understands well, recognizes

what he owes by understanding. For by as much as he is extended more widely by understanding, by so much is he tied more earnestly to fulfilling works. Whence in the Gospel the Truth says: To whom much is given, much shall be sought from him; and to whom they have committed much, they will ask the more from him (Luke XII, 48).

[Old IV.] 9. Understanding given, is like money received on loan, to be returned with interest.--- Let us therefore reckon the understanding given as money on loan, because by how much the more is committed to us from benignity, by so much the more are we held debtors in work; and for the most part this same money of understanding received, when it is given to hearers for usury, is lost, unless it be bestowed cautiously. For it is not to be looked at negligently in the volume of Kings, that when the sons of the prophets were cutting wood in the Jordan, the axe of one of them, having slipped from the handle, disappeared into the deep (4 Kings VI). For the iron in the handle is the gift of understanding in the heart. But to cut wood through this is to rebuke those acting perversely. Which sometimes while it is done loosely, while the slip of vain glory is not avoided in this same science received, the iron is lost in the water, because understanding is made fatuous from dissolved work. Which understanding indeed we know to be given for this, that it ought to be restored by good action before the eyes of the Giver. Whence rightly he who had lost the iron cried out: Alas! alas! alas! my lord, and this very thing I had received on loan (4 Kings

VI, 5). For the elect have this property, that if ever the stealthy fault of vain glory creeps upon them in their knowledge, they quickly return to the heart, and whatever they find damnable in themselves before the eyes of the strict Judge, they follow with tears. Who weeping not only cautiously behold the evils which they have committed, but from the gift received also the good things which they ought to have returned, because namely they feel themselves so much the more sinners, as they are held debtors from the neglected good things which they were able to do. Rightly therefore he who lost the iron, cried out: Alas! alas! alas! and this very thing I had received on loan. As if he should say: I have lost through the dissolution of negligence that which I received from the grace of the Creditor that I might return it through good works. But God never deserts the mind which truly recognizes itself in sins. Whence also presently Elisha coming, sends the wood down, and raises the iron to the surface, because namely our Redeemer, piously beholding us, humbles the heart of the sinner, and reforms to him the understanding which he had lost; he sinks the wood, and raises the iron, because he afflicts the heart, and repairs the knowledge. Whence it is well said in another translation that he broke the wood and cast it in, and thus took up the iron. For to break the wood is to bruise the heart from elation. To cast the wood to the bottom is to humble the elated heart in the knowledge, as we said, of its own infirmity. And immediately the iron returns to the surface,

because understanding recurs to the use of its former exercise.

10. Hence the just fear more than they rejoice concerning the gift committed to them.---Therefore since the gift of understanding which is received is hardly guarded with so many difficulties (for care must be taken lest it grow torpid by sloth, care must be taken lest it vanish by the vice of elation in the exercise of work), holy men by no means exult when they know what they should do, but when they do what they had known; and if they rejoice together in understanding the gift of the Giver, yet mourning they consider the debt of work, that namely they may pay by action what has been reached out to them in knowledge. For foolish is the debtor who rejoicing receives money on loan, and attends not to the time when he ought to return it. But the joy of receiving is moderated, when by skilful providence also the appointed time of returning is thought upon. Because therefore just men are not extolled by secure joy in those things which they vigilantly understand, let it be rightly said: If I rejoiced over my many riches, and because my hand found very many things. As if it were openly said: I in no way believed myself rich from justice in that, in which I also knew many right things which I ought to do, nor did understanding extol the heart, because the consideration of the operation owed pressed it down.

[Old VI.] But it is to be known, that for the most part it happens, that when the height of understanding is perceived, the mind being very

solicitous about itself is kept from the slip of elation. But when it has begun to work also the wonderful things which it understands, by that very thing by which it is shown without it sometimes slips, and glories that it surpasses others in its acts. Blessed Job therefore was not extolled by the gold of understanding, nor did the light of wonderful operation elevate him before human eyes. Whence also he aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. IV].

VERSE 26.---If I beheld the sun when it shined.

41. They do not exult at the brightness of their good works. The debtor is not absolved who returns many things, but he who returns all.---For the sun in its brightness is a good work in manifestation. For it is written: Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matth. V, 16). And again: Let your loins be girded, and lamps burning (Luke XII, 33). For that which in this place is designated by the shining sun, is in the Gospel by burning lamps. For a good work, when it shines in the midst of the faithless, is a lamp burning in the night; but when it resplends in the Church, it is the sun shining in the day. If a good work is still such as only the evil wonder at, it is namely a lamp in the night; but if it so profits, that it can be wondered at by the good and more perfect, it is certainly the sun in the

day. A good work, when it shines through the active life of the body, as after the manner of a lamp, light resplends from a shell. But when it is lifted up in contemplation through the virtue of the mind alone, as after the manner of the sun, light is seen coming from heaven. Because therefore blessed Job had related many good things of himself concerning hospitality and mercy, which were indeed still the least, by as much as he had known them as deeds corporally, recalling the eye of the mind to the summit of spiritual virtues, he remembered his perfection, and called the light of examples, which he gave of himself to others, the sun. [Reg. V.] But there are some who when they do some good things, immediately forget their iniquities, and fix the eye of the heart in the consideration of the good works which they exhibit; and already they think themselves holy by that, by which they turn away the memory of their evils, in which perhaps they are still entangled, among the good things which they do. Who namely if they vigilantly attended to the strictness of the Judge, would more fear for their evils than exult for their imperfect good things; they would more look at that for which they are held debtors concerning those things which are still to be done by them, than that by working some things they already pay part of the debt. For the debtor is not absolved who returns many things, but he who returns all; nor has he arrived at the prize of victory who runs swiftly in a great part of the spectacle, if coming near the goals he fails in that which is left. Nor does it profit those

going to any destined places to have snatched up a long journey by beginning, if they are not also able to complete the whole. We therefore who seek eternal life, what else do we do but some journeys, through which we hasten to the country? But what does it profit that we snatch up so many, if we neglect those remaining things which are left for arriving?

12. Let us not consider what of the journey has already been completed, but what remains to be completed.---After the manner therefore of travelers, we ought in no way to behold how much of the journey we have already made, but how much remains for us to complete, so that for a little while that may become past which is yet incessantly and fearfully attended to as future. We ought therefore more to inspect those good things which we have not yet done, than those which we already rejoice to have done. But human infirmity has this as its own, that it more likes to gaze at what pleases it in itself than what displeases it in itself. For the sick eye of the heart, while it fears to labor in its own consideration, seeks as it were a certain bed of delight in the mind, where it may lie softly; and therefore it understands what advantages it has attained from completed good things, but it knows not what losses it suffers from neglected ones. For for the most part even the elect are tempted by this vice. For the most part it is suggested to their heart that they recall to the mind whatever good things they have done, and exult already with the joy of security. But if they are truly elect,

they turn away the eyes of the mind from that in which they please themselves, they press down all joy in themselves from completed good things, and they seek sadness from those things which they understand themselves to have done less; they estimate themselves unworthy, and almost alone they see not their own good things, which they exhibit in themselves to be seen by all for an example. Hence it is that Paul, while he postponed the good things fulfilled in himself, and thought only of those remaining which were to be fulfilled, said: I do not count myself to have apprehended (Philip. III, 13). Hence it is that that he might be able to humble himself concerning the good things which he was doing, he studied to bring back past evils to the mind, saying: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious (I Tim. I, 13).

[Old VII.] 13. When it is permitted to recall to memory or to relate the good things done by oneself.---Who also if he ever said: I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith (II Tim. IV, 7)? It is to be looked at especially that he brought that in at that time in which he knew that he was already about to depart from the body. For there he premised saying: For I am already being sacrificed, and the time of my resolution is at hand (Ibid., 6). Then therefore he recalled to memory the perfection of the work, when he already foresaw that time of operation was in no way underlying for the space of largess. For as, while we live, we ought to repel our good things from the memory, lest they extol

us, so as the end approaches, for the most part we recall them again to memory, that namely they may afford confidence, and press down despairing fear. Who even if he related his good things by enumerating them to the Corinthians, studied to confirm them, not to show himself. For because he would not attend to those same good things in himself, he taught by the revealed tribulation of his own temptation, which being expressed he subjoined: For which reason I please myself in my infirmities (II Cor. XII, 10). That therefore he might instruct the disciples, he related the highest things of himself; but that he might guard himself in humility, he had fixed the eye of consideration not on his virtues, but on his infirmities. Holy men therefore have this as their own, that they indeed see the good things which they do; and yet when they have completed them, they turn away their eyes from the memory of them. Whence rightly it is said through blessed Job: If I beheld the sun when it shined. As if he should openly say: Even when my work gave light of examples to others, I did not attend to it for the grace of presumption, because while I feared to be extolled by it, I turned away my eyes from beholding it. It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

IBID.---And the moon walking clearly.

14. Fame is not to be hunted from good works.---After the sun had been premised, he aptly subjoined also the moon walking clearly, because namely after a good work, laudable fame

follows, through which a celebrated name is possessed in this night of the present life. But if it is true what some think, that the moon receives illustration through an occult circle from the ray of the sun, that it may be able to exhibit light for nocturnal courses, this suspicion also does not abhor from the order of this signification. For fame receives strength from a good work, and sprinkles the grace of favor as it were the brightness of light. There is also another thing in the moon which by similarity may agree with fame spreading good things. For its light shows the way to those walking even in the time of darkness, because even while the light of praise shines forth from another's life, it illustrates others to the exercise of a good work; and when the opinion of that one is known to be clear, to this one as if going on a journey the light of example is afforded. But sometimes the work which is taken from another's opinion is formed in the mind with a less pure desire. For weak minds when they hear good things of others, sometimes kindle themselves to right operation not by the love of virtue, but by the delight of praise. And indeed it is clear that as the nature of the sun is to kindle and dry up whatever it has touched, so it is the property of lunar fire that it indeed burns whatever it has touched, but by burning renders it moist. To a good life therefore the affection of right work inflames some for the love of God, but the love of praise inflames others. But when we are kindled with the affection of right work, we are dried up from the moisture of vices as

if by the fire of the sun. But him whom the love of praise provokes to a good work, coveted fame, as the moon, touches, because namely it both kindles and dissolves his mind. It kindles it namely to the exercise of work, but dissolves it to the concupiscence of favor. Yet for the most part the examples of others profitably persuade us to exercise good works. And when with a humble mind we receive the good things of another's opinion, we either produce our good things to a better state, or change our evil things to good. And when the splendor of fame from the life of a neighbor irradiates us, our mind, which as we said before directs itself to obtaining the path of virtue, places its steps as if in the light of the moon. But as we profit from another's opinion, so for the most part, if we attend to the praises of our own fame, we are emptied of virtue, because when the mind is delighted in that which it considers is had of itself from without, it forgets that for which it panted within.

[Old VIII.] 15. Intelligence, good works, praises, did nothing to harm the humility of Job (which rarely happens).---Because therefore the intelligence of science did not corrupt the holy man, he despised to rejoice over many riches. But because the greatness of work did not inflate him, he saw not the shining sun. But because neither the fame of praise extolled him, he in no way attended to the moon walking clearly. For there are some who fall into elation by this, that through subtle intelligence they know even those good things which they do not do. These

namely rejoice over many riches, when they find any highest things by understanding, and are corrupted by those very inventions in elation. But there are some whom intelligence indeed does not elevate, but exhibited operation exalts. Who while they look at their own actions, in their own mind postpone others to themselves by disdaining them. These namely although they rejoice not in many riches, yet see the shining sun because they swell from the greatness of a good work alone as if by despising others. And there are some whom neither their own operation extols; but when they have begun to be praised by men for this same good operation, being overcome by those very favors of men, they behold themselves in their own thought as if some great ones, and are dissolved from the custody of the heart. These indeed although they would not see the shining sun, yet behold the moon walking clearly, because among the darkness of this life while they fix the mind in the clarity of their own opinion, they lose the grace of humility as if from a nocturnal light; and beholding the moon, they see not themselves, who begin not to know themselves, while they fix the eyes of the mind on transitory favor.

16. Various progresses and degrees toward virtue. What is to be feared in each one.---But the progress of men is such as we behold to be the increments of trees. For the power of the future tree is first in the seed, afterwards in the rising, and at the end it is produced into branches. So certainly the virtue of each one working grows

up. For it is sown in intelligence, it arises in operation, and at the last it grows strong even to the breadth of great progress. But when his own intelligence extols anyone, the tree which was able to arise rots in the seed. But when after a good operation it is corrupted by the plague of elation, it is dried up as if already arisen. But when neither intelligence nor operation corrupts, but the greatness increasing, while the favor of those praising follows, and turns away the mind of the one working well from its state, the tree has endured the winds of tongues, and the tempest of fame has plucked up by the roots everything which had grown robust in it. For by how much the more a tree has risen high to the upper parts, by so much the more vehemently does it feel the force of the winds, because by how much the more anyone is lifted up in good works, by so much the more is he fatigued by the fuller blast from the mouth of those praising. If therefore the tree is still in the seed, it is to be feared lest it rot by the very knowledge of science. If it has already come forth to a sprout, care must be taken lest the hand of elation touch it, and dry it up from the greenness of its action. But if with a strong power it already raises itself to the heights, it is greatly to be dreaded, lest a heavier wind of praise applied pluck it up by the roots.

[Old IX.] 17. For the danger from fame and human praises, God permits detractions to be opposed.---But among these things it is to be known that lest we be rooted out by immoderate praises, for the most part by a wonderful moder-

ation of our Ruler we are even permitted to be torn by detractions, so that when the voice of the one praising elevates us, the tongue of the one detracting may humble us, because also a tree which is often so impelled by the impulse of one wind, that it seems already almost able to be rooted out, is erected by the blast of another coming from the opposite side, and that which endured an inflection from this part, returns to its state from another. Whence also that tree deeply rooted had stood fixed as it were among opposing winds, which said: By glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report (2 Cor. VI, 8). For often praise insolently applied to the ears of one doing well, while it makes a noise without in words, generates within a certain silent tempest of elation for the mind: and it happens that this, that the mind rejoices concerning human favors, it does not easily show without, but yet it feels the force of corruption not slightly within. And there are some whom praise so inflates, that it draws them even to words of elation. But some, as we said before, blush to make manifest this very thing that they are elevated, and are extolled when their own proclamations are heard; but yet they go not out even to words of elation, and show not themselves to rejoice in such things. Whence blessed Job, because he knew himself not to have been arrogant in no way only in words, but also in silent thought as well, after he said: If I beheld the sun when it shined, and the moon walking clearly, immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 27.---And my heart has been glad in secret.

18. It is forbidden to rejoice even silently over one's own praises.---By which attestation namely what is insinuated to us, but that there is need of great fear and circumspection, lest our mind ever rejoice even silently over its own praises? For whoever beholds the greatness of his own fame as the brightness of the moon, and makes for himself a joy in the secret of the mind, to whom has this one preferred himself but to the Author, whose gift he received that he might work well, and yet in His gift he is cheerful concerning the grace of his own praise? For having despised the honor of the Creator, he is convinced to love himself more, in whose proclamations he rejoices. Although sometimes even holy men rejoice concerning their own good opinion; but when they weigh that by this the hearers profit to better things, they rejoice no longer concerning their own opinion, but concerning the utility of their neighbors, because it is one thing to seek favors, and another to exult concerning progresses. In which matter it is necessary that when it does not profit the utility of hearers, laudable fame should not elevate our mind, but fatigue it. For when we are praised by the attestation of the human tongue, we are required by an occult pulsation what we think concerning ourselves. For the proud mind exults even when false good things are said concerning it, because it does not

think out how it lives before God, but how it may become known before men. For despising the judgment of almighty God concerning itself, and seeking only that of men, it is extolled among the heard praises, and because it had sought this alone, it rejoices as if concerning the prize of work. But on the contrary, if the heart is truly humble, it either by no means recognizes the good things which it hears concerning itself, and fears because false things are said; or certainly if it knows them truly to be present to itself, by that very thing it dreads lest they be lost from the eternal retribution of God, by which it considers these divulged to men, and it trembles vehemently lest the hope of a future gift be changed into the reward of transitory favor.

19. Holy men are tormented by their own praises.---From which thing it is brought about that the mind of the elect is tormented by the great fire of their own praises, and is boiled down from all the rust of its own torpor by the mourning of thought. For by a cautious consideration it trembles, lest either concerning those things in which it is praised and are not, it find a greater judgment of God, or concerning those in which it is praised and are, it lose a competent reward. Whence for the most part it happens that as the unjust man is polluted from his own praise, so the just man is purged when his own praise is heard. For while he knows the good things which he has done to be brought forward by men, he fears the subtle examination of the last judgment against himself, as has been said, and trembling recurs

to the conscience, and corrects whatever there is reprehensible in it. For while he fears his good things to have become known, greatly fearing the subtlety of the examination about to follow, he cuts off whatever hidden evils are in him. For he trembles if at least he is not shown to God to be such as he is thought by men, and he is not content that in that in which he was able to become known, in this he ought to remain. For already he weighs concerning his own good things as if a retribution had been made to him, unless he joins to them also other things which are unknown by men. Whence it is well said through Solomon: As silver is proved in the fining-pot, and gold in the furnace, so is a man proved by the mouth of him that praiseth him (Prov. XXVII, 21). For silver or gold, if it is reprobate, is consumed by the fire; but if it is good, it is declared by the fire. So certainly is also the sense of the one working. For what kind he is, is shown in that for which he is praised. For if he extols himself when his own praises are heard, what was this one but reprobate gold or silver, whom namely the furnace of the tongue has consumed? But if hearing his own favors, he returns to the consideration of the heavenly judgment, and fears lest he be burdened concerning these before the occult Judge, he increases to the greatness of brightness as if by the fire of expurgation, and from where he sustains the fire of trepidation, from there he shines more clearly. Blessed Job therefore, because he in no way preferred himself concerning operation, says confidently: If I beheld the sun when it shined.

But because laudable fame did not divert him from the gaze of the internal judgment, he adds: And the moon walking clearly. But because he did not permit his mind to be overcome by the grace of his own opinion, even in silent thought, he immediately subjoined: And if my heart has been glad in secret.

[Old X.] And because for the most part the inconsiderate mind, while it does not resist transitory favor, is drawn even to this, that it praises itself what it does, to the condition which has been premised it is subjoined as it were congruously:

CHAPTER IX

IBID.---And I have kissed my hand with my mouth.

20. They attribute their good works to God, not to themselves. Prevenient grace.---For by the hand operation is designated, but by the mouth speech; as it is said through Solomon: The slothful hideth his hand under his arm-pit, and it grieveth him if he reach it to his mouth (Prov. 19:24). It is a labor for the slothful to reach his hand to his mouth, because every lazy preacher does not wish even to work what he says. For to reach the hand to the mouth is to agree with one's voice in work. He therefore kisses his hand with his mouth, who praises what he does, and by the testimony of his own speech attributes the virtue of the work to himself. In which matter who is despised, except He who bestows those very gifts of working? Whence it is well said by the eminent

preacher: But what hast thou, that thou hast not received? But if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received? (1 Cor. 4:7). But holy men know that after the fall of the first parent they were brought forth from a corruptible stock, and that they have been changed to better vows or works not by their own power, but by prevenient heavenly grace; and whatever evil they know to be in them, they feel as the desert of the mortal offspring; but whatever good they behold in themselves, they recognize as the gift of immortal grace, and they become debtors to Him for the received gift, who both by preventing gave them to will the good which they would not, and by following granted the power for the good which they will. Whence it is well said through John: They adored Him that liveth for ever and ever, casting their crowns before the throne of the Lord (Rev. 4:10). For to cast their crowns before the throne of the Lord is to attribute the victories of their contests not to themselves, but to the Author, so that they may refer the glory of praise to Him, from whom they know they have received the strength for the contest. Blessed Job therefore, because he so relates the good things which he has wrought, that yet he does not attribute these to his own operation, but recurs to the praise of the Author, denies that he had kissed his hand with his mouth. As if he should say plainly: I do not bring forward my works as my own, because whoever attributes to himself what he works, is convicted of denying the grace of his Author. Whence also he immediately adds:

CHAPTER X

VERSE 28.---Which is the greatest iniquity, and a denial against the most high God.

21. He denies God who presumes on his own strength.---For it is clear that he denies Him, whose grace being despised, he arrogates to himself the strength of good work. Which also is rightly called the greatest iniquity, since every sin which is from infirmity by no means loses hope, because it seeks pardon from the heavenly Judge. But presumption of one's own virtue is so much more grievous in despair, as it is further from humility. And when it attributes to itself the strength of the work, it does not recur to the aid of the Author; and it happens that the sinner perishes so much more grievously, as he is ignorant even of this itself, that he is a sinner. It follows:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. VI]

VERSE 29.---If I have rejoiced at the ruin of him that hated me, and exulted that evil had found him.

22. Only charity makes us disciples of God. Arguments and signs of charity.---The custody of charity alone proves that we are disciples of Almighty God. For hence it is that through itself Truth says: In this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35). Which love indeed, if it truly fills our heart, is accustomed to be shown in two ways, namely,

if we love both our friends in God, and our enemies for God's sake. But it is to be known that the love of an enemy is then truly kept, when we are neither burdened by his progress, nor rejoice at his ruin. For often the mind is deceived in the image of love towards an enemy, and estimates that it loves him, if it does not exist contrary to his life. But either the progress of an enemy, or his fall, interrogates the force of love secretly and truly. For concerning this matter the mind of man does not know itself to the full, unless it has found that he whom it believes to be its adversary has changed the manner of his state in failure or progress. For if it is burdened by his prosperity, and rejoices at the calamity of him that hates it, it is certain that it does not love him whom it does not wish to be better, and it pursues with a vow even him standing, whom it congratulates to have fallen.

23. How we can rejoice at an enemy's ruin without injury to charity, or grieve at his glory. What is to be avoided in this matter.---But among these things it is to be known that it is accustomed for the most part to happen that, without having lost charity, both the ruin of an enemy may gladden us, and again his glory may sadden us without the fault of envy, when, as he falls, we believe certain ones to be well raised up, and as he prospers, we fear many to be unjustly oppressed. In which matter our mind neither raises itself by his failure, nor is it burdened by his progress, if our right thought attends not to what is in himself, but what is done concerning

him around others. But for the keeping of these things, the examination of a most subtle discretion is very necessary, lest when we execute our hatreds, we be deceived under the appearance of another's utility. For if one were not at all to rejoice at the death of an enemy, the Psalmist would not say: The just shall rejoice when he shall see the vindication of the impious (Ps. 57:11). But it is one thing to endure the impious, another the enemy. For there are many enemies who are not impious; and there are some impious ones, who do not specially seem enemies to us. But the human mind thinks everyone whom it tolerates as an enemy, even impious and iniquous, because malice as an accuser exaggerates his faults in its thought. But by whatever crimes he may be pressed, he is believed less iniquous if he is in no way felt as an adversary. In which matter it is to be discerned that it is one thing that our enemy hurts us, another what he hurts himself and others. For if he is good to others, perhaps it cannot be without our fault that he is evil to us; nor is it now at all to be rejoiced at the ruin of him, of whom it is certain that we alone have tolerated adversities. But when the host of us and of many is destroyed, it is necessary that the mind should rejoice at the rescue of neighbors rather than at the destruction of an enemy.

24. We must condole with the misery of the perishing, and rejoice with the justice of the judge.---For it is necessary that as an adversary perishes, we should subtly weigh both what we owe to the ruin of the sinner, and what to the jus-

tice of Him who strikes. For when the Almighty strikes any perverse man, we must both condole with the misery of the perishing, and rejoice with the justice of the judge, so that to us both in grief there may be the punishment of a dying neighbor, and again in joy there may come the exhibited equity of the judging God, so that we may neither exist as adversaries to the perishing man, nor be found ungrateful to the judging God. Blessed Job therefore, because he perfectly trod under foot all hatreds in adversity, let him say: If I have rejoiced at the ruin of him that hated me, and exulted that evil had found him; who namely, loving also his enemy, while he condoled with the falling adversary, in his evils he himself grew towards good, so that from there he might grow to benignity, from where evils which he deserved had found that man.

But because many often strike with a curse those whom they estimate as adversaries to themselves, since they can in no way do so by power; in whom it clearly appears what evils they would do if they could, who in no way cease to imprecate those which they are unable to do; blessed Job, showing himself to be alien even from the fault of cursing, followed and joined:

CHAPTER XII

VERSE 30.---For I have not given my throat to sin, to seek his soul by cursing.

25. We must abstain from curses.---For he would sin if he wished that to be done by God, which he himself either could not do at all, or,

if he could, would in no way befit him. For those who assail an enemy with curses, what else do they wish God to do in him, except what they themselves either are unable to do, or are ashamed to do? For they wish death for their adversary, which even if they are able to inflict they fear, lest either they be held guilty of committed homicide, or they appear iniquous even when they are so. What is it therefore to say to God: Kill him whom I hate, except to cry to Him with open voices: Do this to my adversary, which it does not befit even a sinner to do against him? In which words we must indeed weigh where this man had read: Love your enemies (Luke 6:27, 35); where he had read: Bless, and curse not (Rom. 12:14); and again: Not rendering evil for evil, or curse for curse (1 Pet. 3:9). But outwardly he kept the precepts of heavenly grace which had not been heard, because the inspiration of the Holy Spirit wrote these in the mind of that man. To whom yet it would be less that he loved those placed outside, unless he also tolerated even familiar adversaries living and conversing with him daily within. Whence he subjoins:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. VII]

VERSE 31.---If the men of my tabernacle have not said: Who may give of his flesh, that we may be filled?

26. We ought to tolerate patiently domestic and familiar persons opposing us. The sacrifice of

the altar. Adversities must be endured outwardly with fortitude, and inwardly with clemency.--- Which sentence indeed can also be understood through mystery from the voice of the Redeemer. For the men of His tabernacle desired to be filled with His flesh, either namely the Jews persecuting, or the Gentiles believing, because both those strove to extinguish His body, as it were by consuming it, and these desire to fill their hungry mind through the daily sacrifice of immolation with His flesh. [Vet. XII.] But now following the virtue of history alone, let us weigh with what great fortitude the mind of the holy man, solicitous without and within, is divided towards all things. Who if he ever yielded through silence to those acting unjustly, or did not oppose them through rectitude, certainly he would not have had adversaries. But in that he held the ways of life, he found those who desired his death. He endured open adversaries without, and hidden ones within. But it is a lesser virtue of the contest for someone to see without the evils which he may overcome, and to have nothing within that he may tolerate. But it is the praise of perfect magnitude to endure adversities outwardly with fortitude, and inwardly with clemency. For there are some things which even in the very conversation of familiars cannot be corrected without the fault of the corrector; and therefore when they either defile the one correcting, or burden the one not doing these at all, they must be dissembled with great art of mastery, and be tolerated by this very dissimulation. Which things brought

against us we more quickly release from the heart, if we recognize our own errors around our neighbors. Whence it is well also said through Solomon: Do not apply thy heart to all words that are spoken, lest perhaps thou hear thy servant cursing thee. For thy conscience knoweth, that thou also hast often cursed others (Eccl. 7:22, 23). For while we weigh what kind we have been towards others, we grieve less that others are such towards us, because another's injustice in us avenges what our conscience justly accuses in itself. It follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. VIII]

VERSE 32.---The stranger did not stay without, my door was open to the traveler.

27. Let mercy in sparing be succeeded by mercy in bestowing.---Because, as Paul testifies, charity is described as patient and kind (1 Cor. 13:4), through patience it tolerates another's evils with equanimity, through kindness also it mercifully bestows its own good things. Whence blessed Job both patiently endured domestics cursing him, and kindly received travelers and strangers with himself: bestowing on those examples of conduct, and succoring these with the help of external things; towards those not excited to anger through gentleness, towards these ready to succor through mercy. For the holy man, beholding the Redeemer of the human race through the spirit of prophecy, kept also His preachings

in work, by which He admonishes us, saying: Forgive, and it shall be forgiven you; give, and it shall be given to you (Luke 6:37). For our giving pertains to things which we have outwardly, but forgiving to releasing the grief which we have contracted inwardly from another's fault. But it is to be known that he who forgets, and does not give, although he has not worked fully, yet has held the better part of mercy. But he who gives, and in no way forgives, does no mercy at all, because a gift from the hand is not received by Almighty God, which is brought forward with a heart bound in malice.

28. Conditions of meritorious almsgiving.---For the mind which affords alms ought first to be cleansed, because everything that is given to God is weighed from the mind of the giver. Therefore all stain of malice is to be wiped away from our interior man of thought by a change of thought, because an oblation does not know how to appease the wrath of the Judge, unless it please from the purity of the one offering. Whence it is written: God had respect to Abel and to his gifts, but to Cain and to his gifts he had no respect (Gen. 4:4, 5). For neither does sacred speech say: He had respect to the gifts of Abel, and to the gifts of Cain he had no respect; but first it says that He had respect to Abel, and then subjoined, And to his gifts. And again it says that He had no respect to Cain, and then subjoined, Nor to his gifts. For from the heart of the giver that which is given is accepted. Therefore not Abel from the gifts, but the offered gifts from Abel pleased. For the Lord

is read to have had respect first to him who gave, before to those things which he gave. Whence well blessed Job, about to tell us his largess in the grace of hospitality, first brought forward his patience and kindness around adversaries: that he did not exult over the ruin of an enemy, that he did not assail his persecutors with cursing words, that he patiently endured those raging within, and then at last brought forward the munificence of his hospitality; so that namely, having heard the order of his narration, we may learn that external gifts are seasoned from the internal purity of the heart, so that the contexture of his virtues may teach the reader what kind he ought to be in himself, when he supplies external good things to others.

29. Elation is to be avoided in good works.--- But who would not believe himself to be holy among such summits of virtues? Who would not in some way be tempted by those very many merits, so that if ever as a man he should fail, he would not wish his fault to become known to men; and would believe it to be light, if he should sin in the smallest things; and would rather choose to cover his fault with silence than to open it with the voice of confession? For often it happens that the mind elated by virtues, while it knows many good things to be scattered concerning itself in the estimation of its neighbors, does not wish it to be known if there is anything that it does reprehensibly. Which darkness indeed of error the mind tolerates for this reason, because the swelling of the heart burdens the eye.

Whence blessed Job, among so many eminent acts of virtues, who stood forth so high in operation, that he might show how humble he was in mind, immediately added:

CHAPTER XV

[Vet. XIII, Rec. IX]

VERSE 33.---If I have hidden my sin as a man, and have concealed my iniquity in my breast.

30. It is an argument of humility to confess one's fault; of pride, to excuse it. By excusing sins, we make them more grievous.---For these are the testimonies of true humility: both for everyone to know his own iniquity, and to open it when known with the voice of confession. But on the contrary, it is a common vice of the human race both to commit sin by hiding it, and to conceal it by denying it when committed, and to multiply it by defending it when convicted. For from that fall of the first man we draw these increases of wickedness, from which we have drawn the very root of the fault. For so he, when he had touched the forbidden tree, hid himself from the face of the Lord among the trees of paradise. In which hiding, namely because he could not be hidden from God, the effect of hiding is not described, but the affect is noted. Who when he was argued by the Lord, that he had touched the forbidden tree, immediately replied: The woman whom Thou gavest to be my companion, she gave to me of the tree, and I did eat (Gen. 3:12). The woman also, being asked, replied, saying: The serpent

deceived me, and I did eat (Ibid., 13). For to this end they had been questioned, that they might blot out by confessing the sin which they had committed by transgressing. Whence also that serpent the persuader, who was not to be recalled to pardon, was not questioned concerning the fault. Therefore the man was asked where he was, that he might look back at the committed fault, and might recognize by confessing how far he was from the face of his Creator. But they chose to apply to themselves the solaces of defense rather than of confession. And when the man wished to excuse the sin through the woman, the woman through the serpent, they increased the fault which they endeavored to protect: Adam obliquely touching the Lord, that He Himself had stood forth as the author of their sin, who made the woman; and Eve referring the fault to the Lord, who had placed the serpent in paradise. For they who through the mouth of the deceiving devil had heard: Ye shall be as gods (Ibid., 5), because they were unable to be like God in divinity, endeavored to make God like to themselves in fault, to the heap of their error. So therefore while they strive to defend their guilt, they added that their fault should be made more atrocious when discussed than it had been when perpetrated.

31. Many imitate Adam, thinking to hide sin as with leaves of trees. The sinner goes out from the sepulcher through confession.---Whence now also the branches of the human race draw bitterness from this root as yet, so that when everyone is argued concerning his vice, he hides himself

under the words of defenses as if under certain leaves of trees, and as if to certain opaque secrets of his own excusing he flees the face of his Creator, while he does not wish it to be known what he has done. In which hiding indeed he does not hide himself from the Lord, but hides the Lord from himself. For he acts so that he who sees all things may not see him, but not so that he himself may not be seen. On the contrary, to every sinner already the beginning of illumination is the humility of confession, because he now refuses to spare himself, who is not ashamed to confess the evil which he has done; and he who by defending could be accused, by accusing himself very quickly defends himself. Whence also to the dead Lazarus, who was pressed by a great mass, it is in no way said: Revive, but: Come forth (John 11:43). From which resurrection indeed, which was wrought in his body, it is signaled how we may be resuscitated in the heart, when namely it is said to the dead: Come forth, so that indeed the man dead in his sin, and already buried through the mass of evil custom, because he lies hidden within his conscience through wickedness, may go forth from himself through confession. For to the dead it is said: Come forth, so that from the excusing and hiding of sin he may be provoked to go forth with his own mouth to his own accusation. Whence David the prophet, reviving from that so great death of crime, went out as it were forth at the voice of the Lord, while, being corrected through Nathan, he accused what he had done (2 Sam. 12:13).

32. The fault of hiding sin has grown vehemently.---Because therefore this fault of hiding has grown vehemently in the human race, well blessed Job when he said: If I have hidden my sin, interposed: as a man. For he beholds it to be proper to man, which descends from the imitation of the old parent. Where it is aptly subjoined: And have concealed my iniquity in my breast. [Vet. XIV, rec. X.] For sacred Scripture is accustomed for the most part to put the breast for the mind, as through the voice of the Church concerning our persecutors, who are indeed joined to us by nature, but disjoined by life, it is said through the Psalmist: Render to our neighbors sevenfold into their breast (Ps. 78:12). As if he should plainly say: Let them receive in their mind this which they work raging in our bodies, so that while they punish us outwardly in part, they themselves may be perfectly punished inwardly. Because therefore the breast is taken for the secret of the mind, to conceal iniquity in the breast is to hide this in the lurking-places of the conscience, neither to detect it through confession, but to veil it through defense. On the contrary James says: Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be saved (James 5:16). Solomon also says: He that hideth his crimes shall not be directed; but he that shall have confessed and forsaken them, shall obtain mercy (Prov. 28:13).

33. The confession of sin is feigned without humility. Signs of sincere confession.---But among these things it is to be known that for

the most part men both confess faults, and are not humble. For we know many who, with no one arguing, confess themselves to be sinners; but when they have been corrected perhaps concerning their fault, they seek the patronage of defense, lest they should seem to be sinners. Who if they then when they say it spontaneously recognized themselves with true humility to be sinners, when they are argued by others, they would not deny themselves to be what they had confessed. In which matter the signs of true confession are, if when everyone calls himself a sinner, he does not contradict another also saying this of him. For because it is written: The just man is the first accuser of himself (Prov. 18:17), he desires not more to seem a sinner, but a just man, when everyone confesses himself a sinner with no one arguing, but proves the truth of the confession, when another reproves the evil which we have done. Which if we proudly defend, it is clear that we were calling ourselves sinners from ourselves feignedly. Whence we must especially take care that the evils which we have done, we both confess spontaneously, and do not deny these when others argue them. For it is a vice of pride that what everyone deigns to confess of himself as of his own accord, this he should disdain to be said to him by others.

34. Job's humility in the confession of sin. Often it is of a more grievous contest to confess sins than to avoid them.---Blessed Job therefore shows of how great humility he was, who both knew how to live among adversaries, and yet did

not fear to open his faults with the voice of confession. But it is to be noted that above he speaks his virtues, below he confesses sin. For hence he clearly demonstrates how true things he had said of his good things, who did not wish to be silent of the evil. Now he indicates his virtues, now his fault, because he both perpetrated sin, and did not keep silent, he manifests. Whence most certainly it appears of how great purity he was in the eyes of Almighty God, who both avoided evils, lest he should commit them, and yet those which it happened that he committed, he did not hide from men, so that to him there might be both the glory of justice to have declined sin, and the custody of justice to have produced what he was not able to decline. Let this man seem great to anyone in his virtues, to me certainly he appears sublime even in his sins. Let those who wish admire in him the continence of chastity, let them admire the integrity of justice, let them admire the bowels of piety; I admire in him no less the most humble confession of sins than so many sublime acts of virtues. For I know that through the shame of infirmity it is for the most part of a more grievous contest to produce committed sins than to avoid those not admitted, and every evil although it is more robustly avoided, yet it is more humbly produced. Blessed Job therefore, who, supported by so many great works, was not ashamed to confess his fault, showed how humble he was in virtues. But because from true humility secure authority is always born, so that it may fear nothing outwardly, as the mind does

not pant towards the heights of things through the desire of elation, the confession of sin having been expressed, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 34.---If I dreaded a very great multitude, and the contempt of kinsmen terrified me; and I did not rather keep silence, nor go out of the door.

35. The wonderful security of a heart free from the desire of earthly things. Which nevertheless does not exempt from the discipline of watchfulness. Great is the security of the heart to have no secular concupiscence. For if the heart pants after the attainment of earthly things, it can in no wise be secure and tranquil, because it either lusts after what it has not so as to have it, or fears lest it lose what it has attained; and while in adversity it hopes for prosperity, in prosperity it dreads adversity, it is tossed hither and thither as by certain waves, and is turned in various ways by the mutability of alternating things. But if once the mind is fixed with strong stability in the desire of the heavenly country (superna patria), it is less vexed by the perturbation of temporal things. Indeed, from all external motions it seeks its own intention as a certain most secret retreat, and there adhering to the unchangeable, and transcending all mutable things, by the very tranquility of its rest it is in the world outside the world. It surely exceeds all lowest things by the intention of the highest, and feels itself to be above all things which it does not desire by a certain liberty,

nor does it sustain within the tempest of temporal things which it beholds without. Because all earthly things, which when desired could oppress the mind, when despised lie beneath it. Whence it is well said by the prophet: "Set thee up a watchtower" (Jer. 31:21), so that while each one watches the highest things, he may overtop the lowest. Hence also Habakkuk says: "I will stand upon my watch" (Hab. 2:1). For he stands upon his watch who by the skill of discipline does not succumb to earthly desires, but overtops them, so that while he always desires standing eternity, all that passes away may be beneath him.

36. Because it does not exclude the infirmities and perturbations of the flesh. The Saints, unperturbable by the gift of God, are subject to perturbations by their own infirmity. Yet because a holy man, however much he may have profited in virtue, is still pressed from without by the infirmity of the flesh while placed in this life, as it is written: "Although man walks in the image of God, yet is he disquieted in vain" (Ps. 39:6), it often happens that he is both troubled outwardly and remains unperturbable inwardly; and that which can be disquieted in vain is of the infirmity of the flesh, although that he walks in the image of God is of the virtue of the mind, so that he may both be strengthened within by divine help and yet still be pressed without by the human burden (sarcina humana). Whence Habakkuk well uttered again one sentence serving for both. For he says: "And trembling entered into my bones, and my virtue was troubled under

me" (Hab. 3:16). As if he were to say: It is not my virtue in which, snatched above, I remain unperturbable, and it is my virtue in which, below, I am troubled. He is therefore unperturbable above himself, he is perturbable under himself, because he had ascended above himself in as much as he was snatched to the highest things; and he was under himself in as much as he still drew the remains into the lowest things. He is unperturbable above himself because he had already passed into the contemplation (contemplatio) of God; he is perturbable under himself because he still remained a weak man under himself. With this sentence the prophet David agreeing says: "I said in my excess of mind: Every man is a liar" (Ps. 116:11). To whom it may be answered: If every man, then you also, and the sentence which you yourself, a liar, have brought forth will now be false. But if you yourself are not a liar, the sentence will now not be true, because while you are truthful, every man is not known as a liar. But it is to be noted what is premised: "I said in my excess of mind." By the excess of mind, therefore, he also passed beyond himself when he defined concerning the quality of man. As if he were to say plainly: I brought forth a true sentence concerning the falsehood of all men from the point where I myself was above man. For in so far as he was also a liar, he was man; but in so far as he was not a liar at all, he was so through the excess of mind above man.

37. These things do not hinder internal rest and contemplation. Thus, therefore, thus are all

the perfect: although they still endure something turbulent from the infirmity of the flesh, yet they already enjoy within a most tranquil secret through the contemplation of the mind, so that whatever happens without, it in no wise troubles within. Whence blessed Job, showing the security of a holy mind, after he brought forth so many predicaments of his virtues, following what we have premised, subjoined. "If I dreaded a very great multitude, and the contempt of kinsmen terrified me; and I did not rather keep silence, nor go out of the door." As if he were to say more plainly: Though others were troubled against me without, I remained unperturbable in myself within. For what in this place ought we to take for the "door" but the "mouth"? For through this, as it were, we go out, while by what words we can we open the secrets of our heart; and such as we remain within in conscience, such we go out without through the tongue.

38. The Saints keep silence in time of commotion. Others do otherwise. Silence is to be kept, unless by speaking we can profit others. But there are some who greatly fear to be despised, and lest they should perhaps be judged vile, they desire to appear wise. These are compelled to go out of the door, because when struck by contumelies, they declare by speaking how great they lie hidden with themselves. And while, overcome by impatience, they produce certain things about themselves which were not known, they go out as it were through the door of the mouth. Whence blessed Job, being about to say that he had not

gone out of the door of the mouth, well premised: "I kept silence," because forsooth, troubled by impatience, he would have gone out from the house of conscience if he had not known how to keep silence. For holy men in the temptation of commotion altogether refuse to show themselves, and when they cannot profit their hearers, they wish even to be despised by keeping silence, lest they should glory in the ostentation of their wisdom. And when they say anything prudently, they do not seek their own glory, but the life of their hearers. But when they perceive that they cannot gain the life of their hearers by speaking, they hide their knowledge by keeping silence. For we run to imitate the life of the Lord, as to a certain sign set before us. For He, because He saw that Herod did not seek profit, but wished to wonder at signs or knowledge, being questioned by him kept silence, and because He constantly kept silence, He went out mocked by him. For it is written: "And Herod, seeing Jesus, was very glad; for he had been desiring for a long time to see Him, because he heard many things of Him, and he hoped to see some sign done by Him" (Luke 23:8). Where it is also added: "And he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing." But the Lord keeping silence, it is shown how much He was despised, when it is there immediately subjoined: "Herod with his army despised Him, and mocked Him." Which deed truly it behoves us hearing to learn, that as often as our hearers wish to know our things as if to be praised, but not to change their own perver-

sities, we should altogether keep silence, lest if from the study of ostentation we speak the word of God, both their fault which was may not cease to be, and ours which was not may become so.

39. Whence it may be known whether hearers profit from the doctrine of preachers. What it is to speak "from God" and "before God". Some one may perhaps say: Whence do we know with what heart any one hears? But there are many things which betray the mind of the hearer, especially if our hearers both always praise what they hear, and never follow what they praise. This empty glory of speaking the eminent preacher had fled from, when he said: "For we are not as many, adulterating the word of God; but as from sincerity, as from God, before God in Christ we speak" (2 Cor. 2:17). For to adulterate the word of God is either to feel otherwise concerning it than it is, or to seek from it not spiritual fruits, but the adulterous offspring of human praise. But to speak from sincerity is to seek nothing in eloquence beyond what is behoveful. He speaks as from God who knows that he has it not of himself, but has received from God what he says. But he speaks before God who in all that he says seeks not human favors, but intends the presence of Almighty God; he seeks not his own glory, but the glory of the Author. But he who indeed knows that he has received from God what he says, and yet by speaking seeks his own glory, speaks as from God, but not before God, because he thinks Him as it were absent whom he does not set before his heart when he preaches. But holy men

speak both from God and before God, because they both know that they have from Him what they say, and they consider Him to be present as judge and hearer of their sermons. Whence it comes to pass that when they perceive themselves to be despised by their neighbors, and that their sayings do not profit the life of their hearers, they hide how great virtue they are of, lest if a discourse brought forth should uselessly open the secret of the heart, it should break forth into empty glory.

40. Neither pride nor impatience compelled Job to relate his virtues. Blessed Job, therefore, not desiring to become famous by the manifestation of his virtue among obstinate minds, says: "If the contempt of kinsmen terrified me, and I did not rather keep silence, nor go out of the door." For he who, being solid through humility, in no wise feared to be despised, him impatience did not overcome so as to cast him out by the tongue. Where it is well premised: "If I dreaded a very great multitude," that it may be known of what constancy he was, because forsooth the number of men without in no wise terrifies him whom a crowd of vices does not devastate within. For in this life, he who desires no prosperous things, doubtless dreads no adverse things.

41. What Job relates of himself is to be understood of Christ. Which words truly if we draw to a mystical understanding, we find in them more quickly the operation of our Redeemer. For He dreaded not a very great multitude, who smote His persecutors coming with swords and staves

with only one answer, saying: "I am He" (John 18:6). The contempt of kinsmen terrified not Him, who, delivering us from eternal punishments, received buffets on His face with equanimity. He kept silence, and went not out of the door, who under the very hour of His passion, when He suffered the infirmities of humanity, would not exercise the power of His divinity. For it would have been as it were to go out of the door for the Mediator of God and men, if when He was held as man, He had wished to show the power of His majesty, and through the greatness of His divinity to pass over the infirmities of the flesh He had taken. For that He might be able as an open man to die, God remained hidden: "For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8). He went not out of the door, therefore, who also being questioned by Pilate kept silence; and between the hands of His persecutors He both offered His body to passion which He had taken for the elect, and would not show to those resisting what He was. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: "They have set me for an abomination to themselves, I was delivered up, and I went not out" (Ps. 88:8). For when He was despised because He appeared as man, He would have gone out if He had wished to ostentate His hidden majesty. But because He manifested infirmity, He hid power; in that He remained unknown to His persecutors, He went out to them not at all. Who nevertheless goes out to the elect, because He opens the sweetness of His divinity to those seeking it. Whence it is said

to Him by the prophet: "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people, to save Thy Christs" (Hab. 3:13). It follows:

CHAPTER XVII

[Vet. XVIII, Rec. XIII].

VERSE 35.---Who would grant me a helper, that the Almighty may hear my desire?

42. Let no one rely on his own merits. Christ as Helper and Mediator is to be sought. The holy man, after he has related so many sublime deeds of his virtues, knowing that he cannot arrive at the highest things by his own merits, seeks a helper. And whom forsooth does he contemplate but the only-begotten Son of God, who helped human nature laboring in this mortality when He took it upon Him? For He helped man by being made man, so that because the way of returning was not open to pure man to God, the way of returning might be made through the Man-God. For we were far distant from the just and immortal, we mortals and unjust. But between the immortal and just and us mortals and unjust appeared the Mediator of God and men, mortal and just, who should both have death with men and justice with God, so that because through our lowest things we were far distant from the highest, in Himself alone He might join the lowest with the highest, and from that the way of returning to God might be made for us, whereby He coupled our lowest things to His highest. This Mediator, therefore, blessed Job, speaking

through the signification of the whole Church, requires, who when he had said: "Who would grant me a helper," aptly subjoined: "That the Almighty may hear my desire." For he knew that human prayers could not be heard unto the rest of eternal liberation except through their Advocate. Concerning whom it is said by John the apostle: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:1-2). Concerning whom the apostle Paul says: "Christ Jesus, who died for us, yea, who also rose again, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us" (Rom. 8:34). For for the only-begotten Son to intercede for man is to show Himself as man before the co-eternal Father, and for Him to have prayed for human nature is to have taken that same nature into the height of His divinity. The Lord, therefore, intercedes for us, not by voice, but by commiseration, because what He would not have to be damned in the elect, He liberated by taking. A helper therefore is sought that the desire may be heard, because unless the intercession of the Mediator should intervene for us, from the ear of God doubtless the voices of our prayers would be silent.

43. God hears not words but the desires of the heart. It is also to be noted that it is in no wise said "prayers," but "that the Almighty may hear my desire." For true petition is not in the voices of the mouth, but in the thoughts of the heart. For our words do not make more powerful voices before

the most secret ears of God, but our desires. For if we ask for eternal life with the mouth, and yet do not desire it with the heart, crying out we are silent. But if we desire from the heart, even when we are silent with the mouth, being silent we cry out. Hence it is that in the desert the people make a noise with voices, and Moses is silent from the noise of words; and yet, silent, he is heard by the ear of divine piety, when it is said: "Why criest thou unto me?" (Exod. 14:15). Inwardly, therefore, in the desire is a secret cry, which does not reach to human ears, and yet fills the hearing of the Creator. Hence it is that Hannah, going to the Temple, was indeed silent with her mouth, and yet sent forth so many voices of her desire (1 Sam. 1:13). Hence in the Gospel the Lord says: "Enter into thy chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee" (Matt. 6:6). For he asks in his chamber with the door shut, who, with his mouth silent, pours forth the affection of his mind in the sight of heavenly piety. And the voice is heard in secret when it is silently cried out through holy desires. Whence also it is rightly said by the Psalmist: "The Lord hath heard the desire of the poor; Thine ear hath heard the preparation of their heart" (Ps. 10:17). But whom blessed Job seeks as a helper for him in hearing his desire, he opens by the subjoined words, saying:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Vet. XIX].

IBID.---And let him who judges write a book.

44. Christ, who is Legislator and Judge, is to be sought as Helper. Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Him. For because to a people still fearing the Law was transmitted by a servant, but to loving sons the grace of the Gospel was conferred by the Lord, who coming for our redemption founded a new testament for us, but discussing us concerning the mandate of the same testament, also sometimes comes as Judge, it is not necessary that it should become clear by exposition that he who judges writes the book. For the Truth itself says by Himself: "The Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). He will be then the author of judgment, who now is the founder of the book, that then He may strictly exact what He now mildly commands. For so we see daily that masters flatteringly impose the elements of letters on boys, but these they exact from them with severity; and what they give with mildness, they require with the rod. For the mandates of divine eloquence sound mild now, but they will be felt as harsh in exaction. Mild now is the admonition of Him who calls, but then strict will be the coming justice of the Judge, because it is certain that nothing, even of the least mandate, passes without discussion. Whereby truly it is evident that He who judges wrote the book. Which truly book of the New Testament, because He Himself by Himself the Redeemer of the human race would found in the end, the prophet Ezekiel well denounces, saying: "Behold, six men came from the way of the upper

gate, which looketh toward the North, and every man a slaughter-weapon in his hand. And one man in the midst of them clothed with linen, and a writer's inkhorn by his loins" (Ezek. 9:2). For what else in the six men coming but the six ages of the human race are designated? Who come from the way of the upper gate, because they are evolved from the condition of paradise, as from the entrance of the world, from the superior generations. Which gate looketh toward the North (Aquilo), because forsooth the mind of the human race being open to vices, unless deserting the heat of charity it should affect the torpor of the mind, it would not have gone out into this latitude of mortality. "And every man a slaughter-weapon in his hand," because every generation evolved in each and every age, before the coming of the Redeemer had in its own operation that from which it took the penalty of damnation. "And one man in the midst of them clothed with linen," because our Redeemer, having deigned to have parents also from the sacerdotal tribe according to the flesh, is said to come clothed with linen. Or surely because linen is born from the earth, and not like wool from corruptible flesh, because He took the garment of His body from a virgin mother, and not from the corruption of commixture, He truly came to us clothed with linen. "And a writer's inkhorn by his loins." In the loins is the posterior part of the body. And because the Lord Himself after He died for us, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, then wrote the New Testament through the apostles,

this man had the inkhorn at his loins. For He who founded the scripture of the New Testament after He departed, carried the inkhorn as it were at His back. This inkhorn, therefore, he considers to adhere to the man clothed with linen, who says: "And let him who judges write a book." But why, blessed Job, do you desire the book to be written by Him who is Judge? It follows:

CHAPTER XIX

[Vet. XX, Rec. XIV].

VERSE 36.---That I may carry it on my shoulder, and wrap it about me as a crown.

45. Sacred Scripture is to be carried on the shoulder by operation, that it may be wrapped about as a crown by remuneration. Truly to carry the book on the shoulder is to fulfill Sacred Scripture by working. And it is to be noted how orderly it is described, both that it is first carried on the shoulder, and afterwards wrapped about as a crown, because forsooth the mandates of sacred eloquence, if they are now well carried in work, afterwards exhibit to us a crown of victory in retribution. But why does blessed Job require a book to be written by the Judge, who was not able to arrive at the times of the New Testament? But as it has already been often said, he uses the voices of the elect, and from their signification requires what he foresaw would be profitable for them in all things. For he himself through the Spirit already long since held this book with himself, which he had received through the grace of aspi-

ration, both to know it by living and to announce it by foreseeing.

But among these things it is to be known that when we think of the precepts of the same sacred eloquence, and when we divert the mind from the love of corruptible life, by certain steps of the heart we hasten to the interior things. But no one deserting the lowest things suddenly becomes the highest, because to obtain the merit of perfection, while daily the mind is led on high, to this doubtless we arrive as if by certain steps (gradus) of ascension. Whence here also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XX.

VERSE 37.---By every one of my steps I will pronounce it.

46. There are various steps to perfection. That we may profit towards God, we must fail from ourselves. Concerning these steps of merits truly it is said by the Psalmist: "They shall go from virtue to virtue" (Ps. 84:7). Concerning these again, contemplating the holy Church, he says: "God is known in her steps, while He shall receive her" (Ps. 48:3). For neither, as has been said, is the highest arrived at suddenly, but the mind is led to the height of virtues by increments. Hence truly it is that the same prophet says again: "I was exercised, and my spirit failed for a little while" (Ps. 77:3). What is it, therefore, that he says: "My spirit," but the spirit of man, to wit, the spirit of elation? And because by occult grace we profit towards the love of God by a measure

tempered from above, as much as daily the virtue of the Spirit of God grows in us, so much does our spirit fail. Which spirit of error, because it is not suddenly and thoroughly amputated from us, is well said to have failed for a little while. But then we fully profit in God, when we have thoroughly failed from ourselves. These measures, therefore, of increasing virtues are called "steps" (gradus) by the words of the holy man. For every elect one begins from the earlier tenderness of his rudiment, and afterwards recovers to robust and strong things. Which truly the Truth demonstrates plainly in the Gospel, saying: "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the earth; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring, and grow up, whilst he knoweth not" (Mark 4:26). Whose increments of seed truly announcing, He subjoins: "For the earth of itself bringeth forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear." Whose end of progress also He substitutes, saying: "And when it hath brought forth fruit of itself, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the time of harvest is come." Behold, by the voice of Truth the increments of merits are distinguished by the qualities of the fruits. For He says: "First the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear." Was not Peter even then the "blade" when by the mouth of a maid-servant he was suddenly bent by the breath of one word; already indeed green through devotion, but still tender through infirmity? But he was found "full corn in the ear" when he resisted

the persecuting princes, saying: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). He was found "full corn in the ear" when in the threshing of persecution he bore so many stripes, and yet in no wise was he diminished in the manner of chaff, but remained an entire grain. For little by little in every soul, as I may say, the moisture of internal grace overflows, that the blade may grow into fruit. Let no one therefore despair of the corn concerning any neighbor when he still sees the blade. Truly by the leaves of the blades, which flow down softly hither and thither, the rising grains of the fruits are solidified.

[Vet. XXI.] 47. Diverse degrees of progress expressed by Daniel. --- Well did Daniel the prophet, when the Lord spoke to him, while he studied to insinuate to us the position of his body, mark these increments of merits. For he saith: I heard the voice of his words, and hearing I lay consternated upon my face, and my countenance cleaved to the earth. And behold, a hand touched me, and raised me up upon my knees, and upon the joints of my hands, and said to me: Daniel, thou man of desires, understand the words that I speak to thee, and stand in thy degree; for now am I sent to thee. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood trembling, and he said to me: Fear not (Dan. 10:9). Which position of his body truly, while he heard the words of him speaking within, he would in no wise express to us with such care, if he had known it to be void of mysteries. For in Holy Scripture, of just men not only what they say is prophecy, but also for the

most part what they do. Therefore the holy man, full of internal mysteries, by the position of his body also expresseth the power of the voice; and by this, that first he lay prostrate on the earth, by this, that afterwards he raised himself on the joints of his hands and on his knees, by this, that at the last he stood indeed erect but trembling, in himself he maketh known to us the whole order of our progress. For we hear the words of God lying on the earth, when, placed in sins, joined to earthly pollution, we learn spiritual precepts by the voice of the saints. To which precepts we are raised as it were upon our knees and upon the joints of our hands, because, departing from earthly contagions, we raise the mind as if already from the lowest things. For as he who lieth consternated cleaveth wholly to the earth, so he who is bent on his knees and the joints of his hands, when progress beginneth, is for a great part already suspended from the earth. But at the last, raised indeed by the Lord's voice, but trembling, we assist, when, perfectly raised up from earthly desires, the more fully we know the words of God, the more we fear. For he still as it were lieth on the earth, who neglecteth to be raised to heavenly things through earthly desires. But he is raised as it were upon his knees and the joints of his hands, who, although he riseth from carnal sins to penance, yet still trembleth concerning his salvation.

48. One must come from fear to love and charity. --- But well doth he indicate that he stood trembling, because the examination of internal

subtlety, the more one progresseth toward it, the more it is dreaded. Where aptly is subjoined by the divine voice: Fear not, because when we ourselves recognize more what we have to fear, more is infused into us from God through internal grace what we should love; so that our contempt may for a little while pass into fear, and fear may pass into charity, that because we resist God who seeketh us through contempt, we flee through fear, and contempt and fear being at some time put aside, we may be joined to Him by love alone. For for a little while also we learn his fear, to whose love alone we cleave. Therefore, certain degrees as it were of our progress being set before us, we first place the foot of the mind by fear in the lowest part, and afterwards by charity we raise it to the heights of love, that from that by which each one swelleth, he may be repressed that he may fear, and from that which he already feared, he may be raised up that he may presume. But it is not of great labor to take hold of these degrees of virtues, when one passeth from one to another.

49. The degrees of individual virtues are various. The increments of faith. --- But the matter needs a most subtle disputation, when the mind strives to weigh, in one and the same virtue, by what degrees of its progress it may be raised. For that I may speak of the first elements of virtues, namely, faith and wisdom, each cannot be obtained perfectly, unless we ascend to these by distinct and ordered modes, as by certain degrees. For faith itself, which imbues us to per-

fectly undertake other goods, for the most part in its beginnings both wavers, and is solid; and already is held most certainly, and yet concerning its confidence one still trembles under doubt. For a part of it is first received, that in us afterwards it may be perfectly completed. For if it did not progress by a certain degree in the mind of the believer, the father of the boy to be healed, being required in the Gospel, would not have said: I believe, Lord, help my unbelief (Mark 9:23). Therefore he was still ascending to the faith which he had already perceived, who at one and the same time cried out that he both already believed, and still doubted from unbelief. Hence it is also that it is said to our Redeemer by the disciples: Increase our faith (Luke 17:5), so that what had already been received by the beginning, might come to perfection as it were by the increases of degrees.

50. Wisdom, the mistress of good works, is bestowed by increments. Its diverse steps. Wisdom itself also, which is wont to be the mistress of good works, is bestowed on the panting mind by increments, so that to it doubtless one ascends by steps (gradus) of great moderation. Which the prophet Ezekiel well denounces by a figured narration, who relates concerning that man whom he had seen on a high mountain, saying: "He measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the water up to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the water up to the knees. And he measured a thousand, and brought me through the water up to the loins. And he measured a thousand, a

torrent that I could not pass over: for the deep waters of the torrent had swollen, which cannot be forded" (Ezek. 47:3-4). For what by the number a thousand but the fullness of the conferred gift is signified? The man therefore who appeared measures a thousand cubits, and the prophet is led through the waters up to the ankles, because our Redeemer, when He bestows the fullness of a good beginning on us converted to Him, infuses the first footsteps of our work by the gift of spiritual wisdom. For the water to come up to the ankles is for us now to hold the footsteps of desired rectitude through the perceived wisdom. He who again measures a thousand, and the prophet is led through the water up to the knees, because when the fullness of good work is bestowed, our wisdom is increased even to this, that it may in no wise be bent in perverse acts. Hence truly it is said by Paul: "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight steps for your feet" (Heb. 12:12). Water therefore arrives at the knees when perceived wisdom perfectly binds us to the rectitude of good work. He who again measures a thousand, and the prophet is led through the water up to the loins, because forsooth then the fullness of work grows in us when perceived wisdom has also extinguished all delight of the flesh, as much as is possible. For unless the delight of the flesh were in the loins, the Psalmist would in no wise have said: "Burn my loins and my heart" (Ps. 26:2). Water therefore comes to the loins when the sweetness of wisdom also kills the incentives of the

flesh, so that those fires of delight which could burn the mind may grow cold. He who still measured a thousand, namely the torrent, which the prophet could not pass over, concerning which he also says: "For the deep waters of the torrent had swollen, which cannot be forded." For the perfection of work being perceived, one comes to contemplation (contemplatio). In which contemplation truly while the mind is led on high, being uplifted it sees in God, because it cannot penetrate what it sees, and as it were touches the water of the torrent which it cannot pass over, because it both beholds by speculating what it may please, and yet it cannot perfectly behold this very thing which it pleases. The prophet therefore sometimes arrives at the water which he does not pass over, because when we are led at the last to the contemplation of wisdom, its very immensity, which of itself uplifts man, denies full knowledge to the human mind, so that it may both love this by touching it, and yet in no wise penetrate it by passing over.

51. These things being traversed, one arrives at contemplation. Blessed Job, therefore, because he saw these increments of virtues to be distinctly bestowed on men by a supernal gift, called them steps (gradus), since through them one ascends that he may arrive at obtaining heavenly things. Making mention therefore of the sacred book, that is, of the divine eloquence, he says: "By every one of my steps I will pronounce it," because doubtless he truly ascends to the doctrine of God, who shall have broken forth to

obtain this by the steps of holy operation. And he pronounces the book as if by every one of his steps, who demonstrates that he has perceived its knowledge not through words only, but also through works. Whence it is still added:

VERSE 37.---And as to a prince I will offer it. For all that we offer, we hold in our hands. To offer the book therefore to the Prince coming to judgment is to have held the words of His precepts in action. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI

[Old Ed. XXIII, New Ed. XV].

VERSES 38-40.---If my land cry against me, and with it its furrows weep; if I have eaten its fruits without money, and have afflicted the soul of its tillers; let thistles grow for me instead of wheat, and thorns instead of barley.

52. Concerning the injustice and errors of prelates, the less perfect cry out and do not grieve; but the perfect are silent and mourn. The perfect grieve so much the more over the losses of others as they grieve less over their own.---What is it for the land to cry, for the furrows to weep, and to eat one's own fruits by buying them? To whom is it ever necessary to buy his own? Who heard the land crying? Who saw the furrows weeping? And since the furrows of the earth are always of the earth, why is it that by a distinct pronunciation both the land is said to have cried, and its furrows are denied to have wept with it?

For since a furrow of the earth is nothing else than earth, it does not lack the reason of a great distinction, when he adds: And with it its furrows weep.

In which matter, because the order of history fails, the mystical understanding shows itself to us as if with doors already open. As if it should cry out plainly: Because you know that the reason of the letter has failed, it remains for you to return to me without doubt.

For everyone who either by private right rules a domestic family, or for the common utility is set over faithful peoples, in that he possesses the rights of government over the faithful committed to him, what else does he hold than land to be tilled?

For to this end, by divine dispensation, each one is set over others, that the mind of the subjects, like tilled land, may be made fruitful with the seed of his preaching. But the land cries against its possessor, if either a private house or the holy Church murmurs anything just against him who is set over it.

For the land to cry is for the subjects reasonably to grieve against the injustice of the ruler. Where it is rightly added: And with it its furrows weep.

For the land, even when tilled by no works, for the most part brings forth some food for the use of man, but when plowed it brings forth crops to satiety. And there are some who, though cut by no plow of reading or of exhortation, yet bring

forth some good things, however small, from themselves, as land not yet plowed.

But there are some who, always intent on hearing and retaining by holy preachings and meditations, are cut from their former hardness of mind, as if by a certain plow of the tongue, receive the seeds of exhortation, and return the fruits of good work through the furrows of voluntary affliction.

But it often happens that those who are set over them do some unjust things, and it happens that they harm the subjects whom they ought to have profited.

Which when the rude behold, being moved, they murmur against the ruler, and yet do not greatly grieve through compassion for their neighbors. But when those who are already worn by the plow of reading, and tilled for the fruit of good work, behold the innocent burdened even in the least things, they are straightway turned to lamentations through compassion, because they bewail as their own those things which their neighbors suffer unjustly. For the perfect, since they are always moved by spiritual things, know how to groan over the corporal losses of others as much as they have already been taught not to grieve over their own.

Everyone therefore who is set over others, if he exercises perverse things toward the subjects, the land cries against him, and the furrows weep, because against his injustice the rude peoples indeed break out in voices of murmuring, but the perfect ones afflict themselves in weepings for his

wicked work; and what the unskilful cry out and do not grieve, this the subjects of a more proved life weep for and are silent.

Therefore, for the furrows to mourn with the crying land is for men of a more abundant life to arrive at lamentations through that for which the multitude of the faithful justly complains against the ruler.

Furrows then are both of the earth, and yet are distinguished from the name of earth, because those who in holy Church till their mind by the labor of holy meditation, are so much better than the rest of the faithful, as they return more fruitful crops of works through the received seeds.

And there are some who, being set over holy peoples, follow the stipends of life from ecclesiastical bounty, but do not expend the due ministries of exhortation. Against whom the example of the holy man is rightly added, when it is immediately subjoined by him:

CHAPTER XXII

[New Ed. XVI].

VERSE 39.---If I have eaten its fruits without money.

53. How much they sin, the prelates who eat ecclesiastical goods in silence. How great a solicitude those who are set over them owe to their subjects.---For to eat the fruits of the earth without money is indeed to receive expenses from the Church, but not to provide the price of preaching to the same Church. Of which preaching forsooth

it is said by the voice of the Author: It behooved thee to commit my money to the money-changers, and at my coming I should have received my own with usury (Matt. 25:27). He therefore eats the fruits of the earth without money, who perceives ecclesiastical advantages for the use of the body, but does not expend the ministry of exhortation to the people. What do we shepherds say to these things, who, running before the coming of the strict Judge, indeed undertake the office of the herald, but eat ecclesiastical food in silence? We exact what is due to our body, but we do not expend what we owe to the heart of our subjects. Behold the holy man, bound by so many pledges in this world, was free for the study of preaching among innumerable occupations. Who never ate the fruits of the earth without money, because forsooth he returned to his subjects the word of good admonition, from whom he received the fruits of corporeal service. For this every one who is set over the people owes to Almighty God, this he who is over many, this he who is over few, that he so exact due ministries from his subjects, as that he himself also carefully attend to what of admonition he always owes. For all we who, under the dispensation of the Creator, are joined to one another in a vicarious ministry under the one and true Lord, what are we but servants to one another? When therefore he who is subject serves for obedience, it remains without doubt that he who is set over serves for the word. When he who is subject complies with commands, it behooves him who is set over to expend the care

of solicitude and of piety. And so it comes to pass that while we now strive studiously to serve one another through charity, we may at length with the true Lord rule in common exultation. [Old Ed. XXIV.] But there are some who, in that they exhibit the office of preaching, envy others the good they have, and therefore they do not truly have it already. To whom it is rightly said by James: But if you have bitter zeal among you, and there be contentions in your hearts, this is not wisdom descending from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish (James 3:14). Whence here also when it was said: If I have eaten its fruits without money, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER XXIII.

IBID.---And have afflicted the soul of its tillers.

54. The ruler of the churches should not envy those cooperating with him in preaching.---For the tillers of this land are those who, placed in a lower station, by what zeal they can, by what work they are able, cooperate in the grace of preaching for the instruction of the holy Church. Forsooth, not to afflict these tillers of this land is not to envy their labors, lest the ruler of the Church, while he claims for himself alone the right of preaching, should also contradict others preaching rightly, envy biting him. For the pious mind of shepherds, because it seeks not its own glory but the Author's, wishes that what it does be helped by all. For the faithful preacher desires, if it could be done, that the mouths of all should sound the truth which he alone is not sufficient

to speak. Whence, when Joshua wished to resist the two remaining in the camp and prophesying, it is rightly said by Moses: Why art thou envious for my sake? Who would grant that all the people might prophesy, and that the Lord would give them His spirit? (Num. 11:29). For he wished all to prophesy, who did not envy others the good which he had. Because therefore blessed Job introduced all these things in suspense, and if he did them not at all, he binds himself with the sentence of malediction, there follows:

CHAPTER XXIV

[New Ed. XVII].

VERSE 40.---Let thistles grow for me instead of wheat, and thorns instead of barley.

55. For prelates using their authority badly, thistles grow instead of wheat, and thorns instead of barley.---As if he should say plainly: If I have done anything unjust toward my subjects, if I have exacted what was due, and have not myself expended what I owed, if I have envied others the exercise of good work, instead of the good things which refresh for eternity, let the evil things which prick be returned to me in judgment. For instead of wheat the thistle grows, and instead of barley the thorn, when in the last retribution, from which the reward of labor is sought, the pricking of grief is found. And it is to be noted that as barley differs from wheat, although both refresh, so the thorn from the thistle, although both are what prick, because the thistle is softer,

and the thorn is always harder for pricking. He says therefore: Let thistles grow for me instead of wheat, and thorns instead of barley.---As if he should say openly: I know indeed that I have done both great and small good things, but if it is not so, let small evils answer me for great goods, and let greater evils answer me for small goods. Although this can be understood also in another way. For in wheat is figured spiritual work, which refreshes the mind, but in barley the dispensation of earthly things. In which often while we are compelled to serve the weak and carnal, we prepare as it were their own food for the beasts of burden, and the very use of our works has as it were, after the manner of barley, something of the admixture of chaff. And it often happens that the ruler who is set over them, while he exercises unjust things against the subjects, while he refreshes the good with no flattery, while, what is more grievous, he afflicts through envy any who work well, yet sometimes does some good things, as if he were sowing wheat; and sometimes mixes himself in dispensing earthly things, not with the study of avarice, but for the utility of the carnal, and so expects the fruit of the same labor as it were a harvest of barley. But the subjects, because they are burdened in the greatest things, cannot rejoice in his smallest goods, because neither does that work please before God which the injustice of another work pollutes, nor is the very dispensation of earthly things believed to be undertaken for the utility of the subjects, when he who is set over them is seen to pant through

avarice. Whence it comes to pass that to those very few good things which they consider to be done among many evils, they return not praises, but groans; and the weak ones murmur, while they weigh that what they see is not of a pure work. He says therefore: If my land cry against me, and with it its furrows weep; if I have eaten its fruits without money, and have afflicted the soul of its tillers; let thistles grow for me instead of wheat, and thorns instead of barley. As if he should say plainly: If I have not carefully done the great things which I owed, let me receive the prickings of murmuring from the subjects, even concerning the good which I have done. If I have neglected to exhibit what may foster them, let their tongue justly pricking me break forth into complaint.

56. Let prelates beware of providing bad examples, and subjects of rash judgments.---In which matter it is always to be weighed with solicitous consideration, lest either those who are set over provide examples of bad work to the subjects, and extinguish their life by the sword of their own wickedness; or those who are subject to the government of another, easily dare to judge the deeds of the rulers, and through this, that they murmur concerning those who are set over them, they contradict not a human, but the divine order which disposes all things. For to those it is said: My sheep were eating the things that had been trodden down by your feet, and they drank what your feet had troubled (Ezek. 34:19). For the sheep drink what is troubled by

the feet when the subjects seek for an example of living those things which any prelates pervert by a wicked work. But on the other hand they hear from the prelates: For what are we? Your murmuring is not against us, but against the Lord (Exod. 16:8). For he who murmurs against the power placed over him, it is clear that he reproves Him who gave that same power to man. At length, by God's bounty, we have digested the sentences of blessed Job, full of mystical virtue, in which he answered against the words of his friends; now it remains that we come to the words of Elihu, which are to be weighed with so much the more grievous circumspection, as they are brought forth with a more fervent spirit through the boldness of youth.

FIFTH PART, CONTAINING SIX BOOKS.

BOOK TWENTY-THREE.

Chapters 32 and 33 up to verse 22 are explained, where, Job being silent, Elihu the younger sets forth many right and sound things, but with an intention not right and sound.

For at one and the same time he opposed prudence to the opposing words, and life to the things.

CHAPTER I.

By what counsel of God, or in what ways Job was proved.---The preface of this work I repeat as often as is necessary, as often as I cut it off by the pausing of my speech in the distinction of the volumes, so that when the beginning of reading is taken up, the very cause of the reading may first be renewed to the memory, and the edifice of doctrine may rise so much the more robustly, as the foundation is more studiously placed in the mind from the considered origin of the cause.

Blessed Job, known to God alone and to himself, in order to be brought to our notice in tranquility was touched with a scourge, so that he might spread the odor of his strengths so much

the wider, as after the manner of spices he might fragrance better from burning.

He knew how to rule his subjects piously in good things, and to guard himself strictly from evil things. He knew how to use well the things he had, but we did not know if he would remain patient when they were taken away. He knew how to pay daily sacrifices to God for his healthy children, but it was uncertain if he would immolate a sacrifice of thanks to Him even when bereaved. Lest therefore health should cover any vice, it was worthy that grief should open this.

License therefore was given to the crafty enemy against the holy man. Who while he desires to destroy his good things known to many, also showed the good of patience which was hidden; and him whom he believed he was narrowing by persecuting, he enlarged by scourges and set forth as an example.

Nor did he exercise the license which he received without a heavy art. For he burned the flocks, extinguished the families, overwhelmed the heirs, struck the health of the body, and to hurl the dart of a more grievous temptation, he preserved the tongue of the wife (Job 1, 2, 9, etc.), so that he might both lay low the strong and solid breast of the holy man with grief through the losses of things, and pierce it with malediction through the words of his spouse.

But as many wounds as he ragingly inflicted, so many victories did he unknowingly minister to the holy man. For the faithful servant of God, caught at one and the same time between

wounds and words, both bore the grieving flesh with equanimity, and wisely rebuked the foolish spouse.

The old enemy therefore, because he grieved that he was conquered in domestic things, straightway sought exterior ones. For he moved his friends from their several places, as if for the exercise of charity, and opened their mouths under the appearance of consolation; but through these he hurled the darts of rebuke, which might fix themselves the more hardly in the heart of him listening securely, as they might wound unexpectedly amid the darkness of shown and not preserved charity.

After these also even Elihu the younger is excited to contumelies, so that at least the disdained levity of age might perturb the tranquility of such great gentleness.

But against so many machines of the old enemy stood invincible constancy, stood unbent equanimity.

Let no one therefore estimate that the holy man, although it be openly written of him after the scourges: In all these things Job sinned not with his lips (Ibid. 2:10), at least afterwards in the contention of his friends failed in his words. For Satan sought his temptation; but God, who had praised him, took the intention of his contest in Himself. Whoever therefore complains that blessed Job failed in his speeches, what else does he confess than that God, who stood for him, has lost?

2. The Ancient Fathers similar to fruitful trees. Their fruit was to signify Christ, and the Church.

But because the Ancient Fathers were similar to fruitful trees, they are not only beautiful through their appearance, but also useful through their abundance, thus their life is to be so weighed, that while we wonder what is the greenness in the history, we may also find how great is the abundance in the allegory; so that while that which fragrances in the leaves is pleasant, we may also know how sweet is that which tastes in the fruits.

For no one has had the grace of heavenly adoption, except he who received it through the knowledge of the Only-begotten. It is therefore worthy that He should shine forth in their life and tongue, who illustrates them that they may merit to shine.

For when a light is kindled in the darkness of a lamp, first that same lamp is seen, which makes the rest to be seen. Whence it is necessary that if we truly intend to discern illuminated things, we study to open the eyes of the mind to the very light which illuminates.

Which also in the same speeches of blessed Job, even when the shadows of allegories are removed, as if the darkness of deep night were pressed down, flashes forth after the manner of a passing lightning, when it is said: I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in my flesh I shall see God (Job 19:25).

This light, forsooth, in the night of history, Paul had found, when he said: All were baptized

in Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10:2-4).

If therefore the Rock held the likeness of the Redeemer, why should not blessed Job insinuate His figure, who signified Him whom he brought forth with his voice even by suffering? Whence also Job is not undeservedly said to be "grieving" (dolens), because he expresses in himself the image of Him concerning whom it was announced long before through Isaiah, that He Himself hath borne our griefs (Isa. 53:4).

It is to be known also that our Redeemer exhibited Himself as one person with the holy Church, which He assumed. For of Him it is said: Who is the head, Christ (Eph. 4:15). And again of His Church it is written: And the body of Christ, which is the Church (Col. 1:24).

Blessed Job therefore, who held the type of the Mediator so much the more truly as he prophesied His passion, not only by speaking but also by suffering, when in his sayings and deeds he leans upon the expression of the Redeemer, is sometimes suddenly derived to the signification of the body, so that what we believe to be Christ and the Church as one person, we may see signified also by the acts of one person.

3. Job's wife, the carnal ones of the Church; the friends, shadow forth heretics.

But his wife, who provokes him to curse, what else does she signify but the depravity of the

carnal? Who, placed within the holy Church with uncorrected morals, press the life of the faithful the more hardly as they are the more near; because while they cannot be avoided by the faithful as if they were faithful, they are tolerated the more heavily as they are more interior.

[Old Ed. II.] But his friends, who are brought in as if while they give counsel, express the figure of heretics, who under the appearance of giving counsel do the business of seducing. Whence also while they speak words for the Lord to blessed Job, they are reproved by the Lord, because forsooth all heretics while they strive to defend God, offend Him.

Whence it is aptly said to them also by the same holy man: I desire to dispute with God, first showing you to be fabricators of a lie, and cultivators of perverse dogmas (Job 13:3-4).

It is constant therefore that they bear the type of heretics, whom the holy man rebukes for serving the cultivation of perverse dogmas.

Because therefore Job is interpreted "grieving" (dolens), by which grief forsooth either the passion of the Mediator or the labor of holy Church is expressed, which is crucified by the manifold fatigue of this present life, his friends also indicate the merit of their action from the vocabulary of their name.

For Eliphaz is said in the Latin tongue, "contempt of God." And what else do heretics do, but that while they feel false things concerning God, they contemn Him by being proud?

Bildad is interpreted "oldness alone." But well are all heretics named "oldness alone" in those things which they speak concerning the Lord, while not with a right intention, but with an appetite for temporal glory they desire to be seen as preachers.

For they are excited to speak, not by the zeal of the new man, but by the depravity of the old life.

Zophar also in Latin speech is called "dissipation of the watch-tower," or "dissipating speculation." For the minds of the faithful raise themselves to contemplate heavenly things; but while heretics desire to pervert those contemplating right things by their words, they endeavor to dissipate the watch-tower.

In the three names of Job's friends, therefore, three cases of perdition in heretics are expressed. For unless they contemned God, they would in no wise feel perverse things concerning Him; and unless they contracted oldness, they would not err in the understanding of the new life; and unless they destroyed the speculation of the good, the heavenly judgments would in no wise reprove them with so strict an examination for the fault of their words. By contemning God, therefore, they retain themselves in oldness; but by retaining themselves in oldness, they harm the speculation of the upright by their perverse speeches.

4. Elihu, the figure of faithful but proud doctors.

After these also Elihu the younger is subjoined in the reproach of blessed Job, from whose person

forsooth the species of certain faithful but yet arrogant doctors is designated.

Whose words we do not easily understand, unless we weigh them from the subsequent divine correction. For the Lord says of him: Who is this involving sentences in unskilful words? (Job 38:2).

But when He says "sentences," but does not straightway add what kind, He wishes them without doubt to be understood as good. For when "sentences" are named, unless they are also said to be bad, they cannot be felt to be bad. For we always take "sentences" in a good sense which are placed without the addition of reprobation, as it is written: The sluggard seems wiser to himself than seven men speaking sentences (Prov. 26:16).

But that which is said, that his sentences are involved in unskilful words, this is shown most greatly, because they are brought forth by him with the fatuity of elation. For there is great unskilfulness in him, not to know how to speak humbly what he speaks, and to mix words of elation with the senses of truth.

5. Sometimes evil things are said well, and good things badly.

For all that is said can be distinguished by a fourfold quality: if either evil things are said badly, or good things well, or evil things well, or good things badly.

For an evil thing is said badly when a perverse thing is persuaded, as it is written: Bless God, and die (Job 2:9).

A good thing is said well when right things are preached rightly, as John says: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 3:2).

An evil thing is said well when a vice is expressed through the mouth of the speaker for this purpose, that it may be reproved, as Paul says: Their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature (Rom. 1:26).

In which place he added also the execrable deeds of men; but he related dishonest things honestly, so that by relating dishonest things he might recall many to the form of honesty.

But a good thing is said badly when something right is brought forth not with a right study, as the Pharisees are related to have said to the blind man who was illuminated: Be thou his disciple (John 9:28).

Which they said indeed with the study of malediction, not with the desire of prayer.

Or as Caiaphas says: It is expedient that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation perish not (John 11:50).

A good thing indeed he spoke, but not well, because while he desired the cruelty of death, he prophesied the grace of redemption.

In this way therefore Elihu also is rebuked for saying good things not well, because in those things which he speaks truly he is arrogantly puffed up. Who designates in this the species of the arrogant, in that he raises himself through the sense of rectitude into words of swelling.

6. In the reconciliation of Job's friends, the conversion of heretics is to be recognized. Their

sacrifices do not please God, but those which are offered by the Church.

But what is it that the divine voice commands the three friends to be reconciled through seven sacrifices, but leaves Elihu under the rebuke of only one sentence, unless it be that sometimes heretics, being infused with the largess of divine grace, return to the unity of holy Church?

Which is well signified by that same reconciliation of the friends, for whom nevertheless blessed Job is commanded to pray, because forsooth the sacrifices of heretics cannot be acceptable to God, unless they be offered by the hands of the universal Church for them, so that they may find the remedy of salvation through her merits, whom they were striking by impugning her with the darts of their words.

Whence also seven sacrifices are mentioned to have been offered for them, because while confessing they receive the Spirit of sevenfold grace, they are expiated as it were by seven oblations.

Hence in the Apocalypse of John, by the number seven of the churches, the universal Church is designated (Apoc. 1:11).

Hence through Solomon it is said of wisdom: Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out seven pillars (Prov. 9:1).

By that same number of sacrifices therefore the reconciled heretics express what they were before, who are not joined to the perfection of sevenfold grace except by returning.

But well are they described as having offered bulls and rams for themselves. For in the bull the

neck of pride is designated, but in the ram the leadership of the following flocks.

What therefore is it to slay bulls and rams for them, but to kill their proud leadership, so that they may feel humble things of themselves, and no longer seduce the hearts of the innocent after them?

For with a swelling neck they had recoiled from the universality of the Church, and they drew after them the weak peoples like following flocks. Let them come therefore to blessed Job, that is, let them return to the Church, and let them offer bulls and rams to be slain in a sevenfold sacrifice, who, that they may be joined to the universal Church, humility intervening, should kill whatever they previously tasted as swollen from proud leadership.

[Vet. IV.] 7. Those who, by preaching rightly, serve vain glory, are not reconciled, but are very often reproved. Elihu indeed, by whom the lovers of vain glory are signified, who are established within the holy Church, who despise bringing forth those things which they feel rightly with humility, is by no means commanded to be reconciled through a sacrifice; because those who are indeed arrogant, but nevertheless faithful, for the reason that they are already within, cannot be recalled through the seven sacrifices. Yet the divine sentence rebukes them under the species of Elihu, and reproves in them not the sentences of truth, but the mind and words of elation. Which rebuke, forsooth, what else does it signify, but that the rebuke of heavenly strictness either cor-

rects those placed within through a scourge, or leaves them to themselves through a just examination? For such persons within the holy Church indeed preach right things, but nevertheless, by the judgment of God, deserve to hear adverse things, because through those good things which they bring forth as not their own, they seek not the glory of their Author, but their own praise. Whence this also is to be carefully weighed, which is said by the divine voice concerning Elihu: Who is this (Job 38:2)? For such an interrogation is the first reproach. For we do not say Who is this, except concerning him indeed whom we do not know. But for God not to know is to reprove; whence to some whom He reproves He will say at the end: I know you not whence you are, depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity (Luke 13:27). What is it therefore to inquire concerning this arrogant man: Who is this? but to say openly: I know not the arrogant, that is, I do not approve their life in the power of My wisdom, because while they are puffed up by human praises, they become empty of the true glory of eternal retribution. Whose sentences while He by no means rejects, but nevertheless rebukes him himself who brought them forth, He as it were openly insinuates, saying: I know what he says, but I am ignorant who says it, because I approve the things truly brought forth, but I do not recognize him who is extolled concerning the good things which he brings forth.

8. The excellent image of the best preacher. Good things are hardly known without danger.

He who is wise, let him study to be wise, not to seem so. But that we may show more openly in the boasting of elation how basely Elihu flows away, we ought first to show the form of a good preacher, so that from the state of this rectitude the crookedness of the bowing down may be clearly shown how perverse it is. Every spiritual preacher of the holy universal Church in all things which he says inspects himself with skillful care, lest in that which he preaches right things he should extol himself with the vice of elation; lest his life should disagree with his tongue; lest he should lose the peace which he announces in the Church in himself, while he says well and lives badly. But he studies with all his might against the slanderous rumors of adversaries both to defend by speaking what he lives, and to adorn by living what he says. Nor in all these things does he seek his own, but the glory of his Author; and all the grace of wisdom, which he received that he might speak, he esteems himself to have received not by his own merits, but by the intercessions of those for whom he speaks. And so while he casts himself down below, he is above, because forsooth it profits more for his reward, that he returns the good things which he is able to exercise to the merits of others. He judges himself unworthy of all, even when he lives more worthily than all. For he knows that good things which become known to men can hardly be without danger. And although he feels himself to be wise, he would nevertheless wish to be wise and not to seem

so, and he greatly fears for himself that which is betrayed by speaking; and if it be permitted, he desires to be silent, while he sees that silence is safer for many, and he thinks those to be more happy whom an inferior place hides within the holy Church through silence; and yet that he may defend the holy Church, because he is impelled to speak by the force of charity, he indeed takes up the office of speaking from necessity, but from great desire he seeks the leisure of silence. This he keeps by vow, that he exercises by ministry. But the arrogant are ignorant of this formula of speaking. For neither do they speak because causes happen, but they desire causes to happen that they may speak. Of whom now Elihu signifies the species, who in his speaking exalts himself with the immense vice of elation. Therefore, the words of blessed Job being finished, there is added:

CHAPTER XXXII, VERSE 1.---So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he seemed just to himself.

[Vet. V, Rec. II.] That which is said of him: Because he seemed just to himself, the writer of this sacred history referred to the judgment of the friends, but did not reprove blessed Job for the swelling of elation. There follows:

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 2.---Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram.

9. By Elihu, and his father and kindred, the proud who are tenacious of the true faith are signified. Well do these very names, either of himself, or of his parent, or of the place, or of the kindred, express the mark of his own action. For Elihu interpreted sounds as "That is my God," or "God the Lord." By whom, as we said above (Num. 7), the right faith of the arrogant placed within the Church is designated. Whence also this very name of his is suitable to them. For although they do not live according to the Lord's precepts, they nevertheless recognize God to be the Lord; because in the truth of the flesh they also understand the form of the Deity, as is said by the Prophet: Know that the Lord He is God (Psalm 99:3). But Barachel is said by interpretation to be "the blessing of God," and Buzite "contemptible." Which both agree well with those who preach arrogantly, because in the eloquence of preaching they indeed perceive the blessing of divine grace, but in their elated manners they show it to be contemptible. For those very good things which they have received, they make despicable in that they by no means have known how to use them well. But it is also aptly said to be of the kindred of Ram. For Ram is interpreted as "high." For high is the people of the faithful, who despise the lowest and abject things of this life. High are they who have known how to say with Paul: Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). Elihu therefore is said to be of the kindred of Ram, because every arrogant preacher placed within the universal Church is joined to the holy peoples

by the truth of faith, although he is disjoined from their life by the perversity of elation. There follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSES 2, 3.---Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu against Job, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

10. These at the same time press heretics by preaching rightly, and the Church by being proud. It is to be skillfully observed that he reproves blessed Job because he said he was just before God; but he rebukes his friends because, condemning him, they did not give a rational response against him. For by these indications it is clearly gathered that through him the species of the lovers of vain glory is designated. For he rebukes Job for presumed justice, but his friends for a foolish response. For all the followers of vain glory, while they prefer themselves to all, reprove some for fatuous senses, but others for unworthy merits; that is, they judge some to know nothing, others not to live well. And although they justly reprove all those placed outside the Church for feeling perverse things, nevertheless they also despise those who are within for the contempt of their life, and they are proud against the former from the magnitude of feeling rightly, but against the latter as if from the merit of living well. [Vet.

VI.] Well indeed is Elihu related to rebuke now blessed Job, now his friends, because the lovers of vain glory, sometimes established within the holy Church, both press adversaries while they preach true things, and contradict the manners of the same holy Church while they glory in that same preaching. They press adversaries by the power of what is said, they press the holy Church by the quality of speaking. They impugn the former by the preaching of truth, the latter by the vice of elation. There follows:

VERSES 4, 5.---Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he. When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.

11. Only after the contests of heretics did acute senses and a more perplexed investigation of words come forth. Although the holy Church is without doubt older than her adversaries, because they went out from her, not she from them, as is said of them by John: They went out from us, but they were not of us (1 John 2:19); yet Elihu is rightly described as having been younger than those same adversaries, because forsooth after the wars of heretics arose, the arrogant, puffed up with the pride of knowledge, began to be within the holy Church. For when the more grave contests of enemies came forth, then forsooth more subtle darts of the senses were required, then the obstacles of arguments, then the more perplexed investigation of words. Which things men fervent in genius, while they find them

congruously, often swell arrogantly; and, which mostly happens through the vice of elation, they are prostrated by those same acute senses with which they strike the enemy, while in those things which they feel rightly of God, they seek not God's glory, but their own. Whence Elihu also speaks many things rightly, and yet is rebuked by the divine voice, as if he had said perverse things. But when it is said that Elihu waited for Job speaking, because they were elder than he who spoke, he is openly shown to have reserved honor for blessed Job not for his own sake, but for the reverence of the friends, because forsooth the arrogant placed within despise that same holy church which they defend; and it mostly happens that they venerate the geniuses of those who feel badly more than the simple life of the innocent, they reserve more for the tongues of those speaking outside than for the merits of those placed within, although they meet both from a different side, since they disagree both from the former by rectitude of senses, and from the holy Church by perversity of manners. There follows:

CHAPTER V.

VERSES 6, 7.---And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

12. To be silent is often to be wise. All these things, which are brought forth by him through

the swelling of pride, are rather to be touched upon in passing than to be explained more attentively. For those things which lack the solidity of gravity do not need the subtlety of exposition. But I think it should only be briefly intimated that Elihu, as long as he was silent out of respect for his age, was wiser; but when he despises the multitude of years in others, preferring himself, he shows how childishly he dotes. For against his opinion both the more prolonged age speaks, and through the multitude of years wisdom is taught, because even if longevity does not provide sense, yet it exercises it vehemently by use. There follows:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. IV].

VERSE 8.---But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

13. Four species of swelling in the arrogant: first, to believe that one has good from oneself; second, that it is given to one for one's own merits. Grace is not given for merits. Third, to falsely attribute some good to oneself; fourth, to claim it for oneself alone, despising others. He would say these things rightly if he did not arrogate the same understanding to himself above others. For it is not a perverse condemnation to glory privately in that good which is given commonly, to know whence he received the good, and not to know how he ought to use the good which he

received. [Vet. VII.] For there are four species by which all the swelling of the arrogant is demonstrated: when they either estimate that they have good from themselves; or if they believe it is given to them from above, they think they have received this for their own merits; or certainly when they boast that they have what they do not have; or, despising others, they desire to seem to have uniquely what they have. For he was boasting that he had good from himself, to whom it is said by the Apostle: For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? (1 Cor. 4:7). Again, lest we should believe that the good of grace is given to us for our preceding merits, the same Apostle admonishes, saying: By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephes. 2:8). Who also says of himself: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy (1 Tim. 1:13). By which words he openly declares that grace is not bestowed for merits, while he showed from himself both what he deserved for malice, and what he received for benevolence. Again, some boast that they have what they do not have, as is said by the divine voice through the prophet concerning Moab: I know his pride, and his arrogance; and that his power is not according to it (Jer. 48:29). And as is said to the angel of the Church of Laodicea: Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched,

and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked (Rev. 3:17). Again, some, despising others, desire to seem to have uniquely the good which they have. Whence also the Pharisee for this reason descended from the temple without justification (Luke 18:14), because attributing the merits of good works to himself as it were uniquely, he preferred himself to the praying publican. The holy apostles also are recalled from this vice of elation, who returning from preaching, when they said elatedly: Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name (Luke 10:17), lest they should rejoice in this uniqueness of miracles, the Lord answered them there, saying: I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (Ibid., 18). For he uniquely elated had said: I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will be like the most High (Isa. 14:13). And marvelously the Lord, so that He might press down elation in the hearts of the disciples, presently referred to the judgment of ruin, which the master of elation himself received, so that in the author of pride they might learn what to fear from the vice of elation. In this fourth species of arrogance, therefore, the human mind frequently falls, so that it glories to have uniquely that which it has. In which nevertheless it approaches more closely to the diabolical likeness, because whosoever rejoices to have good uniquely, whosoever seeks to seem more sublime than others, he forsooth imitates him, who having despised the good of the society of angels, placing his seat to

the north, and superbly desiring the likeness of the Most High, through an iniquid desire tried to break out as it were into a certain peak of uniqueness. Elihu therefore, although he confesses that wisdom is given by the Lord, nevertheless falls into this species of elation, so that he rejoices that he is wiser than others, and vainly extols himself as if for a unique good. Which he indicates by the following words, saying:

CHAPTER VII.

VERSES 9-12.---Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will show mine opinion. Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say. Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.

14. Some are superbly silent; and the aged hear, not that they may learn, but that they may judge. As much as pertains to the intention of the letter, Elihu speaking indicates how superbly he was silent. For when he says: For I waited for your words, and I thought you were saying something, he openly declares that he was silent with the study of one judging rather than with the desire of one learning the words of the elders. Although these things better designate the life of the arrogant, who sometimes placed within the holy Church, when they behold the adversaries of the same holy Church, are wont to weigh not the years of the times in them, but the intention

of the words. For however much the heretics are older than the same arrogant, they boldly compress them, in whose words they reprove perverse dogmas. There follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Vet. VIII].

VERSES 12, 13.---Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man. Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

15. God in this life sometimes grants solaces, with no detriment to eternal life. Often heretics, through the fact that they are wont to be despicable also to men, when they behold the holy Church to be venerated by almost all nations, contend to lacerate her opinion with what detractions they can, saying: For this reason all temporal things are supplied to her, because the rewards of eternal gifts are withdrawn from her. Whose voices Elihu meets, saying: Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man. As if the arrogant within the holy Church, yet nevertheless faithful, should say against heretics: Because you see the holy Church to flourish temporally in the honor of men, do not believe her to be cast out by the Lord. For her Redeemer knows how to bestow solaces upon the one coming in this journey, and to reserve heavenly rewards for the one reaching the eternal country. In vain therefore do you say that God and not man has cast her out, when you

see her venerated by almost all men, because the aid of earthly glory is so bestowed upon her, that through this she is even more manifoldly raised up to heavenly things. There follows:

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 14.---Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

16. The proud, when they are corrected, do not hear, or they dissemble. What is it that he says: He hath spoken nothing to me? Does the holy Church, when she beholds the arrogant within herself, through just preachers, omit to instruct and to rebuke? She exercises this, and daily she does not cease to exercise it. But let Elihu, who had heard blessed Job speaking publicly, say: He hath spoken nothing to me, because forsooth all the arrogant hear indeed the voices of the holy Church, but they dissemble that they are said to them, when they despise amending the vice of elation. Nor do they estimate that they are rebuked for pride, because they think themselves to be humble, who even despise being rebuked, while they judge themselves to be wiser even than those very persons rebuking them. But as to what he says: And I will not answer him according to your speeches, he well says that he will not answer blessed Job according to their speeches. For the arrogant placed within the holy Church answer against her, but not as heretics established outside. For neither do they contradict her by preaching perverse things, but by living

perversely, because they do not, like heretics, feel unworthy things concerning God, but they suspect more than is necessary of themselves, worthy things. There follows:

VERSE 15.---They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.

[Vet. IX.] Well are the friends of Job related to have been amazed at the words of Elihu, because sometimes the arrogant defenders of the Church, although they do not hold the order of speaking, nevertheless perturb the adversaries by the very power of their words. There follows:

Elihu therefore, because while he seeks glory without he has no oil within the vessel, says: I will answer also my part, and I will show my knowledge.

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 16.---When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more;)

17. Those who err while they rebuke, desire only to display their own wisdom, not to profit others. It is otherwise with good preachers. It is wont to be the end of the speaking of the wise, that they say to that point where they impose silence upon adversaries. For they do not desire to show themselves, but to restrain those who teach perverse things. But after it is said of the friends of Job: They were amazed, nor answered more, they took away the speech from themselves; Elihu subjoining, says: I have waited, and they have not spoken; they stood, nor answered

more. And they being already silent, he still multiplies words, because forsooth an arrogant man, and one representing in himself the form of the arrogant, hastens not to overcome the words of adversaries, but to display his own wisdom. Whence also there follows: VERSE 17.---I said, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion.

For every arrogant man estimates this to be his part, if he does not so much have knowledge as display it, because forsooth all the elated do not desire to have knowledge, but to display it.

Against which it is well said through Moses: Every vessel that hath no cover, nor binding over it, shall be unclean (Num. 19:15). The cover of the lid, or the binding, is the censure of discipline, by which whosoever is not pressed down, is reproved as it were an unclean and polluted vessel. Or was Elihu not a vessel without a cover, who had estimated this to be his part, if he displayed the knowledge which he had? For as a vessel without a cover, or binding, is polluted, so is he who, open through the study of ostentation, is covered by no veil of silence. But holy preachers repute it as their part, if they themselves indeed rejoice within concerning their wisdom, but without they restrain others from error; nor do they go out from themselves by so speaking, that they place the joy of the mind in the display of eloquent speech, but they meditate the good of knowledge in the secret of the heart, and there they rejoice where they perceive this, not where they are compelled to make it known among so

many snares of temptations, although when they make known the good which they receive, charity intervening, they congratulate from the profit of the hearers, and not from their own display. For the arrogant, when they receive knowledge, estimate that they have received nothing if it happens that they have it hidden. For they place their joy nowhere except in the mouth of men. Whence also the foolish virgins are related not to have taken oil in their vessels (Matt. 25:3), because all the arrogant, when they perhaps contain themselves from some vices, cannot have the good of glory within their consciences. But Paul had taken oil in his own vessel, who said: Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience (2 Cor. 1:12). To carry an empty vessel, therefore, is to seek the judgment of the human mouth outside with an empty heart within. Whence also this very thing, which he suffers within from the fervor of vain glory, he opens by the following words, saying:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. V].

VERSES 18-20.---I am full of words, and the spirit of my belly constrains me. Behold, my belly is as new wine without a vent, which bursts the new bottles. I will speak, and I will take breath a little; I will open my lips, and I will answer.

18. The proud imitate the loftiness of their speech, not the intention of utility.---Sometimes arrogant men, when they see holy preachers

speak great things and be venerated for their speech, imitate the loftiness of their speech and not the utility of the intention; nor do they love this which those seek, but they seek this above all: that they may be shown as illustrious to men. For it often happens that wise men, when they consider that they are not heard, indicate silence to their mouth; but for the most part, while they see that the crimes of the wicked increase while they themselves are silent and not correcting, they sustain a certain force of their spirit, that they may break forth into the speech of open correction. Whence the prophet Jeremiah, when he had indicated silence to himself from preaching, saying: I will not remember him, nor speak any more in his name; immediately added: And there was made in my heart as a burning fire, and shut up in my bones, and I fainted, not being able to bear; for I heard the contumelies of many (Jer. 20:9). For because he saw that he was minimally heard, he sought silence; but when he saw the increasing evils, he did not remain in the same silence. For because he was silent without, from the weariness of speech he bore fire within from the zeal of charity. For the hearts of the just are inflamed when they see the acts of the wicked grow uncorrected, and they believe themselves partakers of their sins, whom they permit to grow in iniquity by being silent. The prophet David, after he had indicated silence to himself, saying: I set a guard to my mouth, while the sinner stood against me; I was dumb, and was humbled, and kept silence from good things (Psal. 38:2), in his

very silence he burned with this zeal of charity, who immediately added: And my sorrow was renewed, my heart grew hot within me, and in my meditation a fire shall burn (Ibid., 3). Within therefore the heart grew hot, because the ardor of love refused to emanate without through the admonition of speech. The fire burned in the meditation of the heart, because the rebuking of the delinquent grew cold from the correction of the mouth. For the zeal of charity tempers itself by increasing with admirable consolation, when it emanates against the works of the wicked through the voice of correction, so that it may not cease to rebuke even what it is not able to correct, lest it adjudicate itself a partaker of the delinquent from the consent of taciturnity.

[Vet. XI.] 19. Some vices lie that they are virtues.---But because often some vices lie that they are virtues, as effusion sometimes wishes to be seen as mercy, and tenacity sometimes as parsimony, and cruelty sometimes as justice, so for the most part the anxiety of vain glory, by no means containing itself within silence, inflames the mind to the impetus of speaking, as if it were the zeal of charity, and the force of the desired display impels to the unrestraint of speech, and as if under the study of counseling, the libido of appearing breaks forth. For it does not care in speaking what it may profit, but what it may appear; nor does it study that it may correct the evil which it sees, but that it may show the good which it feels. Whence Elihu also, extended by the spirit of elation, and not containing himself

within the cloisters of silence, says: I am full of words, and the spirit of my belly constrains me. Behold, my belly is as new wine without a vent, which bursts the new bottles.

20. The inflation of elation sometimes imitates zeal from the breath of the Holy Spirit.--- Which if we ought to understand spiritually, in this place namely he calls the belly the bosom of the heart. For in the new wine the fervor of the Holy Spirit is received, of which the Lord says in the Gospel: They put new wine into new bottles (Matt. 9:17). From which while the apostles were suddenly filled (Acts 2:4), while they spoke in all tongues, it was said by the Jews, who were ignorant, yet nevertheless attesting the truth: These are full of new wine (Ibid., 13). For we do not inconveniently accept the weak bottles as the consciences in humanity itself, or certainly these earthly vessels of the bodies, of which the apostle Paul says: We have this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7). But Elihu, because, as we said above, he is so extended by the inflation of elation, as if he were kindled to speak by the ardor of the Holy Spirit through the grace of charity, compared the spirit of his sense in that which he was silent, as if to new wine without a vent. And he says well: Which bursts the new bottles; because the fervor of the Holy Spirit is hardly contained not only by the old, but even by the new life. New wine therefore bursts the new bottles, because the power of its fervor transcends even spiritual hearts. I will speak, and I will take breath a little; I will open my lips, and I will answer. He says well:

I will take breath, because as it is the labor of the just to see depraved things and not correct; so heavy is the labor of the arrogant, if they do not show what they know. For they can hardly bear the force seething within, if they make known all that they feel a little too late. Whence it is necessary that when a good thing is done, its elation in the heart be first conquered, lest if it should proceed from the root of a miserable intention, it should produce bitter fruits of wickedness.

[Vet. XII, Rec. VI.] 21. Those who are still subject to vices should not presume to rule others.---Those therefore who are still subject to the warfare of vices by no means ought to preside over the teaching of others through the use of preaching (Dist. 44, cap. Non liceat). For hence it is that, according to the voice of divine dispensation, the Levites serve the tabernacle from the twenty-fifth year, but from the fiftieth they become keepers of the vessels. For what is signified by the twenty-fifth year, in which the flower of youth arises, but the very wars against each vice? And what by the fiftieth, in which also the rest of the jubilee is contained, but internal rest, the warfare of the mind being subdued, is expressed? But what is figured by the vessels of the tabernacle, except the souls of the faithful? The Levites therefore serve the tabernacle from the twenty-fifth year, and from the fiftieth they become keepers of the vessels, so that namely those who still tolerate the contests of attacking vices through the consent of delight, may not presume to undertake the care of others; but when they have subdued the wars of tempta-

tions, by which they are already secure in themselves concerning intimate tranquility, they may obtain the guardianship of souls. But who may perfectly subdue these battles of temptations to himself, when Paul says: I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin (Rom. 7:23)? But it is one thing to bear wars strongly, another to be conquered by wars weakly. In the former virtue is exercised, lest it should be lifted up; in the latter it is altogether extinguished, lest it should subsist. He therefore who knows how to bear the temptation of the contest strongly, and is shaken with temptation, presides in the high citadel of rest, because even in himself he sees the contentions of vices to be under himself, to which, broken by no delight, he consents. It follows:

CHAPTER XII.

VERSES 21, 22.---I will not accept the person of man, and I will not equal God to man. For I know not how long I shall subsist, and if after a little my maker should take me away.

22. The time of the present life is short, because it does not remain.---It is a right consideration, that he does not equal God to man for this reason, because he is ignorant how long he may subsist here, or when he may be taken to the judgment of God. And he says well: After a little my maker may take me away, because however long the time of the present life may have been, for that very reason it is short, because it is not

permanent. For it is not worthy that whatever is circumscribed by an end should be judged as lasting. But among these sentences which he brings forth as solid from the truth, he breaks out again into words of elation, saying:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. VII].

CAP. XXXIII, VERSES 1, 2.---Hear therefore, Job, my speeches, and listen to all my words. Behold, I have opened my mouth, let my tongue speak in my jaws.

23. The proud do not preach sound doctrine soundly, because they grow insolent.---Let us consider from what elation it descends, that he admonishes the blessed Job to hear him, that he shows that he has opened his mouth, that he promises that his tongue will speak in his jaws. For the doctrine of the arrogant has this property (Dist. 46, cap. Hoc habet) that they do not know how to bring in humbly what they teach, and they cannot rightly minister the right things which they know. For in their words it is brought forth that when they teach, they seem to themselves as it were to reside in a certain summit of loftiness, and they look upon those whom they teach as placed far below them as if in the lowest part, to whom they do not deign to speak by counseling, but scarcely by dominating. Rightly therefore the Lord says to these through the prophet: But you ruled them with austerity, and with power (Ezek. 34:4). For they rule with

austerity and power, who hasten not to correct their subjects by quietly reasoning, but to bend them harshly by dominating.

[Vet. XIII.] 24. True doctrine flees elation.--- But on the contrary, true doctrine flees this vice of elation so much more vehemently through thought, as it more ardently pursues the master of elation himself with the darts of its words. For it takes care lest it should preach him more by elated manners, whom it pursues with sacred speeches in the heart of the hearers. For humility, which is the mistress of all and the mother of virtues, it endeavors both to tell by speaking and to show by living, that it may speak it before the disciples of truth more by manners than by speeches. Whence Paul, speaking to the Thessalonians, as if forgetful of the summit of his own apostleship, says: We became little ones in the midst of you (1 Thess. 2:7). Whence the apostle Peter, when he said: Always ready for satisfaction to everyone asking you a reason of that hope which is in you (1 Pet. 3:15), asserted that in the science of doctrine itself the quality of teaching ought to be preserved, adding: But with modesty and fear, having a good conscience (Ibid., 16). But this which Paul says to the disciple: Command these things, and teach with all authority (1 Tim. 4:11; Tit. 2:15); persuades not the domination of power, but the authority of life. For that is taught with authority which is first done before it is said. For it subtracts confidence from doctrine, when conscience hinders the tongue. Therefore he did not insinuate the power of elated speech to him,

but the confidence of good action. Whence also it is written of the Lord: For He was teaching as one having power, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 7:29). For singularly and principally He alone spoke from good power, because from evil infirmity He committed nothing. For from the power of divinity He had that which He ministered to us through the innocence of His humanity.

[Vet. XIV, Rec. VIII.] 25. What preachers ought to consider, so that they may flee elation.---For we, because we are weak men, when we speak to men concerning God, ought first to remember what we are, that from our own infirmity we may consider by what order of teaching we may consult for our weak brethren. Let us consider therefore that either we are such as those we correct; or we were such once, even if we are not now by the operation of divine grace, that we may correct so much more temperately with a humble heart, as we more truly recognize ourselves in those whom we emend. But if we are not, nor were, such as they still are whom we care to emend, lest our heart should perhaps grow proud, and fall more miserably from that very innocence, let us recall to our eyes their other good things, whose evils we correct. Which if there are none at all, let us recur to the hidden judgments of God, because as we received this very good which we have by no merits, so grace of supernal virtue can also infuse them, that being excited later they may even be able to prevent those very good things which we received before. For who would believe

that by the merit of apostleship Saul was to precede the stoned Stephen (Acts 7:57), who at his death kept the garments of those stoning him? By these thoughts therefore the heart ought first to be humbled, and then at last the iniquity of the delinquents be rebuked. But Elihu is shown to be ignorant of this mode of speech, as has often been said, who in his speech is inflated with the type of elation as if by the power of a certain authority, saying: Hear therefore, Job, my speeches, and listen to all my words. Behold, I have opened my mouth, let my tongue speak in my jaws.

26. Some only simulate modesty.---But to speak in the jaws is to speak silently, and not to cry out with clamors. By which words he signifies the arrogant placed within the holy Church. For these are said to speak as if in the jaws, when they do not cry out against adversaries living without, but rebuke some within the bosom of the holy Church as if neighbors and placed close by. But often the arrogant show themselves to flee that very arrogance which they hold; and while they so do all things, that they are hidden from none, they tell these things privately to individuals as if secretly: so that they may glory not only concerning the sense of intelligence, but also concerning the very contempt of arrogance before men. Whence it is now said: Let my tongue speak in my jaws. As if it were openly said: What I prudently feel against you, behold I tell silently. But sometimes they break forth into so great elation of impudence, that while others are silent

they themselves are wont to praise what they say. Whence he adds:

CHAPTER XIV.

VERSE 3.---With my simple heart are my words, and my lips shall speak a pure sentence.

27. They falsely glory concerning simplicity.---The praise of simplicity of speech is of great virtue. Which because the arrogant do not have, they more solicitously assert that they have it, that they may be heard more securely. And they announce that they will speak purely, who fear the malice of their own duplicity to be discovered. But often they also mix true things with false, so that their lie may be more quickly believed from that, whence the assertion of truth is recognized to be in them. Because therefore Elihu both showed that he would speak purely, and ran before by calling his words sentences for favor, he now joins that same sentence which he promised, saying:

CHAPTER XV

[Vet. XV, Rec. IX].

VERSE 4.---The Spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty vivified me.

28. Doctrine brought forth inordinately becomes sterile and defiles.---Being about to add true things, he premised elated things; and being about to say that which he rightly knew, he first made known how much he was swollen.

So indeed, so the minds of the arrogant are insane, that even in those things which they feel rightly they are depraved by the tortuosity of their elation. Whence it happens that even their right things by no means instruct the hearers, because indeed they call them through those things which they feel swollenly, not to reverence for themselves, but to contempt. And while words of folly are mixed with prudent sayings, because folly is despised by the hearer, even prudence is not retained. For hence it is said by Moses: The man who sustains a flux of seed shall be unclean (Lev. 15:10). For what is speech, but seed? Which while it is emitted orderly, the mind of the hearer is as it were the womb of the conceiver, impregnated for the offspring of a good work. But if it flows forth importunately, polluting the emitter, it loses the virtue of generating. For if speech were not seed, the Athenians would by no means say of Paul preaching: What does this word-sower want to say to himself (Acts 17:18)? Of whom also Luke says: For he was the leader of the word (Acts 14:11). Seed therefore dedicated to the use of progeny, flowing incompetently, defiles the rest of the members, when speech through which knowledge ought to have been born in the senses of the hearers, if it should proceed inordinately, defiles even what it may have felt rightly. Whence Elihu also defiles even what he can feel rightly, while he is ignorant to whom or what he speaks; and sustains as it were a flux of seed, when he moves a tongue suitable for utility through words of vain speech. But in good order he asserts him-

self both made and animated. He relates himself made through the spirit, and animated through the breath. For Adam being made, it is written: He breathed into his face the breath of life, and man was made into a living soul (Gen. 2:7). But let us hear whether he executes rightly these things which he rightly asserts. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 5.---If you can, answer me and stand against my face.

29. The unsavory boasting of the arrogant more than is just.---Behold, while he relates the order of true condition, he suddenly breaks out into the pride of supercilious elation, and repeats this same thing in other words, saying: VERSES 6, 7.---Behold God made me also as He made you, and I also was formed from the same clay. Nevertheless let not my miracle terrify you, let not my eloquence be heavy to you.

What is this, that Elihu recognizes the order of true condition, and is ignorant of the mode of right speech? What is it, that he both equals himself to the blessed Job as being created, and exalts himself as being about to speak, except this, that all the arrogant indeed remember themselves to be created equally to all men, but through the pride of knowledge they deign not to believe their hearers to be equal to themselves, and they compare themselves to them by the condition of nature, but place themselves above them by the swelling of knowledge? They judge indeed that they existed as equals by being born, but not

that they remained equals by living. And in that which they are no longer equals as it were by living, they recall that to a greater miracle, that they were equals by being born. Whence inflated Elihu says: Behold God made me also as He made you, and I also was formed from the same clay. Nevertheless let not my miracle terrify you, and let not my eloquence be heavy to you [Vet. XVI]. The arrogant have this also as their own, that before they speak, they always estimate that they will say wonderful things, and they prevent their own speech by admiring it, because they are ignorant how great a fatuity elation is even in acute senses. It is to be noted also that Paul, while he admonished the Hebrews wonderfully, added: But I beseech you, brethren, that you suffer the word of solace; for I have written to you in very few words (Heb. 13:22). But Elihu brought forth empty things, and as if by consoling added: Let not my miracle terrify you, and let not my eloquence be heavy to you. The former calls his words a word of solace, but the latter calls them eloquence and a miracle. Behold how distinct flavors of fruits proceed from the diverse root of thoughts. The former feels humbly concerning great things, the latter raises himself vainly concerning the least things. What therefore among these things, except that this is to be skillfully intuited, that both those about to ascend consider themselves to be in the lowest place, and those about to fall always stand in a precipice? Solomon attesting, who says: Before ruin the heart is ex-

alted, and before glory it is humbled (Prov. 16:18). It follows:

VERSES 8-11.---You have said therefore in my ears, and I have heard the voice of your words. [Rec. X.]. And subjoining that same voice, he says: I am clean, and without sin immaculate, and there is no iniquity in me. Because he found complaints in me, therefore he thought me an enemy to himself. He put my feet in the stocks, he watched all my paths. And soon bringing forth his own sentence against these words which he related that the blessed Job had said, he says:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 12.---This is therefore in which you are not justified.

30. They study rather to rebuke than to console.---Indeed the blessed Job had truly said that he was scourged without fault. For he said this of himself, which the Lord said of him to the devil: You have moved me against him, that I might afflict him in vain (Job 2:3). But Elihu did not believe that, fault ceasing, he could have been scourged even for grace. For he was ignorant that by his scourges vice was not deleted, but merit increased, and because he had said that he was scourged without offense, he rebukes him with this sentence, saying: This is therefore in which you are not justified. For the arrogant have this property, that they desire more to argue than to console; and whatever they know happens to men, they think has happened from iniquities alone. For they know not how to seek hidden

judgments subtly, and to search out humbly that which they do not understand, because the very elation of their knowledge often casts them down from secret investigations of the judgments of God, while it exalts them.

31. The tumor of the mind is an obstacle to truth. The effect of true science.---For the tumor of the mind is an obstacle to truth, because while it inflates it obscures. Who even if they sometimes seem to obtain knowledge, they feed as it were from a certain bark of things, and not from the marrow of secret sweetness; and with sparkling geniuses they often reach only exterior things, but they are ignorant of the taste of internal flavor, namely, they are sharp without, but blind within. Nor do they feel that concerning God which tastes sweet within, but that which sounds shaken out without. Who although they perceive certain secrets by understanding, they cannot experience their sweetness; and if they have known how they are, they are ignorant, as I said, how they taste. [Vet. XVII.] And it happens for the most part that they speak strongly, but nevertheless they know not how to live according to those things which they say. Whence a certain wise man said well: But to me may God grant to say these things from the heart (Wis. 7:15). For 'sentence' is named from 'sense' (feeling). And he desires to speak the right things which he understands, not from knowledge alone, but even from the heart, who by no means desires to speak only by knowing, but by feeling to experience what he says. But the mind of the arrogant does not pene-

trate the sense of their own sayings, because it is dashed back from internal taste, by a right judgment, into those favors which it loves without. But true knowledge affects, it does not exalt; nor does it make those proud whom it has filled, but lamenting. With which when anyone has been filled, in the first place he desires to know himself; and now conscious of himself, he is so much more robustly wise through it as he more truly recognizes himself weak in it; and humility itself opens a wider way of this science to him; and while he sees his own imbecility, the knowledge itself of sublime secrets opens hidden bosoms to him, by which knowledge pressed, he is rendered more subtle, that he may be snatched to hidden things. Elihu therefore found not a true reason in the scourges of the blessed Job for this reason, because he knows not how to seek it humbly; and more ready to rebuke than to console, he says: This is therefore, in which you are not justified.

32. The proud often lie while rebuking others.---It is to be noted also that the blessed Job said his foot was set in the stocks, but by no means recorded that he had been clean in this way in which it is objected to him, without sin, or immaculate, and without iniquity. But Elihu, while he studied with austerity to rebuke the things which were said, by lying added things which were not said. For those who always desire to rebuke, and never to cherish, for the most part lie in many things by rebuking. For so that they may seem to argue learnedly, they sometimes feign things which they may redargue; and while

they themselves boil over in the course of their own display in an equine manner, they prepare a field in the invectives of their subjects from iniquities feigned for themselves. It is to be known furthermore, as I also said above (Num. 31), that arrogant men often mix strong sayings with their inflated speeches, nor do they sometimes consider what they live, but studiously weigh what they teach. Of whom Elihu now holds the appearance, who desires not to live rightly, but to teach. Because therefore he speaks as one knowing but arrogant, let us now be silent as to what he lives swollenly, and let us hear what he says solidly. After so many words of elation therefore, at last beginning to show his knowledge, he says:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERSE 12.---I will answer you that God is greater than man.

33. What we suffer from God, who is better than us, let us believe to be just.---It may be said perhaps by someone: Who is ignorant of this even when he does not hear it? But indeed this sentence is believed to be cheap, if it is not weighed from the very root of its intention. [Vet. XVIII.] He was speaking namely to a scourged man, who had both received the blows of percussion, and was ignorant of the causes of the blows. For that reason therefore he brought in: I will answer you that God is greater than man, so that the scourged man considering that God is greater than he, in everything that he suffers may postpone himself to His judgment, in which he does

not doubt that he is less; and that which he suffers from a better, he may believe to be just, even if he is ignorant of the causes of that same justice. Whoever also is struck for sin, unless he should resist by murmuring, by that very fact already begins to be just, in that he does not accuse the justice of the striker. For man was created under God, and returns to the order of his condition, when he prefers the equity of his judge to himself, even that which he does not understand. Well therefore is it said: I will answer you that God is greater than man, so that the power of the creator being considered, the tumor of the mind may cool down through the memory of condition. Whence the prophet David, when he was compelled by the weight of percussion to break out into excess of voice, recollecting himself to the consideration of his condition, says: I was dumb, and I opened not my mouth, because Thou madest me (Psal. 38:3). For he weighed the order of his condition, and found the justice of the percussion, because He who kindly created him who was not, surely struck him who was not except justly. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. XI].

VERS. 13, 14.---Why do you strive against him, because he answered you not to all words. Once God shall speak, and the second time he will not repeat that same thing.

34. God teaches in holy Scripture whatever it becomes us to know.---It is proper to an afflicted

heart that in everything which it desires, and yet feels the order of things to be contrary, if it could be done, it would wish to be answered by divine voices why it is so, or not so, so that it might consult God about the whole controversy of things, and rest in the known reason of His answer. But Elihu, foreseeing that the Lord would establish holy Scripture, so that in it He might answer the public or secret questions of all men, says: Why do you strive against him, because he answered you not to all words. Once God shall speak, and the second time he will not repeat that same thing. As if he were to say: God does not answer the hearts of individuals with private voices, but constructs such an eloquence, through which He may satisfy the questions of all. [Vet. XIX.] For if we as individuals seek our causes in the eloquence of His scripture, we find them, nor is it necessary that in that which each one specially endures he should specially seek to be answered for himself by a divine voice. For there it is answered to all of us in common in that which we suffer specially, there the life of those preceding becomes the form for those following. For that we may bring forward one thing out of many, behold while we are afflicted by some passion or trouble of the flesh, we wish perhaps to know the hidden causes of that same passion or trouble, so far as in that which we suffer we may be comforted from the very knowledge of things. But because by no means is it answered to each of us specially concerning our special temptations, we have recourse to holy Scripture. There namely

we find what Paul, tempted by the infirmity of the flesh, heard: My grace is sufficient for you, for strength is made perfect in infirmity (2 Cor. 12:9). Which for that reason was said to him in his own infirmity, lest it should be said to all of us individually. In holy Scripture therefore we have heard the voice of God, when Paul was afflicted, lest when perhaps we are afflicted, we should individually seek to hear it with a private consolation. Therefore the Lord does not answer us to all words, because once he shall speak, and the second time he will not repeat that same thing; that is, in those things which He brought forth through holy Scripture to our fathers, He took care to instruct us. Let the teachers of the holy Church say so therefore, let even the arrogant say so, when they behold some to labor in it with pusillanimity, because God does not answer us to all words, because once God shall speak, and the second time he will not repeat that same thing; that is, He does not now satisfy the thoughts or temptations of individuals everywhere through the voices of prophets, nor through angelic offices, because in holy Scripture He comprehends whatever can happen to individuals, and in it He took care to inform even the life of those following through the examples of those preceding.

35. The speaking of God is to have begotten the Word.---Although that which he says: Once God shall speak, and the second time he will not repeat that same thing, can be understood more subtly, in that the Father begot the only-begotten Son co-essential with Himself. For the speaking

of God is to have begotten the Word. But to speak once of God is to have no other Word besides the only-begotten. Whence also it is aptly added: And the second time he will not repeat that same thing, because namely He begot this same Word, that is the Son, not otherwise than as the only one. But in that he does not say, He has spoken, but he shall speak, setting down namely not the past time, but the future, it is clear to all because neither the past time fits God, nor the future. Therefore any time whatever is set down in Him the more freely, by how much none is set down truly. For neither could any whatever be said freely, if at least one were said properly. From thence therefore it is allowed for any to say time in God boldly, whence it is allowed to say none properly in Him. For the Father begot the Word without time.

36. We ought to admire this generation, not to scrutinize it.---And who could worthily speak of that ineffable nativity, that the co-eternal was born of the eternal, that He existing before the ages begot an equal, that the born is not later than the Begetter? Which things namely we can admire, but we are by no means able to behold. But to be able now to admire the force of that nativity, is in some measure to see it. But how do we see what we by no means comprehend? Yet there is what we ought to draw from the use of the flesh to the sense of the spirit. For if anyone should lie in the dark with closed eyes, and before him a sudden light of a lamp should break out, his closed eyes are struck by the very arrival of the

light, so that they may open. Why therefore were they disturbed, if being closed they saw nothing? Nor yet was anything perfect, which being closed they could see. For if they had perfectly seen the whole, why being opened should they seek what they might see? So therefore, so are we, when we attempt to behold something concerning the incomprehensible nativity. For by that very fact in which the mind is struck by the admiration of brightness, and as it were sees what cannot be seen, as if placed in the dark, it sees the force of light with closed eyes. But because this secret admiration of the divine nature is not easily made known to minds occupied through earthly desires, the speaking of God aptly insinuates how it may be made to us, saying:

CAPUT XX

[Vet. XX, Rec. XII].

VERS. 15.---By a dream in a nocturnal vision, when deep sleep falls upon men, and they sleep in their bed.

37. The voice of God is heard when there is rest with a tranquil mind from secular works.--- What is it that through a dream the speaking of the divinity is made known to us, unless that we do not know the secrets of God, if we are awake in earthly desires? For in a dream the exterior senses sleep, and interior things are discerned. If therefore we wish to contemplate internal things, let us sleep from external implication. Namely the voice of God is heard as if through a dream, when

there is rest with a tranquil mind from the action of this world, and in that very silence of the mind the divine precepts are weighed. For when the mind is lulled to sleep from external actions, then more fully is the weight of the commands of God recognized. Then the mind penetrates the words of God more vividly, when it refuses to admit to itself the tumults of secular cares. But man wakes badly, when the heat of secular businesses insolently disquiets him. For while the crowd of earthly thoughts makes a noise, it closes the ear of the heart, and in the secret place of the mind, by how much the less the sound of tumultuous cares is restrained, by so much the more the voice of the presiding judge is not heard. For neither is man perfectly sufficient being divided to both, but while he so desires to be instructed interiorly, that he is yet implicated exteriorly, from whence he opens the hearing exteriorly, from thence he becomes deaf interiorly. Moses mixed with the Egyptians as it were was awake, and for that reason placed in Egypt he did not hear the voice of the Lord (Exod. 2:11, 12, seq.). But the Egyptian being extinguished, after he fled into the desert, while he dwelt there for forty years, he as it were fell asleep from the unquiet tumults of earthly desires; and for that reason he deserved to perceive the divine voice, because through heavenly grace by how much more he was torpid from things exterior to be desired, by so much more truly he was awake to knowing interior things. Again preferred to the crowds of the Israelitish people, that he may perceive the precepts of the

law, he is led into the mountain, and that he may penetrate internal things, he is hidden from external tumults (Exod. 19:3).

[Vet. XXI.] 38. Those who serve in exterior ministries, should studiously take refuge in the secrets of the heart.---Whence also holy men who are compelled by the necessity of office to serve in exterior ministries, always studiously take refuge in the secrets of the heart; and there they ascend the summit of intimate thought, and perceive the law as if on mountains, while, having postponed the tumults of temporal actions, they search out the sentence of the heavenly will in the height of their contemplation. Hence it is that the same Moses frequently returns from doubtful matters to the tabernacle, and there secretly consults the Lord, and recognizes what certain thing He decrees. For to return to the tabernacle having left the crowds, is, having postponed the tumults of exterior things, to enter the secret of the mind. For there the Lord is consulted, and what is to be done publicly without, is heard silently within. This good rulers do daily, when they recognize that they cannot discern doubtful matters, they return to the secret of the mind, as if to a certain tabernacle; the divine law being looked into, the ark as it were being placed before them, they consult the Lord, and what they first hear within while being silent, this afterwards they make known without while acting. For that they may serve inoffensively in exterior offices, they take care to recur incessantly to the secrets of the heart; and so they hear the voice of

God as if through a dream, while in the meditation of the mind they are abstracted from carnal motions. Hence it is that the bride in the Song of Songs had heard the voice of the bridegroom as if through a dream, which said: I sleep, and my heart wakes (Cant. 5:2). As if she were to say: While I lull to sleep the exterior senses from the solicitudes of this life, with the mind being vacant I more vividly know internal things. Without I sleep, but within the heart wakes, because while I as it were do not feel exterior things, I skillfully apprehend interior things.

39. Not otherwise than obscurely and as it were by a nocturnal vision, do we contemplate divine and internal things.---Well therefore Elihu says that God speaks through a dream, and aptly added, In a nocturnal vision. For a nocturnal vision is accustomed to appear in the contemplation of the mind under certain images. But in the light of day we discern more certainly, but in a nocturnal vision we see with hesitation. And because all the saints as long as they are in this life behold the secrets of the divine nature as if under a certain imagination, because namely they do not yet contemplate them more manifestly as they are, well Elihu, after he said that God speaks to us through a dream, adds: In a nocturnal vision. For night is the present life, in which as long as we are, by that which we behold internal things, we are dim under an uncertain imagination. For the prophet felt himself to be pressed by a certain dimness for seeing the Lord, saying: My soul has desired Thee in the night (Isai. 26:9). As if

he were to say: In this obscurity of the present life I desire to see Thee, but I am still circumscribed by the cloud of infirmity. David also avoiding the dimness of this night, having waited for the brightness of the true light says: In the morning I will stand before Thee, and will see (Psal. 5:5). As yet therefore in the night he perceives that he sees less, who for seeing God covets the future morning. But because, as we said, to cease from exterior action is to sleep, well Elihu adds: When deep sleep falls upon men. But because holy men when they do not serve in exterior action, rest within the chambers of the mind, he aptly subjoins: And they sleep in their bed. For to holy men to sleep in their bed is to rest within the chamber of their own mind. Whence it is written: The saints shall exult in glory, they shall be glad in their beds (Psal. 149:5). Let it be said therefore, that once God speaks to us through a dream in a nocturnal vision, when deep sleep falls upon men, and they sleep in their bed, because surely then we recognize the secrets of the divinity, when we are segregated from the tumultuous concupiscence of this world within the chambers of our mind. But because, as we have already often said, the tumult of secular businesses closes the ear of the heart, and the rest of secret consideration opens it, he aptly subjoins:

VERS. 16.---Then he opens the ears of men, and instructing them he teaches discipline.

40. Those who cease from exterior works, are instructed to compunction.---For when they are lulled to sleep from exterior actions, with the ear

of internal examination being opened they hear the causes. Who while they subtly consider either public scourges, or secret judgments, do not cease to afflict themselves by weeping. [Rec. XIII.] Whence it is well said. And instructing them he teaches discipline, because to a considering mind, and one tearing itself through penance, the lamentations of compunction are as if certain blows of percussion. Whence also Solomon rightly joining together the force of both percussions says: The blueness of a wound cleanses away evil things, and blows in the more secret parts of the belly (Prov. 20:30). By the blueness of a wound namely, he insinuates the discipline of corporeal percussion. But the blows in the more secret parts of the belly are the internal wounds of the mind, which are made through compunction. For as the belly filled with foods is extended, so the mind dilated with depraved thoughts is lifted up. Therefore evil things are cleansed away both by the blueness of a wound, and by blows in the more secret parts of the belly, because both exterior discipline washes away faults, and the compunction of penance pierces the extended mind with vengeance. But in this both these differ between themselves, that the blows of percussions grieve, the lamentations of compunctions have a taste. Those torment while afflicting, these refresh while they afflict. Through those there is sorrow in affliction, through these joy in sorrow. Yet because compunction itself tears the mind, he not incongruously calls that same compunction discipline.

41. In four ways the just are affected in compunction; which is shown by the example of Paul and of David.---For there are four qualities by which the soul of a just man is vehemently affected in compunction, when either he remembers his evils, considering where he was; or fearing the sentence of the judgments of God, and seeking with himself, he thinks where he will be; or when skillfully attending to the evils of the present life, mourning he considers where he is; or when he contemplates the good things of the heavenly country, which because he does not yet attain, lamenting he beholds where he is not. Paul remembered his evils, and from them he afflicted himself in those in which he had been, when he said: I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God (1 Cor. 15:9). Again subtly weighing the divine judgment, he feared to be in evil in the future, saying: I chastise my body, and bring it into servitude, lest perhaps preaching to others, I myself should become a reprobate (1 Cor. 9:27). Again he weighed the evils of the present life, when he said: While we are in this body, we are pilgrims from the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6). And: I see another law in my members repugning the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death (Rom. 7:23). And again he considered the good things of the eternal country, saying: We see now through a glass in a riddle; but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know,

even as I am known (1 Cor. 13:12). And again: We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have an edifice from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1). Beholding the good things of which house, he says to the Ephesians: That you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the supereminent magnitude of his strength toward us, who have believed (Ephes. 1:18). Blessed Job considering the evils of the present life, says: Human life is a temptation upon earth (Job 7:1). Whence David also says: All vanity is every living man (Psal. 38:6). And although man walks in the image of God, yet he shall be disquieted in vain. Who again having contemplated the eternal country, and weighing these evils in which he was, and considering those good things in which he was not yet, says: Woe is me! because my sojourning is prolonged (Psal. 119:5). And, I said in my fear: I am cast away from the face of Thine eyes (Psal. 30:23). Being lifted up in ecstasy, which our interpreters have properly called fear, he saw himself to be cast away from the face of the eyes of God. For after the vision of the internal light, which flashed in his soul through the grace of contemplation with a ray of brightness, he returned to himself; and the knowledge being perceived, either of what good things he was there wanting, or of what evils he was here present to, he found. For neither is anyone able to behold the evils of the present life as they are, if he is not yet able to touch

the good things of the eternal country through the taste of contemplation. Whence also he recognized that he was cast away from the face of the eyes of God. For being lifted up he saw what having relapsed to himself he groaned that he could not see of himself here.

42. The effect of compunction in the perfect.---Namely this compunction is accustomed more familiarly to affect a perfect soul, by which it discusses all corporeal imaginations insolently meeting it, and intends to fix the eye of the heart in that very ray of uncircumscribed light. For it drew these species of corporal figures into itself within from the infirmity of the body. But perfectly compunct it here watches most greatly, lest when it seeks the truth, the imagination of a circumscribed vision should illude it, and it rejects all images meeting it. For because through them it fell below itself, without them it attempts to go above itself; and after it has been spread indecently through many things, it strives to collect itself into one, so that if it prevails by a great force of love, it may contemplate that which is one and incorporeal.

43. The taste of contemplation affects the mind only snatchingly. Hence pious groans, yet not devoid of delight.---Whence sometimes it is admitted to a certain unusual sweetness of internal taste, and snatchingly in some way being breathed upon by an ardent spirit it is renewed; and it gapes the more, by how much the more it tastes what it may love. And it desires this within itself which it feels to taste sweet to it

intrinsically, because namely by the love of that sweetness it has become vile to itself before itself; and after it could perceive this, in whatever way, it finds what it had been for a long time without it. To which it attempts to inhere, but it is repelled from its strength by its own infirmity still; and because it is not able to contemplate its cleanness, it has it sweet to weep, and to spread for itself falling to itself the tears of its own infirmity. For neither can it fix the eye of the mind on that which it snatchingly beheld within itself, because it is compelled to go downward by that very use of its oldness. Among these things it pants, it glows, it attempts to go above itself, but it relapses to its familiar darkness being conquered by fatigue. Because therefore the soul so affected endures a heavy contest against itself, and because all this controversy concerning us, when it affects us, although mixed with delight, brings forth no small grief, Elihu, after he said that God speaks to us through a dream, and that our ears are opened by His speaking, not undeservedly calls that same opening of the ears discipline, because by so much the more He wears us out by affecting us, by how much the more the sound of internal intelligence breaks out to us through the secret grace of His inspiration. For neither would anyone weep without for what he is, if he could not feel within what he is not yet. For when we look upon ourselves well created, but deceived by a pestiferous consent to the diabolical persuasion, we attend in ourselves that one thing is what we have made, another what

we were made; by condition we are whole, but by fault vitiated. Accordingly being compunct we desire to avoid what we have made, so that we may be reformed to that which we were made. Whence also it aptly follows:

CAPUT XXII

[Al. XXII].

VERS. 17.---That he may turn man from the things which he has done, and deliver him from pride.

44. By compunction we are turned from sins previously perpetrated, and are delivered from pride.---For what has man done of himself except sin? And it is written: The beginning of all sin is pride (Eccl. 10:15). Well therefore is it said that man when he is turned from those things which he has done is delivered from pride. For to be proud against the Creator is to transcend His precepts by sinning, because he as it were shakes off from himself the yoke of His domination, to which he contemns to be subject through obedience. But on the contrary he who desires to avoid that which he has done, recognizes that which he was made by God, and humbly returns to the order of his condition, while fleeing his own works, he loves himself such as he was made by God. But because through this intelligence everlasting glory is received, and eternal punishments avoided, he aptly subjoins:

CAPUT XXIII

[Rec. XIV].

VERS. 18.---Rescuing his soul from corruption, and his life, that it may not pass into the sword.

45. Thus is the soul rescued from corruption and from the sword of divine judgment.---For every sinner is compelled to pass from this corruption of vices thither to the sword of punishments, so that from whence he was here iniquitously delighted, from thence he may be there justly tormented. It is to be noted therefore that God speaking to us through a dream, first delivers us from corruption, and afterwards from the sword, because surely He rescues the life of him from the vengeance of punishment there, whose mind He withdraws from the delight of sin here. For neither has he there what he ought to dread concerning the sword of the sentence, whom here after his emendation the pollution of fault has not corrupted. Well therefore is it said: Rescuing his soul from corruption, and his life, that it may not pass into the sword. For to pass from corruption to the sword is to come to enduring punishments after vices have been performed. It follows:

CAPUT XXIV

[Vet. XXIII, Rec. XV].

VERS. 19.---He rebukes also through pain in his bed, and makes all his bones to wither.

46. In the present life, every rest which we prepare for ourselves is disturbed by temptations.

In any retirement whatever we cannot live without temptations.---In holy Scripture a bed, or a couch, or a covering, is sometimes taken for the pleasure of the flesh, sometimes for rest in good works, sometimes for temporal rest. For what is it that in the Gospel the Lord says to a certain healed man: Rise, take up your bed, and go into your house (John 5:8), unless that through the bed the pleasure of the body is designated? And it is commanded surely that he should carry this when healthy, where he had lain when infirm, because surely everyone who is still delighted by vices, lies infirm in the pleasures of the flesh. But being healed he carries this where he had lain when infirm, because being rescued from vices by divine aid, he afterwards tolerates the contumelies of the same flesh, in whose desires he previously rested. Again through a bed or a covering rest in good works is designated. Whence in the Acts of the Apostles the apostle Peter says: Aeneas, the Lord Jesus Christ heals you; rise, and make your bed (Acts 9:34). What is it to say, Rise, unless, Leave the evils which you have perpetrated? And what is it to say, Make your bed, unless, Work the causes of reward in which you ought to rest? so that he may both desert by rising what he has done, and find by making what he may have made. Both of which the Prophet briefly comprehends, saying: Decline from evil, and do good (Psal. 36:27). For to decline from evil is to rise from that in which he lay; but to do good, is to prepare the works of reward, in which he ought to rest. For he who declines from evil,

but does not yet do good things, has indeed risen from that in which he lay, but where he ought to rest, he has not yet spread. And again a bed or a covering is taken for temporal rest, as it is written: Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity (Ps. 40:4). For when anyone fatigued by secular cares is compunct to desert through divine grace the laborious journeys of this world, he is accustomed to think how he may flee the desires of the present life, and rest from its labors, and he seeks for himself soon the order of desired quiet, and as it were a certain covering, so he covets to find a place of cessation from all labors. But because a man still placed in this life, in a place of whatever order, in a retirement of whatever secret, can by no means live without temptations, for the most part in that which is constructed for rest, a greater pain of temptation is found. Whence rightly it is said through the Prophet: Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. As if he were to say: Everything which he prepared for himself here for rest, this Thou hast changed for him by a secret judgment to perturbation. Which indeed is done by the pious counsel of God, so that in the time of this pilgrimage the life of the elect may be disturbed.

[Vet. XXIV.] 47. Here we are afflicted by the best counsel of God, lest we love the way instead of the country.---For the present life is a way, by which we tend to the country; and for that reason here by a secret judgment we are worn out by frequent perturbation, lest we love the way instead of the country. For some travelers are

accustomed, when they behold perhaps pleasant meadows in the journey, to weave delays of proceeding, and to decline from the rectitude of the journey begun, and the beauty of the journey retards their steps, while it delights. Therefore to His elect proceeding to Him the Lord makes the journey of this world rough, lest while each one is fed by the rest of the present life, as if by the pleasantness of the way, it should delight him more to proceed for a long time, than to arrive more quickly; lest, while he is delighted in the way, he should forget what he desired in the country. Because therefore in this life all our rest, which perhaps we have prepared, is disturbed, it is rightly said: He rebukes also through pain in his bed, that is, in the rest of the present life He disturbs us either with the stings of temptation or with the affliction of a scourge. For often the human mind however short a time it has been without temptation in good studies, soon it is lifted up concerning the same studies in which by resting it exerts itself, concerning the very virtues by which it strives to be multiplied, while it feels itself to profit. Whence by the pious moderation of our ruler, it is affected by the impulse of temptation, so that in it that very elation of its proficiency may be compressed. Wherefore after he said: He rebukes also through pain in his bed, he aptly subjoined [Rec. XVI]: And makes all his bones to wither.

48. Through temptation we recognize, what we can do from our own strengths, what from the divine gift.---Bones in holy Scripture we take for

virtues, as it is written: The Lord keeps all their bones, not one of them shall be broken (Psal. 33:21). Which surely is said not of the bones of the body, but of the strengths of the mind. For certainly we know that even the bones of many martyrs were broken corporally, and the persecutors of the Lord, of that robber, to whom it was said, Today you shall be with me in paradise (Luke 23:43), as of the other robber broke the legs on the cross. When therefore He rebukes through pain in his bed, He makes all the bones to wither, because when in that rest which we prepare for ourselves from this world we are affected by the scourge of temptation, we who perhaps could be puffed up concerning our virtues, are attenuated by the weariness of our recognized infirmity. For when we profit toward God as we desire, if no temptation should strike our proficiency, we would believe ourselves to be of some strength. But because it is done with us by a heavenly dispensation, so that we who profiting forget our infirmity, being tempted may recollect it, and in our proficiency we recognize what we are from the divine gift, and in temptation what we are from our own strengths. Which temptation surely would snatch us to the full, unless heavenly protection should keep us. But it strikes, and does not break; it impels, and does not move; it shakes, and does not cast down, so that from our infirmity we may feel it to be that we are shaken, and from the divine gift that we stand. And because often the soul conscious to itself of some good, when it recalls its virtues to its memory, is fed with a

certain delight, and as it were by the congratulation of its own fullness is fattened, well is it said that with temptation striking the bones wither, because while its own infirmity is recognized by temptation interrogating, all that congratulation of our strengths, as if fat and green, is suddenly dried up by the sorrow of anxiety, and we who by weighing our good things believed ourselves to be of some moment, being struck a little more dread that we are now just now about to perish. Then all the joy of our good things is turned into the fear of punishments. Then we find ourselves to be iniquitous, who a little before believed ourselves holy. The mind pining away, the eyes are stunned, everything which before smilingly was prosperous vanishes; light itself is a loathing, and only the darkness of sorrow pours itself out in the soul; nothing which may delight is beheld, sad is whatever occurs. Whence also it aptly follows:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XVII].

VERSE 20.--- Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food before desirable.

49. By bread in holy Scripture many things are signified: 1. Christ; 2. grace; 3. sacred doctrine; 4. the preaching of heretics; 5. the support of the present life; 6. the pleasantness of human delight.---As if he should say openly: The afflicted mind considers everything which before blandly and willingly satiated it to be turned into bitter-

ness for itself. [Vet. XXV.] For in holy Scripture bread is sometimes taken for the Lord Himself, sometimes for spiritual grace, sometimes for the instruction of divine doctrine, sometimes for the preaching of heretics, sometimes for the support of the present life, sometimes for the pleasantness of human delight.

In bread the Lord is signified, as He Himself says in the Gospel: I am the living bread, who came down from heaven (John 6:51).

Again by bread is understood the grace of a spiritual gift, as it is said through the prophet: He that stops his ears, lest he hear blood, and shuts his eyes, lest he see evil, he shall dwell on high: the fortifications of rocks shall be his highness, bread is given to him (Isai. 33:15). For what is it to stop one's ears, lest he hear blood, but not to offer consent to the persuading sins, which are born of blood and flesh? And what is it, that he may not see evil, to shut the eyes, but not to approve everything which is adverse to rectitude? He shall dwell on high, because although the flesh still retains him in lower things, he has already fixed his mind in sublime ones. The fortifications of rocks his highness, because he who treads upon the abject desires of earthly conversation, raises himself to the heavenly country through the examples of the preceding fathers. And because he is satiated with spiritual grace through the gift of contemplation, it is aptly subjoined: Bread is given to him, that is, he perceives the refreshment of spiritual grace, because he suspends himself from the lowest goods by hoping for celestial

ones. Hence also concerning the holy Church the Lord says through David: I will satisfy her poor with bread (Psal. 131:15), because in her the minds of the humble being placed are filled with the refreshment of spiritual gifts.

Again by bread the instruction of divine doctrine is designated, as it is said through the prophet: You who dwell in the land of the South, meet the fugitive with bread (Isai. 21:14). For they dwell in the land of the South who being placed in the holy Church are breathed upon by the charity of the heavenly Spirit. But he flees who desires to escape the evils of this world. He therefore who dwells in the land of the South, let him meet the fugitive with bread, that is, let him who is already full of the Holy Spirit within the Church comfort with the discourse of instruction him who strives to escape his evils. Namely, to meet the fugitive with bread is to offer the foods of sacred doctrine to him fearing eternal punishments, and now to compress swelling by terror, now to cherish fear by exhortation. Because the refreshment of holy Scripture is not inconveniently understood as bread, it is said through the same prophet to the Jews keeping only the letter: Why do you weigh out silver, and not in bread (Isai. 55:2)? As if he were to say: You weigh the sacred eloquence, but not in refreshment, because while you keep only the appearance of the letter, you lose the fatness of internal refreshment from spiritual intelligence. Whence there it is aptly subjoined: And your labor not in satiety (Ibid.).

[Vet. XXVI.] Again by bread the preaching of heretics is designated, as through Solomon the woman bearing the type of the heretical church, and calling together the foolish, says: Eat hidden bread willingly (Prov. 9:17). Or, as it is written in our translation: Stolen waters are sweeter, and hidden bread more pleasant. For there are some heresies which openly fear to preach what they feel, and at the minds of the weak they season their words so much the more, as they hide them as it were more reverently. Whence not undeservedly it is said: Eat hidden bread willingly. For to miserable hearts the hidden words of heretics taste the more, as they are not held in common with the rest.

Again by bread the support of the present life is understood, as Jacob passing over to Laban, says: Lord God, if You give to me bread to eat, and a garment to put on (Gen. 28:20). And as in the Gospel the Lord says to the crowds following Him: You seek me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled (John 6:26). For they had been filled from the seven loaves. And through their person the Lord detests those within the holy Church, who approaching the Lord through holy orders, seek in the same orders not the merits of virtues, but the supports of the present life; nor do they think what they ought to imitate in living, but by receiving what gains they may be satiated. For to follow the Lord being filled with loaves is to have taken temporal nourishment from the holy Church. And it is to seek the Lord not for signs,

but for bread, to gape for the office of religion, not for increasing virtues, but for seeking supports.

Again by bread the pleasantness of human delight is understood. Whence Jeremiah the prophet while he bewailed the lost morals of the synagogue, said: All her people sighing and seeking bread: they gave all their precious things for food to revive the soul (Lam. 1:11). For the people sighing seeks bread, while the wicked multitude of men is afflicted, because it is not satiated according to its wish with the pleasantness of the present life. But it also gives all precious things for food, because it inclines the virtues of the mind into the appetite for transitory delight. And it strives to revive the soul, because it endeavors to satisfy its perverse desires. Whence well soon from the voice of that elect multitude it is added: See, O Lord, and consider that I am become vile (Lam. 1:11). For the people of God is made vile, when the number of the wicked increasing, it does not follow in them the highest and celestial things, but abject and earthly ones.

[Vet. XXVII.] 50. Whatever tastes well, becomes bitter by the force of temptation.---Elihu therefore what else does he call bread than the delight of the present life? Who after he expressed the force of temptation, immediately subjoined: Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food before desirable, because namely everything which before tasted sweet concerning that very prosperity of living, afterwards through the force of temptation becomes bitter. But sometimes whatever of joy,

whatever of virtue seemed to favor, is suddenly lost in the fear of temptation, and as if evacuated of the same virtues the sad mind is possessed by sorrow alone. For when it is affected a little more vehemently by the impulse of temptation, because it cannot exert the force of its accustomed fortitude, it now grieves for it as if lost, and feeling itself empty from itself, it recognizes its own infirmity from that very emptiness of its own. Whence it is soon as it were broken from all pleasantness; and rejecting the foods of former joy, it is satiated with that mourning which alone it willingly appetites. For each one when the prosperity of living well smiles on him becomes cheerful, and that very cheerfulness refreshes the mind like a desirable food. But when it is struck by temptation threatening a little more, all joy is rejected by its mind through the loathing of sorrow, which before was glad being as it were satiated with the same joy. Because therefore the man tempted rejects from the mouth of the heart every food of delight, and nothing else delights him than both to recognize and to weep for himself, it is well said: Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and to his soul the food before desirable.

51. The utility of temptations and scourges.---But, as we have said above (Num. 48), for this reason by the moderation of a secret dispensation we are permitted to be so tempted, that we who profit in virtue from a divine gift, may also be reminded what we are from our own infirmity; and we who by the perception of the gift bring

in works of virtue, from the memory of our infirmity may offer the sacrifice of humility. But sometimes after the proficiency of strengths not only do vices tempt, but also scourges chastise. But when we are tempted by vices, it is done with us by a pious dispensation, lest we be extolled by these virtues in which we profit. But when we are worn down by scourges, we are admonished by rebuking evils lest we be seduced by the flattering world. While vices tempt us, they humiliate the virtues profiting in us; while scourges tempt, they eradicate the pleasures of this world rising in the heart. Through tempting vices we learn what we are of ourselves, through striking scourges we recognize what we should flee from this world. By those we are restrained, lest we be extolled inwardly, by these we are compressed, lest we appetite anything outwardly. In this life therefore while we are, it is necessary both to be worn down by scourges, and sometimes to be tempted by vices. For whether in the labors of scourges, or in the contest of vices, not only does our infirmity become known to us, but also we recognize in how great virtue we have profited. [Rec. XVIII.] For no one recognizes his strengths in peace. For if wars are wanting, the experiments of virtues do not come forth. He is an unforeseeing soldier, who boasts himself strong in peace. [Vet. XXVIII.] Because therefore often the merits of strengths are opened through the adversities of scourges, Elihu aptly subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERSE 21.--- His flesh shall wither away, and the bones which had been covered shall be made bare.

32. No one recognizes how much he has profited, except among adversities.---For when all exterior pleasure is worn down by pressing scourges, the bones of internal fortitude are made bare. But what in this place is understood by the name of flesh but that very carnal delight? Or what by bones but the virtues of the soul are designated? Therefore the flesh withers, and the bones are made bare, because while carnal delight is attenuated by rebuking scourges, those strong things of virtues which lately lay hid as it were under the flesh are opened. For no one recognizes how much he has profited except among adversities. For when prosperous things are present, the documents of strengths cannot be seen. Whence elsewhere it is written: In the day the Lord commanded His mercy, and in the night He declared it (Psal. 41:9); because namely each one perceives the grace of the heavenly gift in the tranquility of rest, but how much he has perceived, he shows in the adversity of perturbation. Let the flesh therefore wither, that the bones may be made bare. Let us be struck by paternal corrections, that we may recognize how much we profit. For by the scourges of the Lord the fatness of carnal delight is worn down, but the bones of our virtues are opened. Our exterior beauty is defiled by that very adversity of this world, but what lay hid in us inwardly is shown. For it was announced to the beaten apostles that they

should not speak further in the name of Jesus, but they rejoiced with great exultation, that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus, and they answered their adversaries with confidence: It behooves to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). Lo, among adversities a more valid strength of faith shone forth; lo, the integrity of the flesh was cut away, but the bones of virtues were opened. Hence concerning them it is said through Wisdom: God tempted them, and found them worthy of Himself (Wisd. 3:5). For they were tempted by the adversity of strokes, but they were found worthy by the baring of the bones. For because this is that temptation of theirs which is applied from scourges, it is there openly declared, while it follows: As gold in the furnace He proved them, and as a victim of holocaust He received them (Wisd. 3:6). Because therefore the strengths of each one are not opened except through adversities, it is well said: For his flesh shall wither away, and the bones which had been covered shall be made bare. For the flesh withers, while all that is fluid and weak is worn down by scourges. The bones are made bare, while through these even what is strong lying hid in us is opened. But because, as has also been said above, in that very adversity of temptation not only is the strength of fortitude detected, but also the infirmity of humanity is recognized, and each one tempted shows indeed how much he has profited from God, but in those very afflictions of scourges he also recognizes how much he is infirm of himself, because not

only are the bones made bare, but also the flesh withers, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XIX].

VERSE 22.--- His soul shall approach corruption, and his life to the deadly.

53. We are liberated from corruption, when it seems to threaten more in temptation.---The soul of each tempted just man is said to approach corruption when, lest virtue should be able to extol it, it is compelled through scourges to feel what it is from its own infirmity. Namely it approaches corruption, because from its own strengths it is not ignorant that it is close to perdition, so that this, that it is far from perdition, it may attribute not to itself, but to the Lord. But it approaches the deadly, because from the infirmity of the flesh it beholds itself close to the sins bringing death, from which by a divine gift it becomes so much the farther, as from its own merits it finds itself close to them. Through the contemplation of his condition David had approached corruption, when he said: Remember, O Lord, that we are dust: man as grass his days (Psal. 102:15). Also through the contemplation of his own infirmity Paul had approached the deadly, when he said: I see another law in my members repugnant to the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. Unhappy man I, who shall deliver me from the body of this death (Rom. 7:23)?

Therefore to approach corruption and the deadly is, the infirmity of his humanity having been considered, to see himself a sinner from his own merits, and not to have arrogance from his own strengths in himself. For what are we, if we are deserted by the protection of our Creator? Which protection surely is believed less necessary, if it be always had. But it is usefully withdrawn for the most part, so that to himself it may be shown to man how without it he is nothing. The hand of God therefore sometimes insinuates us to ourselves through adversities, which even carries us unknowing in prosperous things. Destitute of which while we begin to fall, and yet being helped are retained, both instruction is made in that we tremble in the lapse, and custody in that we remain in the state.

54. It is never to be presumed concerning our own strengths.---Let no one therefore estimate himself of any virtue, even when he can do something strongly, because if divine protection should desert, there he is suddenly enervatedly overwhelmed, where he boasted himself to stand valiantly. For what is it that the man of God directed against the altar of Samaria to prophesy exercised the authority of a free voice in the presence of the king, and wonderfully bound in rigor the extended arm of the same king, which however he soon mercifully restored to health (1 Kings 13:4)? in whose house being invited he would not eat, because lest he should eat in the way, he kept the precepts of the Lord's prohibition? Who however in the same way being seduced both ate,

and having fed perished. In which thing what do we gather by subtle consideration, what, so to speak, do we suspect by fearing, but that perhaps with himself silent he boasted that he had contemned the king for the Lord's precepts? Whence he was soon shaken from internal solidity; and thence fault crept in upon him in work, whence glory arose in the heart, so that being deceived by the words of the false prophet he might learn, that by no means it was of his own strength, that he had resisted at the words of the king. But well from his mouth he received the sentence of death, by whose seduction he had deviated from the precept of life, so that from thence he might truly take the punishment, whence he had negligently admitted the fault. Because therefore divine grace then the more keeps each elect of its own by instructing, when as if striking it deserts, let it be rightly said: His soul shall approach corruption, and his life to the deadly, so that by which he considers himself close to death by his own strengths through adversities, by that in all things which he has done strongly, fleeing to the fortification of divine hope he may live more solidly.

Book twenty

FOUR.

The eleven last verses of chapter 33, and the eighteen first of chapter 34 are explained, and remarkable things concerning Christ the Mediator, concerning contemplation, concerning the order of conversion, and concerning the pastoral office are taught.

CHAPTER I.

1. All, even the elect, are subject to temptations.---Elihu insinuating the force of the heavenly dispensation, concerning the smiting of each of the elect brought in, saying: His soul shall approach corruption, and his life to the deadly. And while he demonstrates one tempted man, he shows the whole human race placed in what temptation it is; and while he relates what is specially done in individuals, he clearly intimates what is generally done in all. For he so expressed the temptation of some, properly of individuals, that it can be understood also universally of all. For the whole race of the elect in this life is afflicted with the weariness of this labor. Whence also soon to this general pestilence he subjoined a general remedy of medicine, saying:

CHAPTER II.

CHAP. XXXIII, VERS. 23, 24.--- If there shall be for him an angel speaking one of the like, that he may announce the equity of man, He will have mercy on him. [Rec. II.] 2. Christ God and man intercedes with God for men. The economy of the Incarnation.---For who is that angel, but He who is called through the prophet: The Angel of great counsel (Is. 9:6, according to LXX)? For because in the Greek language to evangelize is called to announce, the Lord announcing Himself to us is called an angel. And he says well: If there shall be for him an angel speaking, because, as the Apostle says, He also intercedes for us (Rom. 8:34). But what He speaks for us, let us hear: One of the like. It is the custom of medicine that sometimes it cures likes with likes, sometimes contraries with contraries. For often it has been accustomed to heal hot things with hot, cold with cold; but often cold with hot, hot with cold. Our Physician therefore coming to us from above, and finding us pressed with so great languors, applied to us something like, and something contrary. For to men He came a man, but to sinners a just one. He agreed with us in the truth of nature, but disagreed from us in the vigor of justice. For vicious man could not be corrected except through God. But He who corrected ought to be seen, that by providing a form of imitation, they might change the life from past malice. But God could not be seen by man; therefore He was made man, that He might be able to be seen. [Vet. II.] The just and

invisible God therefore appeared a visible man like to us, so that while He is seen from the like, He might cure from the just; and while He agrees with the condition in the truth of race, He might oppose the sickness by the power of art.

3. The Lord coming in the flesh, neither undertook fault from vice, nor punishment from necessity.---Because therefore the Lord coming in the flesh, did not undertake our fault from vice, nor punishment from necessity (for being polluted by no stain of sin, He could not be held by the condition of our guilt, and therefore He undertook our death, all necessity being trodden down, when He wished, spontaneously), it is rightly said that for the tempted man that angel speaks one of the like, because neither so born as the rest, nor so dead, nor so raised. For He was conceived not by coitus cooperating, but by the Holy Spirit coming upon (Luke 1:33). But being born He exhibited maternal bowels both fruitful and kept them incorrupt. Again we all when we do not wish die, because we are coarcted by the condition of our fault to the debt of paying punishment; but He, because He was mixed with no fault, succumbed to no punishment from necessity. But because He subjected our fault by ruling, He undertook our punishment by pitying, as He Himself says: I have power to lay down my soul, and I have power to take it again (John 10:18). Who also premised: No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. Again He was raised not as the rest, because our resurrection is delayed into the end of the age, but His celebrated on the

third day. And we indeed rise through Him, for He by Himself. For nor did He who was God stand in need like us of another so that He could be raised. In that therefore His resurrection differs from ours, that we do not rise through ourselves, like He. For because we are simply men, we stand in need of superior help so that we may be able to rise. But He exhibited the force of the same resurrection with the Father and the Holy Spirit as God, which however He alone perceived in humanity. [Vet. III.] Because therefore the Lord truly born, truly dead, truly raised, nevertheless in all things differs from us by the magnitude of power, but only agrees with us in the truth of nature, it is well said, because for us that angel speaks one of the like. For when in all His operations He transcends us by immense virtue, in one however from us, that is in the truth of form, He does not disagree.

4. He speaks to the Father for us, when He shows Himself like us.---By this He speaks to the Father for us, by which He shows Himself like us. For His speaking, or interceding, is His demonstrating Himself as man for men. And well when he had said: He speaks one of the like, he immediately added: That he may announce the equity of man. Because unless He were made like men, an equitable man would not appear before God. For from thence He announces our equity, from whence He deigned to undertake our infirmity. Namely that inimical persuasion had polluted us all in the contagion of fault from the very root (Gen. 3:5), and there was no one who

speaking before God for sinners, would appear free from sin, because an equal guilt had involved all alike being brought forth from the same mass (Rom. 5:11). Therefore the Only-begotten of the Father came to us, assumed nature from us, not perpetrating fault. For He ought to be without sin, who could intervene for sinners, because surely He would not wipe away the contagions of another's pollution, if He sustained His own. It is well said therefore that in that He appeared like us, He announced equity to men. For interceding for sinners, He showed Himself a just man who might merit indulgence for others. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSE 24.--- He will have mercy on him, and will say: Deliver him, that he may not descend into corruption, I have found in what to be propitiated for him.

5. Christ alone has liberated us, and propitiated God. Fortitude from humility.---The Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus has mercy on man in that He assumed the form of man (1 Tim. 2:5; Phil. 2:7); by which mercy He says to the Father for the redeemed man: Deliver him, that he may not descend into corruption. As we have already said above, His saying Deliver the man, is to demonstrate human nature free by assuming it. For from that flesh which He assumed, He also showed this free which He redeemed. Which redeemed flesh namely we are,

who are bound by the knowledge of our guilt. But by the equity of so great a Mediator we are liberated, as He Himself says: If the Son shall have liberated you, you shall be truly free (John 8:36). And well for this redeemed man it is said: May he not descend into corruption. [Vet. IV.] For it had been said above: His soul shall approach corruption; afterwards it is said: May he not descend into corruption. As if He were to say: Because by recognizing his infirmity, he is not ignorant that he is close to corruption, for that reason let him not descend to the destruction of corruption. For he would justly descend to corruption, if by his own strengths he judged himself to be far from corruption. But because he approached corruption humbly, he ought to be liberated mercifully: so that he may be strong against the impugning vices by that by which he recognizes himself infirm by his own merits. For whoever is extolled above himself, is burdened by that very weight of his elation; and he merges himself in the lowest things by that by which, rushing into the vice of pride, he has elongated from Him who is truly high; and from thence he appetites the lowest parts more, from whence he estimated himself joined to the highest; as through the prophet it is said to the soul extolling itself: In that you are more beautiful descend, and sleep with the uncircumcised [Ezek. 32:19]. For everyone who neglects to consider the foulness of his infirmity, but through the pride of elation attends to the glory of his virtue, from whence he is more beautiful, from thence he descends,

because by extolling himself concerning his merits, from thence he falls into the lowest parts of destruction, from whence he judged himself to be glorious. Who descending sleeps with the uncircumcised, because he fails in eternal death with the other sinners. Because therefore this man humbly recognized himself to be close to corruption, it is well said of him: Deliver him, that he may not descend into corruption, so that he may avoid punishment the more, as he does not turn away his eyes from fault. But because there was no one by whose merits the Lord ought to have been propitiated for us; the Only-begotten of the Father, assuming the form of our infirmity, alone appeared just, so that He might intercede for sinners (Phil. 2:7).

6. None of men appeared a just intercessor before God for men.---And well the angel speaking for this redeemed man says: I have found in what I may be propitiated for him. As if openly the Mediator of God and men should say: Because there was none of men who appeared a just intercessor for men before God, I made myself man to propitiate men, and while I exhibited myself as man, I found in what I might justly be propitiated for men. And because the Lord assuming infirmity, while He tolerated our punishment by dying, He changed our corruption by rising, well this angel subjoins the scourges of our mortality, and has mercy on them, saying:

VERSE 25.--- His flesh shall revive more than in youth, it shall return to the days of its adolescence.

7. Through Christ the man our flesh is renewed.---The flesh of the redeemed man is said to revive more than in youth, because namely the first man was created not indeed from the first origin of its birth to die, but nevertheless so that he could die if he wished. But this flesh of ours, when it is renewed in the resurrection, will revive more than in youth, because it will be brought to that state of life, so that it can no longer die even if it should wish. From the state namely of its creation, it had the ability not to die; from the glory of the resurrection it will have the inability to die. Therefore it revives more than in youth, because it is more solidly strengthened in its incorruption than it was created. It follows: It shall return to the days of its adolescence. For the days of adolescence are called the times of that first age, in which the flesh of the first man before sin neither knew how to grow old by time, nor to perish by death. To these days therefore our flesh returns, when being freed from the defect of mortality, it is recalled to that state which was in paradise before the fault.

8. In baptism the spirit is renewed, in the resurrection the flesh.---But it is also asked, if this can be understood of the present time? Which can certainly be done, if we consider the order of our renovation. For now in the perception of grace our spirit is renewed, but afterwards in the glory of the resurrection our flesh also is renovated. Whence the Apostle says: Though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). He therefore is

renewed day by day, who by profiting in the love of the heavenly country, daily adds to himself something which he did not have. But then even the outward man is renovated, when it will be recalled to the days of its adolescence, that is to the vigor of its first creation. For now although it is already washed by the water of baptism, it still sustains the punishment of its corruption. For nor is the defect of mortality suddenly taken away from it, nor is the debt of death soon avoided. But because even the very flesh of the elect is now already renovated through the spirit, it is rightly said: His flesh shall revive more than in youth. For although it still sustains the penalty of the first fault, yet because it is now applied to the service of God, it already tastes something of the new life. For when it is restrained from illicit pleasures, and is exercised in the labors of virtues, it is already renovated through the spirit, so that it may be able to be fully renovated in the resurrection. Therefore it revives more than in youth, because even in this life, in which it is still under the debt of death, it begins to live by the spirit of life.

9. Through Christ human nature was purged.---For the first man being created in paradise, although he was not yet subject to death, yet he was not yet confirmed in the state of immortality. But our flesh being now already renovated through the spirit, although it is still subject to death, yet it is already tending to the glory of immortality. For nor does it now so live, as it lived in paradise before sin, nor so as it will

live in the resurrection after death. But it holds a middle state between the oldness of death and the newness of life. For it already has the newness of the spirit, but it still has the oldness of the flesh. Therefore it revives more than in youth, because it is already tending to that which it had not even then when it was created. For nor was it then so confirmed in the state of life, so that it could not fall into death. But now being renovated through the spirit, it is already so established in the hope of life, that it can no longer fall into eternal death. Therefore it is well said: His flesh shall revive more than in youth, because it will be brought to that glory, which it had not even when it was first created.

10. Pure prayer propitiates God.---Because therefore Elihu showed the way of human salvation, which namely is done through the grace of the Redeemer, he well subjoins the fruit of the same grace, saying: VERSE 26.--- He shall pray to God, and He will be placable to him, and he shall see His face in jubilation, and He will render to man his justice.

11. The prayer of the just, and its fruit.---The redeemed man is said to pray to God, and He will be placable to him, because namely he who before being burdened by the weight of fault was far from God, now being renovated through grace is made close to Him. And he shall see His face in jubilation, because now he begins to see through the spirit of contemplation that which he will fully see in the resurrection. And He will render to man his justice, because the Lord will

render to the renovated man that justice which he had lost in the first man. For the justice of man is to serve God alone, and to be subject to no creature. Which justice namely he will then fully receive, when being freed from the corruption of the flesh, he will be brought to the glory of the heavenly country. Then therefore He will render to man his justice, when He will place him in that state, so that he can no longer be subject to any fault.

12. The order of conversion.---But it is also to be noted, that first he is said to pray, then to see the face of God, and finally to receive justice. For this is the order of our conversion, that first we pray for the remission of sins, then we begin to see the light of truth through contemplation, and finally we are established in the stability of justice. For nor can any one see the face of God, unless he has first purged himself by the tears of prayers. Nor can any one be established in the stability of justice, unless he has first seen the light of truth. Therefore he first prays, that he may see; and he sees, that he may receive justice. Which justice namely he then fully holds, when he is no longer moved from the rectitude of his state by any impulse of temptation.

For he who hides his fault, is not yet looking upon himself; but he who reveals it, is already beginning to see what he was.

CHAPTER IV

[Rec. IV].

VERSE 27.--- He shall look upon men, and shall say: I have sinned, and I have truly offended, and as I was worthy, I have not received.

13. Public confession, and its examples.---The redeemed man is said to look upon men, and to say: I have sinned, because namely he is not ashamed to confess his fault before men, who before was hiding it through pride. For he looks upon men, when he attends to the examples of the humble, so that he may follow them in the confession of his fault. And he says: I have sinned, and I have truly offended, because he recognizes that he has done evil not only by work, but also by will. And as I was worthy, I have not received, because he recognizes that the mercy of God is greater than his iniquity. For if God should return to us according to our merits, no one of us would be saved. Therefore he recognizes that he has received less punishment than he was worthy of for his fault. Which namely he then truly says, when he no longer attributes anything to his own strengths, but only to the divine mercy.

14. Confession of heart and mouth.---But it is also to be noted, that first he is said to look upon men, and then to say: I have sinned. For this is the order of true confession, that first the heart be looked upon, and then the mouth be opened. For no one can truly confess his fault by the mouth, unless he has first seen it by the heart. Therefore he first looks, that he may see; and he sees, that he may say: I have sinned. Which namely he then truly says, when he no longer hides his fault by any cloak of excuse, but only reveals it by the

humility of confession. Therefore it is well said: He shall look upon men, and shall say: I have sinned, because namely through the examples of the humble he is brought to the knowledge of his own fault, so that he may no longer be ashamed to confess before men what he has not been afraid to do before God.

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 25.---His flesh is consumed with punishments; let him return to the days of his youth.

7. Departing from God, we found nothing but that by which we might be afflicted.---For in that first man departing from God, being repelled from the joys of paradise, we fell into this misery of mortal life, and we feel by the punishment of our vengeance how grave a fault we committed by the persuasion of the serpent (Gen. III, 23). For having fallen hither, we found nothing outside of God, except that by which we might be afflicted. And because through the sight of the eyes we followed the flesh, we are scourged from that same flesh, which we preferred to the precepts of God. For in it we daily suffer groaning, in it torture, in it destruction, so that the Lord by a wonderful disposition might turn this into punishment for us, through which we committed the fault; nor would there be in the meantime a censure of punishment from elsewhere, except from where the cause of sin had been, so that by the bitterness of that flesh man might be instructed unto life, by the delight of whose pride he arrived at death.

8. From the punishments of carnal life Christ rescued us, and renewed us.---Since therefore the human race was oppressed by innumerable punishments of carnal life, but by our Redeemer coming, both the vices of our corruption and the torments were deleted, let it be said of the redeemed man: [Vet. V, Rec. IV.] His flesh is consumed with punishments; let him return to the days of his youth. As if he were to say: By the penalty of his mortality he was cast down into a certain old age of his antiquity; let him return to the days of his youth, that is, let him be renewed in the integrity of his former life, so that he may not remain in that into which he fell, but being redeemed, let him return to that for receiving which he was created. For Sacred Scripture is often accustomed to put youth for novelty of life. Hence it is said to the coming bridegroom: The young maidens have loved thee (Cant. I, 3); that is, the souls of the elect renewed by the grace of baptism, which do not fail in the use of the old life, but are adorned with the conversation of the new man. For that man was bewailing the old age of the old man wasting away among vices who said: I have grown old among all my enemies (Psal. VI, 8). On the contrary, another, admonishing to rejoice in virtues, says: Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth (Eccl. XI, 9). As if he were to say: Let every strong man rejoice in his renovation; that is, let him place his joy not in the pleasure of the old life, but in the virtue of the new conversation. But because we are recalled to this strength of novelty not by our own powers,

but by the Redeemer intervening, let the angel praying for this scourged man say: Let him return to the days of his youth. And because while our Redeemer intercedes with the Father for us, we also, the torpor of our former life being shaken off, are kindled to the thirst of prayer, it is aptly added concerning this redeemed man:

CHAPTER V.

VERSE 26.---He shall pray to God, and He will be favorable to him.

9. Christ praying for us kindles us to pray.---For first he says the angel asks, and afterwards the man, because unless the Lord Himself, interceding with the Father through His incarnation, should first seek our life, our insensibility would never rouse itself to ask for those things which are eternal. But the prayer of His incarnation preceded, so that the awakening of our torpor might follow. [Vet. VI, Rec. V.] But because after temptations, often after immense bitternesses, the light of truth breaks forth in our mind in a hidden joy; it is well added concerning this tempted and praying man:

CHAPTER VI.

IBID.---And he shall see His face in jubilation.

10. Double compunction, one of sadness, the other of joy, eliciting tears. From this an ineffable joy arises.---It was said above (Book XXIII, n. 40 and following), how God affects by making Himself known, but now it is said how while

He makes Himself known He exhilarates. For one is pricked in one way when, beholding internal things, he is terrified by the dread of his evils; but he is pricked in another way when, beholding heavenly joys, he is strengthened by a certain hope and security. That compunction moves afflicting and sad tears, but this moves joyful ones. For it is called jubilation when an ineffable joy is conceived in the mind, which can neither be hidden nor opened by words; and yet it is brought forth by certain motions, although it is expressed by no properties. Hence the prophet David, beholding that the souls of the elect conceive as much joy in the mind as they are not able to open by speech, says: Blessed is the people that knoweth jubilation (Psal. LXXXVIII, 16). For he does not say, Who speaketh; but, Who knoweth, because indeed jubilation can be known by the intellect, but cannot be expressed by speech. For through it is felt what is beyond sense. And when the conscience of the one feeling is scarcely sufficient for contemplating this, how should the tongue of the one speaking be sufficient for expressing this? Because therefore the light of truth insinuating itself into our hearts, now by pretending strict justice saddens us, now by opening internal joys gladdens us; after the bitternesses of temptations, after the mournings of tribulations, it is aptly added: He shall see His face in jubilation.

11. That is not reached unless the mind is first purged by the fire of tribulation.---For to our mind from the consideration of its blindness first

the fire of tribulation is sent in, so that all the rust of vices may be burned away; and then, with the eyes of the heart cleansed, that joy of the heavenly country is opened, so that we may first purge by mourning what we have done; and afterwards more manifestly contemplate through joys what we seek. First from the sharpness of the mind, burning sadness being interposed, the darkness of evils is wiped away, and then, by the suddenly resplendent flash of uncircumscribed light, it is illustrated. Which being seen in whatever way, it is absorbed in the joy of a certain security, and as if snatched beyond itself after the failing of the present life, it is in some way recreated in a certain novelty. There the mind is sprinkled from the immense fountain by the infusion of heavenly dew; there it beholds that it is not sufficient for that to which it has been snatched, and by feeling the truth, it sees that as great as the truth itself is, it does not see. To which truth it considers itself so much the farther off, the more it approaches, because unless it beheld it in whatever way, it would by no means feel that it cannot behold it.

12. The mind in contemplation, reverberated by the divine light, falls back to itself. Contemplation is not a solid and permanent vision.---Therefore the effort of the mind, while it is stretched into that, is reverberated by the flashing circumstance of its immensity. For it, filling all things, surrounds all things; and therefore our mind by no means dilates itself to comprehend the uncircumscribed circumstance, because the poverty of its own circumscription narrows it. Whence also

it slips more quickly to itself, and having beheld as if certain footsteps of truth, it is recalled to its own depths. Yet this same thing made through contemplation, not a solid and permanent vision, but, as I might so say, as if a certain imitation of vision, is called the face of God. [Vet. VII.] For because we recognize anyone by the face, not undeservedly we call the knowledge of God His face. Hence Jacob, after he had wrestled with the angel, says: I have seen the Lord face to face (Gen. XXXII, 30). As if he were to say: I have known the Lord, because He Himself has deigned that I should know Him. Which knowledge Paul testifies will be most fully made in the end, saying: Then I shall know even as I am known (I Cor. XIII, 12). Because therefore after the contests of labors, after the waves of temptations, the soul is often suspended in ecstasy, so that it may contemplate the knowledge of the divine presence, which presence however it can both feel and cannot fully satisfy, rightly after so many labors it is said concerning this tempted man: He shall see His face in jubilation. But because each one, the more fully he contemplates heavenly things, is so much the more corrected from earthly operation, well after the grace of contemplation, he adds the justice of operation, saying:

CHAPTER VII.

IBID. And He shall render to man his justice.

13. In what way justice is called ours.---It is called our justice, not that which is ours from our own, but that which by divine bounty becomes

ours, as in the Lord's Prayer we say: Give us this day our daily bread (Matth. VI, 11; Luke XI, 3). Behold, we both call it ours, and yet we pray that it may be given. For it becomes ours when it is received, which yet is God's, because it is given by Him. It is God's therefore by gift, and becomes ours truly by acceptance. So therefore in this place the Lord renders to man his justice, not that which he had from himself, but that which being created he received that he might have, and in which having fallen he was unwilling to persevere. That justice therefore God will render to man, to which he was created, that it may be a pleasure to adhere to God, that he may greatly fear His threatening sentence, that he may no longer believe the smooth promises of the crafty serpent.

14. Daily the devil endeavors to pluck out the words of God from the hearts of men.---For what he did in paradise (Gen. III, 5), this the ancient enemy does not cease to do daily. For he strives to pluck out the words of God from the hearts of men, and to root in them the feigned flatteries of his promise; daily he makes light of that which God threatens, and invites to believe that which he falsely promises. For he falsely promises temporal things, that he may make light in the minds of men of those punishments which God threatens as eternal. For when he promises the glory of the present life, what else does he say than, Eat, and you shall be as gods? [Vet. VIII.] As if he should say openly: Touch temporal concupiscence, and appear sublime in this world. And

when he endeavors to remove the fear of the divine sentence, what else does he speak than that which he said to the first men: Why has God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise (Gen. III, 1)? But because the man redeemed by the divine gift has received the justice which being long ago created he lost, he now exercises himself more robustly against the flatteries of crafty persuasion, because he has learned by experience how much he ought to be obedient to the precept. And him whom then fault led to punishment, now his punishment restrains from fault, so that he fears to offend so much the more, as by the compelling punishment he himself also now accuses what he has perpetrated. Whence also follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. VI].

VERSE 27---He shall look upon men, and shall say: I have sinned.

15. He who looks upon the examples of the holy Fathers, understands himself to be a sinner, which is the beginning of justice.---He would not know himself to be a sinner, if he did not have justice. For no one detects his own crookedness, except when he has begun to be straight. For he who is altogether perverse, can neither see this which he is. But he who understands himself to be a sinner, has already in some part begun to be just, and he accuses that which as not just he had done, from that which he is as just. By which

accusation of his he begins to adhere to God, while bringing forth a right judgment against himself, he condemns this in himself which he feels displeases Him. Having received therefore his justice, this man says: I have sinned. And it is to be noted that it is premised: He looks upon men; and then next it is added: And he shall say, I have sinned. For therefore some know not that they have sinned, because they attend not to men. For if they considered men, they would more quickly recognize how much by sinning they had fallen below men. And although Sacred Scripture is sometimes accustomed to put "men" for those wise according to the human way, as the Apostle says: For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal (I Cor. III, 3)? and a little after he adds, saying: Are ye not men? yet sometimes it calls "men" those whom reason distinguishes from beasts, that is, those whom it shows are not worn away by the bestial motion of passions. To whom the Lord says through the prophet: But you the flocks of My pasture are men (Ezek. XXXIV, 31), because namely the Lord feeds those whom the pleasure of the flesh does not affect after the manner of beasts of burden. But on the contrary those who succumb to carnal affection, are no longer called men, but beasts of burden, as is said through the prophet of some dying in their sin: The beasts of burden have rotted in their dung (Joel I, 17). For the beasts of burden to rot in their dung is for carnal men to end their life in the stench of luxury. For they are declared to be not men, but beasts of burden, of

whom it is said through the prophet: Every one was neighing after his neighbor's wife (Jerem. V, 8). And of whom another prophet says: Their flesh is as the flesh of asses, and their issue as the issue of horses (Ezek. XXIII, 20). Whence also it is said through David: Man when he was in honor, did not understand, he was compared to the foolish beasts of burden, and was made like to them (Psal. XLVIII, 13). Since therefore those are called men who are supported by the reason of justice, and those are named irrational beasts of burden who serve carnal delight, it is rightly said of this penitent: He shall look upon men, and shall say: I have sinned. [Vet. IX.] As if it were said: He beholds the examples of holy men, and weighing himself by comparison with them, he detects himself to be iniquitous. For he who desires to understand most fully what he is, ought namely to behold such as he is not, so that he may measure from the form of the good, how much he himself, having deserted the good, is deformed. For from those to whom goods are most fully present, he correctly weighs those things which are less to himself, and in their beauty he beholds his own foulness, which in himself he can both endure and cannot feel. For he ought to behold light, who wishes to judge of darkness, that in it he may see what he should think of darkness, through which he is hindered from seeing. For if the sinner, the life of the just being unknown, beholds himself, he by no means comprehends himself to be a sinner. For he cannot see himself, because, being ignorant of the brightness of light,

when he beholds himself, what else does he attend to than darkness? Therefore we ought to behold the life of the just, so that we may subtly detect our own. Namely, their appearance is proposed to us as a certain form to be imitated.

767 16. The just are books, from which we shall be judged.---The life of the good is a living reading; whence also not undeservedly the same just are called books in the sacred eloquence, as it is written: The books were opened, and another book was opened, which is of life, and the dead were judged from those things which were written in the books (Apoc. XX, 12). For the book of life is the very vision of the coming Judge. In which, as it were, every commandment is written, because whoever shall have seen Him, soon, conscience being witness, understands whatever he has not done. Also "opened books" are mentioned, because the life of the just is then beheld, in whom the heavenly commandments are seen impressed by work. And the dead were judged from those things which were written in the books, because in the shown life of the just, as if in the expansion of books, they read the good which they themselves were unwilling to do, and are damned from comparison with those who did it. Lest therefore everyone then seeing them should weep for what he has not done, let him now attend to what he may imitate in them. Which indeed the elect do not cease to do. For they consider the life of the better, and change the conversation of a worse usage.

[Vet. X.] 17. And the lilies among which we ought to be fed.---Hence by the voice of the Bridegroom it is said to the holy Church in the Canticle of canticles: Thy two breasts are like two young twin roes of a gazelle, which feed among the lilies, until the day break, and the shadows flee away (Cant. IV, 5). For what are the two breasts, except both peoples coming from Judea and Gentility, who in the body of the holy Church are fixed in the secret of the heart through the intention of wisdom? From which people those who are elect are for this reason compared to the young of a gazelle, because through humility indeed they understand themselves to be small and sinners, but they, running through charity, if any obstacles of the impediment of temporality meet them, they pass over, and having given leaps of contemplation, they ascend to heavenly things. Who, that they may do these things, behold the examples of preceding saints. Whence also they are mentioned as feeding among the lilies. For what is declared by the lilies, except the life of those who truly say: We are a good odor of Christ to God (II Cor. II, 15)? Therefore the elect, that they may be able to reach the highest things, having beheld the odoriferous and white life of the just, are satiated. Already indeed they thirst to see the Lord, already they burn with the heats of charity to be satiated by His contemplation. But because placed in this life they are not yet able, they are fed in the meantime by the examples of the preceding Fathers. Whence also aptly the time concerning that feeding of lilies is

defined, while it is said: Until the day break, and the shadows flee away. For so long we need to be refreshed by the examples of the just, until we pass through the shadows of present mortality, the eternal day breathing. For when the shadow of this temporality, this mortality being passed, shall have been declined, because we discern the internal light of that day itself, we no longer desire that we should be kindled to His love through the examples of others. But now because we are not yet able to gaze upon Him, it is extremely necessary that we be incited by the beheld actions of those who have followed Him perfectly. Let us behold therefore how beautiful is the agility of those following, and let us see how base is the sluggishness of the lazy. For immediately, as we look back upon the deeds of those doing well, we judge ourselves, an internal confusion avenging; soon shame strikes the mind, soon a justly raging guilt condemns; and this even vehemently displeases, that as yet perhaps it is basely pleasing.

18. The just man is the temple of God, from whose sight we are confounded concerning our iniquities.---Whence it is well said through Ezekiel: Son of man, 768 show the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be confounded by their iniquities, and let them measure the building, and be ashamed of all that they have done (Ezek. XLIII, 10). For the temple of God is shown to the children of Israel for their confusion, when it is demonstrated to sinners with how great sanctity the soul of each just man shines, which God inhabits by inspiring, so that

in it they may see the good which they neglect, and in themselves they may be ashamed of the evil which they work. But to measure the building is to weigh subtly the life of the just. But while he measures the building, it is necessary that we be ashamed of all that we have done, because the more subtly we discuss the life of the good by weighing it, the more severely we reprove in ourselves all things iniquitously done. But it is well said to the prophet that he should show the temple. For because the sinner dissembles to consider the rectitude of the just, let him at least recognize this from the voice of the preacher. For to show the temple to sinners is to relate the works of the righteous to those unwilling to consider of their own accord. Therefore those who, as we have said, desire to be led to the highest things, it is always necessary that they attend to the progresses of the better, so that they may judge faults in themselves so much the more strictly, as they see in them more deeply what they should admire.

19. The just themselves profit from the consideration of other saints.---But why do we say these things of those sinning, since we see the operators of justice themselves also moved forward by such great dispensation (I Cor. XII, 8, 9, 10 and 11)? For one receives the gift of knowledge, and yet does not reach the virtue of wonderful abstinence. Another is girded with the great virtue of abstinence, yet is not dilated in the highest contemplation of knowledge. Another through the spirit of prophecy is able to foreknow all things

to come, but yet through the grace of healing is not able to relieve the evils of present trouble. Another through the grace of healing relieves the evils of present trouble, but yet because he has not the spirit of prophecy, he is ignorant of what follows. Another can already bestow many of his own things on the needy, but yet cannot freely oppose those acting unjustly. Another boldly opposes those acting unjustly for God, but yet refuses to bestow all that he has on the needy. Another already also restraining himself from idle speech, overcomes the wantonness of the tongue, but yet does not perfectly trample down the rising stings of anger. Another already perfectly tames rising anger, but yet as yet relaxes the tongue into mirth. What is this, that this man needs that good in which another is powerful; and he, though he be powerful in many things, considers the good abundantly to be present in others which he sighs for as lacking to himself, except that it is dealt with us by a wonderful dispensation, so that through this which another has, and this one has not, one is shown better than the other, so that each one may profit so much more ardently unto humility, as he weighs himself as inferior from the goods which he has not to those having them? And so it happens that while he looks in this one, and this one in that, at what he should admire, distinct goods both restrain them from the height of elation, and kindle them to the study of profit. For with great solicitude we are girded to the care of our melioration, when we discern that in others which we do not

have. Whence the prophet Ezekiel, when he had described the flying animals, added: And I heard behind me a voice of a great commotion: Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His holy place, and the voice of the wings of the animals smiting 769 one against another (Ezek. III, 12). For what should we feel the wings of the animals to be, except the virtues of the saints? Who while they despise earthly things, are lifted up by flying to heavenly things. [Vet. XI.] Whence rightly also it is said through Isaiah: They that trust in the Lord, shall change their strength, they shall take wings as eagles (Isai. XL, 31). Therefore the flying animals smite each other in turn with their wings, because the minds of the saints are excited in that they seek heavenly things, the alternate virtues being considered in turn. For his wing smites me, who by the example of his own sanctity kindles me to better things. And I smite the neighboring animal with my wing, if sometimes I show to another a good work which he may imitate.

20. Which is confirmed by the example of the holy apostles Paul and Peter.---But because we have said the life of the saints is signified by these animals, it is pleasing in that very flight of the animals to lift up the eyes of the mind, and to weigh with subtle consideration by how great a smiting of wings they excite themselves in turn. For Paul, when he transcended the solicitude of the other saints by laboring more robustly in preaching, so that he might press himself down from elation, and nourish his strengths in the bosom of humility, not unmindful of his ancient

cruelty, having contemplated the innocence of all the apostles, says: For I am the least of the apostles, that am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God (I Cor. XV, 9). And yet the first of all those same apostles, as if forgetful of the princedom received, as if he himself knew less of something, wonders at the wisdom in Paul, saying: Even as our most beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things in which are some things hard to be understood (II Pet. III, 15). Behold Paul wonders at innocence in the apostles, behold the prince of the apostles wonders at wisdom in Paul. [Vet. XII.] What is this, except that holy men, while by the consideration of virtues they prefer others to themselves in turn, the flying animals touch themselves by the smiting of wings, so that they may excite themselves so much higher to flight, as each more humbly sees in the other what he should admire? Hence therefore it is to be gathered with how great solicitude we who lie in the lowest things ought to behold the life of the better, if even these who are already sublime with such great sanctity, so that they may profit to greater things through the step of humility, still seek in others what imitating they may admire.

21. The reprobate always turn to the examples of the worse.---But the reprobate know not these things, because they always press the eyes of the mind in the lowest things, who even if sometimes they come into the way of the Lord, turn not to

the footsteps of the better, but always to beholding the examples of the worse. For neither do they consider the life of those to whom by humbling themselves they should postpone themselves, but those to whom by being proud they should prefer themselves. For they look at the worse, than whom they glory that they are better; and therefore they cannot profit to better things, because they estimate this to be sufficient for them, that they precede the worst. O miserable ones, they proceed on the way, and look back at their backs. By hope indeed, they put forth the foot as if before them, but by the consideration of wicked men they stretch the eyes behind them. They desire to appear straight, but they take a crooked rule for finding themselves. For if they desired to know themselves such as they are, they ought to have beheld not the examples of the worse, but of the better. Therefore they do not understand themselves to be sinners, because they attend not to men. For if they attended to men, they would find how much by sinning they were distant from good men. Concerning this penitent therefore who for this reason considers the examples of the good so that it may become known to himself how much he has receded from the good, it is well said:

CHAPTER IX.

VERS. 27. --- He shall look upon men and say: I have sinned and indeed I have offended, and I have not received as I was worthy.

22. While they fictitiously confess themselves to be sinners, they wish to be adorned by the confession of sin, not humbled. --- For the most part they confess themselves to be sinners even who do not believe they have sinned. For it often happens that men confess themselves to be iniquitous on all sides, but when they hear their sins truly reproved by others, they defend themselves exceedingly, and strive to seem innocent. Every one therefore when he is such, if he saith he hath offended, he saith it not truly, as who asserteth himself a sinner not from the inmost of the heart, but in word only. For because it is written: The just is first the accuser of himself (Prov. 18:17), this man wished to be adorned by the confession of sin, not humbled; by his accusation he desired to seem humble, not to be so. For if by confessing sin he truly desired to be humble, he would not impugn others reproving him for the perpetration of sin. Therefore the just man, judging his life by the examples of better men, knoweth from the inmost of the heart that he is what he saith. For he saith: I have sinned, and indeed I have offended. And concerning that very scourge which he endureth he subjoins: And I have not received as I was worthy.

23. He that is scourged for sins, let him recognize that he is less smitten than he deserves. Punishment interrogates us, if we truly recognize the fault. --- For every one placed in the scourge still less considers his sins, if he estimates that he has been smitten either as much as or more than he deserved. But this man, because the more

he considers the examples of greater men, by so much more strict an examination he weighs himself, recognizes that he has been smitten less than he deserves, because in their justice he beholds how heavy a fault it was for him that he erred; and therefore he feels not that this which he suffers is strict, because he knows how to weigh strictly what he did. But it is very easy for every one to confess himself a sinner, when he suffers nothing for his sin. Securely forsooth we call ourselves iniquitous, when we feel no vengeance for our iniquity. For indeed we speak as sinners in tranquility, but when we are reproved for those very sins by the intervening scourge, we murmur. Punishment therefore interrogates us, if we truly recognize the fault. Therefore let the just man, because he considers his fault strictly, even when placed in the scourge say: And I have not received as I was worthy. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 28.---For He hath delivered his soul from going into destruction.

24. The agreement of prevenient grace and subsequent free will.---Because with divine grace prevenient in a good work, our free will follows, we are said to deliver ourselves, who consent to the Lord delivering us. Whence Paul, when he said: I have labored more abundantly than all they (1 Cor. XV, 10), lest he should seem to have attributed his labors to himself, immediately added: yet not I, but the grace of God with me. For because he had followed the prevenient

grace of God in himself through free will, he aptly subjoins, With me: so that he might not be ungrateful for the divine gift, and yet might not remain a stranger to the merit of free will. But concerning him who, by knowing himself, has consented to his Deliverer, it is rightly said: He hath delivered his soul from going into destruction. There follows:

IBID.---But that living he might see the light. Namely, the light of truth which he who is dead in heart could not see. Or certainly, because the Lord said: I am the light of the world (John VIII, 12), even the dead shall see the light, when all the unjust shall behold Him coming to judgment in the form of humanity. But he then beholds the light as living, who looks upon Him in the form of divinity with the free eyes of the heart. There follows:

CHAPTER XI.

VERSE 29.---Behold, all these things God worketh three times for every one.

25. In three turns the elect are usually affected first with sorrow, afterwards with joy.---Concerning this man, tempted and scourged, it had been said above: Bread becomes abominable to him in his life; and his soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the deadly. But below it is subjoined: He shall pray to God, and He will be placable to him; and he shall see His face in jubilation, and He hath delivered his soul, that it should not go into destruction, but that living he might see the light. In these sentences, therefore,

already collected and heaped together, both sorrow of bitterness above, and joy of security below is subjoined; and soon after these things it is said: Behold, all these things God worketh three times for every one. As if he said: What I have once said of one, this is done three times for every one. But it must be skillfully observed what those three turns are by which each man is affected with the anxiety of sorrow, and after sorrow is immediately recalled to the security of joy. For he had narrated that above, as I have already said, that both grave sorrow first affects, and great joy afterwards uplifts. Therefore, if we vigilantly attend, we find these three turns of sorrow and joy alternating in the soul of each elect in these ways, that is, in conversion, in temptation, and in death.

26. 1. In conversion, when on one side the spirit calls, on the other the flesh recalls.---For in the first turn which we have called of conversion, there is grave sorrow, when each one considering his own sins, wishes to break the fetters of secular cares, and to walk the way of God through the space of a secure conversation; to cast off the heavy burden of temporal desires, and to bear the light yoke of the Lord with free servitude. For to him thinking on these things occurs that familiar carnal delight of his, which, having grown old long ago, the longer it has held him, the more closely it binds him, and the more slowly permits him to depart from itself. And what sorrow is there, what anxiety of heart, when on one side the spirit calls, on the other the flesh recalls; on

one side the love of a new conversation invites, on the other the use of an ancient perversity impugns; on one side he burns with desire for the heavenly country, and on the other he tolerates in himself carnal concupiscence, which delights him even in some way against his will? Rightly therefore can it be said of this man growing bitter: Bread becomes abominable to him in his life; and his soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the deadly. But because divine grace does not permit us to be affected by these difficulties for long, having broken the chains of our sins, it leads us more quickly to the liberty of a new conversation by consoling us, and the subsequent joy refreshes the preceding sadness; so that the soul of each one converted rejoices the more in reaching its vow, by how much more it remembers itself to have grieved in laboring for it. There is immense joy in the heart, because it now approaches him whom it desires through the hope of security, so that it ought rightly to be said of this: He shall pray to God, and He will be placable to him; and he shall see His face in jubilation. Or certainly: He hath delivered his soul that it should not go into destruction, but that living he might see the light.

27. 2. In the exercise of temptations. The stings of temptations are sharper after conversion.--- But lest each one converted should already believe himself to be holy, and that security itself should afterwards prostrate him whom the fight of sorrow was not able to overcome, it is permitted by God's dispensation that after his conver-

sion he should be fatigued by the stings of temptations. Already indeed the Red Sea has been passed through conversion; but still in the desert of this present life enemies meet us before our face. Already we leave past sins behind our backs like the extinguished Egyptians; but still hurtful vices meet us like other enemies, that they may block the journey begun to those proceeding to the land of promise. Already prior faults, like following adversaries, have been prostrated by divine power alone, but the stings of temptations, like other enemies, come against our face, which are to be overcome even with our labor. Conversion namely brings forth security, but security is usually the mother of negligence. Lest security, therefore, should generate negligence, it is written: Son, coming to the service of God, stand in justice and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation (Eccli. II, 1). For he does not say, for rest, but for temptation, because our enemy, as long as we are placed in this life, the more he beholds us rebelling against him, the more he contends to expugn us. For he neglects to strike those whom he feels he possesses by quiet right. But against us he is the more vehemently incited, the more he is expelled from our heart as from the right of his own habitation. For the Lord figured this in Himself under a certain dispensation (Matt. IV, 1), who did not permit the devil to tempt Him except after baptism, that He might intimate to us a certain sign of future conversion, that His members, after they should profit towards God, then should tolerate sharper snares of temptations. After the

first turn of sorrow and joy, therefore, which each one recognizes through the study of conversion, this second arises, because lest he should be dissolved by the negligence of security, he is affected by the impulse of temptation. And indeed each one in the very beginning of conversion is mostly received by a great sweetness of consolation, but afterwards experiences the hard labor of probation.

28. Three stages of conversion.---For there are three modes of the converted: beginning, middle, and perfection. In the beginning they find the allurements of sweetness, in the middle time also the contests of temptation, but at the last the perfection of fullness. First, therefore, sweet things receive them, which may console them; afterwards bitter things, which may exercise them; and then at length pleasant and sublime things, which may confirm them. For each man also first cherishes his spouse with sweet allurements, whom however, now joined to him, he proves with harsh reproofs, and when proved possesses her with secure thoughts. Whence also the Israelitish people, when called by God espousing them to the sacred nuptials of the mind from Egypt, received first the allurements of signs as if in the place of earnest-money; but when joined, they are exercised in the desert by probations; but when proved, they are confirmed in the land of promise by the fullness of virtue. Before, therefore, they tasted in miracles what they should desire, afterwards they were tempted in labor if they knew how to keep what they had tasted; at

the last also they deserved to receive more fully what, proved by labors, they kept. So therefore, both a pleasant beginning soothes the life of each one converted, and a harsh middle proves it, and a full perfection afterwards strengthens it.

29. The most peaceful beginnings of conversion receive grave temptations. For often all those converted, in the very entrance of their beginning, receive either a most peaceful tranquility of the flesh, or the gifts of prophecy, or the precepts of doctrine, or miracles of signs, or the grace of healing (1 Cor. 12:10); but after these things they are fatigued by hard probations of temptations, from which temptations as yet, when they began, they believed themselves to be very free. Which is done by the dispensation of divine grace, lest in their beginning they should be touched by the harshness of temptations, because if the bitterness of temptation received their beginnings, they would as easily return to those things which they had left, as they had not departed far; for having first despised vices, they would be folded back as if placed nearby. Whence also it is written: When Pharaoh had let the people go, the Lord led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, which is near, reputing lest peradventure it should repent them, if they should see wars rise up against them, and they should return into Egypt (Exod. 13:17). Therefore, they are withdrawn from war nearby as they go out from Egypt, because to those leaving the world a certain tranquility is first shown, lest, troubled in their very tenderness and beginning, terrified

they should return to that which they have escaped. First, therefore, they feel the sweetness of security, first they are nourished by the quiet of peace; but after having known the sweetness, they now sustain the contests of temptations so much more tolerably, by how much more deeply they have known in God what they should love. Whence also Peter is first led into the mountain, first contemplates the clarity of the Lord's transfiguration (Mark 9:1), and then at length is permitted to be tempted at the interrogation of the maid-servant (Matt. 26:70), so that having been made conscious of himself from infirmity through temptation, he might recur by weeping and loving to that which he had seen; and when the wave of fear snatched him into the sea of sin (Matt. 14:24), there might be the anchor of prior sweetness which might hold him. But often the contests of temptations are as long-lasting as the allurements of beginnings had been long. But often more sweetness is given in the beginning, and less in the labor of probation. Often less in the beginning of sweetness, more in the labor of probation. But never does a disparate perfection of firmness follow the labor of temptation, because according to the sum of the contest, each one is rewarded with the fullness of perfection. But mostly each one converted falls in this, that while he is received with certain gifts of grace, in the sweetness of beginning, he judges himself to have received the confirmation of perfection, and estimates the consummation of fullness, which he is as yet ignorant are allurements of beginning.

Whence it happens that while he is touched by a sudden storm of temptation, he suspects himself despised by God and lost. Who, if he did not everywhere believe his beginning, being as yet placed in prosperity, would prepare his mind for adversity, and would afterwards resist coming vices so much more firmly, by how much more sagaciously he had also foreseen them. Which indeed he tolerates more tranquilly if he foresees them. Yet he does not at all decline their contests, even if he foresees them, because the course of our journey is by no means completed without the dust of temptation.

30. Why temptations after conversion seem sharper than before.---But mostly each one converted is agitated by such stings of temptations, as he remembers himself never to have been struck by before the grace of conversion, not because then this same root of temptation was lacking, but because it did not appear. For the human mind, occupied with many thoughts, often remains in some way unknown to itself, so that it is altogether ignorant of what it tolerates, because while it is scattered through many things, it is removed from the internal knowledge of itself. But if it desires to be free for God, and cuts off the branches of manifold thought, then it freely beholds what proceeds from the inmost root of the flesh. For if a thistle is born in the way, it is trodden by the feet of travelers, and by the very use of those passing its surface is rubbed so that it does not appear. But although the budding thorns above do not appear, yet beneath

the hidden root endures. But if the feet of those passing cease to tread and trample it, soon by rising to the surface it proceeds, and through the thorn whatever lived hidden in the root comes forth into public. So also in the heart of seculars often a certain hidden root of temptations does not easily appear to rise up, because as if placed in the way of actions it is trodden by the foot of passing thoughts, and is pressed by innumerable cares as if by many travelers, lest it be seen. But if through the grace of conversion the crowd of cares is removed from the way of the heart, so that no insolence of actions wears it away, no tumult of thoughts presses it, then that which lay hidden is recognized, then from the root of vices the thorn of temptations pricks freely. Against which it is acted by the hand of one living well that, as far as can be done, it be not covered hidden, but be plucked up by the roots. Until which is done, this thorn so disturbs the mind of each one converted, that often by a sudden stroke he feels himself almost overcome, and he fearfully dreads its wound inflicted to the marrow with a deadly fear.

31. Temptations, when they are despised because of assiduity, are dangerous. God proves by temptations, he does not reprove.---But mostly those same stings of temptations, while they come into use, are dilated, and indeed exist not sharper, but longer. But they pain less, but infect more, because while they adhere longer to the mind, they become so much less to be feared, by how much more accustomed. Among

these things therefore the mind being caught is distended hither and thither, and is dissipated by manifold heats of temptations, and often provoked from here and there, is ignorant which tempting vice it should meet, or what it should first impugn. Whence it mostly happens that while excessively rising vices torment, while they incline the mind of the one repugnant already as if into the lapse of despair, each one converted dreads this very way of sublimity, which he chose for himself for a remedy, and as if led out on high he wavers, who stood more solidly in the bottom. So indeed is he narrowed by the circumambient motions of temptations, that it ought rightly to be said of him: Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and his soul's food before desirable. Or certainly: His soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the deadly. But because the merciful God permits us to be proved by temptations, not reproved, as it is written: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make also with temptation a way out, that you may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10:13), He more quickly succors us with the aid of consolation, and mitigates the rising stings of temptations, and calms the impugning motions of thoughts with internal peace. And soon the soul perceives immense joy from heavenly hope, while it beholds the conquered evil which it tolerated, so that by right it ought to be said of this tempted and delivered man: He shall see His face in jubilation; and, He hath delivered his soul, that it should not go into destruction,

but that living he might see the light. These two turns therefore, that is of conversion and probation, having been transacted through sorrow and joy, there remains a third, of which he may yet sustain the sorrow, and follow the joys.

32. In the third turn the just are aided by the fear of death and the dread of the extreme judgment.---For after the contests of conversion, after the hardship of probation, there yet remains a hard temptation, because one cannot come to the joys of perfect liberty, unless he first pays the debt of the human condition. But each one converted, cautiously solicitous for himself, does not cease silently to consider with himself how strict the eternal Judge approaches, and daily looks forward to his end, and attends what accounts of his life he is to place before the severity of such great justice. Even if he has avoided all evil works which he could understand, yet coming before the strict Judge, he rather dreads those things which he does not understand in himself. For who could consider how many evils we perpetrate through the moments of time by the very inconstant motions of thoughts? For it is easy to avoid perverse works, but it is too difficult to cleanse the heart from illicit thought. And yet it is written: Woe to you that devise that which is unprofitable (Micah 2:1). And again: In the day when the Lord shall judge the secrets of men (Rom. 2:16). Who also premised: Their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also defending (Ibid., 15). And again: Deceitful lips in the heart, and with the heart they have spoken evil (Ps.

11:3). And again: For in your heart you work iniquities in the earth (Ps. 57:3). But the human soul once deserting the state of eternity, having slipped into the flux of temporality, this mutability of alternating motions, which while falling it willingly desired, while it endeavors to rise, it is compelled unwillingly to tolerate. Thence namely it is punished whence it was delighted, because thence being converted it has the labor of contest, whence being perverted it desired the joy of pleasure. Often therefore, even into the elect against their will, there creeps in thought what they indeed skillfully inspect in themselves, and attend before God's eyes of how great guilt it is; and since they always dread strict judgments concerning all these things, then however they vehemently fear these things, when coming to pay the debt of the human condition, they see themselves approach the strict Judge. And the fear becomes so much sharper, by how much more the eternal retribution is nearer. But nothing vain then flies across before the eyes of the heart from the phantasm of thought, because all things being withdrawn from the middle, they consider only themselves and Him whom they approach. The dread increases with the near retribution of justice, and with the urgent dissolution of the flesh, by how much more the strict judgment is already as if touched, by so much more vehemently it is dreaded. And if they remember never to have omitted those things which they know, they fear however those things which they know not, because namely they

cannot altogether judge and comprehend themselves, and with the urgent exit, they are terrified by a more subtle fear. Whence our Redeemer approaching the dissolution of the flesh, and keeping the appearance of His members, being made in agony, began to pray more prolixly (Luke 22:44). For what should He, when He was in agony, ask for Himself, who placed on earth gave celestial things with power? But with death approaching, He expressed the contest of our mind in Himself, who suffer a certain force of terror and of dread, when through the dissolution of the flesh we approach the eternal judgment. Nor indeed is then the soul of anyone unjustly terrified, when after a little while it finds this, which it cannot change for eternity.

33. What is to be dreaded at the imminence of death.---For we consider that we could by no means pass the way of this present life without fault, we consider also that not even this indeed is without some guilt of ours, what we have laudably done, if we be judged with piety removed. For who of us can either surpass, or attain the life of the preceding fathers? And yet David says: Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified (Ps. 143:2). Paul when he said: I am conscious to myself of nothing, cautiously subjoined: Yet am I not hereby justified (1 Cor. 4:4). James says: For in many things we all offend (James 3:2). John says: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). What therefore shall the boards do, if the pillars

tremble? Or how shall the immovable shrubs stand, if even the cedars are shaken by the whirlwind of this dread? Therefore approaching the dissolution of the flesh, sometimes the soul of the just is troubled by the terror of vengeance. Which even if it could know anything tranquil in this life, is shaken by the intervening article of death, so that it ought rightly to be said: Bread becomes abominable to him in his life, and his soul's food before desirable. Or certainly because of the punishment of dread that which is subjoined there: His soul hath drawn near to corruption, and his life to the deadly.

34. The souls of the just are purged from light faults by this dread.---But because the souls of the just are often purged from all light contagions by this very dread of death, and perceive the joys of eternal retribution already from the very dissolution of the flesh, and mostly by a certain contemplation of internal retribution they become cheerful even before they are stripped of the flesh, and while they pay the debt of oldness, they already enjoy the joy of a new gift, it is rightly said: He shall see His face in jubilation. Or certainly: He hath delivered his soul, that it should not go into destruction, but that living he might see the light. For the soul of the just beholds the face of God in jubilation, because it perceives as much of internal joy as even when assumed it could scarcely contain. There therefore living it sees the light, because it fixes the spiritual eye into the rays of the eternal sun. There living it sees the light, because all mutability of vicissitude and over-

shadowing already trodden down, it adheres to the truth of eternity; and by adhering to it whom it beholds, it rises to the similitude of unchangeableness, and assumes in itself the unconvertible appearance of its Author while it beholds it. For that which has fallen to mutability through itself, is formed to the state of immutability by seeing immutability. Therefore Elihu, concerning this afflicted and delivered man, because he first expressed the bitterness of sorrow and afterwards the joys of consolation, aptly subjoined: Behold, all these things God worketh three times for every one, namely of conversion, of probation, and of death, because through these three, both with hard stings of sorrow he is first affected, and afterwards refreshed with great joys of security. And because the mind of each elect is worn away by the same three turns, that is either by the labor of conversion, or by the temptation of probation, or by the dread of dissolution, and having been purged by that very attrition is delivered, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 30.---To recall their souls from corruption, and to enlighten them with the light of the living.

35. The present light is of the dying; the eternal light, of the living.---For the light of the dying is that which we behold with bodily eyes. But those who yet live to this world are darkened with the light of the dying. But those are enlightened with the light of the living who, having despised

temporal light, recur to the splendor of internal clarity, so that they may live there where they may see the true light by sensing it, where light is not one thing and life another, but where light itself is life, where light so circumscribes us externally as to fill us internally; so fills us internally as, being uncircumscribed externally, to circumscribe us. They are enlightened therefore by this light of the living, which they then behold so much more subtly, by how much more purely they now live towards it.

36. The proud are accustomed to mix vain and swollen things with true and mystical ones.--- Elihu has brought forth great and very strong things, but each arrogant man is accustomed to have this as his own, that while he speaks true and mystical things, suddenly through the swelling of the heart he mixes in certain vain and proud things. For he desires to please outwardly in that which he truthfully senses; and thence he soon becomes vain from the truth, whence through the type of elation he recedes from the inmost. For because being learned he seeks to be approved outwardly, he loses within the fullness by which he was being taught. Whence also Elihu, whom we have often already said holds the type of the arrogant, after he digested many depths of wisdom, suddenly after those same true and mystical sentences, being puffed up by the pride of knowledge, is extolled, by the merit of which inflation his sense is soon derived to vain words. For he subjoined, saying:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERSES 31-33.---Attend, Job, and hear me, and hold thy peace while I speak. But if thou hast anything to say, answer me: speak, for I would have thee appear just. But if thou hast not, hear me; hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom.

37. When they speak anything humbly, they do not persevere long in the appearance of that same humility.---What kind of man he has himself within himself he manifests by this speech, by which he says: Attend, Job, and hear me, and hold thy peace while I speak. For it is immense pride to exact reverence from a senior to himself, and to command silence to one better than himself. But because just preachers while they reprove any, often through the grace of humility return to the inmost of their thoughts, and in that very thing which they reprove, inquire lest they be deceived in anything, and grant license to those reproved that if they sense anything more just for themselves they may confess it, this sometimes also the arrogant desire to imitate. For for a little while elation having been postponed in words, they seek as if the justice of those whom they reprove, if by chance they might be able to find it, not because they so sense, but because they desire to be adorned through the appearance of humility. For they fear lest, because they are proud and swollen, they should seem to be so. Whence Elihu immediately subjoined, saying: But if thou hast anything to say, answer me; speak, for I would have thee appear just. But be-

cause he did not bring these things forth from the heart, he did not wait to hear what he had sought. For he immediately subjoined: But if thou hast not, hear me; hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom. For those who truthfully seek to hear what is just, equanimously wait to hear what they seek. But Elihu, because he did not truthfully bring forth words of requisition, did not permit to be said what he had sought, but soon what he carried within erupted, and he showed what kind of man he held himself in his eyes, saying: Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom. For arrogant men when they sound anything humbly, do not long endure in the appearance of that same humility. When peradventure they seek that they may hear, soon by speaking they meet lest they be taught, because the intention of ostentation which rises from the root of the heart more quickly compresses the surface of the voice which they had brought forth, and they prove that same form of humility assumed species-deep to be so much more quickly foreign, by how much they cannot hold it longer. Behold Elihu when he seeks justice that he may learn, promises that he may teach. Behold as if seeking what is just he had sounded something level with the tongue; but soon he could not hide this which swelled high in the conscience. For suddenly he subjoined: Hold thy peace, and I will teach thee wisdom. But because all arrogant men are puffed up by the type of pride in that which they bring forth, and, as if placed on high so assume the appearance of teachers as if their words are poured

out from heaven by a certain deigning upon unworthy men, well a verse is interposed by the writer of this history, by which it is said:

CHAPTER XIV.

CAP. XXXIV, VERSE 1.---Elihu also pronouncing, spoke these things also.

38. The just speak from the root of humility; otherwise the iniquitous.---For what is shown by the word of this "pronouncing" (declaring), but the inflation of elation, so that the words which came from the deep root of pride, should proceed with a certain as it were loftiness and distinction. So namely are all arrogant men accustomed to preach? For they bring forth with a certain pride that which they believe themselves uniquely to have understood; and peradventure they then preach humility, when through the type of elation they show examples of pride. Whence it happens that their preaching cannot remain concordant with itself, because that which they sow speaking right, they impugn perversely swelling. For to humble hearers they grant their words not by compassionating, but scarcely by deigning. For they estimate themselves placed far on high, and upon those same hearers of theirs as if preceding they scarcely deign to incline the respect of doctrine from the summit. But on the contrary the words of the just come from the root of humility, that they may be able to bear the fruit of piety: and whatever healthy things they could, they subminister not by swelling, but by compassionating. For through words of charity they so

transform either themselves into their hearers, or their hearers into themselves, as if both those through these teach this which they hear, and these through those learn this which by teaching they bring forth. Therefore Elihu holding the type of the arrogant, and beginning with the ostentation of pronouncing, let us hear what he says. There follows:

CHAPTER XV.

VERSES 2, 3.---Hear, ye wise men, my words, and harken unto me, ye learned. For the ear trieth words, and the throat discerneth meats by the taste.

39. Proud teachers do not seek to make their hearers wise, but to ostentate their own wisdom.---As if he would say: As neither the ear discerneth meats, nor the throat words; so neither does any foolish man understand the sentence of a wise man. Ye wise and learned, therefore, hear what I say, who are able to know the things which shall have been said. Let us see therefore how much he swells, who estimates his words as fitly heard only by the wise. But a true preacher of wisdom says: I am a debtor to the wise and to the unwise (Rom. 1:14). But on the contrary, the arrogant man in his preaching waits only for the ears of the wise, because he does not preach for this reason, that he may be able to make any persons wise, but he seeks the wise for this reason, that he may be able to show by being proud that which he has felt. For as has been said above, he does not desire to erudite them, but to show himself;

nor does he consider how just they who hear may become, but how learned he himself may appear when he is heard by the learned. Because indeed no one would admit the preaching of the arrogant, if they did not also mingle something of the image of humility, well did Elihu, after he extolled himself by tumid words, again condescend as it were to the concord of equality, saying:

CHAPTER XVI

VERSE 4.---Let us choose to us judgment, and let us see among ourselves what is the better.

40. They sometimes pretend humility, but feigned.---But whether he sought this judgment from a humble heart, we easily know, if we weigh his subsequent words. There follows:

VERSES 5, 6.---For Job hath said: I am just, and God hath subverted my judgment. For in judging me there is a lie; and my violent arrow is without any sin.

They charge the just with false crimes.---He complains that blessed Job said these things, which nevertheless, because he by no means said them, the required words of the sacred history testify. But he who had sought judgment equally, from the fault which he feigned, forthwith promulgates a sentence. For there follows:

VERSES 7, 8.---What man is there, like Job, who drinketh up derision like water, who goeth with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with impious men?

Behold, seeking judgment he brought forth a judgment, and after his allegation, no sentence

of blessed Job being expected, he judged him worthy of damnation from the society of the reprobate. For he says: What man is there, like Job? That namely we may understand, none. And he subjoins: Who drinketh up derision like water. For water when it is drunk, is so liquidly taken, that for swallowing it is retarded by no fatness of its own. But to drink derision as water is to mock God without any obstacle of thought, so that in that in which the tongue or conscience is proud, no trepidation may contradict. But how much this sentence of his upon blessed Job exorbitates from the path of truth, we know by that attestation of the Lord, by which He says to the devil: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth (Job 1:8)? Behold, him whom Truth says to be just without comparison, Elihu asserts to be a sinner without comparison. But these things are accustomed to be proper to arrogant preachers, that they desire to correct even their afflicted hearers more strictly, than to refresh them blandly. For they study more, that they may increase evils by upbraiding, than confirm good things by praising. For they desire to appear superior, and they rejoice more when wrath elevates their mind, than when charity equals it. They always wish to find what they may rigidly strike by upbraiding. Whence it is written: In the mouth of a fool is the rod of pride (Prov. 14:3), because namely he knows how to strike rigidly, but knows not how to compassionately humble.

41. Holy preachers, when they are about to correct others, send blandishments before. Like skilled physicians, they first feel, afterwards they strike.---Just preachers are also accustomed to correct their hearers by upbraiding, they are accustomed to rage against their vices with strict upbraiding. Whence it is written: The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened on high (Eccl. 12:11). Rightly moreover their words are called nails, because they know not how to feel the faults of delinquents, but to prick. Were not the words of John nails, when he said: Ye offspring of vipers, who hath shown you to flee from the wrath to come (Matt. 3:7)? Were not the words of Stephen nails, when he said: Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:51)? Were not the words of Paul nails, when he said: O senseless Galatians, who hath fascinated you (Gal. 3:1)? And again when he said to the Corinthians: For whereas there is among you zeal and contention, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man (1 Cor. 3:3)? But it is necessary that we see cautiously that just preachers in those very persons whom they correct, when on another part they find peradventure something of good operation, with how much dispensation they descend to those same words of upbraiding. Behold Paul teaching the Corinthians, and beholding them in the fault of division, began, saying: I give thanks to my God always for you, in the grace of God which is given to you in Christ Jesus, that in all things ye are made rich in Him (1 Cor. 1:4). Much surely he praised those whom he said were rich

in all things in Christ. And behold yet he multiplies blandishments, saying: In every word and in all knowledge, as the testimony of Christ is confirmed in you (Ibid., 5). The testimony of Christ is confirmed in you, he said, as if they had by work completed what they had learned by doctrine. And soon in the consummation of praise he subjoined: So that nothing is wanting to you in any grace, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. I beseech thee, Paul, with these so many favors now insinuate whither thou tendest. And behold a little after there follows: But I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all say that same thing, and that there be no schisms among you. For it hath been signified to me of you, my brethren, by those who are of Chloe, that there are contentions among you (Ibid., 10). Of which contentions a little after he added, saying: For whereas there is among you zeal and contention, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man (1 Cor. 3:3)? Behold with what praises he descends to open words of correction; behold in the heart of the hearers with how bland a hand of favor he opened the way of strict upbraiding. For first he studied to bind the arms of the proud through the chains of blandishments, that afterwards he might have been able to cut the wound of pride with the iron of correction. There were surely in the Corinthians both things which ought to have been praised, and things which ought to have been argued. A skilled physician therefore first felt by praising the healthy members which were around the wound, and af-

terwards by striking transfixed the putrid hollow of the wound. The rule of doctrine has therefore in holy preachers its weight apt for both, that they may both nourish right things by favoring, and cut off perverse things by animadverting.

42. It is one thing to strike when justice goads, another when pride inflates. What mode is to be kept in correction. The proud are ignorant of this. But sometimes even just preachers strike rigidly. But it is one thing when justice goads, another when pride inflates. The just, when they correct severely, do not lose the grace of internal sweetness. For often for refraining the inquietude of the perverse they assume the hardness of strict vigor, but within they are liquefied by the fire of charity, and they burn with the love of those against whom they rage with harsh correction; and they also humble themselves to them intrinsically in the secret of the heart, whom outwardly they chastise by as it were despising with the goads of hard animadversions. But for the most part they both despise by not despising, and despair by not despairing, that they may make them so much more quickly tremble and leap back from fault, as they now show as it were more nearly the pit of death. Often also by a certain decent moderation they indicate their own faults before their disciples, that they hearing may learn how they may subtly reprehend themselves for their own actions. But with so much dispensation they temper themselves, that neither when they erect themselves are they intrinsically rigid, nor again when they humble

themselves are they outwardly remiss, because both in discipline they keep humility, and in humility discipline. Paul held discipline, when he said to the Corinthians: For whereas there is among you zeal and contention, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man (1 Cor. 3:3)? But he did not lose humility in discipline, because by deprecating he sent before, saying: I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye all say that same thing, and that there be no schisms among you (1 Cor. 1:10). Again he held humility, when speaking to the same Corinthians a little more widely peradventure than he had wished, he reprehended himself, saying: I am become a fool (2 Cor. 12:11). But he did not lose discipline in this humility, because he immediately added: Ye have compelled me. He exhibited an example of great humility, when he said to his disciples: For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord, and ourselves your servants through Christ (2 Cor. 4:5). But in this humility he did not lose the justice of discipline, who says to the same delinquents: What will ye, shall I come to you in a rod (1 Cor. 4:21)? and the rest. Holy preachers therefore know how to temper the art of mastery with both moderation, and when they find the guilt of delinquents, they know how now to correct severely, now to deprecate humbly. But when arrogant men desire to imitate them, they take from them the harsh words of correction, and they know not how to truly take from them the prayers of humility. For they can be more terrible than mild; and therefore they learn whence they

may erect themselves, and they neglect to learn that they may submit their mind. And when they know not how to admonish delinquents placidly, by the excessive use of rigor through the wrath of invective, they are unbridled even against those who act rightly. Of whom this Elihu holding the species, does not refresh blessed Job, but upbraids him, saying: What man is there, like Job, who drinketh up derision like water, who goeth with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with impious men? And because pride is always alien from the truth, soon also he breaks forth into false things, saying:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 9.---For he said: A man shall not please God, even if he shall have run with Him.

43. Pride is always alien from the truth.---Which surely because he by no means said it, whosoever reads the words of blessed Job acknowledges. But he who for this reason speaks, that he may be proud by showing himself, what wonder if he feigns in another what he may reprehend? For how may he cohere with truth in words of upbraiding, whom within himself the tumor of the mind separates far from that same truth? There follows:

VERSE 10.---Therefore, ye wise men, hear me.

Behold again inflated with the fastidiousness of pride, he seeks only those who, as it were by understanding worthily, are able to follow him, and thus what he felt breaks out, saying:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERSES 10 and 11.---Far be impiety from God, and iniquity from the Omnipotent. For the work of a man He shall render to him, and according to the ways of each He shall restore to them.

44. God in this life does not always render to each according to their works.---Well he said, because in the omnipotent God iniquity or impiety is not. But in this life by no means is this always done, which he subjoined, that He renders to each according to his work and according to his own ways. For He even gratuitously prevents many perpetrating illicit and perverse things, and converts them to holy works, and corrects some devoted to right acts, a scourge intervening, and thus afflicts those who please Him as if they displeased, Solomon attesting, who says: There are just men to whom many things happen, as if they had done the works of the impious; and there are impious men who are so secure, as if they had the deeds of the just (Eccl. 8:14). Which doubtless omnipotent God dispenses with inestimable piety, that both scourges may torture the just, lest they extol their works; and the unjust at least may pass through this life without punishment, because by acting badly they hasten to the torments which are without end. For that sometimes the just are by no means scourged according to their works, is shown by this very history which we are treating. For neither had the same blessed Job been scourged for a fault, who before the goad of the scourge was praised

by the Judge Himself attesting. More truly therefore would Elihu say, if he had said: Because in the omnipotent God impiety and iniquity is not, even when He does not seem to render to men according to their own ways. For even that which is not understood by us, is brought forth from the not unjust balance of a hidden judgment. But because arrogant preachers, while they scatter many vain things, also often bring forth true and solid things, Elihu rightly subjoins:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 12.---For truly God shall not condemn in vain, nor shall the Omnipotent subvert judgment.

45. The judgments of God are just, although hidden.---To the devil the Lord says: Thou hast moved me against him, to afflict him in vain (Job 2:3). But Elihu says: That the Lord shall not condemn in vain. Which surely is believed to discordant from the sayings of Truth, unless it be weighed by subtle consideration. For it is one thing to condemn, another to afflict. He afflicted him therefore according to something in vain, but He does not condemn in vain. Or had He not according to something in vain afflicted Job, when vice was not being deleted, but merit was being increased? For He cannot condemn in vain, because condemnation cannot be made in part for something, which namely in the end punishes all that which each one here has iniquitously committed. Nor does omnipotent God subvert judgment, because although the things

which we suffer seem to be less right, yet they are rightly decreed in the hidden examination. There follows:

CHAPTER XX

[Rec. XI].

VERSE 13.---Whom hath He appointed another over the earth, or whom hath He set over the world, which He hath made?

46. He who through Himself founded the world, through Himself also governs it.---That you may namely understand "none." For He governs through Himself the world, which He founded through Himself; nor does He need the help of others for governing, who did not need it for making. But these things are collected for this reason, that it may clearly indicate that since omnipotent God does not neglect to govern through Himself that which He created, what He well created He surely well governs, because what He piously founded He does not impiously dispose; and He who cared for things not yet made that they might be, does not desert those which have been made. Since therefore He is present in governing who stood as author in creation, therefore He does not pass over the care for us. Whence also He aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 14.---If He direct His heart toward him, He will draw his spirit and breath to Himself.

47. He directs the crooked hearts of men, by raising them to Himself when He wills.---The heart is crooked when it seeks after the lowest things, it is directed when it is raised up to the highest. If therefore man directs his heart to the Lord, the Lord draws his spirit and breath to Himself. He namely puts "spirit" for internal thoughts, but "breath," which is drawn through the body, for external actions. For God to draw the spirit and breath of man to Himself is to change both our interior and exterior things for the conversion of his desire, so that nothing exterior may now please the mind, nothing lower the flesh, or if it seeks after them, it may not attempt to obtain them; but all that man is, may both fervently desire Him interally from whom he is, and may constrain himself externally by subduing himself. Whence also He aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER XXII

[Rec. XII].

VERSE 15.---All flesh shall fail together, and man shall return into ashes.

48. Then flesh shall fail, and man returns into ashes through humility. For all flesh fails together, when it now serves none of its own habits, because the presiding spirit restrains all its flux, and by a certain sword of its own strictness (districtionis) kills all that which was living evilly in it. Surely with this sword of discipline Jeremiah had killed himself, when he said: After Thou didst convert me, I did penance; and after Thou didst

show to me, I struck my thigh (Jerem. 31:19). For what is understood by the thigh, if not the pleasure of the flesh? And what is it that he says: After Thou didst show to me, I struck my thigh, if not that after he saw heavenly things spiritually, he extinguished all that which was living carnally in himself below, so that the more the highest things were opened, the more the lowest things which he had held might not be free? For by as much as anyone begins to live higher, by so much also he begins to die below. For according to the affection of carnal operation, all the flesh of Paul had died together, when he said: I live, but now not I, but Christ liveth in me (Galat. 2:20).

[Vet. XXVII.] 49. The sinner forgets his mortality, unlike the just.---Well also did Elihu subjoin in this place: And man shall return into ashes. For everyone placed in sin forgets his mortality, and does not remember that he is earth, while he is still puffed up through pride. But after the grace of his conversion, when he is touched by the spirit of humility, he remembers that he is nothing else than ashes. Already David had returned into ashes, when he said: Remember, O Lord, that we are dust (Psalm 102:14). Abraham had returned into ashes, saying: I will speak to my Lord, since I am dust and ashes (Gen. 18:27). And if death had not yet dissolved the living flesh in the earth, yet they were this in their own estimation, because they foresaw without doubt what they were to be. Hence it is said elsewhere: Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail, and return into their dust (Psalm 103:29). But what spirit, if

not the spirit of pride is named? Let their spirit therefore be taken away that they may fail, that is, the spirit of pride being withdrawn, they may know that they are nothing of themselves. And let them return into dust, that is, let them be humbled from their weak condition. Because of this dust, to the memory of which those who consider themselves are recalled, it is said through Wisdom: The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds (Wisd. 3:7). For holy men, while they are mixed with sinners, kindle them with the fire of their examples, and reduce all that in which they shine into ashes, because consumed by the flame of piety, while they behold the weakness of their condition, they know that they are nothing else than embers, so that, resolved from the hardness of their pride, they may say through penance that which we brought forward above: Remember, O Lord, that we are dust (Psalm 102:14). Well therefore is it said that when the Lord draws the spirit of man to Himself, all flesh shall fail together, and man shall return into ashes. [Rec. XIII.] These things which Elihu says are both true and great; but because he soon became evilly swollen from that which he felt well, he betrays it by the following words, saying:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XXVIII].

VERSE 16.---If thou hast therefore understanding, hear what is said, and hearken to the voice of my speech.

50. The proud by seeing more grow dark and blind. The more we suffer the vice of pride, the less we see. All arrogant persons have this as their own, that when they perhaps perceive something acute, they soon break out therefrom into the vice of elation, and despise the senses of all in comparison with their own, and prefer themselves in their own judgment to the merits of others. To which wretched persons it happens that by seeing more they grow dark, because while they attend to subtle things, they know not how to behold themselves; and by as much as they perceive understanding more acutely, by so much they fall more miserably through pride. Who would indeed well behold subtle things, if they saw themselves in that which they bring forward. For Elihu had said above: If thou hast what to speak, answer me: speak, for I will thee to appear just (Job 33:32). But now he says: If thou hast understanding, hear what is said. Behold how elation profits for a little while through the increase of words. Above he doubted if blessed Job could bring forward what is just; but now he discusses if he can at least hear this which is said. There he said: If thou hast what to speak, answer me. As if he said: Say something, if yet thou canst be worthy who speakest. But here he says: If thou hast understanding, hear what is said. As if he should openly say: Hear me, if yet thou canst be worthy who hearest. These are the daily failures

which occur in the hearts of the reprobate, by which they descend incessantly to worse things, because while they incautiously neglect smaller things, they break out perniciously to greater. Already also this had been of pride, that he doubted that blessed Job could speak that which is just. But while he neglects to consider this in himself, he arrives at worse things, so that he not only doubts that what is just can be said by him, but also despairs that he who says just things can be understood by him. Whence the vice of pride is to be cut off soon from its very root, so that when it arises secretly, it may then be vigilantly cut away, lest it flourish by progress, lest it be strengthened by use. For each one with difficulty finds inveterate pride in himself, because namely the more we suffer this vice, the less we see. For so pride is generated in the mind, as dimness (caligo) in the eyes. By as much as this dilates itself more widely, by so much more vehemently it narrows the light. For a little while therefore elation grows in the heart, and when it has extended itself more vastly, it utterly closes the eye of the oppressed mind, so that the captive soul can both suffer the pride of elation, and yet cannot see that which it suffers. But because arrogant men sometimes, as we have said, perceive right things not rightly, and have known how to find good things, but despise to bring these forward well, Elihu after the pride of elation, in which he had said: If thou hast understanding, hear what is said, subjoins saying:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Vet. XXIX].

VERSE 17.---Can he that loveth not judgment be healed? And how dost thou so far condemn Him that is just?

51. In all things which we say we must attend to: what, to whom, when, and how it is said. He brought forward indeed a good sentence, but it was not to be brought forward to blessed Job. For in everything which is said we must especially behold what is said, to whom it is said, when it is said, and how it is said. But Elihu attended to what he said, but he did not attend to whom he said it. For blessed Job loved judgment, because he knew how to weigh his causes with the Lord subtly. Nor had he condemned Him who is just, but he was seeking with humility, while placed in grief, why he had been struck without sin. He loves judgment whoever subtly discusses his own ways, and having entered the secret chamber of the heart, weighs what the Lord bestows on him, and what he himself owes to the Lord. How had blessed Job not done this, who was offering such frequent sacrifices for the expiation of his sons even for their thoughts? Because therefore Elihu said that he who loves not judgment cannot be healed, reproving blessed Job that he loved not judgment, and because he had condemned Him who is just, he immediately subjoins the justice of the same Just One, that is, of the Lord, saying:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XIV]

VERS. 18.---He that saith to the king: apostate; he that calleth the leaders impious.

52. He is an apostate who is set over others not that he may profit them, but that he may dominate. --- We often know that many who are set over others exact an inordinate fear from their subjects, and wish to be venerated not so much on account of the Lord as for the Lord. For inwardly they extol themselves with the tumor of the heart, and despise all subjects in comparison with themselves, nor do they consult by condescending, but press down by dominating, because forsooth they raise themselves up with high thought, and do not recognize themselves as equal to those whom it happens they are set over. Against this tumor it is said by the book of Ecclesiasticus: Have they made thee a leader? be not extolled, but be among them as one of them (Ecclus. 32:1). The Lord, rebuking this tumor in the pastors by the prophet, saith: But with austerity did ye rule over them, and with power (Ezek. 34:4). For the very good things which they say to their subjects they proffer by dominating rather than by consulting, because forsooth they estimate themselves to have cast themselves down if they say anything to them as it were on equal terms. For they rejoice in the singularity of the height, and not in the equality of condition. But because the Lord subtly weighs these swelling hearts of rulers, it is well said against them: He

that saith to the king: apostate. For every proud ruler as often slips into the fault of apostasy, as he, delighted to be set over men, rejoices in the singularity of his honor. For he does not consider under whom he is, and he exults that he is as it were not equal to his equals. But whence does this root of vices sprout in the heart of those ruling, but from the imitation of him who, having despised the societies of angels, said: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the Most High (Isa. 14:14)? Because therefore every ruler as often as he is extolled in that he rules others, so often by the lapse of pride he is separated from the service of the supreme Ruler; and when he despises his subjects equal to himself, he does not recognize His dominion over himself under which all are equal, it is rightly said: He that saith to the king: apostate.

[Vet. XXX.] 53. He is impious if, by the example of his pride, he draws his subjects to a precipice. --- But because when they are set over by dominating, by the example of their pride they draw their subjects to impiety, it is aptly subjoined: He that calleth the leaders impious. For they would lead to the way of piety, if they showed examples of humility to the eyes of their subjects. [Rec. XV.] But the leader is impious who wanders from the path of truth; and while he himself rushes headlong, he invites those following to steep places. The leader is impious who by examples of tumor shows the way of error. Paul feared to be a leader of impiety, when he repressed the height of his power, saying: Nor seeking glory of men, neither

of you, nor of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ, but we were gentle among you (1 Thess. 2:6). He had become a little one in the midst of them, because he feared lest if he should claim the honor of his height among the disciples, he should show examples of elation. Doubtless he feared lest while he himself sought for himself the power of pastoral might, the subject flock should follow through steep places, and he should lead those following to impiety, who had undertaken the office of piety.

54. Let him shine before his subjects with the splendor of virtues. Let him prudently and humbly correct their faults.

Whence it is necessary that he who is set over others should skilfully attend to what examples he offers to his subjects; and let him know that he lives for as many as he is set over; and let him vigilantly inspect lest he should swell in that in which he has been preferred; lest he should exact the rights of due power more immoderately; lest the right of discipline should be changed into the rigor of pride; and whence he was able to restrain his subjects from perversity, he might therefrom rather pervert the hearts of those beholding; lest, as has been said, he should stand as a leader of impiety through the office of piety. For he ought not to undertake the leadership of men, who knows not how to go before men by living well; lest he who is chosen for this, that he may correct the faults of others, should himself commit what he ought to have cut away. From here and from

there therefore let those who are set over others look around themselves, that they may live for themselves and for their subjects, so that the good which they do, they may both hide within the chamber of the mind, and yet impart from it examples of right operation for the progress of those following, so that they may correct the faults of their subjects when they notice them, and yet not swell through the force of that same animadversion, so that they may tolerate some things lightly corrected, and yet not dissolve the bonds of discipline with that same leniency, so that they may dissimulate some things by tolerating them, and yet not permit them to grow by dissimulating. These things are laborious, and difficult to keep unless divine grace support. For it is rightly said concerning the advent of the strict Judge through the book of Wisdom: Horribly and quickly He shall appear, because a most severe judgment shall be made for those who are set over (Wisd. 6:6). Because therefore most frequently through the power of government one breaks out into the fault of elation, and before the strict Judge that elation is esteemed as impiety, it is well said of the Lord through Elihu: Who calleth leaders impious. For while they are proud of the leadership itself, they draw their subjects to impiety by their own example.

55. Judging others, let him assidously present himself before the supreme Judge. Power accepted is to be esteemed not as honor, but as a burden. The infinite evils of ambition. Pastoral

care is neither to be embraced out of cupidity, nor to be deferred out of fear.

Whence it is greatly to be cared for that he who is preferred for ruling men, should preside within himself in the chamber of the mind on the chair of humility. And when he is assisted from without by others while judging, let him incessantly behold with a vigilant eye, before what Judge he himself must one day assist to be judged concerning these, so that as much as he now trembles more solicitously before Him whom he does not see, so much more securely he may discern Him when he shall have seen Him. [Rec. XVI.] Let him therefore weigh, who perhaps scarcely suffices for satisfying the strict Judge concerning his own soul alone, that as many subjects as he is set over for ruling, he has, so to speak, so many souls alone at the time of rendering account before Him. Which thought surely, if it assiduously dries up the mind, presses down all swelling of pride. And the provident ruler will now no more be called either an apostate king or an impious leader, by as much as power which has been accepted is esteemed by him with solicitous thought not as honor, but as a burden. For he who now likes to be a judge, will not like then to see the Judge. For faults cannot be numbered, which are perpetrated by the love of having power. For then only is power well wielded, when it is retained not by loving, but by fearing. Which that it may be able to be rightly administered, it is necessary first that not cupidity, but necessity should impose it. But when perceived it ought

neither to be deserted for fear, nor to be embraced from lust; lest either anyone should be more evilly proud as if out of humility, if by fleeing he should contemn the order of divine dispensation; or he should therefrom cast off the yoke of the supreme Ruler, by which a private government over others delights him. Power therefore when it is perceived, is not to be loved out of lust, but to be tolerated out of long-suffering, so that it may be therefrom then healthily light for judgment, whence it is now patientsly heavy for ministry.

Book twenty

FIVE.

In the explanation of chapter 34, from verse 19 to 30, it is discussed concerning the punishment of the reprobate and the hidden judgments of God.

CHAPTER ONE.

1. The error of those who attend to what they have in men, not what they are. The quality of the human condition itself indicates how far it stands before other things. For the reason conferred on man asserts how much rational nature precedes all things which lack either life, or sense, or reason. And yet, because we close our eyes from internal and invisible things, and feed on visible things, for the most part we venerate man not from that which he himself is, but from those things which are around him. And when we do not behold what he himself is, but what he can do, in the acceptance of persons, we are led not by persons, but by adjacent things. And so it happens that he also comes into contempt within us, who is honored without, because while he is held honorable for those things which are around him, he is postponed to his own things in our

examination. But omnipotent God interrogates the life of men from the quality of merits alone; and often He punishes more from that source, whence He conferred greater things for ministry here, Truth attesting, which says: To whom much is given, much shall be required of him (Luke 12:48). Whence it is well said now through Elihu:

CHAPTER II.

CH. XXXIV, VERSE 19.---Who accepteth not the person of princes, nor hath known the tyrant when he disputed against the poor.

2. There is no acceptance of persons with God. But through the prince or tyrant any proud man can be understood; but through the poor man the humble is designated. He does not therefore know the tyrant disputing against the poor, because He declares that He knows not in judgment all the proud who now depress the life of the humble, saying: I know you not whence you are (Luke 13:25). And because He so powerfully destroys when He wills, as He powerfully created when He willed, it is subjoined by aptly reasoning: IBID.---For all are the work of His hands. [Rec. II.] And soon it is subjoined:

CHAPTER III.

VER. 20.---In a moment shall they die, and at midnight shall the people be troubled, and shall pass away.

3. The death of all the wicked is sudden, because it is not foreseen. However late the wicked

may be taken from this life, they are taken suddenly and unexpectedly, because they know not how to foresee their end by thinking upon it. That is sudden to a man, which he could not think of beforehand. That foolish rich man was suddenly taken, who left the barns which he was preparing, and found the place of hell which he did not foresee. He was exercising his soul by thought for one thing, but he sent it forth by sentence for another; he contemplated one thing while living, he experienced another while dying. For he left temporal things long treated of, and found eternal things unhoped for. Whence for this ignorance of his blindness it is well said to him by the divine sentence: "This night do they require thy soul of thee" (Luke 12:20). It was taken away in the night, because it was lost in the darkness of the heart. It was taken away in the night, because it would not have the light of consideration, that it might foresee what it could suffer. Whence the Apostle Paul well says to the disciples thinking of the future: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (1 Thess. 5:4). For the day of departure overtakes them as a thief in the night, when it casts out the souls of the foolish not foreseeing the future. Whence here also it is aptly subjoined: "And at midnight shall the people be troubled, and shall pass away." Being troubled at midnight they pass away, who being humiliated in the darkness of their negligence are snatched away. Then shall

they be troubled by the sentence of the Judge, who now neglect to be troubled by the humility of the heart. But the elect, lest they be troubled against their will in death, are troubled of their own accord in humility. Whence it is said to Holy Church concerning the converted offspring of the persecutors: "The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come crouching unto thee" (Isai. 60:14).

4. The life of man after sin is a transition: it was otherwise before sin. And well concerning the dying peoples he says not, They shall pass, but "they shall pass through," because even by living temporally we daily tend to the end, and we pass through the present life as if by subduing a certain way. For this very thing, that they who are about to die live, is as it were to go to death. And how many days of life we pass through, so many steps we approach as if on a journey to the proposed place. For the very increases are decreases of times, because the spaces of our life as soon as they have begun to be, begin now not to be. [Vet. II.] But the first man was so created, that while he remained, times should pass away, lest he himself should pass away with times. For he stood while the moments ran down, because he did by no means tend to the term of life through the increments of days. He stood so much the more robustly as he more closely cleaved to Him who always stands. But when the forbidden thing happened, soon, having offended the Creator, he began to go with time. The state of immortality being lost, the course of mortality absorbed him (Gen. 3:4). And while he was drawn by youth to

old age, by old age to death, he learned by passing what he was by standing. From whose stock because we are born, we retain the bitterness of the root as if in a branch. For because we derive our origin from him, we sort his course by being born, so that by that very daily moment in which we live we incessantly pass away from life, and the space of living to us whence it is believed to grow, thence it decreases. Because therefore we daily tend to the sum of dying through the increments of living, well concerning the dying it is by no means said they shall pass, but "they shall pass through," because they pass even while they live, but they pass through while they die. It follows.

CHAPTER IV.

Ibid.---And they shall take away the violent man without hand.

5. The unforeseen hand of God snatches the wicked to punishment. Understand the divine judgments. But without hand shall they take away him who was violent with his hand. Without hand shall they take him away, because forsooth by a sudden exit pressing he is invisibly snatched away, who was visibly snatching. He himself saw those whom he snatched, but who snatches him in death he does not see. Without hand therefore the violent is taken away, because he does not behold his snatcher, and yet he is led. Whom a stricter sentence follows, as a great patience has been prolonged to him while sinning, because the divine severity punishes the wicked more sharply, the longer it has borne with him.

But it often happens, that while the heavenly clemency waits for sinners, they break forth into greater blindness of heart. Whence it is written: "Knowest thou not, that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2:4). And behold while any violent man snatches whom he can, while he oppresses the weak, and while he long exercises all that he wickedly desires, because he is not suddenly smitten, but his punishment is deferred to the end, his most wicked action is not believed to be seen by God. Whence aptly after he has related his destruction, he immediately joins concerning the Lord, saying:

CHAPTER V.

VER. 21.---For His eyes are upon the ways of men, and He considereth all their steps.

6. Foolishly and impiously the sinner thinks from the patience of God, that his crimes are either not seen by God, or are approved. Punishment will open the eyes which fault closed. For then He was by no means believed to consider, when that violent man perpetrated all the evil he could with impunity. God was estimated not to discern the acts of the unjust, because He deferred to damn justly; and His great patience was put for a certain negligence. The wicked man also himself so often believed that he was not seen by God in his sins, as often as he sinned

with impunity. To whom it is said by a certain wise man: "Say not, I have sinned, and what harm hath happened unto me?" (Ecclus. 5:4). He will not amend the iniquity for which he has not borne worthy punishment; and by what he was piously expected, by that he was instigated to sin wickedly; and despising the long-suffering of the heavenly patience, whence he ought to have corrected his fault, thence he heaped it up, as is said through the same Job: "God gave him place for repentance, and he abuseth it in pride" (Job 24:23). Often also, because he does not suddenly receive the punishment which he deserves, he does not estimate this very thing which he does to displease God. [Vet. III.] Let him go therefore now, and break forth into any blasphemies by presuming; let him fulfill the iniquities of his pleasures, let him snatch the things of others, let him be satiated with the oppression of the innocent, and because he is not yet smitten, let him estimate his ways either not to be seen by the Lord, or what is worse, to be approved! There will come surely, there will come an eternal and sudden percussion; and then he will know that all things are beheld by God, when he sees himself damned for the retribution of all by an unforeseen exit. Then in his punishment he will open his eyes, which he long held closed in fault. Then he will feel that the true Judge has considered all things, when he can no longer by feeling evade the merit of his evils. The wicked man therefore who was long waited for, was therefore suddenly taken away, because "the eyes of the

Lord are upon the ways of men, and He considereth all their steps." As if he said: Because those things which He long patiently beholds, He at some time does not leave unavenged. For behold He suddenly snatched the violent man, and cut off by animadverting his evils which He bore by waiting. Let no one therefore say that God does not discern human deeds, when he freely beholds any wicked man heap up his iniquities. For he is suddenly taken away, who is long tolerated.

7. What are the steps of man which God considers. But he calls the steps of men, either the several operations on which we lean, or the alternating motions of inward thought by which as if by steps, either we depart far from the Lord, or piously approach the Lord. For the mind approaches to God by as many steps, as it profits by good motions. And again it becomes far off by as many steps, as it deteriorates by evil thoughts. Whence it mostly happens that the motion of the mind does not yet proceed in work, and yet the fault is now perfect from the very guilt of thought, as it is written: "Hand in hand the wicked shall not be innocent" (Prov. 11:21). For hand is wont to be joined to hand, when it rests in leisure, and no use of labor exercises it. "Hand therefore in hand the wicked shall not be innocent." As if he said: And when the hand ceases from wicked work, the wicked is yet not innocent through thought. Because therefore we know that strictly all things not only done, but even thought are weighed, what shall we do concerning the gait of wicked work,

if God so subtly judges the steps of the heart? Behold no man sees the secret journeys of our mind, and yet before the eyes of God we place as many steps as we move affections. [Vet. IV.] So often we fall before Him as often as we limp with the foot of weak thought from the right journey. For unless this assiduous lapse of our minds increased in His sight, He would not forsooth cry through the prophet: "Take away the evil of your thoughts from before mine eyes" (Isai. 1:16). Saying these things forsooth, He testifies that He cannot as it were bear the force of our covered malice. Which cannot be covered to Him, because forsooth whatever is illicitly thought secretly by us is importunately thrust upon His sight. For all things, as it is written, "are naked and open to His eyes" (Heb. 4:13). Whence here also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER VI.

VER. 22.---There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

8. No one is hidden from the judgment of God, who forgets or is ignorant of nothing. What did he study to designate by darkness, but ignorance, and what by the shadow of death, but oblivion? Concerning the ignorance of some it is said: "Having the understanding darkened with darkness" (Ephes. 4:18). And again concerning the oblivion which happens in death it is written: "In that day all their thoughts shall perish" (Psalm 145:4). Because therefore through death

whatever is thought while living is fundamentally delivered to oblivion, oblivion is as it were a certain shadow of death. For as death intervening acts that that which was in life be not, so oblivion intervening acts that that which was in memory be not. Rightly therefore is it called its shadow, because it is expressed as if from it, while it imitates its force by lulling the senses. But because God neither is ignorant of the evils of men thought, nor forgets them perpetrated, unless they be deleted from His eyes by repenting, it is congruously said: "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." As if he said: Therefore no one is hidden from His judgment, because He can by no means either not see what we do, or forget what He sees.

9. God is void of all mutability. Not man, nor angels. Although darkness or shadow of death can also be understood otherwise. For every change is as it were a certain imitation of death. For that which changes is as it were killed from that which it was, that it may cease to be what it was, and begin to be what it was not. The true light, therefore, our Creator, because He is darkened by no mutable vicissitude, is overshadowed by no defects of His nature, but His being is to shine without mutability, darkness or shadow of death is said not to be in Him. Whence elsewhere it is written: "With whom is no change, nor shadow of vicissitude" (James 1:17). And whence again the Apostle Paul says: "Who only hath immortality, and inhabiteth light inaccessible" (1

Tim. 6:16). [Vet. V.] But when we all have known that both the human soul and the angelic spirits were instituted immortal, why is God said by the Apostle alone to have immortality, unless because God alone truly does not die, who alone is never changed?

10. The human soul forsooth would not have fallen into lapse, if it had not been mutable; which also expelled from the joys of paradise, if it were not mutable, would never return to life. But in this very thing that it strives to return to life, it is compelled to tolerate its defects by ever alternating mutability. Because therefore it was created from nothing, it tends nevertheless from itself below itself, unless it be held to the state of good desire by the hand of its Artificer. From that therefore that it is a creature, it has to go downwards. For by its own virtue it considers that it can go headlong, but it holds itself to its Creator by the hand of love, lest it fall, until it pass to immutability, and live there truly immortally, where it lives unchangeably.

11. The angelic spirits themselves also were created mutable by nature, so that they might either fall of their own accord or stand by their choice. But because they humbly chose to cleave to Him by whom they were created, they have already conquered this very mutability of theirs by the immutability of standing: so that they might by merit transcend this very thing, which by the order of their nature they could have been subject to mutability. Because therefore it is of the divine nature alone not to suffer the shadows of igno-

rance and mutability, let it be rightly said: "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." [Vet. VI.] For the eternal Light, which is God, by as much as He shines unchangeably, by so much He sees penetrably; and He is not ignorant of secret things, because He penetrates all things, nor does He forget the things penetrated, because He remains unchangeable. Therefore as often as we conceive anything unworthy in the heart, so often we sin in the light, because it is present to us and not to itself being present, and walking perversely we strike against it, from which by merit we are far off. But when we do not believe that we are seen, we hold our eyes closed in the sun. We forsooth hide Him from us, not ourselves from Him. Now therefore while we can, let us delete from the sight of the eternal Judge both things badly thought, and worse perpetrated; let us recall before the eyes of the heart whatever we have done perversely through the wickedness of presumption. Let our infirmity flatter itself in nothing, and in those things which it recalls, let it not delicately stroke itself, but by as much as it is conscious of evil to itself, by so much let it be more kindly severe in itself, let it propose against itself the future judgment, and whatever things it feels in itself to be strictly smitten by the sentence of the Judge, these let it piously smite in itself by the penance of conversion. Whence aptly after the punishment of this violent man has been described, it follows:

CHAPTER VII.

VER. 23.---For it is no longer in the power of man to come into judgment with God.

12. We ought to prevent the judgment of God by judging ourselves. This verse requires so much the greater discussion, by as much as that which it says, if it be neglected, more sharply pains. Here forsooth not that judgment is designated, which punishes by eternal retribution, but that which, conceived in the mind, is washed away by conversation. For he does not desire to come to that, whoever fears to be damned by it. While therefore it is said: "For it is no longer in the power of man to come into judgment with God," truly it is shown that there is a certain judgment which at some time even by the damned and reprobate is desired. And what is that, but this, concerning which the Apostle Paul says: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31)? and concerning which it is said through the prophet: "There is no judgment in their goings" (Isai. 59:8); and concerning which David says: "The king's honor loveth judgment" (Psalm 99:4); forsooth he who now honors God by faith, should solicitously judge what he owes Him in operation. Whence again it is written: "Judge before the Lord, and wait for Him" (Job 35:14). He is judged before the Lord, forsooth, who beholds the Lord in his heart, and discerns his acts under His presence by solicitous inquisition. Whom one waits for so much the more securely, as he daily examines his life suspecting. For he who comes to

His extreme judgment, is no longer judged before Him, but by Him. Concerning this judgment of the mind also, to the soul forgetting, the Lord says through the prophet: "Bring Me to remembrance, that we may be judged together; tell if thou hast anything, that thou mayest be justified" (Isai. 43:26).

13. The order of this judgment. The conscience accuses, reason judges, fear binds, pain tortures. For the mind of each one ought to discuss with solicitous inquisition both its own causes before the Lord, and the causes of the Lord against itself; it ought cautiously to weigh either what good things it has perceived from Him, or what evil things it has answered to His good things by living perversely. Which the elect indeed by no means cease to do daily. Whence Solomon well says: "The thoughts of the righteous are judgments" (Prov. 12:5). For they approach to the secret chamber of the Judge within the bosom of the heart: they consider how strictly He will at some time smite, who long patiently waits; they fear in those things which they remember they have done, and they punish by weeping what they understand they have perpetrated; they fear the subtle judgments of God, even concerning those things which they can perhaps not understand in themselves. For they see that that is seen divinely which they themselves do not see in themselves through humanity; they behold the strict Judge, who the later He comes, the more severely He smites. They also contemplate the assembly of the holy fathers sitting together with

Him, and they reprehend themselves for having contemned either their examples or their words, and in this secret of internal judgment, being constricted by the very execution of their mind, they smite by repenting what they committed by priding. For there everything that should impugn them is enumerated against them: there they heap up before their eyes all that they should bewail; there they intuit whatever can be decreed by the wrath of the strict Judge; there they suffer as many punishments as they fear to suffer; nor is there wanting in this judgment conceived in the mind all the ministry which ought more fully to punish its guilty ones. For the conscience accuses, reason judges, fear binds, pain tortures. Which judgment punishes so much the more certainly as it rages more inwardly, because forsooth it does not approach from external things. For each one, when he has begun to enter upon the cause of this examination against himself, is himself the actor who produces, himself the guilty one who is produced; he hates himself such as he remembers he has been, and he himself who is, pursues through himself him who was, and from the man himself against himself there becomes a certain strife in the soul, bringing forth peace with God. The Lord was requiring this strife of the heart, when He said through the prophet: "I hearkened and heard, no one speaks what is good, there is no one who does penance for his sin, saying: What have I done" (Jerem. 8:6)? By this strife of the human heart He was appeased, when He spoke to His prophet concerning king

Ahab reprehending himself, saying: "Hast thou seen Ahab humbled before Me? Because therefore he is humbled for My sake, I will not bring the evil in his days" (1 Kings 21:29).

14. This judgment which the wicked decline, the just always exercise, how profitably we undergo it. Thus we are renewed from the oldness of sin. Because therefore it is now in our power to undergo the internal judgment of our mind against ourselves, let us by recognizing accuse ourselves, and let us by repenting torture such as we have been; let us not cease while it is allowed to judge what we have done, let us listen cautiously to what is said: "For it is no longer in the power of man to come into judgment with God." For it is wont to be proper to the reprobate always to do perverse things, and never to retract what they have done. For they pass through all that they do with a blind mind, and they do not acknowledge their deed unless when they shall have been punished. But on the contrary it is of the elect to discuss their acts daily from the very fount of thought, and to dry up all that flows turbidly from the innermost parts. For as we do not feel how the limbs grow, the body profits, the appearance is changed, the blackness of the hair whitens in grey hairs (for all these things are done in us without our knowing), so our mind through the moments of living is changed from itself by the very use of cares, and we do not acknowledge it, unless by residing at our interiors with vigilant custody, we daily weigh our progress and decreases. For this very thing to consist in this

mortal life, is as it were to go to oldness, and when the undiscussed mind is left, it is lulled in a certain old age of torpor, because negligent of itself, losing the proposed strength insensibly, it grows old while it knows not from the form of its prior fortitude. Whence also it is said through the prophet under the species of Ephraim: "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knew it not; but also grey hairs are spread upon him, and he himself knew it not" (Hosea 7:9). But when it seeks itself, and discuss itself subtly by repenting, it is renewed from this very oldness of its own, washed with tears and incensed by sorrow, and that which had already almost inveterately grown cold, waxes hot through the subministered studies of internal love. Whence the Apostle Paul admonishes the disciples growing old by the use of mortal life, saying: "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Ephes. 4:23).

15. That we should do this, the examples of the Holy Fathers and the divine precepts admonish us. But to do these things the examples of the fathers and the precepts of the sacred word greatly help us. For if we inspect the works of the saints, and lend an ear to the divine commands, some things contemplated, some heard, kindle us, and our heart is not constricted by torpor, while it is provoked by imitation. Whence it is well said to Moses: "The fire on the altar shall always burn, which the priest shall nourish, putting wood in the morning every day" (Levit. 6:12). For the altar of God is our heart, in which the fire is commanded always to burn, because it is neces-

sary that from it the flame of charity incessantly ascend to the Lord. To which every day the priest should put wood, lest it be extinguished. For every one endowed with the faith of Christ has forsooth been made a member of the High Priest, as the Apostle Peter says to all the faithful: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). And as the Apostle John says: "Thou hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests" (Apoc. 5:10). The priest therefore nourishing the fire on the altar, let him daily put wood, that is, each of the faithful, lest the flame of charity fail in him, let him not cease to heap up in his heart both the examples of those preceding and the testimonies of the sacred Scripture. For to give as it were certain fuel to the fire is to minister in the excitation of charity either the examples of the fathers or the precepts of the Lord. For because our internal novelty itself daily grows old by the conversation of this life, this fire is to be nourished by wood applied, that while it extenuates itself by the use of our oldness, it may revive through the testimonies and examples of the fathers. And well there it is commanded that in the morning wood be heaped up every day. These things forsooth are not done, unless when the night of blindness is extinguished. Or certainly because morning is the first part of the day, the thoughts of the present life being postponed, let each of the faithful think this in the first place, that he may inflame the study of charity by what efforts he can that which is now as it were failing in him. For this fire on the altar of the Lord, that is,

in our heart, is more quickly extinguished, unless it be repaired by the examples of the fathers and the divine testimonies cleverly applied.

16. Thus kindled with the fire of charity, we are a holocaust to God. Well also there it is subjoined: "And the holocaust being laid upon it, he shall burn the fat of the peace offerings" (Levit. 6:12). For whoever kindles in himself this fire of charity, lays himself forsooth as a holocaust upon it, because he burns up every vice which was living badly in him. For when he considers the internal things of his thoughts, and slays the reprobate life by the sword of change, he has laid himself upon the altar of his heart, and kindled it with the fire of charity. From which victim the fat of the peace offerings smell sweet, because the internal fattening of the new charity making peace between us and God, renders from us a most sweet odor. But because the same charity remains inextinguishable in the hearts of the elect, aptly there it is subjoined: "This is the perpetual fire which shall never fail from the altar" (Ibid. 13). Never forsooth shall this fire fail from the altar, because even after this life the fervor of charity increases in their minds. For it is acted by eternal contemplation, that the almighty God the more He shall have been seen, the more He may be loved.

17. Assisted by divine precepts and the examples of the saints, we attain liberty. But that assisted by divine admonitions and the examples of those preceding we are delivered from the deep of this life, is well signified also by the prophet

Jeremiah sent into the pit, who that he may be lifted from the pit, ropes and old clouts are let down to him (Jerem. 38:11). For what are figured by the ropes but the divine precepts? Which because they both convince and rescue us placed in evil operation, and as it were bind and draw, coarct and lift. But lest he bound by these ropes while he is drawn be cut, at the same time also old clouts are let down, because lest the divine precepts terrify us, the examples of the ancient fathers comfort us, and from the comparison of them we presume that we can do, what from our imbecility we dread. If therefore we hasten to be lifted from this deep, let us be bound with ropes, that is, let us be bound with the divine precepts. Let there also be present old clouts, with which the ropes may be better held; that is, let us be comforted by the examples of those preceding, lest the subtle precepts wound us weak and fearful while they lift. As if some old clouts the Apostle Paul subjoined, when for lifting his disciples he provided to the spiritual precepts the examples of the ancients, saying: "The just had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword" (Heb. 11:36). And a little after: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). And again: "Remember them which have the rule over you,

who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (Heb. 13:7). Above forsooth, while he spoke spiritual precepts, he had as it were sent ropes, but afterwards remembering the examples of the elders, he as it were applied old clouts.

18. From exterior things we must return to the heart. Assisted therefore by so many voices of precepts, aided by so many comparisons of examples, let us return to our hearts, let us discuss all that we do, and whatever in us offends the rule of divine rectitude, let us accuse, so that before the strict Judge (districtum judicem) that very accusation may excuse us. For in this judgment of our mind we are absolved so much the more quickly, as we hold ourselves the more strictly guilty. Nor are the times in which there is leisure for doing these things to be passed over, because after the times of this life there is no leisure for doing these things. For it is not said in vain: "Neither is it any more in the power of man to come to God in judgment." For on this account we are reminded of what we cannot do then, lest we neglect what we can do now. But behold, businesses occupy us which, incessantly applied to us, turn away the eye of our mind from considering ourselves. For in these visible things which it beholds, our heart is scattered outside itself, and it forgets what is being done within itself while it is occupied without. But the divine voice pierces it with its terrible sentences, as if with certain nails, that it may awake, so that man, being at least struck by terror, may dread the hidden judg-

ments upon himself which, pressed by torpor, he dissembles. For as we said above, the mind, ill-accustomed by the very use of the old life, is depressed, and in these things which it beholds outwardly is lulled as it were sleeping: which after it has once poured itself forth to desire visible things, has vanished from contemplating invisible things within. Whence it is now necessary that she who is scattered through visible things be struck by invisible judgments; and because she has prostrated herself, being ill-delighted in these exterior things, at least being struck she may seek what she deserted. But behold, Sacred Scripture transfixes torpid hearts with a certain terror, lest they cleave to these things which flow away outwardly, but to those eternal things which they have lost within. It indicates what is decreed by the hidden sentence, lest these public things be thought of by us immoderately. It says what is being done concerning us above us, that from this public state of temporality we may collect the eye of the heart to the secret of the internal disposition. [Vet. IX.] For after many things have been narrated concerning the punishment of the wicked, suddenly the hidden judgment is brought in, which is piously and justly disposed over us, how some lose what they seemed to hold, and others receive what others by their merits lose. For he says:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERS. 24. He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and shall set others in their

stead. 19. Some lose what they seemed to hold, others receive what was previously lost. To be cast out to exterior things is a sign of reprobation; as to be drawn to interior things is a sign of predestination. This is done daily. But because as yet the end of both parts is not discerned, it is less feared. For never do the reprobate know their fault except in punishment. And because punishment is deferred, the fault is despised. But they fall from the state of justice, and as they fall, others obtain by lot the place of life. But they neglect their fall in this, that they do not attend to the destruction which awaits them in eternity. For if they would send their eyes to that which they are to suffer there, they would fear this which they do here. But it is clear to all that in that extreme requisition Almighty God is to make a public examination, so that He may desert some for torments, and admit others to the participation of the heavenly kingdom. But this is now done daily in a secret judgment, which is then demonstrated in public. For justly and mercifully either examining or disposing the hearts of each, He casts some out into exterior things, and draws others to those things which are within; these He kindles to desire internal things, those He deserts for their pleasures to think of exterior things; the mind of these He erects to heavenly things, the pride of those He plunges in the lowest desires. But the hearts of others are closed to human eyes, and it is not known who is rejected, because those things which are thought by each one cannot be penetrated. For often in a perverse heart the

deliberation of thought has not yet proceeded to the effect of work, and still perhaps he is bound by habit within, who already wanders in mind without. But such a one as that fell then before the eyes of the internal Judge, when he went out from desiring interior things through desire. But sometimes others, after the use of evil operation, suddenly revive to heavenly hope with love; and they who in perverse action had scattered themselves, collect themselves by rebuking to the bosom of internal retraction. These men looking at still such as they had known them in work long ago, so they think them. But on the contrary, they follow their life such as they remember it to have been through the examination of strict consideration, and what they were is known, but what they have already begun to be is not known. In both these kinds of men, therefore, it often happens that both they who seem to stand by human judgment already lie in the sight of the eternal Judge; and they who still lie before men already stand in the sight of the eternal Judge. For who of men could have estimated that Judas would lose the lot of living even after the ministry of the apostleship (Luke 23:40)? And who on the contrary would believe that the thief would find the cause of life even in the very article of death? But the hidden Judge presiding, and discerning the hearts of both, piously established the one, justly broke the other. Him He strictly repelled outwardly, this one He mercifully drew within. Whence well also through the Prophet announcing that some would fall at the time of His passion

and others would rise, he says: "I mingled my drink with weeping" (Psal. 101:10). For drink is drawn within from exterior things, but weeping emanates outwardly from interior things. To mingle drink with weeping for the Lord, therefore, is to draw some within from exterior things, and to reprobate others into exterior things from interior things. [Vet. X, Rec. VIII.] He shall therefore break in pieces mighty men without number, and shall set others in their stead.

20. Reprobation is first done within, and afterwards is shown outwardly. The number of the elect is certain and defined. But as we said above, this crushing is first done within, that afterwards it may be shown outwardly. By this crushing sometimes the exteriors of some are as it were sound, but already the interiors have putrefied. For it is written: "Before a fall the heart is exalted" (Prov. 16:18). There therefore they are struck, where they are proud. Whence it is written: "I have crushed their heart fornicating and receding from me" (Ezek. 6:9). For to fornicate interiorly is to be delighted outwardly in forbidden things. But the great crushing of the heart is this very elation of the proud man. For by that very thing he falls from the integrity of salvation, in that the boasting of any virtue swells. For the proud despise God, and having left the glory of their creator, they seek their own. To whom already this very thing is to have fallen, having lost the power of their superior, to have come into themselves. They are also crushed, because, having left heavenly things, they seek

the earth. But what greater crushing can there be than, having deserted the creator, to seek the creature; having deserted heavenly joys, to gape after the lowest things? Whence well through the Prophet it is said: "But He humbleth sinners even to the earth" (Psal. 146:6). For having lost heavenly things, all that they thirst for is earthly; and while they try to be seen more, it is less that they desire. Concerning whom it is rightly said through Jeremiah: "They that depart from thee shall be written in the earth" (Jerem. 17:13). But on the contrary it is said of the elect: "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). This crushing, therefore, first creeps in the mind, that afterwards it may proceed in work; first it shakes the foundations of thought, that afterwards it may dash the fabric of operation. Whence with the greatest care it is to be labored that it be avoided there where it arises. For it is written: "Keep thy heart with all watchfulness, for from it life proceedeth" (Prov. 4:23). And again it is written: "Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts" (Matt. 15:18). Within therefore we must watch lest the mind while it is extolled fall. Within let us keep all that we do without. For if once the rottenness of elation has consumed the marrow of the heart, the empty bark of external vision more quickly falls. But it is to be noted that while others falling others are said to be solidified for standing, the number of the elect is shown certain and defined. Whence also it is said to the Church of Philadelphia through the angel: "Hold

that which thou hast, lest another receive thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

[Vet. XI.] 21. The doctrine of the Church concerning predestination and reprobation nourishes the hope of the humble, and presses down the elation of the proud. The reprobate are innumerable. By this sentence, in which it is narrated that the life of some is erected, but of others is broken, both the hope of the humble is nourished, and the elation of the proud is pressed down, while both they can lose those good things concerning which they are proud, and these receive those things which because they had them not are contemned. Let us therefore fear in these things which we have received, nor let us despair of those who have not yet attained them. For what we are today we know, but what we can be after a little while we know not. But these whom perhaps we despise can both begin late, and yet precede our life with more fervent studies. It is therefore to be feared lest even we falling he should rise, who is derided by us standing; although he knows not how to stand already, who knows how to deride one not standing. Strucking this fear of heavenly judgments into the hearts of the disciples, the Apostle Paul says: "Let him that thinketh he standeth, see lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). But that saying: "He shall break in pieces many," he immediately added, "Innumerables," either he studied to express the multitude of the reprobate, which passes the number of human reason; or certainly he wished to indicate that all who perish are not held within the number of the

elect, so that they are innumerable in that they run outside the number. Whence the Prophet beholding so many in this time of the Church believing only in appearance, as many as it is certain pass the number and the sum of the elect, says: "They are multiplied above number" (Psal. 39:6). As if he should say: many entering the Church, even these come to the faith only in appearance who are excluded from the number of the heavenly kingdom, because they transcend the sum of the elect by their own multiplicity. Whence also through the prophet Jeremiah it is said: "The city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel even to the gate of the corner, and it shall go forth beyond the rule of measure" (Jerem. 31:38). For no one is ignorant that the city of the Lord is the Holy Church. But Hananeel is interpreted the grace of God. But in the corner a double wall is joined. The city of the Lord, therefore, is said to be built from the tower of Hananeel even to the gate of the corner, because the Holy Church beginning from the height of heavenly grace, is constructed even to the entry and reception of both peoples, namely the Jewish and the Gentile. But because in her as the multiplicity increases the reprobate also are collected, it is aptly subjoined: "And it shall go forth beyond the rule of measure," because it is extended even to those also who, passing the rule of justice, are not within the number of heavenly measure. Whence through Isaiah also it is said to the same Church: "For thou shalt be dilated to the right hand and to the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles" (Isai.

54:3). For in so great a multitude of nations she is extended to the right hand, while she receives some to be justified. She is also dilated to the left hand, while she admits to herself some even to remain in iniquity. On account of this multitude, which lies outside the number of the elect, the Lord says in the Gospel: "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 20:16). But because this that some are broken while others are elected, is from the merit of the one suffering, not from the iniquity of the one punishing: "For is God unjust who inflicteth wrath?" is aptly subjoined (Rom. 3:5).

CHAPTER IX

[Rec. IX].

VERS. 25. For He knoweth their works, and therefore He shall bring night, and they shall be crushed. 22. God sometimes punishes a sinner with blindness. It is to be known above all that every wicked man is crushed in the night in two ways, either when he is struck with the tribulation of exterior punishment, or when he is blinded within by a secret sentence. He falls in the night, when through the extreme judgment he loses the light of living forever. Whence it is written: "Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into outer darkness" (Matt. 22:13). For then he is cast forced into outer darkness, because now he is blinded voluntarily in interior things. Again the wicked man is crushed in the night, when being damned by the confusion of preceding sins, he finds not the light of truth, and acknowledges

not what he ought to do henceforth. [Vet. XII.] For every sin, which nevertheless is not cleansed by repenting more quickly, is either a sin and a cause of sin, or a sin and a penalty of sin. For the sin which repentance does not dilute soon draws by its own weight to another. Whence it happens that not only is it a sin, but a sin and a cause of sin. From that vice indeed the subsequent fault arises, from which the blinded mind is led so that it may be bound worse by another. But the sin which arises from sin is not already sin only, but sin is also a penalty of sin, because by a just judgment Almighty God clouds the heart of the one sinning, so that by the merit of the preceding sin he may fall also in others. For whom He would not deliver, by deserting He struck. Therefore not unmeritedly is it called a penalty of sin, which by a just blindness inflicted from above, is perpetrated from the vengeance of a preceding sin. Which indeed is done by a disposition ordered above, but confused below by iniquity, so that both the preceding fault may be the cause of the subsequent, and again the subsequent fault may be the penalty of the preceding. Which indeed Paul had seen in the unfaithful and slippery as a certain seed of error, when he said: "Who when they had known God, glorified Him not as God, or gave thanks; but became vain in their thoughts" (Rom. 1:21). But what sprouted from the seed of this error, he immediately adds, saying: "For which cause God gave them up into the desires of their heart, into uncleanness, that they should afflict their bodies with contumelies in them-

selves" (Ibid., 24). For because knowing God they committed the sin of pride by understanding, they are also blinded lest they understand what they commit. And they who will not follow their understanding in sin and a cause of sin, lose also the very light of understanding in sin and a penalty of sin. By the merit therefore of the prior sin the pit of subsequent sins is covered, so that he who knowingly perpetrates evil, may henceforth justly fall also in others unknowingly.

23. Faults are punished by faults, so that from the increase of vices punishments may be augmented. For this is done, that faults may be struck by faults, so far as the very increases of vices may become the punishments of those sinning. For because Almighty God indulges time for repentance, which nevertheless human malice twists to the use of its own iniquity, surely by the just judgment of God the fault is permitted to be increased, so that it may be accumulated for a deeper striking at some time. For hence again the Apostle Paul says of some: "That they may fill up their sins always" (1 Thess. 2:16). Hence by the voice of the angel it is said to John: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still" (Rev. 22:11). Hence David says: "Add iniquity upon their iniquity, that they may not enter into thy justice" (Psal. 68:28). [Vet. XIII.] Hence again it is said of the Lord by the same Psalmist: "He made a way to the path of His wrath by sending among them evil angels" (Psal. 77:49). For the heart already aggravated by prior merits the Lord justly permits also to be deceived

by subsequent persuasions of malignant spirits, which when it is worthily drawn into fault, its guilt is accumulated in punishment. Whence also the Lord is said to have made a way for His wrath from a path. For a way is broader than a path. But to make a way from the path of His wrath is to dilate the causes of wrath by strictly judging, so that they who being illuminated would not act rightly, being justly blinded may still do whence they may deserve to be punished more. Hence it is said through Moses: "The sins of the Amorites are not yet full" (Gen. 15:16). Hence through the same Moses the Lord says: "For their vine is of the vineyard of Sodom, and their offspring of Gomorrah" (Deut. 32:32). Their grape is a grape of gall, and a cluster of bitterness in them. Their wine is the fury of dragons, and the incurable fury of asps. Are not all these things gathered with me, and sealed in my treasures? In the day of vengeance I will repay them (Ibid., 33, 34). How many of their evils he has narrated, and yet he immediately adds: "In the time when their foot shall slide" (Ibid., 35). Behold their most atrocious crimes are described, and yet to the day of vengeance a subsequent slide is still looked for, by which their faults may be accumulated. They have indeed already whence they may deserve to be struck; but yet the sin is sustained to grow still, so that a more atrocious penalty may torment those sinning. Already the sin and a cause of sin deserves punishment; but it is still waited for, that the increase of punishment may substitute the sin, and the penalty of sin.

24. The same sin is sometimes a penalty and a cause of sin. God blinds by not delivering from blindness. Often indeed one and the same sin is both a sin and both a penalty and a cause of sin. Which we shall show better if we bring the things themselves to the middle. For the unbridled gluttony of the belly instigates the fullness of the flesh to the fervor of luxury. But luxury perpetrated is often covered either by perjury or by homicide, lest it be punished by the vengeance of human laws. Let us place therefore before our eyes that a certain one relaxed the reins of voracity to himself, by which voracity overcome he admitted the crime of adultery; but being caught in adultery, he secretly killed the husband of the adulteress, lest he should be drawn to judgment. This adultery therefore, placed between voracity and homicide, arising indeed from that, generating this, is a sin and both a penalty and a cause of sin. It is surely a sin through itself; but it is a penalty of sin, because it increased the fault of voracity; but it is a cause of sin, because it generated also the subsequent homicide. One therefore and the same sin is both a penalty of the preceding, and a cause of the subsequent fault, because it both damns past things while it exaggerates them, and still sows following things which ought to be damned. Therefore because by preceding sins the eye of the heart is blinded, that very blindness which confounds the mind of the one sinning from the damnation of past fault is deservedly called night, because through this the light of truth is hidden from the eyes of the delin-

quent. Well therefore it is said: "For He knoweth their works, and therefore He shall bring night, and they shall be crushed," because, as has often been said, preceding evils surely cause that they be involved again in subsequent darkness for sinning, so that they already cannot see the light of justice in that they would not see it when they could. But the Lord is said to bring night, not that He Himself brings in darkness, but that He does not mercifully illuminate the obscure hearts of those sinning, so that this very thing should be to have blinded in the night, to have been unwilling to deliver from the darkness of blindness. It follows:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. X].

VERS. 26. He struck them as impious in the place of beholders. 25. Living wickedly in the bosom of the Church, divine vengeance strikes them as if impious. What "quasi" signifies in the Scriptures. The Church is the place of beholders. In Sacred Scripture "quasi" is accustomed to be put sometimes for likeness, sometimes for truth. For "quasi" is put for likeness, as the Apostle says: "As if sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Cor. 6:10). But it is put for truth, as John says: "We saw His glory, the glory as if of the Only-begotten from the Father" (John 1:14). But in this place it differs nothing whether it be put for likeness or for truth, because in whatever order it be said, the depraved life of the wicked is openly signified.

But Sacred Scripture properly calls the unfaithful "impious." For by this distance sinners are discerned from the impious, because while every impious man is a sinner, yet not every sinner is an impious man. For he can be called a sinner even who is pious in faith. Whence John says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John 1:8). But he is properly called impious who is separated from the piety of religion. Concerning such the Prophet says: "The impious shall not rise in judgment" (Psal. 1:5). [Vet. XIV.] But the Holy Church is called the "place of beholders" (loco videntium). For in her it is rightly consisted, that the true light, which is God, may be seen. Whence it is said to Moses: "There is a place near me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock when my majesty passes by" (Exod. 33:21). And a little after: "I will take away my hand and thou shalt see my back parts" (Ibid., 23). Indeed by the place the Church, by the rock the Lord, but by Moses the multitude of the Israelite people is figured, which did not believe the Lord preaching on earth. She therefore stood on the rock, beholding the back of the Lord passing by, because indeed after the passion and ascension of the Lord, being led within the Holy Church, she deserved to perceive the faith of Christ; and whose presence she saw not, His back parts she acknowledged. Let it be said therefore of these, whom divine vengeance found within the Holy Church enduring in iniquities, let it be said of these whose life the Apostle Paul notes, "Who confess that they know God, but in works they deny Him" (Tit. 1:16): "He struck them as

impious in the place of beholders." For there they stood, where they seemed to see God. There they loved darkness, where the light of truth is beheld. And although they had open eyes in faith, they held them nevertheless closed in work. Whence well also of Judea it is said: "Her watchmen are blind" (Isai. 56:10), because indeed they did not see by work what they discerned by profession. Whence also of Balaam it is written: "Who falling hath his eyes open" (Num. 24:16). For falling in work he held his eyes open in contemplation. So therefore these also opening their eyes in faith, and not seeing in work, placed within the Church with a pious appearance, were found outside the Church with an impious conversation. Concerning whom elsewhere it is well written: "I saw the impious buried, who while they lived, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city as if of just works" (Eccles. 8:10). 26. The peace of the Church hides many false Christians. Some seek glory from the profession of the Christian religion. For the very tranquility of ecclesiastical peace hides many obsessed by the pestilence of their own depravity under the Christian name. Whom nevertheless if the air of light persecution has struck, it soon takes away like chaff outside the floor. [Vet. XV.] But some are therefore signed with the vocation of Christianity, because the name of Christ being sublimely exalted, they behold almost all already to be seen as faithful; and for this that they discern others called this, they themselves are ashamed not to be seen as faithful, but they neglect to be what they glory to be

called. For they take the thing of internal virtue for the decoration of external vision; and they who before the heavenly Judge consist naked with the infidelity of conscience, before human eyes are cloaked with a holy profession according to the word.

27. Faithful who live wickedly often lose their faith by divine judgment. Many die without faith in the house of faith. To them the society of the faithful results in an accumulation of punishment. But some hold the faith from the marrow, but by no means care to live faithfully. For they follow by manners what they venerate by credulity. To whom by divine judgment it often happens that through this that they live wickedly, they lose also that which they healthily believe. For they incessantly pollute themselves by depraved actions, and upon this they distrust that the vengeance of the just Judge can be retributed; and often when they neglect to live well, they slide even to perfidy without anyone pursuing. For they who do not believe the strict judgment to be imminent, who suspect that they sin unpunished, in what way can they either be or be called faithful? For to have lost the faith is not to believe that worthy punishments can be rendered for uncorrected evil works. Because therefore they contemn to keep the worthy works of faith, they lose also the faith which they seemed to hold. Over whom well through the Prophet under the appearance of Jerusalem the words of the destroying enemies are remembered, by whom indeed it is said: "Empty it,

empty it even to the foundation in it" (Psal. 136:7). Indeed Paul says: "Another foundation no man can lay besides that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 3:11). The destroying enemies therefore empty Jerusalem even to the foundation, when perverse spirits from the heart of the faithful, the building of good work having been first destroyed, exhaust also the solidity of religion. For as a fabric upon the foundation, so works are constructed upon faith. Therefore to have emptied even to the foundation is, the work of living well having been overturned, to have dissipated also the strength of faith. Hence also it is said to Judea through Jeremiah: "The children also of Memphis and Tahpanhes have deflowered thee even to the crown" (Jerem. 2:16). For to be deflowered even to the crown is after the use of evil operation to be corrupted also in the very height of faith. For when the most wicked spirits involve the soul of each one in depraved works, but cannot vitiate the integrity of faith, they as it were pollute the inferior members, but do not reach to the crown. But whoever is corrupted in faith, is already deflowered even to the crown. For the malignant spirit reaches from as it were the inferior members even to the highest, when polluting the active life, he corrupts the chaste height of faith with the disease of distrust. Because therefore all these things are hidden from human eyes, but are open to divine gazes, and many in this house of faith die without faith, it is rightly said: "He struck them as impious in the place of beholders." For they show them-

selves pious to men in the Church; but because divine judgments cannot lie hid, they are struck as if impious. To whom this grows the more to the accumulation of punishment, that each one of them being mingled with the faithful in the Church contemns the truth of faith by knowing it; and so much the more grave vengeance follows, as through the examples of the rulers also the knowledge of living well accompanies them. For as many as are now shown to them as upright and faithful brothers, by so many witnesses they are impugned in the coming judgment. They know therefore what they neglect to follow. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XI

[Vet. XVI, Rec. XI].

VERS. 27. Who as it were of set purpose recoiled from Him. 28. Sin is perpetrated either by ignorance, or by infirmity, or by study, which is graver. It is one thing not to do good, another not even to love it, another to hate it. It is to be known indeed that sin is committed in three ways. For it is perpetrated either by ignorance, or by infirmity, or by study. And indeed it is sinned more gravely by infirmity than by ignorance, but much more gravely by study than by infirmity. By ignorance Paul had sinned, when he said: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and contumelious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim. 1:13). But Peter sinned by infirmity, when in him every strength

of faith which he offered to the Lord one voice of a maidservant shook, and he denied with his voice the God whom he held in his heart (Luke 22:57). But because the fault of infirmity or of ignorance is so much the more easily cleansed as it is not perpetrated by study, Paul corrected by knowing the things which he was ignorant of, and Peter solidified by watering with tears the moved and as it were already withering root of faith. But by set purpose (ex industria) they had sinned of whom the Master Himself said: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin" (John 15:22). And a little after: "Both have they seen and hated both me and my Father" (Ibid., 24). For it is one thing not to do good things, another to hate the teacher of good things; as it is one thing to sin by precipitation, another by deliberation. For often sin is committed by precipitation, which nevertheless is damned by counsel and deliberation. For from infirmity it is usually accustomed to happen to love the good, but not to be able to fulfill it. But to sin by study is neither to do nor to love the good. As therefore sometimes it is more grave to love the sin than to perpetrate it, so it is more wicked to hate justice than not to have done it. There are therefore some in the Church who not only do not do good things, but also persecute them; and those things which they themselves neglect to do, they detest also in others. The sin of these, forsooth, is perpetrated not from infirmity or ignorance, but from study alone, because indeed if they wished to fulfill good things, and

yet were not able, they would at least love in others those things which they neglect in themselves. For if they should desire them even by wish alone, they would not have hated the things done by others; but because hearing they know the same good things, living they despise them, animadverting they persecute them, it is rightly said: "Who of set purpose recoiled from Him." Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

IBID.---And they would not understand all His ways.

29. How heavily they offend, who by their own ignorance seek impunity for sinning. It is one thing not to have known, another to have been unwilling to know. ---For he says not: By infirmity they do not understand; but, they would not understand; because often those things which they despise to do, they also contemn to know. For because it is written: "The servant who knows not the will of his lord, and doing things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few; and the servant who knows the will of his lord, and doing not according to it, shall be beaten with many" (Luke 12:47); they think impunity for sinning is a remedy for not knowing. Who forsooth are darkened by the sole mist of pride, and therefore do not discern that it is one thing not to have known, another to have been unwilling to know. For not to know is ignorance; to have been unwilling to know, pride. And they can so much the less have an excuse because they are ignorant, as what

they should know is opposed even to them when unwilling. Whence it is said by Solomon: "Doth not wisdom cry aloud, and prudence give her voice, standing on the top of the highest summits above the way, in the midst of the paths?" (Prov. 8:1). Perchance we might have been able to pass through the way of temporal life with ignorance of it, if this same wisdom had stood in the corners of the path.

30. The ways of divine wisdom are open to all through the Incarnation. What it is to understand the ways of God. Humility opens the light of understanding, pride closes it. ---She would have had to be searched for, if she had wished to be hidden. But after she publicly showed the mysteries of her incarnation, after she offered examples of humility to the proud, she fixed herself for us as it were passing in the midst of the paths, that forsooth we may strike against her, whom we are unwilling to seek; and that we may touch her by stumbling, whom we neglect to see as we pass. Let it be said therefore: "And they would not understand all His ways." For every action which the Incarnate Wisdom performed temporally is a way. His ways are the orders of living, which He laid down for those coming to Him. He therefore provided as many ways for those coming to Him, as He showed examples of living well. The Prophet had beheld the ways of His humility, when he sighed, saying: "I will exercise myself in Thy commandments, and I will consider Thy ways" (Ps. 119:15). Hence again it is said of every just man who takes care to walk

by the Lord's examples: "The steps of a man are directed by the Lord, and He desireth His way exceedingly" (Ps. 37:23). Because therefore all the proud contemn the deeds of the Lord's humility, it is rightly said: "They would not understand His ways." For those ways are despised in vision, but to be revered in understanding. For that which is discerned in them is one thing, that which is expected another. For what else in this life did He show to the eyes of beholders than dejection, spittings, mockeries, and death? But through these lowest things one passes to the highest, through these shames which precede, eternal and glorious things are promised to us. The proud therefore saw the ways of God, but they would not understand them, because while they despise the abject things which those ways show in themselves, they lost the sublime things which they promise. To understand the ways of God, therefore, is both to tolerate transitory things humbly, and to expect remaining things perseveringly, so that by the example of the Lord co-eternal glory may be sought compared with temporal reproaches, and that one may not intend what he tolerates here, but into that which he expects. To these things therefore the proud held their eyes closed, because while they are proud in the glory of the present life, they saw not the loftiness of the Lord's humility. For humility opens the light of understanding, pride hides it. For it is a certain secret of piety, and the mind arrives at it so much the less, as it swells the more,

because by that very thing it is repelled outwards, by which it is more insanely puffed up. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. XII].

VERS. 28.---That they should cause the cry of the needy to come to Him, and that He should hear the voice of the poor.

31. When the cry of the poor reaches God. He is a feigned pastor who, preaching being neglected, is occupied with secular cares. The necessity of confession. ---For while these are proud, those who are oppressed by the proud themselves cry out to God. Or certainly it is said that they caused the cry of the poor to come to God for this reason, because these falling, the poor, that is, the humble in spirit, are substituted in their place. And because this was done by their fall, they themselves are reported to have done it, forsooth by that kind of speech by which we say a camp fights, because it is fought from it. Or certainly because all things which have been said above can be referred also to ecclesiastical rectors, who, having left the study of preaching, under the occasion of government, are involved in earthly business, it is aptly subjoined: "That they should cause the cry of the needy to come to Him, and that He should hear the voice of the poor"; because forsooth while they themselves, occupied with secular cares, desert the office of preaching, they compel the subject flock to break forth into the cry of complaints, so that as if

by right every subject murmurs concerning the life of a feigned pastor, why he holds the place of a master, who does not exercise the office. Although perchance better by the swelling of the powerful the pride of the Jews is figured, and by the cry of the poor the desires of the Gentiles, even as, Truth attesting, by the rich man feasting splendidly the Jewish people is designated; assuming forsooth the abundance of the law not for the necessity of salvation, but for the pomp of elation, and in the words of the precepts not refreshing himself in an orderly way, but boastfully showing off; and by the wounded Lazarus, which is interpreted helped, the form of the Gentile people is expressed, whom divine help raises up so much the more, as he confides the less in the faculty of his own strength. Who is described as being poor and full of wounds, because Gentility humble in heart opened the confessions of its sins. For as in a wound the virus is drawn from the internal parts to the skin, so in the confession of sin, while secrets are spread into public, as it were evil humors break forth outwards from the inmost bowels. Those therefore sinning, the cry of the poor is heard, because while the Jews are proud against God, the vows of the Gentiles have reached to God. Whence also soon dreading these same immense and profound judgments, he cares not to discuss them by reason, but to venerate them with admiration, and says:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 29.---For when He granteth peace, who is he that shall condemn? after He shall have hidden His face, who is he that shall behold Him?

32. Why one is called and drawn, another repelled, let no one discuss. ---Let no one therefore discuss why, while the Jewish people stood, for a long time Gentility lay in unbelief; and why, at the end Gentility rising, the fault of unbelief prostrated the Jewish people. Let no one discuss why one is drawn by gift, another repelled by merit. For if thou wonderest at Gentility assumed, "When He granteth peace, who is he that shall condemn?" If thou art astounded at Judaea lost, "after He shall have hidden His face, who is he that shall behold Him?" Therefore the counsel of supreme and occult power becomes the satisfaction of open reason. Whence also in the Gospel the Lord, when He spoke of the cause of this matter, says: "I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Even so, Father" (Matt. 11:25). And soon as if adding a certain reason for the hiding and revelation, He says: "Because so it was pleasing before Thee." By which words forsooth we receive examples of humility, lest we presume rashly to discuss heavenly counsels concerning the vocation of some, and the repulsion of others. For when He had brought in both, He did not soon render a reason, but said it was so pleasing to God, showing forsooth this, that it cannot be unjust which pleased the Just One. Whence also in the vineyard rendering

reward to those laboring, when He made equal in prize some workmen unequal in work, and he who had sweated more in labor sought more in reward, He says: "Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? But I will also give to this last even as to thee; or is it not lawful for me to do what I will?" (Matt. 20:13). In all things therefore which are disposed outwardly, the open cause of reason is the justice of the occult will. Let it be said therefore: "For when He granteth peace, who is he that shall condemn? after He shall have hidden His face, who is he that shall behold Him?" And because God so judges the least as the greatest, so individuals as all things, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XV.

IBID.---Both against a nation, and against all men.

33. God provides for the least as for the greatest; and for individuals as for the universe. ---As if we were openly admonished to attend, because this judgment, which is described over one nation, is also celebrated over all men by an invisible examination, so that one is chosen, another repelled secretly, but none unjustly. This therefore which we discern to be done in the greatest things, let us also cautiously fear in each of us. For the divine judgments are so intended over one soul, as over one city; so over one city, as over one nation; so over one nation, as over the whole multitude of the human race; because the Lord so intends to individuals, as if He were free from all; and He so intends to all at once, as

if He were free from individuals. For He who fills all things by administering them, rules by filling them; neither is He wanting to the whole, when He disposes one; nor is He wanting to one, when He disposes the whole, forsooth He works quiet by all the power of His nature. What wonder therefore that He is not narrowed in being intent, who works quiet? Let it be said therefore that He exercises this subtle judgment both over a nation, and over all men. [Rec. XIV.] Because therefore He passed from the species to the genus, now from the genus He turns Himself to the species, and shows what Judaea properly deserves, saying:

CHAPTER XVI

[Vet. XX].

VERS. 30.---Who maketh a hypocrite man to reign because of the sins of the people.

34. Those who are subject to evil prelates should attribute it to their own fault. Antichrist is to reign because of the sins of the peoples. --- For forsooth Judaea would not have a true king reign over her, and therefore, her merits requiring it, she received a hypocrite, even as Truth itself says in the Gospel: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye received me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). And as Paul says: "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, therefore God shall send them the operation of error, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:10). In that therefore which is said: "Who

maketh a hypocrite man to reign because of the sins of the people," Antichrist himself, the head of all hypocrites, can be designated. For that seducer then simulates sanctity, that he may draw to iniquity. But he is permitted to reign because of the sins of the people, because forsooth they are then preordained under his government, who are foreknown before the ages as worthy of his dominion, who by subsequent sins require that they be disposed under him by precurrent judgments. That therefore Antichrist then reigns over the impious, is not from the injustice of the judge, but from the fault of the sufferer; although many also have not seen his principality, and yet serve his principality by the condition of their sins, because even him whom they by no means behold dominating them, they undoubtedly venerate by living perversely. Or are they not his members, who through the species of affected sanctity desire to seem what they are not? For he principally assumes hypocrisy, who while he is a damned man, and a wicked spirit, lies that he is God. But undoubtedly from his body now they proceed, who hide their iniquities under the cover of sacred honor, that they may desire to seem by profession, what they refuse to be in works. For because it is written: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," as much as they now more freely perform the perverse things which they will, so much the more resolutely are they bound to his service (John 8:34). But let no one, who suffers such a rector, accuse him whom he suffers, because forsooth it was of his own

merit to be subject to the power of a perverse rector. Let him therefore accuse the fault of his own work rather than the injustice of the governor. For it is written: "I will give thee kings in my fury" (Hosea 13:11). Why therefore do we despise those being over us, whose governments over us we receive from the Lord's fury? If therefore God being angry we receive rectors according to our merits, we gather in their action, what we should weigh from our own estimation. Although very often also the elect are subject to the reprobate. Whence also for a long time David bore with Saul (1 Sam. 18:11); but by the subsequent fault of adultery he is betrayed, because he was then worthy to be pressed by so great asperity of the one set over him.

35. Because of the offences of the flock sometimes a good pastor is perverted. ---So therefore according to the merits of the subjects are the persons of the rulers given, so that often those who seem good, as soon as they have received government, are changed; as Sacred Scripture related concerning the same Saul, because he changed his heart with his dignity. Whence it is written: "When thou wast a little one in thine own eyes, I constituted thee head in the tribes of Israel" (1 Sam. 15:17). So for the qualities of the subjects the acts of the rulers are disposed, so that often for the evil of the flock the life even of a truly good pastor offends. For that David the prophet, praised by God's attestation, that one conscious of heavenly mysteries, puffed up by the swelling of sudden elation, sinned by num-

bering the people, and yet the people received the vengeance, David sinning (2 Sam. 24:9). Why this? because forsooth according to the merit of the common peoples the hearts of the rectors are disposed. But the Just Judge corrected the vice of the sinner from the animadversion of those, for whose sake he sinned. But because he himself, forsooth, being proud by his own will, was not foreign to the fault, he himself also received the vengeance of the fault. For the raging wrath, which struck the people bodily, prostrated also the rector of the people with inmost sorrow of heart. But it is certain that the merits of rectors and of common peoples are so connected to each other, that often from the fault of pastors the life of the common peoples becomes worse, and often from the merit of the common peoples the life of the pastors is changed.

[Vet. XXI.] 36. Let subjects tolerate prelates even if they be evil, if they can saving the faith. Humility the mistress of what is right. ---But because rectors have their own Judge, it is a great caution of subjects not rashly to judge the life of rulers. For neither in vain did the Lord through Himself pour out the money of the money-changers, and overturn the chairs of them that sold doves (Matt. 21:12); forsooth signifying that through teachers indeed He judges the life of the common peoples, but through Himself He examines the deeds of the teachers. Although also the vices of subjects, which are now either dissembled from being judged by teachers, or cannot be, are without doubt reserved for His judgment.

Therefore while the matter is conducted saving the faith, it is a merit of virtue, if whatever belongs to a superior is tolerated. It ought nevertheless to be humbly suggested, if perchance that which displeases may be able to be amended. But it is to be cared for exceedingly lest an inordinate defense of justice pass into pride, lest while rectitude is incautiously loved, humility herself, the mistress of rectitude, be lost; lest anyone despise him being over him, whom perchance it happens that he reprehends in some action. Against this swelling of pride, the mind of subjects is tamed to the custody of humility, if one's own infirmity is incessantly attended to. For we neglect truly to examine our own strengths; and because we believe stronger things concerning ourselves, therefore we judge strictly those who are set over us. For by how much we less acknowledge ourselves, by so much the more we see those whom we strive to reprehend. These are individual evils, which are often committed by subjects against prelates, often by prelates against subjects, because both those who are over all subjects think them less wise than they themselves are, and again they who are subject judge the actions of their own rectors, and if it should happen to them to have government, they think they could have acted better. Whence it very often happens that both rectors see less prudently those things which are to be done, because the very mist of elation obscures their eyes; and sometimes he who is subject does this when he shall have been a prelate, which as a subject he recently argued

should be done; and for that reason that he perpetrates those things which he had judged, let him at least blush because he judged. Therefore as it is to be cared for by prelates lest a superior place extol their hearts by the estimation of singular wisdom, so it is to be provided for by subjects lest the deeds of rectors displease them.

[Vet. XXII.] 37. Evil pastors are to be honored, not imitated. ---But if the life of teachers is justly reprehended, it is necessary that subjects, even when they displease, should venerate them. [Rec. XV.] But this is to be skillfully looked into, lest either thou desirest to imitate him whom it is necessary to venerate, or thou contemnest to venerate him whom thou despisest to imitate. For a subtle way of rectitude and humility is to be held, that so the reprehensible deeds of teachers may displease, that the mind of subjects may not depart from keeping the reverence of the mastership. Which is well expressed in Noah being drunk, whose naked shame his good sons covered by coming with their backs turned (Gen. 9:21). For we are said to turn away from what we reprove. What is it therefore that the sons, a cloak being thrown over their backs, coming with their backs turned cover the shame of the father, unless that to good subjects the evils of those set over them so displease, that yet they hide these from others? They bring the covering with their backs turned, because judging the deed, and venerating the mastership, they are unwilling to see what they cover.

[Rec. XVI.] 38. To contemn pastors vacant for temporal things, is to accuse God. The power of government cannot be administered without the study of temporal care. ---There are indeed some who if they begin ever so little of spiritual conversation, when they consider their rectors to do temporal things and to consider earthly things, soon they accuse the order of the heavenly disposition, that they are by no means well set over for governing, through whom examples of lowest conversation are shown. But these forsooth while they neglect to temper themselves from the reprehension of their rectors, their merits of their own fault requiring it, they exceed even to the reprehension of the Creator: whose dispensation forsooth is acknowledged the more right by the humble, for the very reason that it is judged not right by the elated. For because the power of government cannot be administered without the study of temporal care, sometimes Almighty God by a wonderful dispensation of piety, that the tender minds of spiritual ones may be disjoined from earthly care, enjoins the burden of government on hard and laborious hearts, that those may lie hid from this world so much the more securely, as these willingly labor in earthly solicitudes. In the exhibition forsooth of the received burden for the utilities also of the subjects themselves there are hard ways of worldly servitude.

39. How much we owe to those who, by attending to temporal cares themselves, free us from them. ---And often, as has been said, the merciful God, by how much He loves to hold

His own, by so much He solicitously hides them from external actions. For also very often the father of the family directs to that labor the servants, from whom he suspends the delicate sons; and thence the sons are beautiful without vexation, whence the servants are defiled in the dust. Which how rightly it is done divinely in the Church, is signified by the very construction of the tabernacle. For to Moses it is enjoined by the divine voice that for covering the holy of holies within, curtains should be woven of fine linen, scarlet, and hyacinth, and it was commanded that for protecting the tabernacle, he should extend curtains of goat's hair and skins, which forsooth should tolerate either rains, or winds, or dust (Exod. 26:1). What therefore do we receive by the skins and goat's hair, by which the tabernacle is covered, but the gross minds of men, which sometimes in the Church by the secret judgment of God, although they be hard, are preferred? Which because they fear not to serve temporal cares, it is necessary that they carry the winds of temptations and rains from the contrarieties of this world. But what is signified by the hyacinth, scarlet, and fine linen, but the tender, but bright life of the saints? Which while it is cautiously hidden in the tabernacle under the goat's hair and skins, its own entire beauty is preserved for it. For that in the interior parts of the tabernacle the fine linen may shine, the scarlet may gleam, the hyacinth may resplend with its cerulean color, from above the skins and goat's hair carry the rains, winds, and dust. They there-

fore who profit with great virtues in the bosom of holy Church, ought not to despise the life of their own prelates, when they see them vacant for exterior things, because this that they themselves secure penetrate inmost things, is from the help of those who labor exteriorly against the storms of this age. For what grace of its own whiteness would it retain, if rain touched the fine linen? Or what of brightness and clarity would the scarlet or hyacinth show, if the dust received should defile these? Let there be therefore from above a strong texture of goat's hair for the dust, let there be below a hyacinthine color apt for beauty. Let those adorn the Church who are vacant for spiritual things alone, let those cover the Church, whom also the labor of corporal things does not weigh down. By no means therefore let him murmur against his own rector acting exteriorly, who within the holy Church already shines spiritually. For if thou securely within glowest as scarlet, why dost thou accuse the goat's hair by which thou art protected?

[Vet. XXIII.] 40. God disposes perverse examples of prelates for the punishment of proud subjects. While the prophets seem to curse, they predict. ---But it is asked by some because while at least for the utility of subjects rectors serve temporal cares too much, many in the Church become worse by their example. Which who would deny to be very true, when he sees earthly things cared for by pastors more solicitously than heavenly things? But neither are these unjust, if, as we said above, the affairs of those presiding

are disposed according to the merits of the subjects. For secretly and spontaneously perpetrated faults require that perverse examples also be offered by pastors, so that by a just judgment he who being proud goes out of the way of God, may also in the way in which he walks stumble through the leadership of the pastor. Whence also by the prophet it is said with the study of one foretelling, not with the wish of one cursing: "Let their eyes be darkened, lest they see, and bow down their back always" (Ps. 69:23). As if he should say: Those who are over the actions of human life as it were as ways to be foreseen, let them not have the light of truth, so that also the subjects who follow, bowed down by the weights of their own iniquities, may lose all state of rectitude. Which thing forsooth we know was done in Judaea, when in the very advent of our Redeemer the crowd of Pharisees and of priests closed their eyes from the true light of the mind, and the people walking through the examples of those set over them wandered in the darkness of unbelief.

41. In what sense God causes the hypocrite to reign. ---But it can be reasonably asked how it is said in this place that the Lord makes the hypocrite to reign, when He specifically complains concerning this matter through the prophet, saying: "They have reigned, but not by me; they have been princes, and I knew it not" (Hosea 8:4). For who that feels rightly would say that the Lord does what He by no means knows? But because God's knowing is to approve, His not knowing to reprove; whence to some whom He reproves He

says: "I know you not whence ye are, depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke 13:25); and sometimes God's doing is to permit by being angry that which He prohibits to be done; whence also He asserted that He hardened the heart of the king of Egypt (Exod. 4:21), because forsooth He permitted it to be hardened; in a wonderful way the Lord both makes hypocrites to reign and knows them not: He makes by permitting, He knows not by reproving. Whence it is necessary that for everything which is desired in this life the internal will be first required. Which when the ear of the human heart desires to perceive, let it know that this sounds not in words, but in things. The place of government therefore when it is offered to be ruled, it is first necessary that each one discuss in himself, if his life congrues with the place, if his action does not dissent from the honor, lest the Just Ruler of all afterwards hear not his prayers in tribulation, for the very reason that He also knows not the very beginnings of his honor, from which the tribulation arises.

Book twenty

SIX.

The holy Doctor explains the seven last verses of chapter 34, and the whole of chapter 35, with the first twenty-one verses of chapter 36. Where he excursus very widely into both allegorical and moral senses.

CHAPTER I.

1. Signs of feigned and true humility.---Among other things, arrogant men are wont to have this peculiar trait in their speech: they then ask their hearers whether they have perchance said anything inordinate, when they know they have said something praiseworthy. They do this, forsooth, not because they doubt their own words, but because they seek favors from the judgment of their hearers. For it can easily be discovered with what mind they inquire, if any one, while praising their good points, should also reprove their bad ones. For it is certain that as they are puffed up by praise, so are they inflamed by corrections; and when they see themselves even justly reproved by anyone, they soon seek for a fuel of defense in their evils. How then do they humbly doubt concerning their good things, who strive to defend

even perversely their evil ones? For he is truly humble in good things, who is not a defender in evil ones. For he who is rebuked for his evils, and is kindled against the words of the rebuker, when he wavers as if humbly concerning his good things, seeks to be adorned by the voice of humility, not to be taught. Eliu therefore, signifying the life of the arrogant, after he had brought in many internal and sublime things, behold, he assumes the form of humility in his words, and having proposed equity, addresses blessed Job under a certain image of discipleship, saying:

CHAPTER II.

JOB 34:31-32.--- Because I have spoken to God, I will also not prohibit thee. If I have erred, teach thou me; if I have spoken iniquity, I will add no more.

3. The mask of humility is quickly cast off.--- As it often happens that even the wicked speak good things, Eliu remembered that he had said many strong things a little above, and was therefore secure in asking lest perchance he should have erred. For he would not ask, if he had believed himself to have erred. For it is, as I have said, the peculiar fraud of the arrogant, that they then study to inquire concerning error, when they know themselves not to have erred. Who again despise to inquire or be rebuked for error, if ever they truly foreknow that they have erred. For they seek not to be, but to seem humble; and then in inquiring they assume the appearance of humility, when they are rather praised for the

inquiry itself. But because it is altogether difficult that the elation which reigns in the heart should not burst forth in the voice; if the hearers of the arrogant wait and consider their words in silence for a little while, their hearts are more quickly manifested by the following words. For they cannot long stay in that image of humility which they take only in appearance. For to proud minds humility is a height, and when they aim to climb its form, they slip down with wearied steps of the soul, as if from steep and rough paths. That which they seek to seem is forsooth foreign to them, and therefore they can by no means long adhere to its image. They estimate it a heavy weight, when they carry it even only in appearance, and until they cast this off, they suffer a certain violence in their heart, because forsooth they serve the ill-ruling habit of elation, and are compelled by its command to betray themselves for what they are, lest they should long be able to seem what they are not. Whence Eliu also, after he had asked to be taught concerning error, after he had promised that he would speak iniquity no more, suddenly leaped forth from the appearance of humility to words of swelling contention. For he added, saying:

CHAPTER III.

JOB 33:33.--- Doth God require it of thee, because it hath displeased thee?

3. The saints do not fear human judgment, but divine, to which even the wicked pretend to appeal.---As if he said: I am about to set forth

reasons before the Lord why my iniquity is now reproved by thee, which it is certain will not be required of thee in judgment. Right men, when they are unjustly attacked by men, recur to the heavenly judgment. Whence it is said by the same blessed Job: Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my conscious one is on high (Job 16:19). And because they desire exceedingly to please Him, they seek the testimony of Him alone. The perverse also, because they desert the life of the just, but sometimes follow their words, when they are rebuked for their ill deeds, assume this as an argument of defense, which the just bring forward as a testimony of purity. Whence also a custom has already been made among them, that if any one reproves them for their deeds, they seek the judgment of God rather than of men. For they do not fear to be judged by God even when they know themselves worthy of damnation, and they blush to be judged by men. They propose therefore the greater which they do not fear, that they may be able to decline this lesser which they blush at. For it is written: Every one of us shall render an account for himself to God (Rom. 14:12). Because therefore then the damnation of each one is manifest, from thence now the wicked gather that even the perverse action of each one should be secure; lest now any just man should discuss it by reproving, from which it is certain that he is a stranger in judgment. But on the contrary, the consciences of the godly believe that a great reward is conferred upon them, when they are now reproved for certain of their illicit

actions. For they propose before the eyes of the heart that the strict judgment of God will then be the more truly mitigated over them, by how much it is now prevented by the sharper reproof of man; and they compute temporal wrath upon themselves as a gain, through which they know they can escape eternal wrath. Eliu therefore, holding the type of all the arrogant, and rather choosing to be struck by eternal invective, than to be temporarily rebuked, let him say: Doth God require it of thee, because it hath displeased thee? But because those who begin to speak in contention are wont to be more culpable than those who respond, he added, saying:

CHAPTER IV.

IBID.--- For thou hast begun to speak, and not I.

4. They in vain think themselves innocent, who when struck respond harshly.---In this he believed himself innocent, in that when struck he broke forth; 813 forsooth not knowing that innocence is not defended by time, but by reason. For what is supported by his defenses, in that although he brought nothing against one who was silent, yet he responded wickedly to one who was rightly beginning? But after he is shown in words of elation, behold again he is cloaked under the veil of inquiry, and he brings in, saying:

IBID.--- But if thou knowest anything better, speak.

Although in that he says not, "Because thou knowest better," but, "If thou knowest anything

better, speak," this itself was to have been too proud, to have doubted concerning the knowledge of one better. Yet this, that he gave place of speaking to blessed Job, indicated that he exhibited humility. But, as was said above, because in the action of the arrogant everything that is covered by an added speech is opened by the intention of elation breaking forth again, more quickly it became known of Eliu with what mind he asked blessed Job to speak. For there follows:

CHAPTER V.

JOB 34:34-35.--- Let men of understanding speak to me, and let a wise man hear me. But Job hath spoken foolishly, and his words do not sound of discipline.

5. It is not allowed to lie for the sake of humility.---Behold while he gave place of speaking to blessed Job as if humbly, he showed what he carried within, saying: Let men of understanding speak to me; forsooth disdaining if blessed Job should presume to speak, who as it were could not understand his words. And because he judged blessed Job unworthy not only to speak, but also to hear, he immediately added: Let a wise man hear me. As if he said: To this man it is unjustly granted to speak, who does not even deserve to hear the words of the wise. And soon he openly manifests how despised a thought he has of him, saying: But Job hath spoken foolishly, and his words do not sound of discipline. He believed blessed Job to have spoken without discipline, because he remembered that he had been just

in his works. Perchance Eliu would speak truly, if those things which blessed Job had related of himself, the Author of discipline Himself had not also judged of him. For Job innocently asserted himself to have been scourged, whom God also showed to have been struck without cause (Job 2:3). Why then did the voice of the struck one sound proud, which in no way disagreed from the sentence of the Smiter? They are incautiously humble who ensnare themselves in a lie while they avoid arrogance; nay, rather by lying they are proud, because they set themselves up against the truth which they leave. For he who, necessity compelling, speaks true good things of himself, is so much the more joined to humility, by how much he is also associated with truth. Or was Paul not humble, when in emulation of truth against false apostles he related so many of his own strong deeds to his disciples (1 Tim. 2:7; Acts 20:18, 19)? Who forsooth would have existed as an enemy to truth, if by hiding his own virtues, he had permitted the preachers of errors to prevail.

But because arrogant men, in that they proudly examine the words of the good, consider the surface of the words rather than the order of things, Eliu believed that the sentences of blessed Job did not sound of discipline. Because forsooth the sharpness of the proud is often extended even to the hardness of malediction, he immediately subjoins against blessed Job, as if addressing words to God:

CHAPTER VI.

JOB 34:36.--- My Father, let Job be proved unto the end.

6. The proud know not how to pity the afflicted. In correction, swelling parts are so to be pressed down, that the bleeding ones may be cherished.---Behold, that which he had conceived from the swelling of arrogance, he exalts even in words of malediction. But perchance he would wish for the force of a benevolent proof, if he had judged him to have stood in the proof. That therefore the malice of his cruelty may openly appear, he prays that he may still be proved by scourges, whom he already complains to have fallen amidst scourges. He sent before what he felt, that what he desired might be more clearly known. He still asks for him to be struck, whom he already accuses of having sinned under the hand of the Smiter. These are the peculiar vows of the arrogant, that they pray for the life of the suffering to be more sharply examined, because the more just they are to themselves, the harder they exist to the sorrows of others. For they know not how to draw into themselves the passion of another's infirmity, and to pity the weakness of a neighbor as they do their own. For because they think high things of themselves, they therefore by no means condescend to the humble. Eliu believes blessed Job to have been struck for a fault, and therefore he did not think the bowels of piety were to be shown to him even amidst so many sorrows. But men truly holy, when they know anyone to be scourged even for a fault, although they correct some of his inordi-

nate things, yet they pity some of his sufferings; and they so know how to press down the swelling parts, that they also know how to cherish the bleeding ones, in order that in them, while the hard parts are softened, the weak ones may be strengthened. But on the contrary, arrogant men, because they have not bowels of charity, not only do not pity even the just who are suffering, but they moreover afflict them under the appearance of just rebuke; and either if there are any small evils in them they exaggerate them, or those things which are truly good they change by interpreting them ill in their own minds.

7. Holy doctors are wont to exaggerate the vices of delinquents. What it is to dig through the wall of the heart.---Although even chaste doctors often are wont to exaggerate the vices of delinquents, and to search into secret things from certain public signs, that they may be able to know greater things from the least. Whence it is said to Ezekiel: Son of man, dig through the wall (Ezek. 8:8). Where he soon added: And when I had digged through the wall, there appeared one door, and he said to me: Go in, and see the most wicked abominations which these do here. And having entered I saw; and behold every likeness of creeping things, and abomination of animals, and all the idols of the house of Israel were painted on the wall (Ibid. 9, 10). For by Ezekiel the person of those set over is signified, by the wall the hardness of subjects. And what is it to dig through the wall, but by sharp reproofs to open the hardness of

the heart? Which when he had digged through, a door appeared, because when the hardness of the heart is opened by sharp reproofs, a certain gate as it were is shown, from which all the interior things of the thoughts in him who is reproved may be seen. Whence also it well follows there: And he said to me: Go in, and see the most wicked abominations which these do here. He as it were enters to behold the abominations, who having discussed certain signs appearing outwardly, so penetrates the hearts of subjects, that all things which are thought of there become known to him. Whence also he added: And having entered I saw; and behold every likeness of creeping things, and abomination of animals. In the creeping things, thoughts altogether earthly are signified; but in the animals, things already somewhat suspended from the earth, but still requiring the rewards of earthly recompense. For creeping things 815 adhere to the earth with their whole body; but animals are suspended from the earth by their belly, yet by the appetite of the throat they are always inclined to the earth. Creeping things therefore are within the wall, when thoughts are revolved in the mind which are never lifted up from earthly desires. Animals also are within the wall, when even if any things already just, any things honest are thought of, yet they serve for the seeking of temporal gains and honors; and through themselves indeed they are already as it were suspended from the earth, but still through ambition, as if through the desire of the throat, they submit themselves to the lowest

things. Whence also it is well added: And all the idols of the house of Israel were painted on the wall. For it is written: And avarice, which is the service of idols (Col. 3:5). Rightly therefore after the animals the idols are described, because although by honest action they as it were raise themselves from the earth, yet by dishonest ambition they depose themselves to the earth. But it is well said: They were painted, because while the appearances of outward things are drawn within, whatever is thought of in feigned images is as it were painted in the heart.

8. The pious severity of the ruler of souls in searching out the crimes of the heart. Let him who ceases from correction fear to be damned. It is therefore to be noted that first a hole in the wall, and then a door is perceived, and then at last the secret abomination is demonstrated, because forsooth of each sin first signs are shown without, then the door of open iniquity, and then at last all the evil that lies hid within is opened. Therefore also holy doctors are wont to discuss minutely small things, that from the extreme outer parts they may be able to arrive at the secret greater things. They move words of sharp rebuke, that they may eradicate the thorns of deadly thought; and when they do these things, they are fierce with the love of charity, they do not swell with the inflation of elation. For they are ready to die for those very ones whom they afflict by being fierce as if unto death. They keep in thought what they love, they assume in appearance what they persecute. Preaching good things they insinuate

them, but cautioning against evil things they foretell them, not as Eliu desiring them, do they pray. Towards those committed to them they sometimes so fervently burn in correction, as if they had nothing of tranquility; but they are so tranquil in love, as if no fervor kindled them. For they greatly fear lest if they cease from the correction of the wicked, they themselves should be punished for their damnation; and when they are kindled to words of invective, they indeed come to these things unwillingly, but yet these things prepare a defense for them before the strict Judge.

9. The order of reproving and instructing delinquents to penance and piety.---Whence it is also said again to the same Ezekiel: Son of man, take thee a brick, and thou shalt lay it before thee, and shalt portray upon it the city of Jerusalem, and thou shalt ordain a siege against it, and shalt build munitions, and shalt carry up a mound, and shalt set camps against it, and shalt place battering-rams round about. And take thou unto thee an iron frying-pan, and thou shalt set it for an iron wall between thee and the city (Ezek. 4:1, seq.). For of whom does Ezekiel hold the likeness but of masters? to whom it is said: Take thee a brick, and thou shalt lay it before thee, and shalt portray upon it the city of Jerusalem. For holy doctors take to themselves a brick, when they take hold of the earthly heart of their hearers that they may teach them. Which brick they lay before them, because they keep it with the whole intention of their solicitude. In which also they are commanded to portray the city of Jerusalem,

because by preaching they take care exceedingly to demonstrate to earthly hearts how great is the vision of heavenly peace. To whom it is well also said: And thou shalt ordain a siege against it, and shalt build munitions. For holy preachers ordain a siege about the brick in which the city of Jerusalem is portrayed, when they demonstrate to the earthly mind, but now seeking the heavenly country, how great an adversity of vices attacks it in the time of this life. For when each sin is shown how it lies in wait for the mind, a siege as it were is ordained about the city of Jerusalem by the voice of the preacher. But because they not only insinuate how the vices lying in wait may expugn the mind, but also how the guarded virtues may strengthen it, it is rightly subjoined: And thou shalt build munitions. For the holy preacher builds munitions, when he ceases not to insinuate what virtues may meet what vices. And because as virtues increase, for the most part the wars of temptation are increased, it is rightly still added: And thou shalt carry up a mound; and shalt set camps against it, and shalt place battering-rams round about. For he carries up a mound, when each preacher indicates the mass of increasing temptation. And he sets camps against Jerusalem, when he foretells to the right intention of the hearers the circumventions of the crafty enemy as if incomprehensible snares. And he places battering-rams round about, when he makes known the stings of temptations on every side surrounding us in this life, and piercing through the wall of virtues.

10. What and how great zeal is necessary for this.---Where it is well added: And take thou unto thee an iron frying-pan, and thou shalt set it for an iron wall between thee and the city (Ezek. 4:3). For by the frying-pan is shown the frying, but by the iron is shown fortitude. But what so fries and tortures the mind of a master and doctor as the zeal of the Lord? Whence also Paul was kindled by the frying of this pan, when he said: Who is weak, and I am not weak? and who is scandalized, and I burn not (2 Cor. 11:29)? And because whoever is kindled with the zeal of God against sinners, is fortified forever with a strong guard, lest he should be damned from the neglected care of preaching and ruling, it is rightly said: Thou shalt set it for an iron wall between thee and the city (Ezek. 4:3). For the iron frying-pan is placed as an iron wall between the prophet and the city, because when doctors now exhibit a strong zeal, they afterwards keep that same zeal as a strong munition between themselves and their hearers, lest they should then be destitute for vengeance, if they have now been dissolved in correction. This same pan the prophet heard, that he might take a wall between himself and his hearers, when the divine voice sent before to him, saying: If thou shalt announce to the wicked man, and he shall not have been converted from his impiety, and from his wicked way, he indeed shall die in his impiety, but thou hast delivered thy soul (Ezek. 3:19). This pan Paul had placed as a wall between himself and his disciples, when he said: I am pure from the blood of you all; for I have

not shunned to announce to you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26). Now therefore it is necessary that doctors should desire to be fried by the ardors of zeal, lest they be compelled afterwards to be tortured by the fire of Gehenna for the torpor of negligence.

11. With what discretion it is to be exercised. Let it not proceed from secret hatred.---But it is one thing what we owe to the unjust and subjects, another 817 what we owe to the just and not subjects. The fear of rendering accounts ought to kindle us to the correction and custody of the former; but the considered equity itself ought to incline us to the veneration of the latter. But arrogant men, because they are ignorant of the form of this discretion, exhibit that to the just and not subjects, which they see done by good preachers to both the unjust and subjects. Who when they unjustly leap forth to the fervor of invective, even exceed by words of malediction. For because they by no means love their neighbors as themselves, they cease not to desire for their neighbors what they themselves fear to happen to themselves. Whence Eliu, sweating out secret hatred in the manifestation of malediction, says: My Father, let Job be proved unto the end, cease not from the man of iniquity. He calls him a man of iniquity, whom God by heavenly attestation denounces as just above all men. And because many things are still subjoined under this indiscretion, I think they are to be briefly passed over. For sayings which lack gravity do not require an intent exposition. It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

JOB 34:37.--- Who hath added blasphemy upon his sins.

12. Eliu shadows those out, who while they seem to speak for the truth, are strangers to the truth.---He accuses him both of having deserved scourges for his sins, and of having sinned after the scourges. But the Lord judges far otherwise, Who both insinuates that he was scourged without cause, and returns double goods after the scourges (Job 2:3). For punishment is due to fault, not reward. Blessed Job is therefore shown to have spoken without fault, whom rewards follow after his speaking (Job 42:10). Eliu therefore, because speaking for the defenses of the Lord, he feels otherwise of blessed Job than the Lord does, as it were while he multiplies words for the truth, he disagrees with the truth. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

JOB 34:36.---Let him be tried until the end, and then let him provoke God to judgment by his words.

13. They are eager to speak not only foolish things, but many.---As if he were to say: Let him know from our assertion that he by no means suffices for the divine examination. And because arrogant men are eager to speak not only foolish things, but also many; the verse which follows is well frequently applied to him.

CHAPTER IX.

JOB 35:1.---Therefore Eliu spoke these things again.

14. The immense loquacity of the proud.---Everyone who speaks much always studies to begin in his speech, so that by the very beginning he may make the hearers suspended, that they may be silent more attentively, as expecting to hear something new. But Eliu, finishing some things, incessantly begins others, so that his immense loquacity may be continued by always subjoining new beginnings. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

JOB 35:2.---Doth thy thought seem right to thee, that thou shouldst say: I am more just than God?

15. How unjustly they are wont to accuse the innocent.---That blessed Job did not say he was more just than God, everyone who reads the text of the history acknowledges, but he says: Let Him set equity against me, and my judgment shall come to victory (Job 23:7). Namely, weighing his own life, and being ignorant of the causes of his smiting, as has already been often said, he believed he was scourged for the washing away of sins, and not for the increasing of merits; and therefore he trusted that his judgment would come to victory, because he found not in himself the fault for which he ought to have been smitten. Which indeed the Lord also said of him to the devil: Thou hast moved me against him, to afflict him without cause (Job 2:3). How then did he sin by speaking these things, who by

these words consented, even without knowing it, to the divine and hidden sentence concerning himself? Or what does it hinder if our words outwardly disagree with the rectitude of truth in human judgment, when in the hinge of the heart they agree together joined to it? Human ears judge our words such as they sound without; but divine judgments hear them such as they are brought forth from within. Among men the heart is weighed from the words, but with God the words are weighed from the heart. Blessed Job therefore, while he says this outwardly which the Lord said inwardly, all that he spoke he brought in so much the more justly outwardly, as he did not piously depart from the internal sentence. Although being filled with the prophetic spirit, in that which he says: Let Him set equity against me, and my judgment shall come to victory (Job 23:7), he could behold the presence of our Redeemer. For He Himself, who is the power and wisdom of the Father, is also not inconveniently accepted as His equity. Whence it is written: Who is made unto us of God wisdom, and justice, and sanctification (1 Cor 1:30). Which equity namely, because God, by showing it incarnate, set it against the fleeing wicked, He straightway recalled them from iniquity, and the human race in that judgment overcame the ancient adversary, in which it found the equity of God opposing its ways. It follows:

CHAPTER XI.

JOB 35:3.---For thou saidst: That which is right doth not please Thee, or what will it profit Thee if I shall sin?

16. Either they speak false things, or if true, yet not suitable.---If the whole series of the book is attended to, blessed Job is shown to have said none of these things. But arrogant men, as we have also said above, are wont to have this as their own, that while they go forward in excessive invective, they even lie in their inveighing; and when they cannot justly reprehend what is, they reprehend by lying what is not. It follows:

JOB 35:4.---Therefore I will answer thy words, and thy friends with thee.

By the previous sayings he has related as it were the culpable words of blessed Job, and from them has proposed to himself matter for speaking; but by the subsequent words he discusses with strong sharpness that which he fallaciously feigned to himself for matter of speaking. And indeed the sentences which follow are strong, but they do not agree with the person of blessed Job; and so much the more the weapons of this rebuke do not strike him, as they are unjustly sent against him. It follows:

CHAPTER XII.

JOB 35:5-7.---Look up to the heaven, and behold, and contemplate the ether, that it is higher than thou. If thou shalt sin, what wilt thou hurt Him; and if thy iniquities be multiplied, what wilt thou do against Him? Furthermore, if thou shalt

act justly, what wilt thou give to Him, or what will He receive from thy hand?

17. Creatures are the footsteps of God.---Although these things ought by no means to have been said to blessed Job, who knew greater things, yet the things which are said are true, that namely our sins neither hurt God, nor our well-done deeds assist Him. Whence following up, he added: JOB 35:8.---Thy impiety shall hurt a man who is like thee, and thy justice shall help the son of man. But among these things that is to be skillfully considered, which he says: Look up to the heaven, and behold, and contemplate the ether, that it is higher than thou. For saying these things, he surely gathers that he ought to consider how much less he either profits or hurts God by his action, who cannot profit or hurt the height of the heaven and the ether. Although in the heaven or the ether we may understand the heavenly powers, always adhering to the divine sights, so that when we behold the angelic spirits still to be far distant from us, we may acknowledge how far distant we are below the Creator Himself and Ruler of spirits, yet nothing hinders us from understanding the corporeal matter of the heaven and the ether in this place. For if we vigilantly behold exterior things, by those very same things we are recalled to interior things. For the wonderful works of the visible creature are the footsteps of our Creator. For Himself we cannot yet see; but we are already tending to the vision of Him, if we wonder at Him in those things which He has made. We therefore call the

creature His footsteps, because by these things which are from Him, by following them we go to Him. Whence Paul says: His invisible things are seen understood by those things which are made, also His eternal power and divinity (Rom 1:20). Whence also it is written in the book of Wisdom: For by the greatness of the creature and the beauty, the Creator may be intelligently seen (Wis 13:5). For to our mind, scattered without by its own sin, God does not yet become known within as He is; but while He proposes the beauty of His workmanship without, as it were by certain beckonings to us He hints, and shows what we should follow within, and in a wonderful manner by those very exterior forms He leads us to interior things; He hints with immense admiration what He is, by showing these wonderful things without which He is not. Hence indeed it is written of wisdom: She showeth herself cheerfully to them in the ways, and meeteth them with all providence (Wis 6:17).

18. There are ways to the Creator. Through visible things we departed from God; through the same we ought to return to God.---For the ways to the Creator are the works of the creature considered. Which while we see them made, we wonder at the power of the Maker. In these ways we are met by wisdom with all providence, because the power of the Maker is proposed to us to be inquired into in everything that is seen to be wonderfully made; and whithersoever the soul turns itself, if it vigilantly attends, it finds God in those very same things by which it left Him; and it

acknowledges His power from the consideration of them again, for the love of which it deserted Him; and by those things through which it fell perverted, by the same it is recalled converted. For where we have fallen, there we lean that we may rise; and as it were there in rising we fix the hand of consideration, where by the foot of slippery love falling through neglect we were lying. For because we fell from invisible things through visible things, it is fitting that we should lean upon the invisible things by the same visible things again, so that by what case the soul came to the lowest things, by that degree it may return to the highest; and by the same steps by which it fell it may rise, while, as has been said, those things well considered recall us to God, which badly chosen divided us from Him. Eliu therefore, that he might move the force of consideration, and show from corporeal things how much higher God is than man, well brought in: Look up to the heaven, and behold, and contemplate the ether, that it is higher than thou. For by those very created and corporeal things we acknowledge how much we are distant from the sublimity of our Creator, because by everything which we see we are admonished to be humble, so that as it were the appearance of the creature considered may be a certain lesson to our mind. Let him say therefore: Look up to the heaven; and behold, and contemplate the ether, that it is higher than thou. If thou shalt sin, what wilt thou hurt Him? and if thy iniquities be multiplied, what wilt thou do against Him? Furthermore, if thou shalt act

justly, what wilt thou give to Him, or what will He receive from thy hand? As if he were to say: Understand from the creatures themselves which thou seest to be corporally higher than thou, how much thou art disjoined from the sublimity of divine power; and from this thy consideration gather that thou neither helpest God by living well, nor again burdenest Him by evil actions.

19. We are inferior to the angels, how much more to God!---If indeed, as we said above, we understand by the heaven or the ether the heavenly powers, by these words Eliu admonishes us to consider, that because the angelic spirits themselves cannot fully contemplate the power of our Creator, of whom yet it is certain that they are higher than we by the very fact that they have not fallen into the lowest things, we may namely gather how much inferior we are to God, who are subject even to sublime creatures, yet far inferior to Him. As if he were to say: See how far thou art separated from the divine height, from whose power even those powers tremble with humility which transcend thee with immense sublimity, and how much thou art inferior to the Highest, who findest thyself to be inferior even to those who are inferior to Him. But by showing the highest things, he brings him back to equal things, and says:

CHAPTER XIII.

JOB 35:8.---Thy impiety shall hurt a man who is like thee, and thy justice shall help the son of man.

20. Man can hurt or help man, not the angels.---Human impiety hurts him whom it defiles by perverting. And again our justice helps him whom it changes from wicked actions. For those things know not how to hurt or help which can neither be corrupted from good nor changed from evil. Therefore the heavenly powers can neither be harmed nor helped by this, because they have already received to be unchangeable. But they cannot consider these things who are entangled in earthly desires. For to minds scattered without it is difficult to return to themselves, because wicked ways hold them, once captured, so much the more delightfully, as in them everything that pleases is lawful. For no wall of discipline meets them to constrain, no punishment of retribution is foreseen to terrify, but the eyes of the heart being closed, the soul is precipitated into the lowest things, as much as it is obscured from the highest; and it perpetrates temporal evils so much the more securely, as it more hardly despairs of eternal goods.

21. The wicked purge the good by pressing them.---But this wickedness of the reprobate, after the manner of threshing, separating the life of the elect like grains from the chaff, presses that it may purge. For the wicked more expedite the good from the desires of this world while they afflict them; because while they bring upon them here many violent things, they compel them to hasten to heavenly things. Which was well signified concerning the Israelitish people, Moses calling them and King Pharaoh raging (Exod 3:7).

For then Moses was sent to call them, when already Pharaoh had been excited to oppress them with hard works, so that the minds of the Israelites, unseemly adhering to Egypt, while one called as it were drawing them, another might as it were impel them while raging; and the people shamefully fixed in service might be moved, either provoked by good things, or impelled by evil things. This is done daily, while heavenly rewards being preached, the reprobate are permitted to rage against the elect, so that if we neglect to go out when called to the land of promise, we may at least be impelled by raging pressures, and this Egypt, namely the present life, which oppressed us by flattering, may help us by pressing; and that which while it cherished us, crushed us with the yoke of service, may show the way of liberty while it tortures. This is surely the cause why the just are permitted to be afflicted by the unjust, namely that while they hear of future goods which they may desire, they may also suffer present evils which they may dread, and that love may provoke, and torture may impel to an easier exit. Whence Eliu, following out those same labors of the elect under the oppressions of the reprobate, says:

CHAPTER XIV.

JOB 35:9.---By reason of the multitude of calumniators they shall cry out, and they shall howl by reason of the force of the arm of tyrants.

22. They are worse who by wicked examples spoil us of virtues, than they who of external

goods.---We can rightly call calumniators all the wicked, not only those who take away external goods, but also those who by their evil morals, and the example of a reprobate life, strive to dissipate our internal goods. For the former desire to invade those things which are outside us, but the latter seek to prey upon us within. For the former from love of things, the latter cease not to rage from hatred of virtues. For the former envy what we have, the latter what we live. For the former study to snatch away exterior goods, because they please; the latter bestir themselves to dissipate interior goods, because they displease. By how much therefore the life of morals differs from the substance of things, by so much more grievous is the calumniator who by being seen to do evil brings force upon our morals, than he who by violently oppressing brings losses upon things. The latter has withdrawn nothing from our sustenance, but has placed before us examples of perdition. Therefore he has brought a more grievous calumny, by how much he has moved a quiet heart into temptation. Who although he has by no means persuaded us to the works of his action, yet has brought on the fight of temptation. Therefore we sustain a grievous calumny from his life, because namely we suffer within what we overcome with labor. And because in this world the life of the wicked abounds which may torture, it is rightly said: By reason of the multitude of calumniators they shall cry out.

23. Some persuade to vices, others command and compel to them by tyrannical force.---But

because they sometimes study to extort with unbridled forces those things which they are not able to persuade with words, it is fitly subjoined: And they shall howl by reason of the force of the arm of tyrants. For whosoever compels us to live evilly by his own example, still uses against us the voice of a calumniator; but whosoever persuading to sin also desires to terrify us, already rages against us with the arm of tyranny. For it is one thing to persuade to vices by living, another to command them by terrifying. While therefore we behold examples of evil action, we as it were still hear the noise of the calumniator; but when we are compelled to sin by force, we already sustain a tyrant in the heart.

24. Nevertheless the minds of the elect resist their efforts. We must go to God, not only through soft, but also through rough things.--- But the minds of the robust, immovably fixed in God, despise those things the more as they perceive that they grow against the precepts of the Founder. For awaiting the rewards of eternity, they take strength from adversities, because as the fight increases, they doubt not that a more glorious victory remains for them. And thus the desires of the elect while they are pressed, profit by adversity, as fire is pressed by a blast that it may grow; and whence it is seen as it were to be extinguished, thence it is strengthened. For in that we show with how great a desire we burn for the Lord, if we pass to Him not only through quiet and soft things, but also through rough and hard things. For hence the prophet

says: Who made my feet like the feet of harts (Ps 17:34 [Vulg. 18:34]). For the hart when he climbs the ridges of the mountains, whatsoever rough things he beholds, whatsoever things present themselves bound with thorns, he overpasses with a leap, and without any obstacle to his course he is elevated to higher places. So also the minds of the elect, whatsoever they behold to oppose and meet them in this world, they transcend by the leap of contemplation, and after the manner of harts, having despised the thorns of earthly things, they carry themselves into heavenly things. Hence again he says: And in my God I shall overpass a wall (Ibid. 30 [31]). For a wall is everything which is placed in our way, lest we should pass to Him who is loved. But we overpass the wall, when for the love of the heavenly country, we tread under foot whatsoever things have been placed in our way in this world. Hence by the same Prophet the Lord says to the contending soul: I heard thee in the secret of the tempest, I proved thee at the waters of contradiction (Ps 80:8 [Vulg. 81:7]). For the secret of the tempest is when in a contrite heart the waves of tempting thoughts swell, when against the studies of holy love the tumults of worldly cares dash themselves. He is heard therefore in the secret of the tempest, because this very fluctuation of tribulation is the cry of one praying. But because there are not wanting altogether those who may strive to persuade perverted things to those seeking good things, the waters of contradiction are the resisting peoples. And because then the desire is

proved when it is resisted by some adversity, it is rightly said: I proved thee at the waters of contradiction. By these efforts of virtues, therefore, the robust profit from adversity, but the weak often languish in their desires, if any things have been placed in their way from the opposite side, and when they are struck with strong tribulation, they fail through pusillanimity. Whence Eliu, casting reproaches of pusillanimity upon blessed Job, having first mentioned the oppressions of the wicked, straightway follows out the pusillanimities of the weak, saying:

CHAPTER XV.

JOB 35:10.---And he said not: Where is God who made me?

25. He who is broken by temptation does not seriously think on the providence of God.---It is the custom of holy Scripture to pass suddenly from the singular number to the plural, and from the plural often to turn itself to the singular. Whence Eliu when he said: They shall cry out, and they shall howl, by no means subjoined: They said not, where is God: but: He said not where is God. For coming from the plural number to the singular, he suddenly passed to the person of each weak one, perhaps because by each one that which is heard to be said singularly of them is better recognized, so that each one may return to his own heart, and reprehend in himself this which is said of each one. Therefore he held the singular number, saying: And he said not, Where is God who made me. For whosoever is broken by

the tribulation of adversities, little contemplates by whom he was made. For He who made that which was not, does not desert what is made without governance; and He who kindly formed man, by no means permits him to be unjustly tortured; nor does He allow that to perish neglected which is, who created even that which was not that it might be. When therefore we require the cause of our tribulation, and perhaps find it more slowly, there is this consideration, that we suffer nothing unjustly, because if by God's authorship we are who were not, by God's governance we are not afflicted unjustly who are. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

JOB 35:10. --- Who gives songs in the night.

26. Lest we be overcome, God seasons tribulations with consolation. --- A song in the night is joy in tribulation, because although we are afflicted by the pressures of temporality, yet we already rejoice in the hope of eternity. Paul preached songs in the night, saying: Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation (Rom. 12:12). David had taken a song in the night, who said: You are my refuge from the pressure which has surrounded me, my exultation, redeem me from those surrounding me (Ps. 31:7 [Vulg. 32:7]). Behold, he calls the pressure 'night,' and yet calls his Deliverer 'exultation' amidst his straits. Externally indeed it was night in the surrounding of pressure, but internally songs were resounding from the consolation of joy. For since we cannot return to eternal joys except through temporal

losses, the whole intention of holy Scripture is that the hope of remaining joy may strengthen us among these transitory adversities. Whence also the prophet Ezekiel testifies that he received a book in which were written lamentations, a song, and a woe (Ezek. 2:9). For what is figured by this book but the divine words (divina eloquia)? Which, because they prescribe to us tears and mourning, are related as lamentations written therein. They also contain a song and a woe, because they so preach joy from hope that they yet mention pressures and straits in the present. They contain a song and a woe, because although we desire sweet things there, it is first necessary that we endure bitter things here. The Lord preached a song and a woe to the disciples, when He said: These things I have spoken to you, that in me you might have peace; in the world you shall have pressure (John 16:33). As if He said plainly: Let there be that to you from me within which may refresh you by consoling, because there will be that from the world without which by raging may heavily press you. Because therefore every weak person, when he is pressed, is wearied by excessive pusillanimity from the hope of joy, and while he endures adversities without, forgets within that in which he rejoiced, it is well said: He said not, Where is God who made me, who gave songs in the night? For if he said these things, he would temper the violence which he suffers; and by this, that he sought within what is to remain, he would not estimate that which he sustains as transitory without to be intolerable. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII.

JOB 35:11. --- Who teaches us above the beasts of the earth, and instructs us above the birds of heaven.

27. God teaches us to beware of the pleasures of the flesh and the elation of the spirit. --- The beasts of the earth are those who, by the use of carnal life, seek the lowest things; but the birds of heaven are those who, by the study of proud curiosity, search into sublime things. The former, by living, cast themselves down lower than they are; the latter, by inquiring, raise themselves higher than they are able. The pleasure of the flesh casts down the former in the lowest parts; the lust of curiosity (libido curiositatis) raises the latter as if in higher parts. To the former it is said through the sacred eloquence (sacra eloquia): Be not as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding (Ps. 31:9 [Vulg. 32:9]); the proud labor of the latter is rebuked, while it is said: Seek not the things that are too high for you, and search not into things that are above your strength (Ecclus. 3:22 [Vulg. 3:22]). To the former it is said: Mortify your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence (Col. 3:5); to the latter it is said: Let no man deceive you through philosophy and vain deceit (Col. 2:8). God therefore teaches us above the beasts of the earth and the birds of heaven, because while we recognize what we are, neither does the infirmity of the flesh cast us down, nor does the spirit of pride raise us up; neither by flowing down are

we subjected to the lowest things, nor by being proud are we puffed up with sublime things. For he who falls by the flesh is prostrated by the appetite of beasts; but he who is extolled in mind is raised up after the manner of birds as if by the feather of levity.

28. Pride is the nursery of luxury. The flesh drowns those whom proud knowledge raises up. The mind justly loses the dominion of the flesh if it refuses to serve God. --- But if it is vigilantly intended, that both humility of mind and chastity of the flesh (castimonia) be held, we quickly recognize that one is guarded by the other. For to many pride has often been the nursery of luxury, because while the spirit raised them as if on high, the flesh drowned them in the lowest parts. For these are first secretly elevated, but afterwards they publicly fall, because while they are puffed up by the hidden motions of the heart, they fall by the open lapses of the body. Thus, thus the elated were to be struck by a just retribution, so that because by being proud they prefer themselves to men, by being luxurious they may be brought down even to the likeness of beasts. For man when he was in honor, did not understand; he was compared to the senseless beasts, and was made like to them (Ps. 48:13 [Vulg. 49:12]). For the feather of knowledge had raised them on high, of whom Paul said that which we also brought forward above: Because when they had known God, they glorified him not as God, nor gave thanks; but became vain in their thoughts (Rom. 1:21). But how they fell into the pleasure of beasts,

or more than beasts, he subjoined, saying: God delivered them up to the desires of their heart, into uncleanness (Ibid. 24). Behold, the flesh drowned those whom proud knowledge raised up, and from the flight of birds they fell through appetite beyond that of beasts; and thence they were prostrated under themselves, whence they seemed to go above themselves. Care must therefore be taken, and with all guardianship the mind must be kept from the tumor of pride. For our thoughts do not fly past before the eyes of God empty; and no moments of time pass through the soul without the state of retribution. God therefore sees within what elevates the mind, and therefore permits to grow strong without what may cast it down. Within it is first extolled, what afterwards without may be struck by the corruption of luxury. An open stroke follow clearly a hidden fault, so that by external evils internal ones may be punished, and the heart may publicly fall, which was secretly swelling. Hence indeed it is said through Hosea against the Israelites: The spirit of fornication is in the midst of them, and they have not known the Lord (Hos. 5:4). Who, that he might show that the cause of libido broke forth from the fault of elation, straightway subjoined, saying: And the arrogance of Israel shall answer in his face (Ibid. 5). As if he said: The fault which lay hid in secret through the elation of the mind, answered in the open through the luxury of the flesh. Therefore, through the guardianship of humility, the purity of chastity is to be kept. For if the spirit is piously pressed under God, the

flesh is not unlawfully raised above the spirit. For the spirit has the dominion of the flesh committed to it, if yet it recognizes the rights of lawful servitude under the Lord. For if by being proud it despises its Author, justly it also receives battle from the subject flesh. Whence also that first disobedient man, as soon as he sinned by being proud, covered his shameful parts (Gen. 3:7). For because the spirit brought contumely upon God, it straightway found the contumely of the flesh. And because he would not be subject to his Author, he lost the right of the subject flesh which he ruled, so that in himself indeed the confusion of his disobedience might redound, and being overcome he might learn what he, being elated, had lost.

29. If we neglect humility of heart, God despises the integrity of the flesh. --- Let no one, therefore, after he has begun to seek heavenly things, if he is prostrated by the pleasure of the flesh, judge himself conquered only then when he is openly overcome. For if for the most part the virus of libido is born from the root of elation, then the flesh conquered when the spirit secretly swelled: already then the soul, by the origin of the fault, fell into the petulance of beasts, when by extolling itself, after the manner of birds, it flew beyond what it ought. For hence it is that long continence is suddenly dissolved; hence that for the most part virginity preserved even to old age is vitiated. For because humility of heart is neglected, the righteous Judge despises even the integrity of the body; and sometimes through an

open evil He announces the reprobate, whom He for a long time tolerated as reprobate in secret. For he who suddenly lost a good long preserved, held within himself another evil, from which another suddenly broke forth, through which he stood forth as alien even then from Almighty God, when he showed himself to adhere to Him through purity of body. Since therefore elation of mind leads to the pollution of the flesh, the heart of the reprobate is drowned from the flight of birds to the petulance of beasts. But holy men, lest they be brought down to the gulf of luxury by beastly appetite, solicitously guard the thoughts of the mind from the flight of pride; and lest they fall by being foolish in the lowest things, they humbly press down everything that they wise sublimely. Rightly therefore is it said: Who teaches us above the beasts of the earth, and instructs us above the birds of heaven. You understand, this also he [the weak person] did not say.

30. In adversities we fail, because we know not how to use prosperous things moderately. --- This therefore which excels beasts and birds, he [Eliu] says is not remembered in tribulation; as if he said: Every weak person therefore by no means strengthens himself in perturbation, because also in tranquility he does not temper himself; and for this reason he knows not how to endure adversities, because being set in prosperous things, he knew not in thought how to press himself down from the flight of birds, nor how to raise up carnal motions from the gluttony

of beasts. But this is said to blessed Job so much the more inconveniently, as his life is wonderfully tempered between high and low things. Which indeed can be understood also otherwise: Who teaches us above the beasts of the earth, and instructs us above the birds of heaven. For as by the word 'beasts' is signified the life of men still subject to the motions of the flesh, so by the appellation of 'birds' is figured the elation of proud spirits, so that by the beasts indeed earthly men, but by the birds demons (daemonia) are designated. Whence when the Lord said that seeds had fallen by the wayside, He subjoins: The birds of the heaven came and ate them up (Matt. 13:4), doubtless signifying by the birds the aerial powers.

31. While the saints subject themselves to God, they overcome and despise all transitory things. --- But holy men, because they neither seek the lowest examples of men, nor again are deceived by demoniacal subtlety, increase by the virtue of instruction both above the beasts of the earth and above the birds of heaven. For they are taught above the beasts of the earth, because they despise whatever can be sought after in the lowest things. They are also instructed above the birds of heaven, because they comprehend all the snares of the unclean spirits. They are taught above the beasts of the earth, because they seek nothing in this life which passes away. They are instructed above the birds of heaven, because they already tread under foot by the merits of their life the aerial powers, which they still tolerate through

the infirmity of the flesh. Paul had already been taught above the beasts of the earth, saying: For many walk. And a little after: Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. But our conversation is in heaven (Phil. 3:18-20). And again he knew himself instructed above the birds of heaven, when he said: Know you not that we shall judge angels? (1 Cor. 6:3). He saw the beasts under him, because being placed still on earth he trod under foot the ways of men who are conversant in the lowest things. And again he had transcended the flight of birds by the dignity of his merits, because he was not ignorant that he, about to enter heavenly things, would judge angels. In the former he trod under foot the lowest things of the unclean, in the latter the highest things of the proud. The minds indeed of the saints despise all transitory things, and contemplate as falling under them whatever is proud, whatever passes away; and being set as if on a certain summit of things, they behold all things to be subject to them so much the more, as they more truly subject themselves to the Author of all; and thence they transcend all things, whence they prostrate themselves in true humility to the Creator of all things. Let him say therefore: Who teaches us above the beasts of the earth, and instructs us above the birds of heaven. As if he said: The weak person overcome by pusillanimity said not these things, and for this reason the adversity of temptation struck him, because in the time of tranquility he overcame none of these passing

things by any perfection. For he would not dread the adversities of this life, if by the merit of perfection he had also trod under foot its favorable things. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOB 35:12. --- There they shall cry, and He will not hear, because of the pride of the wicked.

32. The just are permitted to be oppressed that they may be purged, and that the wickedness of the oppressors may be consummated. --- 'There,' namely, in tribulation, as on the contrary it is written of joy: The children of your servants shall dwell there (Ps. 101:29 [Vulg. 102:28]). But it seems uncertain whether he says: Because of the pride of the wicked He will not hear; or, because of the pride of the wicked they shall cry. But it can be better understood if they are related rather as not being heard because of the pride of the wicked, than as crying. For that they cry because of the pride of the wicked has been already said above, in that verse where it is said: Because of the multitude of the violent they shall cry. Something is therefore hinted to us in this verse which may be attended to a little more subtly, because often some who are oppressed, while they cry, deserve indeed of themselves to be heard, but yet their desires are deferred because of the pride of those who oppress them. For the just God both permits His own to be temporally oppressed, and the malice of the violent to be wickedly increased, so that while the life of the former is worn in

purgation, the wickedness of the latter may be consummated.

But for the most part it happens, that the just overtaken in tribulation, perceive heavenly solace even temporally, which yet they do not implore for a temporal end. For they desire to be saved not for their own sake, but for the sake of the salvation of their adversaries, so that while Almighty God delivers them from immense dangers by a certain miracle, His virtue may become known even to the persecutors themselves; and He may thence redeem His adversaries for eternity, whence He saves His own temporally, as the Prophet also, taking up the voice of the martyrs, says: Deliver me because of my enemies (Ps. 68:19 [Vulg. 69:18]). As if he said: I do not indeed desire to be delivered from temporal tribulation for my own sake, but yet I desire to be delivered for the sake of my adversaries, so that while my life is seen to be wonderfully saved, by the very sight of the miracles the hardness of my enemies may be converted. As therefore the Lord often delivers the life of His own temporally for the conversion of their enemies, so He often does not hear the voices of His own because of the damnation of the persecutors, that they may indeed accumulate their guilt from that, whence they wickedly rejoice to have prevailed. For those who despise invisible things, can sometimes be moved by visible miracles. But for this reason nothing wonderful is for the most part done visibly with the just, because their adversaries do not deserve to be illuminated invisibly. Let it be said therefore:

There they shall cry, and He will not hear, because of the pride of the wicked. As if he said: The guilt of the oppressors forbids the voices of the oppressed to be heard. Nor are the just delivered visibly, because the unjust do not deserve to be saved invisibly. Whence again it is said through the Prophet: When he shall see the wise dying, at the same time the foolish and the senseless shall perish (Ps. 48:11 [Vulg. 49:10]). For those whom they behold to die visibly, they do not believe can live invisibly; and by that they accumulate the guilt of their infidelity, by which, having seen the death of the faithful, they despair of eternity. Therefore the violent fail so much the worse, as they prevail externally against the life of the innocent; and the inward Truth casts them out from Himself so much the more, as He permits them to be able to do what they will temporally against His own.

33. The more heavy punishment of the wicked is prosperity. It is a manifest sign of reprobation. --- Whosoever therefore persecutes the life of the good, is then damned with a worse vengeance (ultio), when no adversity resists him; and he is then subject to the dangers of a stronger wrath, when he prosperously performs what he wickedly desired, because namely the vengeance (vindicta) of the heavenly judgment has deserted him by reserving him for future punishments, whom it here disdained to meet in his evil. For hence the Lord says through the Prophet: I let them go according to the desires of their heart, and they shall go in their own wills (Ps. 80:13

[Vulg. 81:12]). Hence again it is said: The rod of God is not upon them (Job 21:9). Hence also it is written of their very head: He shall do and shall prosper (Dan. 8:12). Hence again it is said of the same: And deceit shall be directed in his hand (Dan. 8:25). For in the hand of the Antichrist deceit is directed, because in that which he proposed to fulfill against the good temporally, he is hindered by no adversity. Hence again it is said through Solomon: The prosperity of fools shall destroy them (Prov. 1:32). It is therefore a manifest sign of perdition, when a subsequent effect favors the affected iniquities, and no contrariety hinders what the perverted mind conceived. For often while the vows of wicked men are delayed, they are changed; and while they feel the difficulty of perfection, they recognize the guilt of a evil action; and those things which at first they opposed when unwilling, they afterwards oppose when willing what they had conceived. Because therefore the Lord, when He deserts the wicked, permits them to prevail, and whence the wickedness of the proud is perfected, thence the long-suffering (longanimitas) of the humble is consummated, let it be rightly said: There they shall cry, and He will not hear, because of the pride of the wicked. It follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

JOB 35:13. --- For God will not hear in vain, and the Almighty will behold the causes of every one.

34. The desires of the saints are heard so much the more abundantly, as they are heard more

slowly. --- It is to be noted that there are two things said, because He both hears the one crying not in vain, and yet He regards what he suffers; and He dissembles to hear the voices, and He is not ignorant of what each one endures. Let no one therefore who is heard more slowly believe that he is neglected by the heavenly care. For often our desires, because they are not quickly fulfilled, are heard; and that which we petition to be completed speedily, is better prospered by the very delay. Often our voice is perfected in that in which it is deferred; and when the petition is neglected as to the surface, our vows are more deeply fulfilled in the root of our thoughts: just as also the seeds of the harvests, being pressed by the frost, are made solid; and by how much more slowly they go out to the surface, by so much more manifold do they rise up to the fruit. Our desires therefore are extended by delay, that they may profit; they profit, that they may grow strong for that which they are to receive; they are exercised in the contest, that they may be accumulated with greater rewards in the retribution; the labor of the fight is protracted, that the crown of victory may increase. The Lord therefore, when He does not quickly hear His own, draws them by that which He is believed to repel. For He is an internal Physician (medicus), and He cuts the contagions of sins in us which He reprobates as being in the very marrow, He cuts away the virus of rottenness with the iron of tribulation; and by how much He dissembles to hear the voices of the sick person, by so much He procures the

end of the sickness. For hence the Prophet says: My God, I shall cry through the day, and you will not hear; and in the night, and not to my foolishness (Ps. 21:3 [Vulg. 22:2]). As if he said: By no means does it profit me to foolishness that you do not continually hear me crying day and night, because whence you as it were desert me in temporal tribulation, thence you instruct me more for eternal wisdom. Hence also he says: A helper in opportunities, in tribulation (Ps. 9:10 [Vulg. 9:9]). Being about to say 'tribulation,' he first mentioned 'opportunities,' because often we are both crushed by tribulation, and yet it is not yet opportune that we should be helped to the desire of deliverance. Let it be said therefore: For God will not hear in vain, and the Almighty will behold the causes of every one. But because for the most part some are broken even by that very delay of help, he aptly subjoins:

CHAPTER XX.

JOB 35:14. --- Even when you shall say: He does not consider; judge before Him, and wait for Him.

35. When the storm of despair rushes in, the benefits of God are to be recalled to memory. --- For perhaps while our cry is as it were neglected, the hope which was in the heart is weakened; and we believe that the heavenly helps will be wanting, because we obtain them more slowly; and we groan as if those things were unconsidered by God, which we endure unavenged. But when this storm of despair disquiets us, the shaken mind more quickly places itself in the port of

hope, if it subtly weighs its causes with the Lord, if it recalls His benefits to memory, if it does not craftily excuse in its own presence the evils which it returned for His benefits, if it weighs what it has justly deserved from Him and what it has mercifully received, if it vivaciously discusses its life, if examining before the eyes of God all that it does it does not hide itself from itself, if it remembers that it was made when it was not, if it recognizes that it was illuminated and raised up when it lay in darkness. Collecting therefore all these things in itself, while it considers the benefits received, it does not accuse the adversities which it endures; nor is it broken by despair, which is strengthened by the consolation of so great gifts, because it receives hope concerning future things while it recognizes past benefits. Let him say therefore: Even when you shall say: He does not consider; judge before Him, and wait for Him. As if he said: When for this reason God is not believed to consider, because He is slow to have mercy, enter the secret of thought, and there receive the judgment of your cause before His eyes; and discern what things you have yourself contributed by living, or what things you have mercifully perceived; and then you return to the confidence of hope, while you are ashamed of the benefits of so great kindness, so that among adversities you may confidently wait for Him whom you recall to be propitious even after offenses. For heavenly helps were to be hoped for, even if no benefits had preceded. and it is to be known that

God does not unjustly despise the man whom He kindly created.

36. He who considers past gifts, let him not despair of future things. --- It is to be weighed therefore how great a danger it is to behold past gifts and to despair of future things; how great a danger it is if in this storm of tribulations we are broken by the shipwreck of despair, who are bound as it were by immense ropes to the port of hope by past gifts. Let it be said therefore rightly: Judge before Him, and wait for Him. For he who does not judge himself before God, does not wait for Him while he is afflicted. For he who dissembles that the benefits of another have preceded, despairs that helps can follow; and when he forgets past things, he is also defrauded of the bounty of subsequent things. But behold, while we are afflicted, while we long-sufferingly sustain the grace of consolation, the wicked break forth to worse things, and they profit by the exaggeration of iniquity, in that they are left without the scourge. And yet the Almighty mercifully waits for those who sin, He grants time for penance, which for those who are not converted He turns to the testimony of a heavier guilt; He patiently retains His wrath, which He some time indifferently pours out. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI.

JOB 35:15. --- For now He does not bring in His fury, nor does He greatly punish crime.

37. God here for a long time tolerates those whom He is about to damn forever. --- For God for a long time tolerates him whom He damns forever; and He dissembles to bring in fury now, because He keeps it to be poured out without end hereafter. For it is of the elect to be crushed here, that they may be instructed for the rewards of the eternal inheritance. It is ours to receive scourges here, by which it is preserved to rejoice concerning eternity. For hence it is written: He scourges every son whom he receives (Heb. 12:6). Hence it is said to John: Those whom I love I rebuke and chastise (Rev. 3:19). Hence Peter says: It is time that judgment should begin from the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17). Where he straightway subjoins with wonder: But if first from us, what shall be the end of them who believe not the Gospel of God? (Ibid.). Divine severity by no means permits sins to remain unpunished, but the wrath of judgment begins here from our correction, that it may rest in the damnation of the reprobate. Let the reprobate go now, therefore, and let them consume the desires of their pleasures with unpunished iniquity; and in that they do not feel temporal scourges, let eternal punishments wait for them. But well was their unpunished wickedness signified by Cham sinning, to whom it is said by his father: Cursed be Chanaan the boy, a servant shall he be to his brethren (Gen. 9:25). Chanaan namely was the son of Cham. And what is it that while Cham sins, Chanaan his son receives the sentence of vengeance? What is it that he is struck not in himself, but in his

posterity, unless that the wickednesses of the reprobate profit here indeed unpunished, but are struck hereafter? Let it be said therefore: For now He does not bring in His fury, nor does He greatly punish crime.

38. Yet He sometimes begins to strike them in this life. --- But it is to be noted that he subjoined, 'Greatly' (valde), because although He for a long time tolerates some things, yet He scourges some things even in this life, and here He sometimes begins to strike, what He consummates with eternal damnation. Therefore He both strikes some things, and leaves some things unpunished, because if He cut off nothing, who would believe that God cares for human affairs? And again, if He struck all things here, whence would the last judgment remain? Some things therefore are struck, that we may dread the solicitude of our Ruler over us; but some things are preserved unpunished, that we may feel that judgment still remains. Well therefore is it said: Nor does He greatly punish crime, because while some small part of iniquity is struck, the sentence of eternal judgment is already proferred to unconverted minds.

39. It is one thing to say what is right, another to say it rightly. --- All this therefore is said by Eliu as right, if it were said rightly. For he knows what he ought to speak, but he is ignorant to whom he speaks. For the things which he said are true, but alien to the rebukes of blessed Job, because he did not need this correction so much as he did not sin by any pusillanimity. But because the

elation of the proud is wont to be an occasion of virtues to just men, it is done with blessed Job by a hidden judgment, so that after the scourges of punishments he may increase even through the words of the arrogant. For behold, he is so much the more despised by the minister of pride, as he is the same within cherished by Truth the mistress. For after Eliu knew that he had said so many strong things, he opened what elation he was carrying, and he despised blessed Job by feeling high things of himself, saying:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERS. 16.---Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain, and multiplies words without knowledge.

40. The vices of the proud are loquacity, and impatience of hearing.---In bringing these things in, he asserts that blessed Job both knew nothing, and said many things; and while he himself brings in what he feels loquaciously, he accuses him of the vice of loquacity. But this also is wont to be a proper vice of the arrogant, that they both believe what they themselves have said many times to be little, and they believe what is said to them a few times to be much. For because they always wish to speak their own things, they cannot hear the things of others; they think they suffer violence, if they do not pour out more immoderately those things which they feel immoderately. And although blessed Job was silent at his words, yet Eliu found a cause of invective from his speech, with which he had answered his friends, so that he might be able to display his

silence more widely for himself, and that he himself may answer many things, he confirms that he multiplied words. For he both soon begins the beginnings of a prolix speech; and as if he had as yet said nothing, he attempts to begin. Whence it is added:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XX, Rec. XVIII].

CHAP. XXXVI, VERS. 1, 2.---Eliu also adding, spoke these things also: Bear with me a little, and I will show thee.

41. They measure their doctrine by loquacity. While they display themselves, they pretend to speak for God.---He had already said many things, and he hopes to be borne with yet a little longer, because namely the arrogant judge that they suffer a heavy loss, if they constrain their knowledge by brevity of speech. For they believe they show themselves so much more learned, as they have been able to open themselves by multiplicity of loquacity. But because they often feel that the reverence of silence is not deferred to them, they sometimes insinuate the power of the Lord of whom they as it were speak, and under the pretext of Him they exact silence for themselves, which they by no means deserve; and while in appearance they set forth God, exacting for themselves a hearing from reverence for Him, they study more to show themselves than to preach His deeds. Whence also Eliu sub-

joins, saying: IBID.---For I have yet somewhat to speak for God.

831 But because sometimes holy teachers frequently repeat if they say any things more obscurely, that they may infuse those things which they preach as hidden into the hearts of the hearers by this voice of iteration, the arrogant for the most part desire to imitate this also, and insolently repeat those things which they have said, not because they desire to insinuate things into the hearts of the hearers, but because they wish to appear eloquent in their judgment. Whence Eliu subjoining says: VERS. 3.---I will repeat my knowledge from the beginning. But because when knowledge was named, the tumor of the heart had become clear in the voice; the arrogant is openly known, if he be not more quickly cloaked by some veil. Whence soon in the concealment of his arrogance bringing in under it the justice of the Lord, he says: IBID.---And I will prove my Maker just. That while he speaks as it were for the justice of God, whatever flows out arrogantly may be excused before human judgments. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERS. 4.---For truly my words are without lie.

42. Having not testimony from God, they seek it from men.---When they perceive that they cannot be understood by weak hearers, even the just are mostly wont to praise the good things which they speak, not that they themselves may gape after their own praises, but that they may

kindle their hearers to a solicitude of hearing, so that while they are brought forth by their voice, they may be snatched by a more ardent affection from their hearts. Whence Paul, when he had said many and wonderful things to the Corinthians, added: Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged (2 Cor. 6:11). But the arrogant, while they know not the heart of the good, and sometimes imitate only their voices, set forth by praising the things which they say, not because the torpor of the hearers displeases them, but because they gape with pleasure in themselves. Imitating the voice of the just they simulate, but they are ignorant of the power of the voice. They see what the just bring forth, but they know not what they seek. For when holy teachers exalt the praise of preaching, they lift up the hearts of the hearers as if by the hand of the voice from their lowest thoughts, that having been shaken off they may as it were meet in the way with the following sayings, and may constrain them with so much embrace of understanding, as they had loved them even as it were before they discerned them in the voice of the praiser. But these things, as I said, the arrogant know not. For because what they desire is without, they cannot feel what is desirable within. For of the Church of the elect it is written: All the glory of the king's daughter is from within (Psal. 45:13). And the wise virgins are related to carry oil in their vessels (Matth. 25:4). Whence also it is said by the voice of the saints: Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience (2

Cor. 1:12). But the arrogant, because they have not the testimony of their conscience before God, seek before men the testimony of another's voice; which when they find late, they themselves even break out into the impudence of their own favor. For if they find not the voices of men, which they gapingly expect, they themselves preach their own knowledge with praise. Whence also Eliu adds, saying:

CHAPTER XXV.

IBID.---And perfect knowledge shall be proved to thee.

43. The elation of the heart, although hidden, is inexcusable; how much more that which breaks forth into words.---Doubtless he felt that he would say great things, but with a swelling heart he could not be silent about that which he sublimely esteemed of himself: and therefore he ran before by praising what he felt as right: because he would indeed be already guilty in the divine judgment, if he had felt great things of himself even by being silent. For before the subtle examination of truth we are not altogether secure, even if we have not in human 832 judgment anything which ought to be reprehended in us. For mostly thinking too negligently we are beaten by elation, which nevertheless being silent we press down. But unless by a quick retraction the hidden tumor be suffocated in the very bed of the heart in which it arises, before the strict Judge all merit of our action is extinguished. Hence therefore it is to be weighed with how much animadversion that

elation of the heart shall be condemned, which is nourished even to the audacity of the voice, if even this is not excusable which arises latently in the heart. It is to be considered also what kind of elation reigns within, which has been so far preserved, that it does not even blush to break forth without. Eliu therefore because he felt great things, knew not how to temper himself humbly, he held the loftiness of knowledge, he refused the grace of humility; and while he follows the good by which he desired to speak well, he lost the good by which he might have lived well. For knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth (1 Cor. 8:1). But now let him say what is right, which nevertheless he is ignorant how to say rightly. For after he breathed out the inflated thoughts of the mind through words of elation, he added a strong sentence, saying:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Vet. XXI, Rec. XIX].

VERS. 5.---God casteth not away the mighty, whereas He Himself also is mighty.

44. Temporal power, although good, is subject to the temptation of elation. He who sees that he can do more than others, easily believes that he knows more. This one is like Satan.---In the use of mortal life some things are noxious of themselves, but some from those things which are about them. Of themselves some things are noxious, as sins and crimes. But some things sometimes hurt us from those things which are

about them, as temporal power, or the conjugal union. For marriage is good, but the evils are those which grow up around it from the care of this world. Whence Paul says: But he that is with a wife thinketh of the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife (1 Cor. 7:33). Whence also persuading some to better things, he recalls them from marriage, saying: But this I speak, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is honest, and which may give power to pray to the Lord without impediment (Ibid., 35). While therefore that is held which does not hurt, for the most part that which hurts is committed from things placed near; as we often go a right and clean way, and yet by briars arisen near the way we are held by our garments. In a clean way indeed we do not stumble, but from the side arises that by which we are pricked. Great also is temporal power, which has its merit before God from the good administration of government; yet sometimes by that very thing by which it excels others, it swells with elation of thought; and while all things are subject for use, while commands are swiftly fulfilled at a wish, while all subjects set forth with praises if any things are well done, but contradict things ill done with no authority, while they mostly praise even what they ought to have rebuked, being seduced by these things which are placed beneath, the mind is lifted up above itself; and while it is surrounded without by immense favor, it is emptied of truth within; and having forgotten itself, it scatters itself into the voices of others; and it believes

itself to be such as it hears without, not such as it ought to have discerned within; it despises subjects, and acknowledges them not to be its equals in the order of nature; and whom it has exceeded in the lot of power, it believes it has transcended also in the merits of life; it esteems itself to know more than all, to whom it sees it can do more. For he constitutes himself in a certain height with himself; and he who is constrained by an equal condition of nature with others, 833 disdains to look back upon others as equal; and so he is led even to the likeness of him of whom it is written: He beholdeth every high thing, and he is a king over all the children of pride (Job 41:25). And of whose body it is said: A generation whose eyes are lofty, and their eyelids lifted up on high (Prov. 30:13). He is led to his likeness, who desiring a singular height, and despising the social life of angels, says: I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the most High (Isai. 14:14). By a wonderful judgment therefore he finds within a pit of dejection, while he extols himself without in the height of power. For he is made like to the apostate angel, while being a man he disdains to be like to men. Thus Saul from the merit of humility grew into the tumor of pride by the height of power. For through humility he was preferred, through pride he was reprobated, the Lord attesting who says: When thou wast a little one in thine own eyes, did I not make thee the head in the tribes of Israel (1 Kings 15:17)? He had seen himself a little one before power, but, supported by temporal power, he no longer saw himself a

little one. For preferring himself by comparison of others, he judged himself to be great with himself. But in a wonderful manner when he was little with himself, he was great with the Lord; but when he was great with himself, he was little with the Lord. The Lord prohibits us to be great with ourselves by the prophet saying: Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent before yourselves (Isai. 5:21). Lest we ought to be great with ourselves, Paul admonishing, says: Be not wise with yourselves (Rom. 12:15). Mostly therefore while the mind is inflated from the affluence of subjects, it is corrupted into the luxury of pride by the very height of power pandering to it.

45. Legitimate power is that which is raised over faults, not over men. The example of St. Peter and St. Paul.---But it is one thing for any goods not to be, another not to know how to have goods well. For power is good in its order, but it needs the cautious life of the ruler. Therefore he exercises this well, who knows both how to retain it and how to impugn it. He exercises this well, who knows how to be raised through it over faults, and knows how to be composed with it in equality with others. For the human mind is for the most part extolled, even when it is supported by no power; how much more does it raise itself on high, when power also joins itself to it? And yet it is prepared by an apt execution for correcting the vices of others. Whence also it is said by Paul: For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil (Rom.

13:4). When therefore the ministry of temporal power is undertaken, it must be watched with the highest care, that each one may know both how to take from it what helps, and how to expugn what tempts; and how to discern himself as equal with it to others, and yet to prefer himself with the zeal of vengeance to those who sin. Which discretion we know more fully, if we discern also the examples of ecclesiastical power. For Peter, by the authority of God, holding the primacy of the Church, refused to be venerated too immoderately by Cornelius acting well, and prostrating himself humbly to him, and he recognized himself as similar to him, saying: Arise, do it not, for I myself also am a man (Acts 10:26). But when he found the fault of Ananias and Sapphira, he soon showed how much power he had grown over the others (Acts 5:5, etc.). For by a word he struck their life, which he detected by a searching spirit; and he recalled himself as supreme within the Church against sins, which, when honor was vehemently bestowed upon him, he did not acknowledge before his brothers who acted well. There the holiness of action merited the communion of equality, 834 here the zeal of vengeance opened the right of power, Paul did not know that he was preferred to the brothers acting well, when he said: Not because we lord it over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy (2 Cor. 1:23). And he immediately added: For by faith ye stand. As if he were to say: Therefore we lord it not over your faith, because ye stand by faith. For we are equals to you, where we know that you stand.

He as it were knew not that he was preferred to the brothers, when he said: We were made little ones in the midst of you (1 Thess. 2:7), and, We ourselves your servants through Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:5). But when he found a fault which ought to have been corrected, he immediately recalled that he was a master, saying: What will ye? shall I come to you with a rod (1 Cor. 4:21)?

46. Prelates, while they punish faults by the right of power, should acknowledge themselves equal to those who are corrected through the guardianship of humility. Let them even postpone themselves to them, and why.---The highest place is therefore well ruled, when he who is set over it lords it over vices rather than over his brothers. For nature brought forth all equal; but that some should be committed to others for ruling, not nature, but fault postpones them. Therefore rulers ought to raise themselves against vices, for the cause of which also they are preferred; and when they correct delinquents, let them solicitously attend, that by discipline they may indeed strike faults by the right of power, but by the guardianship of humility they may acknowledge themselves equal to the brothers themselves who are corrected. Although mostly it is also worthy that we should prefer those same ones whom we correct in our silent thought. For their vices are struck through us by the vigor of discipline; but in those things which we ourselves commit, we are not lacerated even by the invective of a word from anyone. Therefore we are so much more bound before the Lord, as we

sin unpunished before men. [Vet. XXIII.] But our discipline renders subjects so much freer from divine judgment, as it does not leave their faults here without vindication. Humility therefore is to be kept in the heart, and discipline in the work. And among these it must be skillfully considered, lest while the virtue of humility is guarded too immoderately, the rights of government be loosed; and while each prelate casts himself down more than is becoming, he may not be able to bind the life of his subjects under the bond of discipline. Let us therefore hold outwardly what we undertake for the utility of others, let us hold inwardly what we feel of our own estimation. But yet with certain signs breaking forth becomingly, let those themselves also who are committed to us not be ignorant that we are such with ourselves, so that they may both see in our authority what they may fear, and acknowledge in our humility what they may imitate. But the authority of government having been preserved, let us return to our heart without ceasing, and consider assiduously that we are created equally with the rest, not that we are temporally preferred to the rest. For power, by how much it is prominent outwardly, by so much it ought to be pressed down inwardly, lest it overcome thought, lest it snatch the mind into the delight of itself, lest the mind may no longer be able to rule it under itself, to which it subjects itself by the lust of lording it.

47. The example of power humbly administered in David.---David well knew how to rule the power of his kingdom, who overcame the

elation of the same power by pressing himself down, saying: Lord, my heart is not exalted (Psal. 131:1). Doubtless for the increase of his humility he subjoined: Nor are mine eyes lofty. And he added: Neither have I walked in great matters. And still discussing himself by a most subtle inquisition, he says: Nor in wonderful things above me. And drawing out also all his thoughts from the bottom of his heart, 835 he subjoins, saying: If I have not been humbly minded, but have exalted my soul. Behold, he frequently repeats the victim of humility offered from the inmost heart, and ceases not to offer it again and again by confessing; and speaking of it manifoldly he displays it to the eyes of his Judge. What is this? and how had he known that this sacrifice pleased God, which he immolated in His sight with so much iteration of voice, except because pride is wont to be near to the powerful, and elation is almost always associated with affluent things, because also often abundance of moisture gives hardness of tumor?

[Vet. XXIV.] 48. The rare society of humility and power.---It is indeed very wonderful when humility of manners reigns in the hearts of the sublime. Whence it is to be weighed that all the powerful, when they are humbly wise, attain the height of an extraneous and as it were far-off virtue, and they rightly appease the Lord as quickly as possible with this virtue, because they humbly offer to Him that sacrifice which the powerful can hardly find. For it is a most subtle art of living to hold the height, to press down glory; to be indeed in power, but not to know one-

self to be powerful; to know oneself powerful for bestowing goods, but to ignore all that one can do powerfully for repaying harmful things. Rightly therefore is it said of such: God casteth not away the mighty, whereas He Himself also is mighty. For he desires to imitate God, who administers the height of power intent on the utilities of others, and not elated by his own praises, who being preferred to others desires to benefit them, not to preside over them. For the elation of the tumor, not the order of power, is in fault. God bestowed power, but the malice of our mind found the elation of power. Let us therefore take away what we have brought of our own, and the things are good which we possess by the bounty of God. For because by no means just power, but depraved action is condemned, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XX].

VERS. 6.---But He saveth not the wicked, and He giveth judgment to the poor.

49. God condemns the pride of power, not its loftiness.---Sacred Scripture is mostly wont to call the humble poor. Whence in the Gospel they are named with the addition of spirit, while it is said: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matth. 5:3). For because riches visibly show the powerful, they are poor with themselves who are not elated in their consciences. But those He calls wicked, who either are disjoined from the piety of faith, or who

in that which they faithfully believe contradict themselves by depraved manners. Because therefore almighty God condemns the pride of malice, not the loftiness of power, after it was said: God casteth not away the mighty, whereas He Himself also is mighty, it is rightly subjoined: But He saveth not the wicked, and He giveth judgment to the poor. That is, He destroys the elated, but He renders the humble free through judgment. Or certainly He gives judgment to the poor, because those who are now wickedly oppressed, themselves then come as judges over their oppressors.

50. Of the reprobate some are judged, some are not judged.---For there are two parts, namely, of the elect and of the reprobate. But two orders are contained in each of those same parts. For some are judged and perish, some are not judged and perish. Some are judged and reign, others are not judged and 836 reign. They are judged and perish to whom it is said by the Lord's exclamation: I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not (Matth. 25:42, 43). To whom it is premised: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Ibid., 41). But others in the last judgment are not judged and perish, of whom the Prophet says: The wicked do not rise again in judgment (Psal. 1:5). And of whom the Lord says: But he that believeth not, is already judged (John 3:18). And of whom Paul says: They who have sinned with-

out the law, shall perish without the law (Rom. 2:12). Therefore all the infidels rise again also, but to torment, not to judgment. For their cause is not discussed then, because they approach the sight of the strict Judge already with the condemnation of their own infidelity. But those retaining the profession of faith, but not having the works of the profession, they convict so that they may perish. But those who have not held even the sacraments of faith do not hear the rebuke of the Judge in the last examination, because, being prejudged by the darkness of their infidelity, they do not deserve to be convicted by the invective of Him whom they had despised. They at least hear the words of the Judge, because they held at least the words of His faith. These in their condemnation perceive not even the words of the eternal Judge, because they wished to preserve His reverence not even as far as a word. Those perish legally, because being placed under the law they sinned; to these in their perdition nothing is said of the law because they attempted to have nothing of the law. [Vet. XXV.] For a prince ruling an earthly republic, punishes otherwise a citizen delinquit internally, and otherwise an enemy rebelling externally. In the one he consults his rights, and adjudges him under words of worthy invective; but against an enemy he moves wars, exercises instruments of perdition, and repays worthy torments of his malice, but requires not what the law has concerning his evil. For it is not necessary to be destroyed by the law, who could never be held by the law. So therefore in the last

judgment both a legal invective strikes him who from that which he held by profession, declined in action; and this one is destroyed without the invective of judgment, who is not held by the law of faith.

51. Of the elect also some undergo judgment, some do not, but sit as judges.---For of the part of the elect some are judged and reign, who wipe away the stains of life with tears, who redeeming preceding evils by following deeds, cover whatever illicit thing they once did from the eyes of the Judge by the superduction of alms. To whom the Judge coming says to those standing on the right: I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye covered me; sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came to me (Matth. 25:35). To whom He premises, saying: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the constitution of the world (Ibid., 34). But others are not judged and reign, who even transcend the precepts of the law by the perfection of virtues, because they are by no means content to fulfill only this which the divine law commands to all, but by a more excellent desire they desire to exhibit more than they were able to hear in the general precepts. To whom it is said by the Lord's voice: Ye who have left all things, and have followed me, when the Son of man shall sit 837 in the seat of his majesty, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matth. 19:28). And of whom the prophet says: The Lord will come to

judgment with the ancients of his people (Isai. 3:14). And of whom Solomon, when he spoke of the bridegroom of the holy Church, brought in saying: Her husband is noble in the gates, when he shall sit with the senators of the land (Prov. 31:23). These therefore in the last judgment are not judged and they reign, because with their Author they come also as judges. For leaving all things they fulfilled with a more prompt devotion than they heard to be generally commanded. For by a special command to a few more perfect ones, and not generally to all, is this said which the rich young man heard: Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me (Matth. 19:21). For if a general command bound all under this precept, it would surely be a fault for us to possess anything of this world. But it is one thing which is generally commanded to all through sacred Scripture, another which is specially commanded to the more perfect. These therefore are rightly not held under general judgment, who also overcame general precepts by living. For as they are not judged and perish, who by the persuasion of perfidy contemn to be held by the law, so they are not judged and reign, who, by the persuasion of piety, advance even beyond the general precepts of the divine law. Hence it is that Paul, transcending even special precepts, exhibited more in work than he received by the institution of permission (1 Thess. 2:7). For when he had received that preaching the Gospel he should live by the Gospel, he both bestowed the

Gospel upon those hearing it, and yet refused to be sustained by the expenses of the Gospel. Why therefore should he be judged that he may reign, who received less that he should keep, but found greater by which he should live? Therefore let it be rightly said: He giveth judgment to the poor, because as much as they were despised by this world with great humility, so much then by the received seats they grow into a greater height of power. Whence also it follows:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Rec. XXI].

VERS. 7.---He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous, and he placeth kings on the throne for ever, and there they are exalted.

52. God then more regards the righteous, when they are unjustly afflicted.---For the Lord is perhaps believed to have withdrawn His eyes from the righteous, because they are here torn by the cruelties of the unjust without vindication; but He then more regards His servants, when the wickedness of the persecutor unjustly afflicts them. For seeing what they here humbly endure, He doubtless already foresees what He will there mercifully recompense to them. Therefore He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous. Behold, this one humbly groans, that one is proud and wickedly flourishes. This one contrites his heart, that one exalts himself concerning the glory of iniquity. Which of these, therefore, is far from the divine sights: he who has endured

injustice, or he who has brought it upon those suffering; he who has held heavenly grace amidst the darkness of sorrow, or he who amidst exterior joys has lost the light of justice within?

53. Why the saints are called kings in Holy Scripture. For the saints to sit on the throne with Christ is to judge from His power.---But well are holy men called kings by the testimony of Holy Scripture, because, being set over all the motions of the flesh, they now curb the appetite of luxury, 838 now they temper the heat of avarice, now they bow the glory of elation, now they overwhelm the suggestion of envy, now they extinguish the fire of fury. They are kings, therefore, because by not consenting they have known not to succumb to the motions of their temptations, but by ruling to be in command. Because therefore they pass from this power of governance to the power of retribution, let it be rightly said: He placeth kings on the throne for ever. For by ruling themselves, they were for a time fatigued, but they are placed for ever on the throne of the eternal exaltation of the kingdom; and they receive there to judge others worthily in that degree in which here they know not how wickedly to spare themselves. For hence it is said elsewhere: Until justice be turned into judgment (Psal. 94:15). Paul says of himself and his consorts: That we might be made the justice of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). Justice therefore is turned into judgment, because those who now live justly and irreproachably, then obtain the power of judging. Hence the Lord says to the Church of Laodicea:

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne (Rev. 3:21). The overcoming Lord asserts that He sat on the throne with the Father, because after the struggles of the passion, after the palm of the resurrection, He indicated more clearly to all that He was equal to the power of the Father, and made Himself known as not unequal to Him, the sting of death having been trodden down. Whence also to Mary, not yet believing Him similar to the Father, He says: Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father (John 20:17). For us to sit on the throne of the Son, is to judge from the power of the same Son. For because we perceive the primacy of judgment from His virtue, we reside as it were on His throne. Nor is it abhorrent from the truth that elsewhere He witnesses that the disciples will come upon twelve thrones (Matth. 19:28), while here He asserts that they will be sitting on His throne. For by the twelve thrones the universal judgment is shown, but by the throne of the Son the singular height of judicial power. This therefore is designated by the twelve thrones, which is designated by the one throne of the Son, because namely the universal judgment is perceived from the intervention of our Mediator. Therefore let it be said: He placeth kings on the throne for ever.

54. The session of the saints is eternal. Being first humbled, they will be exalted.---But aptly adding for ever, He openly intimates what He says. For if He spoke concerning the throne of an

earthly kingdom, He would by no means have added for ever, because they who seize that, are surely not placed in it for ever, but temporally. But well did He add: And there they are exalted. As if He should hint to the intention of the hearer, saying: Because they have been humbled here, there they are exalted. For to holy men this is the place of humility, that that may be the place of highness. Whence elsewhere it is written: Thou hast humbled them in the place of affliction (Psal. 44:19). For the present life is the place of affliction. They therefore who tend to the eternal country, now despise themselves temporally in the place of affliction, that then in the place of joy they may be truly sublimated. It follows:

CHAPTER XXIX

[Rec. XXII].

VERS. 8, 9. And if they shall be in chains, and be bound with the ropes of poverty, he shall show them their works, and their crimes, because they have been violent.

55. The saints think themselves to be bound with chains as long as they live here.---The chains of obligation are the very retention 839 of pilgrimage as yet. Paul had beheld himself bound with these chains, when he said: Having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ (Philip. 1:23). He saw himself to be bound with the ropes of poverty, when beholding true riches, he also prayed for them for his disciples, saying: That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what

the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints (Ephes. 1:18).

But well after these things is it added: He shall show them their works, and their crimes, because they have been violent. For when by loving we more know heavenly glory, then we feel the evils which we have done to have been more heavy. Whence also Paul, after the perceived grace of heavenly things, recognized those things which he had believed to have been in him studies of virtues to have been already crimes, saying: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief (1 Tim. 1:13). Or certainly: But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ (Philip. 3:7). Whence also it is aptly added:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERS. 10. He shall also open their ear, that he may correct; and he shall speak, that they may return from iniquity.

56. By the love of heavenly glory, sins previously committed become more heavy.---To open the ear from iniquity is to open the understanding of knowledge. But one is corrected, the ear being opened, when he perceives within the desire of eternal goods, and recognizes what evils he has committed without.

The punishment of temporal affliction can also be understood in the chains and ropes of poverty, because often those who do not hear the words of him who commands, are admonished

by the stripes of him who strikes, so that punishments at least may draw to good desires those whom rewards do not invite. Whence it is said by the Prophet: With bit and bridle bind their jaws, who come not near to thee (Psal. 32:9). But if they also despise the scourges, it is certain doubtless that they feel there the punishments of a more heavy vindication, in as much as here they tread upon the grace of a greater providence. Whence also it follows:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERS. 11, 12. If they shall hear and observe, they shall accomplish their days in good, and their years in glory. But if they shall not hear, they shall pass by the sword, and shall be consumed by folly.

57. How severely those are to be punished, who are not coerced from lost morals even by scourges.---By good, right action is designated, but by glory, heavenly retribution. They therefore who study to obey heavenly precepts, accomplish their days in good, their years in glory, because they fulfill both the course of the present time in right work, and their consummation in happy retribution. But if they shall not hear, they shall pass by the sword, and shall be consumed by folly, because both vindication strikes them in tribulation, and the end concludes them in fatuity. For there are some whom not even torments restrain from lost morals. Of whom it is said by the prophet: Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast scourged them, and

they have refused to receive discipline (Jerem. 5:3). And of whom it is said under the species of Babylon: We have healed Babylon, and she is not healed (Jerem. 51:9). Of whom again it is said: I have slain and destroyed my people, and yet they have not returned from their ways (Jerem. 15:7). These sometimes become worse from the stripe, because being struck by sorrows, they either exist harder with contumacious pertinacity, or, what is worse, they even break out into the exasperation of blasphemy. Well therefore is it said that they pass by the sword, and are consumed by folly, because the sins which they ought 840 to have amended by scourges, they exaggerate by scourges. And here already they feel the pains of the stroke, and there they do not escape the punishments of just retribution. For it is the fatuity of folly that iniquity so binds them, that not even punishment restrains them from fault. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Rec. XXIII].

VERS. 13. Dissemblers and the cunning provoke the wrath of God.

58. The image of the cunning dissembler.---When He said dissemblers, He aptly subjoins and the cunning, because unless they are cunning in wit, they cannot congruously dissemble what they desire to be seen. For there are some vices which are easily committed even by those slower in sense. For to swell with elation, to gape with the heats of avarice, to succumb to the knocking

of luxury, even any one with obtuse senses can; but to execute the falsehood of dissimulation, no one can, unless he be of a more subtle wit. For whoever is such, is divided as it were by a continual observation to keep two things, that he may cunningly know both to hide what he is, and to ostentate what he is not; and to suppress true evils, and to show false goods; nor to exalt himself openly in this which is seen, and, that he may hold greater glory, often to dissemble that he declines glory. For because before the eyes of men he cannot apprehend it by following it, he studies for the most part to hold glory by fleeing it. These things therefore by no means agree with the simple, because if they agree, they are no longer simple.

59. He not only deserves, but provokes the wrath of God.---But well when He said: Dissemblers and the cunning, He did not subjoin, they deserve, but they provoke the wrath of God. For to deserve the wrath of God, is also to sin by not knowing. But to provoke is to go against His commands by knowing; to know the good, but to despise it; to be able to do it, and not to will it. For these by the perpetration of wickedness are darkened within, and by the ostentation of justice are whitened as far as the surface. To whom it is said by the Lord's voice: Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye are like to whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful to men, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all filthiness; so ye also indeed outwardly appear righteous to men, but within ye are full of

hypocrisy and iniquity (Matth. 23:27). Outwardly therefore they keep by showing those things which within they impugn by living. But within they exaggerate thinking evil things which outwardly they hide by superinducing something else. Before the strict Judge therefore they can no longer have an excuse concerning ignorance, because while before the eyes of men they ostentate every mode of holiness, they are themselves a testimony to themselves that they are not ignorant of living well. Therefore let it be rightly said: Dissemblers and the cunning provoke the wrath of God. But what follows them at the last, He adds, saying:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Ibid. Neither shall they cry when they are bound.

60. Even when struck, he blushes to confess his sins.---Every unjust man who, since he is unjust, does not desire to appear holy, being caught in the stroke of the scourge, does not blush to confess that he is unjust. But he who, doing unjust things, intercepts human judgments of himself under the species of holiness, even when he is struck with the scourge, refuses to betray himself as unjust, because he has been accustomed to appear holy. But if at any time he is heavily straightened, he hardly confesses himself unjust as far as the surface, because he is confounded to detect his internal things by a true confession. But we are as it were free, when we are chastened by no correction; but we are bound, when we

are straightened by the scourge of a stroke. Being bound therefore 841 we cry out the higher, in as much as being placed in the stroke we more truly confess our sins. For before the ears of God a strong voice is a devoted confession. Because therefore they do not lead any dissemblers, even when the scourges of the stroke correct them, to a simple confession (for they refuse to be known as sinners, because they were reported as holy in the opinion of all), although now the scourges strike them at the last, although they are not ignorant that they are being led to eternal punishments, yet such they desire to remain before human judgments, as they had always studied to ostentate themselves. Being caught therefore even by the scourge of the last stroke, because they neglect to put forth a pure confession even when afflicted, they contemn as it were to cry out being bound. Well therefore is it said: Neither shall they cry when they are bound.

61. Hypocrites think themselves holy, not because they are, but because they are called so. Deluded by a vain hope, they do not fly to the remedy of confession even in the last things. The heart of a man is often far distant from himself.--- Although it can also be understood otherwise. For every one who, since he is unjust, does not fear to be called holy by men, even if he reproves himself as unjust in silent thought, yet when he has begun more often to hear himself called holy, he loses this which he held of himself within. For he pours out his heart externally, and because he willingly receives a false testimony of himself

without, he does not require what kind he has within. Whence it comes to pass that he seeks the fosterings of empty praise even when they are lacking, and having forgotten what he is, he desires to appear what he is not. Therefore those who are such, while they dissemble themselves righteous before human judgments, while they ostentate their actions worthy of praises to the eyes of those looking on, a hidden justice is dealt with them, so that in that in which they strive to deceive others without, they themselves are also deceived concerning themselves within. For they lose every eye of solicitous investigation about themselves. For they dissemble both to discuss and to search out their life, but they think themselves such as they hear themselves called, and they think themselves to be holy, not because they so live, but because they are so called. But they neglect to behold the subtle judgment of God, and themselves, because they place the faith of their merit in the attestation of another's mouth. But when they are struck by a sudden stroke, they can by no means either truly confess themselves unjust, or detect themselves as they are, because namely they have believed themselves holy by human profession. Well therefore is it said: Neither shall they cry when they are bound. For by a vain hope they trust themselves to come such before the heavenly Judge, as they know themselves to have become known to men; and miserable men do not detect themselves even amidst torments, and while they look at the testimony of false praise, they lose the remedy

of true confession. They are led even bound, and they do not cry, because, being overcome by the importunity of human praise, the miserable men think themselves holy even when they die in their sins. To whom it is well said by the prophet: Return, ye transgressors, to the heart (Isai. 46:8). For if they returned to the heart, they would not pour themselves out through the words of an exterior attestation. For what is nearer to us than our heart? what is nearer to us than that thing which is within us? And yet when it is scattered through wicked thoughts, our heart wanders far from us. Far therefore the prophet sends the transgressor, when he compels him to return to his heart, because in that degree in which he poured himself out externally, he hardly finds whence he may return to himself. But because the mind of dissemblers, for that it is divided from one intention of eternity, is wasted by an inundation of manifold thoughts, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIV.

VERSE 14.---Their soul shall die in a storm.

62. Hypocrites die in a sudden storm. For they seemed to live as it were quietly, when they took care to rejoice in the praise of holiness. But in a sudden storm their soul dies, which was rejoicing in the worst tranquility of human praise. Often an unexpected storm suddenly changes all that the serene air flatters; and for this reason the danger cannot be avoided, because it could not even be foreseen. Whence dissemblers, who neglect the

guardianship of their own life, are said to die in a storm. For from hence a sudden whirlwind of internal percussion casts them out, whom the arrogance of external favor extols; and while they embrace in praise what they are not, they suddenly find in vengeance what they are. But it is well said by Solomon: As silver is tried in the refining pot, and gold in the furnace, so is a man tried by the mouth of him that praiseth (Prov. 27:21). For their own praise torments the just, and exalts the wicked. But while it torments the just, it purges them; while it delights the wicked, it shows them to be reprobates. For these are fed by their own praise, because they do not seek the glory of their Author. But they who seek the glory of their Author are tormented by their own praise, lest that which is said without should not be within; lest, if even that which is said be there, it should be made void before the eyes of God by those very favors: lest human praise should soften the strength of the mind, and prostrate it in the delight of itself; and that which ought to be a help for increasing the work, should now be the retribution of the labor. But when they feel that their praises tend to the praise of God, they even embrace them desirably. For it is written: That they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:16). They make themselves therefore a way for men, as often as they show in themselves anything by which God may be known, because they do not study to fix human praise in themselves, but seek that it should pass through them as intermediaries to

the glory of the Author. But the arrogant prostitute their soft hearts to human praises, because they are corrupted by their own loves. Of whom it is said elsewhere: Men shall be lovers of their own selves (2 Tim. 3:2). But aptly is it here subjoined concerning this their corruption:

CHAPTER XXXV.

IBID.---And their life among the effeminate.

63. The effeminate are they who are corrupted by human praises. For if they lived manfully, no transitory praise would vitiate them with any corruption. Whence the Prophet persuades the elect, saying: Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened (Psal. 31:24). For saying, Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened, he immediately subjoined this, as if he took care to fortify the sex of the heart. For the mind of a luxurious person is corrupted, if it delights in transitory things. Therefore the life of dissemblers dies among the effeminate, because it is found corrupted by the luxury of praise. But in another translation it is not had, Their life among the effeminate, but, Let their life be wounded by angels. Yet both, although they differ in word, agree in reason, because the angels wound the life of the effeminate, while the messengers of truth attack it with the darts of holy preaching. Because therefore we have heard what is done concerning the damnation of the reprobate, let us hear what follows concerning the deliverance of the humble:

VERSE 15.---He shall deliver the poor from his distress.

64. The humble, when they die, are delivered from distress. The poor is delivered from his distress when every humble person is freed from this affliction of his pilgrimage. For he is also pressed here by constant tribulations, that he may be provoked to seek the joy of true consolation. Whence also it follows: IBID.---And He shall reveal his ear in tribulation.

To reveal the ear in tribulation is to open the hearing of the heart by the strokes of scourges. For when we despise the precepts, it is dealt with us by a pious strictness, that we may fear the scourges. Therefore tribulation opens the ear of the heart, which the prosperity of this world often closes. For it is said by Solomon: The turning away of little ones shall kill them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them (Prov. 1:32). It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Rec. XXIV].

VERSE 16.---Therefore He shall save thee from the narrow mouth most widely.

65. The habit of sin is a most narrow pit, from which grace alone can lead us out. Everyone who, deserting the way of life, casts himself into the darkness of sins, merges himself as it were into a pit or a ditch. But if by long-continued perpetration he is also oppressed by the habit of iniquity, so that he cannot now rise to higher

things, he is as it were straitened by the narrow mouth of the pit. Whence the prophet David prays under the form of sinners, saying: Let not the tempest of water drown me, nor the deep swallow me up, nor let the pit press its mouth upon me (Psal. 69:15). For him whom the iniquity of an evil work has moved from good stability, the tempest of water has as it were snatched away; but if it has not yet prevailed by long habit, it has not drowned him. He has already fallen into the pit who has perpetrated that which the divine law prohibits. But if long habit does not yet depress him, the pit has by no means straitened its mouth. Therefore he goes out so much more easily, by how much less habit he is straitened. Whence the prophet Jeremiah, while he beheld Judaea to have been overwhelmed with iniquities by long habit, deplores himself under her form in his lamentations, saying: My life is fallen into the pit, and they have laid a stone upon me (Lam. 3:53). For life falls into the pit when it is defiled with the stain of iniquity. But a stone is placed over it when the mind is swallowed up in sin even by hard habit, so that even if it wishes to rise, it now in some way cannot, because the mass of evil habit presses from above. But because it is subject to the divine power, and after the strait of a wicked habit it is recalled to the amplitude of good action, therefore it is said: He shall save thee from the narrow mouth most widely. For he is saved most widely from the narrow mouth, who even after the yoke of iniquity is reduced to the liberty of good work by repenting.

66. How great a distress it is to wish to rise from an overwhelming evil habit and not to be able. For there is as it were a certain distress of a closed mouth, to wish to rise from an overwhelming evil habit, and not to be able; to tend already indeed by desire to heavenly things, but as yet to remain in the lowest things in act; to go before in heart, and yet not to follow in work, and to suffer in oneself a contradiction of oneself. But when the soul thus tending is helped by the hand of exalting grace, it comes from the narrow mouth to latitude, because, difficulties being conquered, it performs the good works which it desires. The prophet David had beheld the closing of the narrow mouth, when he said: Thou hast saved my soul from necessities, and hast not shut me up in the hands of the enemy (Psal. 31:7,8). But he knew himself to have been saved most widely, when he subjoined, saying: Thou hast set my feet in a spacious place (Ibid.). For in a spacious place the feet are established, when we both tend to congruent goods, and are hindered by no difficulty. For as it were through a wide place we proceed whither we wish, because we are straitened by no opposing difficulties.

67. Job believed to have fallen into this pit undeservedly. But Eliu would say these things rightly, if his sentence agreed with blessed Job. For he believed him to have been scourged for a fault, and therefore he judged him to have fallen into the narrow mouth. For by how much more valid strokes he saw him to be afflicted, by so much the worse iniquities he believed him to

be weighed down, truly not knowing that his scourges were an increase of merit, not a punishment of sin. But when he confesses him to have fallen into the narrow mouth, he further sets forth as it were more widely in how great a depth Job is held, saying:

CHAPTER XXXVII

[Vet. XXXII].

IBID.---And having no foundation under it.

68. Him whom the narrow pit of evil habit includes, hell swallows up, and the abyss of despair. Every sin has no foundation, because it does not subsist from its own nature. For evil is without substance. Which yet, however it be, coalesces in the nature of good. Therefore the narrow mouth is said to have no foundation under it, because the defilement of sin has no proper right of subsisting. But because foundation is so called from the bottom (fundus), we can also not inconveniently take foundation for bottom, just as hearing is so called from the ear, and yet for the most part the ear itself is designated by the name of hearing. When therefore he said the narrow mouth, wishing to fill up the whirlpool of the deep, he subjoined: And having no foundation under it. For him whom iniquity snatches away, hell swallows up. But hell is rightly believed to have no bottom, because whoever is snatched by it, is devoured in an immense depth. For the prophet, wishing to set forth its immense breadth, says: Hell hath enlarged its soul, and

opened its mouth without any bound (Isai. 5:14). As therefore he is said to be dilated without bound who draws very many to himself, so he is not incongruously believed to be deep without a bottom, because those whom he receives into himself, he swallows as it were in a certain abyss of his immensity. Therefore when he said: He shall save thee from the narrow mouth most widely, he aptly subjoined: And having no foundation under it. As if he should say: He shall save from the narrow mouth which has no bottom under it, for because through sin one tends to hell, him whom He saves from sin, He delivers from the narrow mouth. But him whom He snatches from the narrow mouth, He withdraws from the depth of hell.

69. Although it can also be understood otherwise.

For as he who is merged into a pit is retained by the depth of the pit, so the soul falling would consist as it were in a certain place of the bottom, if once fallen it should retain itself in some measure of sin. But since it cannot be content with the sin into which it falls, while it is daily cast down to worse things, it finds as it were no bottom in the pit into which it fell where it may be fixed. For there would be a bottom of the pit, if there had been a measure of sin; whence it is well said elsewhere: The sinner, when he shall come into the depth of evils, contemneth (Prov. 18:3). For he dissembles to return, because he despairs of being able to be pitied. But when by despairing he sins further, he as it were withdraws the bottom

from his pit, lest he should find where he may be retained. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IBID.---And the rest of thy table shall be full of fatness.

70. Him whom grace delivers, it fills with the delight of internal satiety. The rest of the table is the refreshment of internal satiety; which is said to be full of fatness, because it is prepared in the delight of eternal pleasure. The Prophet hungered for the banquets of this table, when he said: I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear (Psal. 17:15). He thirsted for the cups of this table, saying: My soul hath thirsted after the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God (Psal. 42:2)? Eliu therefore, wishing to console the temporal scourges in blessed Job by the retribution of eternal things, promises as it were gratuitously from himself that which was due to him by right from merits, saying: And the rest of thy table shall be full of fatness. It follows:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Rec. XXV].

VERSE 17.---Thy cause hath been judged as that of the impious, thou shalt receive cause and judgment.

71. The just are scourged, that they may be instructed to greater vigilance. The cause of the good is justice. Their cause is judged as of the

impious, because their justice is here fatigued by a paternal scourge, that they may be taught to larger vigilance not only by the precept of the commands, but also by the percussion of strokes. But they receive cause and judgment, because from that justice by which they now live they then shine forth in the summit of judicial power, so that they then judge all things so much more powerfully, by how much all things are now more subtly judged in them. Eliu brought these in by promising them as it were new, which blessed Job always held stably by believing. All arrogant men have truly these proper things, so that they both exaggerate evil by lying, and if they say something perhaps good, they bring this forward as if unknown. Whence it happens that they even dare to teach those more learned than themselves, because forsooth they think they alone know such things. But when they descend to some words of consolation, they immediately estimate themselves to have become vile, and through the asperity of a turgid rebuke they as it were reform a certain genius for themselves, so that they who seemed to have condescended as flattering witnesses, may be feared by a suddenly arisen rebuke. Whence also Eliu soon subjoined, saying:

CHAPTER XL.

[Rec. XXVI].

VERSES 18-21.---Let not wrath therefore overcome thee, to oppress anyone; nor let the multi-

tude of places bend thee. Lay aside thy greatness without tribulation, and all the strong in fortitude. Do not prolong the night, that people may ascend for them. Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity; for this thou hast begun to follow after misery.

72. The proud carp at whatever is done rightly by others. In most manuscripts we find "of gifts" (donorum); but in a few, and those more ancient, "of places" (locorum). But because it needs no exposition if it be said: "Nor let the multitude of gifts bend thee," it has pleased us rather to expound that which seems to be opened with some little difficulty. But how great words of elation these are, the very tumor (pride) of him who formed them shows. But because we have said that Eliu holds the type of the arrogant and blessed Job the type of the elect, if we discern them more subtly, we show even now within the Church how they agree with the arrogant. Holy men wonder at the works of others even when small, but their own even when great they despise. But on the contrary, the arrogant despise even the great works of others, and wonder at their own even when small; and for the most part they estimate good things of their own evils, and do not cease to feel evil of the good works of others. For while they seek their own glory, they perniciously study that whatever of virtue is done by others should be lacerated by a mark of iniquity, and they turn the weight of a good action into the stain of a crime. For often when they see the wicked to be strictly corrected by

the Church, they as it were complain that the innocent are unjustly afflicted, and they change the brightness of her discipline with the name of wickedness. Whence Eliu, preserving the figure of the arrogant, says as it were admonishing blessed Job: Let not wrath therefore overcome thee, to oppress anyone. For the arrogant depute as a motion of wrath whatever is done by holy Church by the censure of discipline. And because by the appetite of human praise they study always to appear benign, they judge no one to be corrected by the strictness of severity. Whence also they estimate those to be oppressed by good rulers, as was said above, whom they see to be coerced from vices against their will.

73. The temporal power of the Church in all parts of the world. This the enemies of the Church undeservedly reproach her with. Although there are some within her bosom who are proud of her glory. But by the Author's gift, because in all parts of the world holy Church has grown in the summit of religion, this very temporal power, which she indeed uses well, they by detracting bend into the vice of elation. [Rec. XXVII.] Whence Eliu subjoins, saying: Nor let the multitude of places bend thee. As if it were said to the same holy Church, while she preserves humility more in prosperous things, by the voice of the arrogant: Because thou art worshipped everywhere with the reverence of faith, take heed lest thou be extolled by the bundles (fasces) of that same reverence. For they behold some who under the pretext of religion swell with the vice of elation, and what they rightly

reprehend in some, this they unjustly draw to the crime of all: by no means forsooth weighing that there are in her those who both knowing how to despise, know perfectly how to rule temporal things, and loving eternal things, wait for them with full desires; and perform the dispensation of the power received, and keep the ministry of innate humility, so that they neither neglect the care of the government undertaken for the sake of humility, nor again let humility swell in them on the occasion of government. Even if there are some perhaps within her who serve not God's but their own glory under the pretext of religion, she yet studies either to correct them strictly, if she can, or, if she cannot, to tolerate them with equanimity; and either by correcting them she embraces them as sons, or by tolerating them she is exercised as by enemies. For she knows that by their pride the life of the just is lacerated, she knows that whatever is sinned by the depravity of such is extended to her own crime, but she fears so much the less to sustain the mark of another's crime, by how much she knows her Head also to have tolerated such things. For of Him it is written: And He was reputed with the wicked (Mark 15:28). Of Him again it is said: Surely He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows (Isai. 53:4). Let the arrogant go therefore, and with the estimation of the wicked let them bite the life of the innocent. The Church of the elect knows how to tolerate both the deeds of those and the words of these, she knows how to convert the minds of the wicked by tolerating. Who even

if they cannot be converted, she yet suffers their ignominy with equanimity. For she weighs that it profits to her double reward that she is despised without from the merits of those whose life is also lacerated within.

74. He who is temporally extolled, falls. But it is to be noted that he does not say: "Nor let the multitude of places extol thee," but he says: "Nor let the multitude of places bend thee." For everyone who is temporally extolled is by that very thing by which he is extolled bent down, because while he erects himself outwardly, he falls within. Eliu therefore, beholding the fall of the heart in elation, says: Nor let the multitude of places bend thee. As if it were said to holy Church by the voice of the arrogant: Take heed lest, if thou art extolled by the veneration of the whole world, thou shouldst be bent from thy internal intention. It follows:

CHAPTER XLI

[Rec. XXVIII].

VERSE 19.---Lay aside thy greatness without tribulation, and all the strong in fortitude.

75. The Apostles and the strong ones of the Church being called to their rewards, God in their place has strengthened the weak for conflicts. Whom else do we receive as the strong ones of holy Church, but those who grow strong for conquering the desires of this world both by sublime beginnings and consummate progress? Therefore her greatness consists in the life of her strong

ones, because she is then rendered more glorious, when it is contended for the defense of truth even unto death by her elect with constant virtue. Therefore arrogant men, when the apostles have been withdrawn from this world, when the martyrs have been withdrawn to heavenly things, because they see forsooth more learned and more valiant prelates to be abundantly lacking, suspect themselves as it were to have remained alone within the Church. Whence while they prefer themselves, they mock her as if consulting for her, saying: Lay aside thy greatness without tribulation, and all the strong in fortitude. As if they should say by open reproaches: By no means trust that thou hast greatness, because the former fathers being withdrawn, thou hast not now any of whose life thou mayest glory. They say these things forsooth, not knowing that Almighty God does not desert His Church without worthy administration. For when He calls the strong to reward, He strengthens the weak in their place for conflicts; while He rewards those by receiving them, He ministers to these the strengths of labors, which He may reward. Concerning whom it is said to the same holy Church: Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all the earth (Psal. 45:16). For into the virtue of the ancient fathers, those who were afterwards made prelates are substituted, because also when aged groves are cut down, tender twigs grow up into their strength. But arrogant men do not believe those to grow strong whom they have known to

be weak at some time; and they despise to venerate those who have been changed, whom they remember to have been despicable.

76. In the Church the just are much fewer than the wicked. Proud pastors reap by exulting those things which their fathers sowed by dying. But because they behold in her few just ones, but the wicked more numerous, just as in the threshing of fruits there is a greater multitude of chaff, they even contemn the life of the just from the estimation of the wicked. They see forsooth that some of her rulers, leaning on temporal power, are fed by the elation of that same power. They see that the reverence of religion, which the fathers by dying preserved for this world, these reap by exulting in earthly joys; and they weigh indeed that they are strong, but not in fortitude. For while they are propped up by temporal power, they are strengthened as it were by a certain debility. For by how much they are strong outwardly, by so much do they become empty within from all the strengths of fortitude. And therefore it is said to her by the arrogant: Lay aside the strong in fortitude. As if it should be openly said: Those truly strong ones had adhered to thee, who in thee held by living that which they spoke by teaching; but now these who preside over thee are strong in vision, not in fortitude, because they indeed do not cease to show themselves honorable, but they are so much more imbecile and more contemptible, by how much they fear the glory of their own honor to be despised for the truth. Which the arrogant indeed feel truly of very many, but they

fall into the vice of elation in this, that they think all whom they see to preside to be such. For the evil of very many ought not to tend into the estimation of all, because even if those whom they judge by knowing are iniquitous, some yet are holy whom they are ignorant of. For it is the time of threshing, and the grains still lie hid under the chaff. Therefore no fruit will be expected from the floor, if this alone is believed to be in it, which is seen as far as the surface. Therefore because they despise those whom they discern, and contemn those whom they know to be substituted in the orders of the ancient fathers, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERSE 20.---Do not prolong the night, that people may ascend for them.

77. The night of the Church is, when the unlearned and the weak occupy the places of the learned and the strong. As if the arrogant should say openly: Do not act in the obscurity of thy ignorance, that in the place of the strong thou shouldst substitute a multitude of the weak. For by the name of "peoples" are designated those who, given as it were to vulgar custom, live everywhere in all things which they desire. But to prolong the night is that peoples should ascend for the strong, if it is done through negligence that the unlearned and the weak should obtain the places of the learned and the strong. Peoples ascend for the strong when those who have learned to live iniquitously perceive the places of pastors. Which could indeed be said rightly, if it

were said humbly. For the arrogant, even when they admonish of good things, exercise the vice of their own superstition. For they desire more, as was also said above, to strike by rebuking than to cherish by consoling. Whence it is soon subjoined:

VERSE 21.---Decline not to iniquity; for this thou hast begun to follow after misery.

This forsooth the arrogant call the misery of the Church, because they suspect her multitude to be despised by God; and they contemn her with so much higher elation, by how much they also suspect her to be utterly despised by God. These things therefore being run through in a figured exposition, now those things are to be brought in which are felt morally, that, the figure of the Church being known, which we believe to be expressed generally, we may hear also what we may collect from these words specially in individuals. He says therefore:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Old XXXVI].

CHAPTER XXXVI, VERSE 18. --- Let not wrath therefore overcome thee, that thou shouldest oppress any one.

78. MORAL SENSE. --- In making correction, wrath ought to be subject, not to preside. Every one by whom it is necessary that the vices of others should be corrected, ought first skillfully to behold himself, lest while he avenges the faults of others, he himself be overcome by the fury

of avenging. For for the most part the immanity of wrath vastates the mind under the pretext of justice, and while it as it were rages with the zeal of rectitude, it fills up the madness of fury, and esteems that it does justly, whatever wrath wickedly dictates. Whence also it often transcends the mode of avenging, because it is not bridled by the measure of justice. For it is worthy that when we correct the things of others we should first measure our own, that the mind may first cool down from its own kindling, may first within itself compose the impetus of its zeal with tranquil equity, lest if we are drawn to animadvert upon vices with abrupt fury, we sin by correcting sin, and we who pursue a fault by judging it, act immoderately by striking. But now not the correction of the delinquent, but rather oppression follows, if in vengeance wrath is extended further than the fault deserves. For in the correction of vices, wrathfulness ought to be subject to the mind, not to preside, so that it may not precede the execution of justice by domineering, but may follow by serving, and may fulfill the known judgment when possessed, not run before it when possessing. Well therefore is it said: *Let not wrath therefore overcome thee, that thou shouldest oppress any one.* Because forsooth if he who endeavors to correct is overcome by wrath, he oppresses before he corrects. For while he is kindled more than he ought, he is unbridled to the immanity of cruelty under the pretext of just vengeance. Which for the most part happens therefore, because the hearts of

rulers are less intent on the love of the Creator alone. For while they desire many things in this life, they are dispersed in innumerable thoughts; and when they suddenly find the faults of subjects, they are unable to judge them worthily with God, because they cannot suddenly collect their hearts, scattered in transitory cares, to the summit of strictness. Being moved therefore, they find the balance of equity so much the less for avenging sins, as they do not seek it in the time of their tranquillity. Whence when Eliu said: *Let not wrath overcome thee, that thou shouldest oppress any one,* in order that he might express the same causes of injustice and of overcoming wrath, he immediately added:

CHAPTER XLIV.

IBID. --- Nor let the multitude of places incline thee.

79. From original sin the unquiet mutability of man arises. Since he cannot be satisfied with the quality of things, he seeks at least to be satisfied with variety. In so many places indeed are we inclined as we are extended in superfluous cares. For as a place is a corporal space of the body, so a place is each intention of the mind's thought. Which while it is impelled hither and thither, if it is willingly occupied by some delight of its thought, it is as it were placed in a certain place that it may rest. For as often as being overcome by weariness we are led from thought to thought, we as it were migrate from place to place with a weary mind. So many places therefore incline the

summit of the mind, as the thoughts that arise dissipate the unity of good intention. For the mind would stand upright, if it always adhered to the one thought to which it ought. The mind would stand upright, if it did not prostrate itself in innumerable motions with fluid mutability. But while it now treats of these things, now slides off to others, it is as it were inclined from the state of its rectitude by the multitude of places; and while it stretches itself through many things, it casts itself down from the one intention to which it ought to adhere. Which use of mutability nevertheless, from the vice of the first prevarication, has now as it were come into nature. For when the soul endeavors to stand in itself, it is in some way derived from itself even without knowing it. For the human soul is removed from every thing to which it is intent by the impelling of fastidiousness. But while it thirstily desires things to be thought of, and suddenly fastidiously loathes the things thought of, it teaches that it hangs from elsewhere, which placed anywhere does not rest. For it is suspended toward Him by whom it was formed. And because it was made to desire God alone, but every thing which it desires below is less, it is rightly not sufficient for it what is not God. Hence it is that it is scattered hither and thither, and is removed from every thing, as we said, by the impelling of fastidiousness. Greedy forsooth of delight, it seeks where it may pause, but it has lost the one whom it could have sufficiently. Whence now it is led through many things, that because it cannot be satisfied by the

quality of things, it may at least be satisfied by variety.

[Old XXXVII.] 80. The Saints by adhering to God, heal this anxiety. But holy men therefore keep themselves with observation, lest they be mutably dissolved from their intention, and because they desire to be the same, they skillfully bind themselves to the thought by which they love God. For in the contemplation of the Creator they are to receive this, that they may always enjoy one stability of mind. No mutability then dissipates them, because forsooth their thought perseveres always not dissimilar to itself. This therefore they now endeavoring with labor imitate, which afterwards they joyfully receive in the gift. To which immutability the Prophet had bound himself by the virtue of love, when he said: *One thing have I asked of the Lord, this will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord* (Psal. XXVI, 4). To this unity Paul had adhered by intention, saying: *But one thing, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ* (Philip. III, 13). For if any thing flows away in their heart after the manner of men, severe discussion soon restrains this; and when thought slides away as it were childishly, it is soon bridled by youthful coercion. Whence it comes to pass that they continually collect the scattered mind, and compose it in one thought as much as they prevail. Because therefore the state of the mind is bent by the mutability

of thoughts, it is rightly said by Eliu: *Nor let the multitude of places incline thee.*

81. Elation is to be avoided by those thus at leisure for God. --- But often while the mind of a just man stands in that very citadel of its intention, while it collects itself from every scattering of mutability, while it presses down whatever arises superfluously in itself; it is touched by the very glory of its rectitude, and is lifted up in the swelling of its own presumption. For he who does great things, although he may feel humble things of himself, yet knows that those things which he does are great. For if he knows not that they are great, he without doubt by no means keeps them. Which while he neglects to keep, he either profits less in them, or loses them fundamentally. While therefore it is necessary to know our good works that we may keep them, from that very knowledge of them the entrance of elation is opened, and the hand of fault is admitted to the heart of the worker, by which vastating they may be snatched away. But it is acted by a wonderful dispensation, that our Founder permits the mind lifted up by prosperous things to be shaken by a sudden temptation, that it may see itself more truly in infirmity, and from that pride of elation which it had taken from virtues, it may descend now better than itself. Whence also it is well now added:

CHAPTER XLV.

VERSE 19. --- Lay down thy greatness without tribulation, and all the strong in fortitude.

82. Lest we presume of ourselves, God permits us to be struck by temptation. --- For strong are the motions of the heart, when they feel nothing but what are of virtue. But we lay down greatness and strong motions, when by the striking of vice we are compelled to weigh what we are. We lay down strong motions, when now we are not lifted up concerning virtue, but by consenting in fault we fear to be overwhelmed by that very infirmity by which we are shaken. For the mind much confides of itself when it beholds strengths to be at hand for its wish. Already it arrogates to itself the confidence of holiness, already it thinks itself fit even for all the summits of virtues which it has conceived by thought alone. But when a temptation suddenly arisen pierces this, it fundamentally disturbs those elated thoughts which had been born of virtues. For an unexpected enemy enters as it were a secure city, and by a sudden sword the necks of the proud citizens are struck. Nothing therefore is then acted but continuous grief, while the captured city of the soul is emptied of the glory of its great ones, slaughter intervening. Whence it is now said: *Lay down thy greatness without tribulation, and all the strong in fortitude.* As if it were openly said: Repress all that by which you had swollen within from good action, and lay down the motions of the heart which you had strong from right work, because now in that very temptation of adversity you consider how in vain you before esteemed great things, being elated of yourself. Which greatness indeed is said to be laid down

without tribulation for this reason, because forsooth when humility profits through temptation, that very adversity is prosperous which keeps the mind from elation. [Old XXXVIII]. But yet it is not acted without great tribulation, when a tranquil mind is disturbed by an rushing temptation as if by a sudden enemy. For that very adversity of temptation, while it inserts itself into the mind, begets certain darknesses in it, and disturbs it with the obscurity of its bitterness, which had lately shone clearly with itself, the sweetness of virtues radiating. Whence also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVI.

VERSE 20. --- Prolong not the night that peoples may ascend for them.

83. Temptation begets darkness, and excites storms. --- For the night is prolonged when the sadness arisen from temptation is not ended by a quickened consolation. The night is prolonged because the grief of the mind is lengthened out with confused thoughts. For while the mind placed in temptation considers that it is repelled from the pristine solidity of its virtue, sadnesses being brought over it, it is blinded as it were with certain darknesses, and its eye is closed from all light of joy, while being solicitous it trembles lest it fundamentally lose that which it had lately begun to be. Whence also it is well said that in this night peoples ascend for the strong, because forsooth in this grief of temptation unworthy and manifold thoughts leap forth in the heart in place of strong motions. For while it beholds itself in

perturbation to have now almost lost what it was, it heaps up in itself innumerable waves and tumults, now it grieves because it has lost its tranquillity; now it greatly fears lest it should fall even to wicked works; now it remembers in what summit it had stood; now it attends in what depth of vices it lies through delight; now it repairs itself for resuming strengths; now as if conquered and broken it despairs that it can resume them.

84. In this night manifold thoughts press as it were tumultuous peoples. --- When therefore so manifold thoughts come forth over the mind addicted, these press it as it were peoples rising up in the night. Which peoples indeed the Prophet had presumed that he could subdue not by himself, but through the help of divine protection, when he said: *My protector, and in him will I hope, who subdueth the peoples under me* (Psal. CXLIII, 2). For peoples are subdued by holy minds, when foolish thoughts leap away from them through the presence of strict severity, so that they may not snatch them away through the precipices of phantasms, but being subject to reason may humbly rest from the heart. Because therefore the soul placed in temptation, which presumed greater things of itself in prosperous things, suffers the tumults of hope and of despair, it is rightly now said: *Prolong not the night, that peoples may ascend for them.* As if it were openly said: Being caught in temptation, more quickly cut short the darkness of grief, lest you who in tranquillity had felt high things of

yourself, in perturbation also should confound yourself worse with the darkness of thoughts. Which Eliu would rightly say, if yet he knew to whom he said it. For these things are so much the less congruent to blessed Job, as all things are known more deeply by him. But because, as we have often said, the arrogant, while they presume to teach those whom they ought not, slide down even to the contumelious words of rebukes, it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XLVII

[Rec. XXIX].

VERSE 21. --- Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity; for this hast thou begun to follow after misery.

85. Then impatience is to be avoided, which is undeservedly impinged upon Job. --- He follows iniquity after misery, who after the evils which he sustains for correction inflames himself with the torches of impatience with a fervent heart. Which Eliu believed blessed Job to have perpetrated, who heard him being placed among scourges speak with free voices, forsooth not knowing, that all which he said, he brought forth not from the iniquity of impatience, but from the virtue of truth, who did not err from the sentence of the internal judge even when he justified himself. [Old XXXIX.] But it is greatly to be considered how when he said: *Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity,* concerning that same iniquity he

immediately added: *For this hast thou begun to follow after misery.*

86. The proud know not how to keep the mode in arguing. --- What is this that while he forbids to decline to it, he immediately condemns concerning it as if to that which had already been declined, except that arrogant men wish more to be seen as judges than as consolers? Whence also sometimes they strike with strict sentences those things which they suspect to be born in the heart, and before the fault of the delinquents is certain, a strict invective of words is brought forth; and it is struck by sentence before that should come forth which is to be struck.

87. The discretion of the Saints in correcting. --- Although also just men for the most part meet wicked and occult thoughts by arguing; but when some works that precede demonstrate those same thoughts, for the most part they eradicate from the hearts of their hearers those vices which are not yet brought forth with the hand of correction, but they already behold those to follow from others which precede. For as corporal physicians find some sicknesses to have already come, but heal some lest they should come, so holy teachers sometimes restore to health the wounds found, but sometimes they act in minds lest they should be wounded. In which it is to be skillfully beheld, that as they for the most part rebuke certain things with asperity, so they contradict uncertain vices even with tranquillity; striking certain things they rebuke, pre-arming they avoid uncertain things. Which rule of discre-

tion because arrogant men know not, they pierce with the darts of their sentences unknown things as well as known; uncertain things as well as certain. Whence it is now said by Eliu: *Take heed that thou decline not to iniquity; for this hast thou begun to follow after misery.* But because those things which are subjoined are prolonged by a longer allegation, we bind this little book with this end, lest it be immoderately extended.

TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK.

The last twelve verses of the thirty-sixth chapter are explained, with the entire thirty-seventh chapter, with senses ingeniously sought for constructing both Christian doctrine and ethics.

CHAPTER ONE.

1. From the right sayings of the proud what profits is to be taken, what hurts is to be rejected. --- Whosoever endeavors to take knowledge from the great sayings of the arrogant, ought skillfully to provide, lest he imitate this that their knowledge swells high, lest with the words of virtues he collect the vices of manners, and in that in which he attains the notice of speaking, he transfix himself with the unskilfulness of living. For when we hear these speak strong things, but yet behold them swell from the strong sayings, having as it were entered the garden of doctrine, we touch roses from thorns. There is need therefore for us of discrete solicitude, both to pluck what is fragrant, and to beware what pricks, lest if perhaps the flower of the sayings is gathered improvidently, the incautious hand of the reader be lacerated by the thorn of manners. Eliu therefore, learned and arrogant, brings forth sometimes what is fragrant, sometimes what pricks. Thus

therefore is to be taken from his doctrine what is sweet-smelling, that yet what wounds from elation should be solicitously avoided. Who indeed brought in many things morally above, but in the following words he lifted himself up to the secrets of prophecy alone. For he deserts the depths of morality, and ascends to the summits of prophecy.

2. The proud sometimes filled with the spirit of prophecy. --- Nor is it to be wondered at that an arrogant man could be filled with the prophetic spirit, since Saul also was in the number of the prophets (1 Sam. X, 6). But why do we say this of Saul, since we have known even an ass to have received reasonable words from the vision of an angel (Num. XXII, 28)? But as an irrational animal uttered words of reason, and yet did not attain to the permutation of a rational nature, so often any unworthy person receives holy words through the spirit of prophecy, but yet does not reach to the merit of the glory of holiness, so that he both stands out by speaking above himself, and becomes torpid by living below himself. Whence now Eliu, not humble, beholds the humble advent of our Redeemer, and preaches Him by prophesying, whom he impugns with elated manners, saying:

CHAPTER II.

CHAPTER XXXVI, VERSE 22. --- Behold, God is high in His fortitude, and none is like to Him among the lawgivers.

3. Christ at once humble in infirmity and high in fortitude far excels other lawgivers. --- As if he should openly say: He who shall be seen humble in infirmity, remains high in fortitude, Paul also attesting this, who says: *For though He was crucified through infirmity, yet He liveth by the power of God* (2 Cor. XIII, 4). Of whom it is rightly subjoined: *None is like to Him among the lawgivers.* Moses was a lawgiver, Joshua a lawgiver, the prophets also were lawgivers; we can call all those lawgivers whom we know to have admonished the people in right things from the law. But to this Mediator there is none like among the lawgivers, because these being called freely return from sins to innocence, and lead back others by preaching from those things which they have experienced in themselves. But our Redeemer is man without sin, a Son without adoption, nor did He ever perpetrate what He rebuked, and He so speaks to the world from humanity, that yet He domineers over the same world from before the ages from divinity. Some believed this Mediator of God and men to have been like to the lawgivers. For to Him inquiring: *Whom do men say that the Son of man is?* the disciples answered, saying: *Some say John the Baptist, some Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the prophets* (Matth. XVI, 13). But forsooth He opened to Peter how high He was in fortitude, when looking upon Him truly, he discerned Him from the equality of lawgivers, saying: *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God* (Ibid., 16). Whence rightly the bride in the Song of Songs says of Him: *In my bed

by night I sought Him whom my soul loveth, I sought Him, and found Him not* (Cant. III, 1). And a little after: *The watchmen that keep the city found me.* Of whom again she says: *They wounded me, they took away my veil.* Whom again she inquires, saying: *Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? When I had passed by them a little, I found Him whom my soul loveth* (Cant. III, 3).

4. Who is sought in the night, but is not found unless after having passed over prophets and patriarchs. --- For the Beloved is sought by night in the bed, because within the secret chambers of the heart He is desired in the tribulation of the spirit. Whom yet the bride seeking finds not, because every elect soul already indeed burns with the torches of His love, but as yet the species sought is denied, that the desire of the lover may grow; and as it were water is withdrawn in thirst, that the heat of the same thirst may be increased, and by how much she desires this more thirstily, by so much when she shall have found it she may take it more greedily. But watchmen find her seeking, and they wound her, and take away her veil, because when solicitous teachers find every soul now seeking the species of its Redeemer, they wound her with the darts of heavenly love through the word of preaching, and if there is yet in her any covering from the old conversation, they withdraw it, that by how much she is rendered stript of the burden of this world, by so much He who is sought may more quickly be found by her. But well is it subjoined:

When I had passed by them a little, I found Him whom my soul loveth. Because the mind greedy for His vision, unless it should pass over the estimation of the prophets, unless the loftiness of the patriarchs, unless the measure of all men, it would not find Him who is above men. To pass by the watchmen therefore is to postpone even those whom the soul admires in comparison of Him. And then He who was sought is discerned, if He is believed to be indeed man, but yet beyond the measures of men. Whence well is it now said: *None is like to Him among the lawgivers.* But He forsooth appearing to our sights through the infirmity of the flesh, while He reprobates some, and calls others, exhibited wonderful judgments, which can both be thought of by us, and cannot be comprehended. For He says: *For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind* (John IX, 39). And again: *I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes* (Matth. XI, 25). In which judgments forsooth Judea is repelled, Gentility is gathered together. Which fact indeed we can wonder at, but we can by no means search out. Whence also it is well now subjoined by Eliu:

CHAPTER III.

VERSE 23.---Who will be able to search out His ways? or who dares to say to Him: You have wrought iniquity?

5. We ought not to search out His judgments, much less to find fault with them. As if he should say: How can his action be found fault with, whose searching out is not possible? For no one judges well that which he is ignorant of. Therefore, we ought to rest in silence under His judgments, as much as we perceive that we do not see the reason of His judgments. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER IV

[Ancient and Recent II].

VERSE 24.---Remember that you are ignorant of His work, of which men have sung.

6. Angels and doctors, even if they praise them, nevertheless know them very little. In sacred Scripture, sometimes angels, sometimes men of perfect life are mentioned as men. For because sometimes an angel is called a man, the prophet Daniel testifies, saying: Behold the man Gabriel (Dan. ix. 21). Again, because by the name of men, those of perfect life are expressed, Wisdom speaks in the Proverbs, saying: O men, to you I cry out (Prov. viii. 4). Men therefore sing of the Lord, when either the heavenly spirits, or any perfect doctors make known His power to us. But yet His work is unknown, because forsooth His judgments are venerated as unpenetrated even by those who preach Him. And they know, therefore, whom they preach, and yet they are ignorant of His works, because they know by grace Him by whom they were made, but they are unable to

comprehend His judgments, which are also done by Him over themselves. For that almighty God is not clearly seen in His action, the Psalmist testifies, saying: Who has made darkness His hiding-place (Ps. xvii. 12). And again: Your judgments are a great deep (Ps. xxxv. 7). And again: The deep as a garment is His clothing (Ps. ciii. 6). Whence also it is well said by Solomon: As you know not what is the way of the spirit, and by what reason the bones are joined together in the womb of her that is with child, so you know not the works of God, who is the maker of all things (Eccles. xi. 5).

7. An example of the secret judgments of God in infants dying without baptism, or after baptism. For that I may speak of one out of many, two infants come to this light, but to one it is given that he may return to redemption through baptism, the other is withdrawn before the regenerating wave bathes him. And often the son of the faithful is snatched away without faith, often the son of the unfaithful is renewed by the sacrament of faith being granted. But perhaps someone may say that God knew that this one would act wickedly even after baptism, and therefore He did not lead him to the grace of baptism. But if it is so, the sins of some are undoubtedly punished before they are committed. And who that thinks rightly would say that almighty God, who delivers others from committed crimes, would condemn these same things in others when not committed? His judgments, therefore, are hidden; and with as much obscurity as they cannot be seen, with so much humility ought they to be

venerated. Let him say therefore: Remember that you are ignorant of His work, of which men have sung. As if he were to say openly: Of which all the strong have spoken, His works are hidden from the eyes of your mind, because they transcend the measure of your knowledge by the very fact that you are circumscribed by humanity. It follows:

CHAPTER V

[Recent III].

856 VERSE 25.---All men see Him, everyone beholds Him from afar.

8. God is not seen except from afar, even by the elect. Every man, by the very fact that he was created rational, ought to gather from reason that He who created him is God. Whom forsooth already to see is to behold His condemnation by reasoning. But when it is said: All men see Him, it is rightly subjoined: Everyone beholds Him from afar. For to behold Him from afar is not yet to see Him by sight, but still to weigh Him from the admiration of His works alone. From afar the elect also behold Him here, because they do not yet apprehend His brightness by the sharpness of inward vision. To whom although they are already near through love, yet they are still separated from Him by the weight of earthly habitation; and although they cleave to Him by living well, they sigh that they are far from the sight of His contemplation. Whom forsooth the reprobate also, when they shall see Him coming to judgment, behold from afar, because they do

not behold Him in the form of divinity, but only in that humanity in which He could also be comprehended, because forsooth their evil deeds, then brought back to memory, reverberate against their eyes, and while they see His humanity, whose brightness of divinity they do not see, they become in a wondrous manner far from the vision of Him whom they behold. [Ancient III.] But when it is said: Remember that you are ignorant of His work, and then it is subjoined: All men see Him, whom, as we have said, to see is to gather from reason His essence transcending all things, it is greatly to be wondered at that we both see Him, and are ignorant of His work. For we are not doubtful of His essence, and yet we remain uncertain in His judgments. That which is highest is open to us, that which is least is hidden. For His works are less than Himself; and we behold Him acting, but we are in darkness in the action: because forsooth it is uncertain why anything is done, but who He is that does these uncertain things, is not uncertain. Let him say therefore: Remember that you are ignorant of His work, of which men have sung: All men see Him, everyone beholds Him from afar, because we see through reason that He exists, whose judgments we by no means comprehend; whom yet we still behold from afar, because we are separated from His strength by the cloud of our infirmity. It follows:

CHAPTER VI

[Recent IV].

VERSE 26.---Behold, God is great, surpassing our knowledge.

9. We then only begin to understand something of God, when we feel that we cannot worthily know Him. He had said above: Behold, God is high: now again he says: Behold, God is great. What is it that speaking of God he says behold, and repeats behold, except that we say behold of that thing which we show in the present? and because God is everywhere present, when it is said of Him behold, He is mentioned as being present even to those who do not see. But he well relates that He surpasses our knowledge, whom he had said was seen by all, because although He is beheld by reason, yet His greatness is penetrated by no subtlety of our sense. For whatever we know of the brightness of His greatness, is below Himself; and we are repelled so much further from the knowledge of Him, as we suspect that we have comprehended His power. For although our mind be snatched up on high, yet it is transcended by the immensity of His greatness. Of whom we then know something as it were in part, when we feel that we cannot worthily know Him. It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

In the same place.---The number of His years is unsearchable.

857 10. God is immense without space, eternal without beginning or end. He wished to speak of eternity in some way, and he called the length of eternity itself years. For when we wish to extend

the shortness of time, we extend moments into hours, hours into days, days into months, and months into years. Because therefore he wished to say something very ample, but found nothing wider to say, he multiplied years in God without estimation of number, saying: The number of His years is unsearchable, so that while he multiplies those things which are prolonged with him, human infirmity may know that it cannot measure the length of eternity. Stretch therefore your eye into eternity, that you may see God, either when He is from the beginning, or how far; and nowhere is there a superior limit, because He does not begin to be; nowhere an inferior limit, because He does not cease to be. Within Himself all things are narrowed, but He is extended around all things without space, dilated without place. Behold all things which have been made, by that very circumscription by which they were created, are girt by a superior and inferior limit. For by their own law, because they begin from non-existence, they hasten not to be.

11. Certain things are to be eternal, but have not been so. But certain things have wonderfully received that although a superior limit begins them, yet an inferior limit does not constrain them; and although they begin to be, they do not cease to be forever. But the eternity of these is for this reason unlike the highest eternity, because they began to be eternal. When we look forward to the extreme parts, we do not comprehend the end of these, which is altogether wanting; yet we behold their beginnings, when we recall the mind

backwards; and while in them we lead the mind below and above, we do not at all take in how far they are, but we see from what time they are. But because in God there is as it were something long through eternity, which neither arises in a beginning, nor is terminated by an end, and receives in itself neither from what time nor how far, let it be said therefore: The number of His years is unsearchable. By this therefore that the number of His years is mentioned, His long duration is shown. But by this that it is mentioned as unsearchable, this very existence is demonstrated to be infinite and incomprehensible. But because we have known that He is made known to human minds, while all men see Him; and because we behold Him admiring His greatness, while the number of His years is held to be unsearchable, it remains now that we should also hear what He does. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Ancient IV, Recent V].

VERSE 27.---Who takes away the stars of rain, and pours out showers after the manner of floods.

12. The holy patriarchs and prophets were stars generating rain. There are in this life two kinds of the just: one forsooth of those who live well, but teach nothing; the other of those who live rightly, and teach the same right things, as also in the face of heaven some stars come forth which no rains follow, others come forth which

water the parched earth with great showers. Therefore, as often as some live rightly in holy Church, but yet know not how to preach the same rectitude, they are indeed stars, but born in the dryness of the air; because by the example of living well they can shine to others, but by the word of preaching they cannot rain. But when some in her both live rightly, and flow into others the same rectitude by the words of preaching, stars are as it were produced in heaven to bring forth rains, which so shine by the merits of their life, as also to rain by the speech of preaching. Was not Moses a star of rain in this heaven, 858 who when he shone forth from on high, watered the hearts of sinners as it were the parched earth below with the rain of holy exhortation to the fruitfulness of the seed? Was not Isaiah shown as a star of rain, who in that he held the light of truth by foreseeing, watered the dryness of the unfaithful by announcing in prophecy? Were not Jeremiah and the other prophets, as if placed in heaven, stars of rain, who, erected in the height of preaching, while they dared freely to rebuke the perversity of sinners, as it were with drops of words pressed down by watering the dust of human blindness? Whose souls forsooth, received from this corruptible flesh, because the heavenly judgments take them away from the present life, are as it were withdrawn from the face of heaven as stars of rain, and return to the hidden stars, while after their courses are finished, the souls of the saints are laid up in the treasures of inward disposition.

13. These being withdrawn, the apostles were sent, who poured out showers like floods. But because the earth would become parched if, the stars of rain being withdrawn, the heavenly streams should altogether cease, it is rightly said: Who takes away the stars of rain, and pours out showers after the manner of floods. For when He took away the prophets, in their place the Lord sent the apostles, who should rain after the likeness of floods, after the former patriarchs being withdrawn the outward preachings of the law had become silent. He hid therefore the stars of rain, and poured out showers after the manner of floods, because while He brought back the preachers of the law to secret and inward things, a more abundant force of preaching flowed out through the words of those who followed.

[Ancient V.] 14. After the apostles, the holy Fathers increased sacred doctrine. The holy apostles can also be designated by the stars of rain, of whom it is said to the reprobated Judea by Jeremiah: The stars of rain were forbidden, and there was no late shower (Jer. iii. 3). The Lord therefore withdrew the stars of rain, and poured out showers after the manner of floods, because when He took away the apostles preaching from Judea, the doctrine of new grace watered the world. Both which facts can not inconveniently be understood in the Church, because when He brought back the souls of the apostles, their bodies being loosed, to the secret bosoms of the heavenly ones, He as it were hid the stars of rain from the face of heaven. But the stars of rain being taken away,

He gave showers in the manner of floods, because even after the apostles were brought back to heavenly things, He opened the streams of divine knowledge, long hidden, by a more bounteous effusion through the tongues of the expositors who followed. For what they spoke in brevity, these have increased manifoldly by expounding. Whence also not undeservedly the preaching of the expositors is compared to floods: because while they gather the sayings of many who preceded, they themselves are more profoundly dilated in that which they build up. For while they join testimonies to testimonies, they make as it were floods out of drops. By whose words while Gentility is daily taught, because the mind of sinners receives heavenly knowledge, it shows floods as water standing on the earth. But by no means let the expositors prefer themselves in knowledge to the same apostles, when by expounding they speak more widely. For they ought incessantly to remember, through whom they received the inventions of the same knowledge. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 28.---Which flow from the clouds.

15. Nor yet are they to be preferred to the apostles, the first deliverers of this doctrine. These floods forsooth flow from the clouds, because if the force of understanding did not begin from the holy apostles, it would by no means flow more largely through the mouths of the doctors. For in sacred Scripture sometimes by clouds, 859 any

fickle men, sometimes prophets, and sometimes apostles are designated. For by clouds the fickleness of the human mind is expressed, as Solomon says: He that observes the wind does not sow; and he that considers the clouds, never reaps (Eccles. xi. 4). By the wind he doubtless calls the unclean spirit, and by the clouds the men subjected to him; whom he so often impels and recalls hither and thither, as often as his temptations alternate in their hearts by the blasts of suggestions. He therefore that observes the wind, does not sow, because he who fears coming temptations, does not set his heart to good works. And he that considers the clouds, does not reap, because he who trembles before the terror of human mutability, deprives himself of the retribution of eternal reward. By clouds prophets are figured, as it is said by the Psalmist: Dark water in the clouds of the air (Ps. xvii. 12); that is, secret knowledge in the prophets. [Ancient VI.] By clouds the apostles also are designated, as it is said by Isaiah: I will command the clouds, that they rain no shower upon it (Is. v. 6). They therefore are stars, because they shine by the merits of their life; they are clouds, because they water the parched earth of our breast with the streams of heavenly understanding. For if they were not clouds, the prophet beholding them would by no means have said: Who are these, that fly as clouds (Is. lx. 8)? The floods of showers therefore flow from the clouds, because the profound preachings of those who followed received the origin of their understand-

ing from the holy apostles. Of which clouds it is still aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER X.

In the same place.---Which cover all things from above.

16. Why the apostles are called clouds. When the clouds cover the air from above, if we lift up our eyes to heaven, we do not behold heaven, but the clouds themselves; nor does our sight penetrate the ethereal regions, because its own infirmity hides them from it; and when the sun shines from heaven, it is first fed by the air spread between, so that afterwards it may contemplate the rays of the sun in heaven. Because therefore we are carnal men, when we strive to seek after heavenly things, we as it were lift up our eyes to heaven, and direct our sight as it were to heaven, because, pressed by the use of corporal things, we attempt to teach spiritual things. But because our understanding is not permitted to pass to divine things, unless it be first formed by the examples of the preceding saints, our eye as it were already receives the sky, but sees the clouds, because it desires to comprehend those things which are of God, but can scarcely wonder at those things which have been conferred upon men. Whence also it is said elsewhere: You enlighten wonderfully from the eternal mountains (Ps. lxxv. 5). For he who cannot contemplate the rising sun, looks upon the irradiated mountains, and perceives that the sun has risen. From the eternal mountains therefore God enlightens us,

because through the admired life of the preceding Fathers, He illustrates us with the ray of His brightness. Behold we are kindled in the study of the Lord's devotion and charity, but in this devotion and charity we are better formed by the contemplation of these clouds. For what was more devoted than Peter (Matth. xiv. 29)? What more dear than John (John xiii. 23)? He through devotion feared not to tread the fluid backs of the sea, he through love rested on the very breast of our Author; and he who had come to the refreshment of the corporal supper, took spiritual food from the bosom of the Redeemer.

[Ancient VII.] 17. Why the prophets and ancient Fathers are also called clouds. Abraham teaches us obedience; Isaac, patience; Jacob, a laborious life; Joseph, chastity; Moses, meekness; Joshua, constancy; Samuel, benignity; David, piety and humility. But because we have said that the prophets also are signified by the clouds, it is necessary that we should still bring forward the examples of the former Fathers. Behold when we desire to be subjected to the heavenly precepts by obedience, 860 we are assisted by the considered footsteps of the ancient fathers. For what was more obedient than Abraham, who at a single divine voice leaves his kindred and country, and for the sake of obtaining an eternal inheritance fears not to strike him whom he, now an old man and almost about to die, had received as his heir (Gen. xii. 4)? When we strive to apprehend the virtue of patience, we behold the examples of those who preceded. For what was more patient

than Isaac, who carries the wood, inquires about the burnt offering, and after a little while is bound, and speaks not; is placed upon the altar, and does not struggle (Gen. xxii. 7)? What therefore can be said more patient than this man, who is led as if to solace, and inquires; is bound for the stroke, and becomes silent; and when about to offer the burnt offering inquires, when to be offered in burnt offering is silent? When we strive to be girded for the endurance of labors, we are relieved by the examples of those who preceded. For what was more laborious than Jacob, who with Laban for so long a time, being a kinsman by right of relationship, exercised the works of servitude, and followed in the place of a servant, that he might enjoy the rewards of an heir (Gen. xxx. 26)? When we strive to ascend the citadel of continence and chastity, we are relieved by the examples of those who preceded. For what was more chaste than Joseph, who at the desire of a petulant mistress, could not be pressed by the yoke of luxury even when a captive? And indeed he was a servant to men, but against the dominant wickedness even in service he was free (Gen. xxxix. 12). When we desire to be filled with meekness, we are assisted by the examples of those who preceded. For what was more meek than Moses, who endures the sedition of the people committed to him, and yet prays to the angry Lord for these same persecutors of his, and objects himself for them to the divine wrath, because in his holy breast even from persecution charity takes fire (Exod. xxxii. 32)? When we

strive to form the constancy of the mind against the adversities of the world, we are supported by the consideration of those who preceded. For what was more constant than Joshua, who being sent to explore the quality of the nations, feared neither the greatness of their stature, nor the multitude of their number. Whence also those same nations, which he feared not in exploring, he also prostrated in fighting (Josh. x. 7). When we strive to apprehend the summit of benignity, we are instructed by the examples of those who preceded. For what was more benign than Samuel, who being cast down from the principality of ruling the people, humbly seeks a successor for himself, and having found him anoints him as king, and soon suffers the anointed as a persecutor (1 Sam. x.; xii. 1). Before whom he trembles lest he die; and yet he prays lest the Lord be angry with him. For he himself when he was sent, said: Saul will hear, and will kill me (1 Sam. xvi. 2). And to him through itself the Truth says: How long do you mourn for Saul, when I have rejected him (Ibid. 1)? What therefore can be said more benign than this man, who even does not wish him to be struck divinely by whom he fears to be killed? When we tend to the height of piety and humility, we are raised by the examples of those who preceded. For what can be said more merciful, what more humble than David, who received contumelies from a reprobate king for his victories, who being strong rescued the Israelitish nation from the hostile hand, and yet he himself as if weak flies lest he die (1 Sam. xvii. 18, 19); who

also knows himself elected by divine judgment, and his persecutor reprobated, and yet subjects himself with the humility of frequent satisfaction to the same persecutor of his, who takes away the persecutor's spear, cuts off the hem of his cloak, and straightway hastens to the top of the mountain, and at one and the same time shows that 861 he had the power of killing, and prays that he may not be killed?

18. The life of those saints is read as being extended over us after the manner of clouds. Because therefore in all things which we seek after spiritually we are informed by the preceding examples, it is well said of these clouds: Which cover all things from above. For after the manner of clouds the life of the fathers being extended over us we are covered, that we may be watered to the fruit of a fruitful seed. And as if beholding heaven we first behold the clouds, because we first see with admiration the deeds of the good, and afterwards we penetrate by experience those things which are heavenly. But because by no means the life and virtue of these clouds, that is of the ancient fathers, would be open to us, unless other clouds, that is the holy apostles, opened it by the light of their preaching, let the discourse return to these clouds which go around the world by preaching, and show what the Lord did through them in the world. It follows:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. VI].

VERSES 29, 30. — If He will to extend the clouds as His pavilion, and to flash with His light from above, He will also cover the hinges of the sea.

19. The saints of God are pavilions, in which He dwells and walks among us. When Paul was seeking Rome, God went hidden in his breast as if under a pavilion. — The Lord extends the clouds when, opening the way of preaching to His ministers, He spreads them abroad everywhere into the breadth of the world. Moreover, it is well said: As if His pavilion. For a pavilion is usually placed on a journey. And when the holy preachers are sent into the world, they make a way for God. Whence it is written: Behold, I send My angel before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee (Mal. 3:1). And whence again it is said by the Psalmist: Make a way for Him who ascendeth upon the setting (Ps. 68:4). And again: O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people, when Thou passedst through the desert, the earth was moved (Ps. 68:7). For God, who by Himself is not locally everywhere, walks locally through His preachers into the parts of the world. Whence also it is said by the prophet: And I will walk in them (Lev. 26:12; 2 Cor. 6:16). For He makes a journey through them, while He pours Himself into human hearts by their eloquence. And in this journey, these same hearts of the saints are the pavilions of God, by which He is covered as if resting on the way, while coming through these to the minds of men, He performs what He has disposed, and is not seen. [Vet. VIII.]

Hence it is that the whole synagogue together is called a pavilion, when the Lord complains through Jeremiah that the priests have ceased from preaching, saying: There is none to stretch out My pavilion anymore, and to set up My curtains (Jer. 10:20). Hence again it is said of its extermination: He hath dissipated His pavilion as a garden, He hath demolished His tabernacle (Lam. 2:6). For because the Lord then lay hidden among men in the worship of one people, He called that same people His pavilion. Whence also these clouds are now rightly called His pavilion, because God, coming to us through grace, is covered within the minds of His preachers. Was not Paul His pavilion, when coming to the hearts of mortals from Jerusalem round about as far as Illyricum, the Lord rested in his mind (Rom. 15:19)? Indeed, he was a cloud to men, a pavilion to God, because Him whom he poured into his hearers by preaching, he retained invisibly in his mind. The same Paul again, while he sought Rome bound with chains to occupy the world, God went hidden in his breast as if under a pavilion (Acts 28:15), because He both being occult could not be seen, and betrayed by the words of preaching, He performed without cessation the journey of begun grace. Moses stood forth as His cloud when, before he provided leadership to the people of Israel, remaining in the desert for forty years, and seeking sublime things, he lived segregated from the conversation of the people. But he was made the pavilion of God when, sent to recall the people to Egypt, he went (Ex. 3:10), carrying

the invisible truth in his heart, while Almighty God, who was open in the work, lay hidden in the heart. And everywhere present containing all things, He made a journey coming in His servant into Egypt. Whence it is written: God went into Egypt, that He might redeem a people for Himself (Ex. 15:13, sec. LXX). Behold, He is said to go, by whose uncircumscribed presence all things are contained, because He who is everywhere by His majesty, as if on a way, places His steps by preaching.

20. God flashes through the saints when He performs miracles. These are necessary in preachers. — But to these same holy preachers words are by no means sufficient for persuading, unless miracles are also added. Whence, since it has been said: If He will to extend the clouds as His pavilion, it is rightly subjoined: And to flash with His light from above. For what ought we to understand by flashes, but miracles? Of which it is said by the Psalmist: Thou shalt multiply lightnings, and shalt trouble them (Ps. 144:6, sec. LXX). Through these clouds, therefore, He flashes with His light from above, because through the holy preachers He illustrates the darkness of our insensibility even by miracles.

21. The conversion also of the extreme boundaries of the world. Britain subjected to the faith. — And when these clouds rain with words, and when they open the power of flashing light with miracles, they convert also the extreme boundaries of the world into divine love. Whence it is rightly subjoined: He will also cover the hinges

of the sea. Which indeed we have heard as to be done by the voices of Elihu, but by the authorship of God we now see it as done. For Almighty Lord has covered the hinges of the sea with flashing clouds, because with the emicant miracles of the preachers, He has brought also the boundaries of the world to the faith. For behold, He has already penetrated the hearts of almost all nations; behold, He has joined the limit of the East and the West in one faith; behold, the tongue of Britain, which knew nothing else but to gnash barbarously, has for a long time since begun to resonate the Hebrew Alleluia in divine praises. Behold, the Ocean, once tumid, now prostrate serves at the feet of the saints, and its barbarian motions, which earthly princes had been unable to tame with iron, these the mouths of priests bind with simple words for divine dread; and he who being unfaithful had by no means feared the companies of fighters, now being faithful fears the tongues of the humble. For because, heavenly words being perceived, miracles also becoming clear, the virtue of divine cognition is infused into him, he is restrained by the terror of the same divinity, so that he fears to act perversely, and with all desires longs to arrive at the grace of eternity. Whence here also it is conveniently added:

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 31. — For by these He judgeth the peoples, and giveth foods to many mortals.

22. Through the same preachers designated by the clouds, both terror is inflicted and food is

given. — For through these words of the preachers, that is, the drops of the clouds, through these flashes of miracles God judges the peoples, because He calls their terrified hearts to penance. For while they hear sublime things, while they attend to wonderful works, they soon return to their hearts, and afflicting themselves for their past depravities, they greatly fear eternal torments. But through the same clouds through which terror is inflicted, food is also given, because the dispensation of the preachers is great, that they so know how to afflict the minds of the proud, as they also have known how to nourish the afflicted by the eloquence of consolation, so that they may both terrify the sinners concerning eternal punishments, and feed the penitents with the joys of the heavenly kingdom. Whence the order of the dispensation itself was well preserved, so that Elihu should say in an orderly manner that through these clouds He first judges the peoples, and afterwards provides foods, because indeed Almighty God through His preachers first shakes us by correcting us for perverse action, and afterwards nourishes us by consoling through hope. For if the divine dispensation did not now perform judgment through these clouds, He would by no means have said to the same clouds: Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose you shall retain, they are retained (John 20:22). And again, if He did not feed our fasting hearts through them, the Lord would by no means have said to His disciples concerning

the hungry peoples: Give ye them to eat (Matt. 14:16). Which we believe was so done then by their hands, that we see this done daily by their words without cessation. For what does Peter do, when he speaks through his epistles, but that our hearts, poorly fasting, may be satiated with the fodder of the word? What do Paul, what do John, speaking through their epistles, perform, but that our minds may perceive heavenly nourishments, and overcome the fastidiousness of their hunger by which they were dying? Let it be said therefore: If He will to extend the clouds as His pavilion, and to flash with His light from above, He will also cover the hinges of the sea. For by these He judgeth the peoples, and giveth foods to many mortals. As if He were to say openly: If He extends His saints into the ministry of preaching, and helps their words with miracles, He calls the boundaries of the whole world to the faith, through which He both first judges the proud, and afterwards strengthening the humble in hope by the word of consolation, He nourishes them.

[Vet. IX.] 23. Faith is not given to all. — But when He said that He gives foods to mortals, it is to be noted that He did not say to all, but to many, because it is certainly written: Faith is not of all (2 Thess. 3:2). And to some it is said: Therefore you hear not, because you are not of God (John 8:47). And again: No man can come to Me, except the Father, who hath sent Me, draw him (John 6:44). And again: The Lord knoweth who are His (2 Tim. 2:19). Whence in the holy Church itself

also, very many hold the faith, but do not hold the life of faith; they perceive the sacraments of the Lord's humility, but they despise being humbled by the imitation of the Lord; they communicate in the mild preachments of divine eloquence, but within themselves they persevere immense in swelling. Whence here also, after the breadth of the Church gathered through the hinges of the sea has been signified, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. VII].

VERSE 32. — He hideth the light from the immense.

24. The knowledge of truth is denied to the proud. — For they are immense (immanes) who extol themselves with elated thoughts. Against whom it is said through Isaiah: Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent before yourselves (Isa. 5:21). Against whom Paul also says: Be not prudent among yourselves (Rom. 12:16). But from these immense ones light is hidden, because indeed the knowledge of truth is denied to the proud. Whence through Itself the Truth says: I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones (Matt. 11:25): namely calling the proud wise and prudent. For He who did not subjoin: Thou hast revealed them to fools, but to little ones, showed that He had condemned swelling, not sharpness. Whence also

it is said elsewhere: The Lord keeping the little ones (Ps. 116:6). And that it may be shown what this same littleness is called, it is added: I was humbled, and He delivered me (ibid., 6). Because therefore there are many in the Church who despise being little ones, they by no means cease to be immense within themselves even in the place of humility. These you may generally see extolled with honors, enjoying pleasures, dilated by the multiplicity of things. These often seek nothing especially but to be over others, they congratulate themselves on being feared by many; they neglect to live rightly, and they desire to have the fame of a right life; they seek flatteries, they swell with favors. And because they are prompt in things copiously present to them, they do not seek coming joys. And when multiple action occupies them, it demonstrates them to be even aliens from themselves [Vet. X]. And yet if any temptation of faith arises, because they are contained in it at least as far as the species goes, they defend this by words, this by labors, and they vindicate the heavenly country, and yet they do not love it.

25. Many fight for the land of promise, which they nevertheless do not love at all. Example of the Gadites and Reubenites. — Whom the sons of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, well express in Moses, who possessing many cattle and beasts, while they desire the plains they had seen outside the Jordan, were unwilling to have an inheritance in the land of promise, saying: The land which the Lord hath smitten in

the sight of the children of Israel, is of a most fertile region for the pasture of animals; and we thy servants have very many beasts; and we pray, if we have found grace before thee, that thou give it to us thy servants in possession, and make us not cross the Jordan (Num. 32:4). They, therefore, who possess very many beasts, refuse to cross the Jordan, because those whom many involvements of the world occupy, do not seek the habitation of the heavenly country. But the very faith which they hold at least in appearance, rebukes them, lest they torpify by the delight of ease, and by their example break others from the tolerance of labor and the study of long-suffering. Whence it is said to them by Moses: Shall your brethren go to the fight, and shall you sit here? Why do you subvert the minds of the children of Israel (ibid., 7)? But because they blush not to defend what they confess, for the same faith which they have professed, they hasten to the contest, and vindicate it not for themselves, but for their neighbors. Whence they also say to Moses: We will build folds for the sheep, and stalls for the beasts, and fortified cities for our little ones; but we ourselves armed and accinct will go forward to battle before the children of Israel (ibid., 16). Who soon coming strong for others, both free the land of promise from the enemies, and leave it; and return to feed their herds outside the Jordan. For many, although faithful, occupied with present cares, feed their herds as if outside the Jordan, because against the faith of baptism they serve perishable things with their whole mind and

every desire. Who nevertheless, as we have said, when a temptation of faith arises, are accinct with the arms of defenses. By overcoming they slay the enemies of the faith, and they do not love the inheritance of the land of promise, that is, the fruit of faith; and they so fight for it, as nevertheless to deposit their pledges outside of it. For because they have their little ones outside, they have no affection in its habitation. Whence they return to the plains, because they slip down from the high summits of the mountains as if from the hope of heavenly things, that they may nourish brute animals outside the land of promise, because they labor to feed irrational motions of the mind with various desires, because they do not know how great the clarity of eternal light is, who are blinded by transitory occupations; and while they are proud of earthly things, they close the entrance of heavenly light to themselves.

[Vet. XI.] Whence it is now rightly said: He hideth the light from the immense. But yet sometimes heavenly grace regards these immense ones, and afflicts them with the very occupations of abundant things, and interweaves indeed adverse but useful tribulations into their prosperities, so that being saddened they may return to their heart, and acknowledge how vainly they are occupied in perishable things. Whence here also, after the subtracted light is mentioned, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIV.

IBID. — And He commandeth it that it return again.

26. The light of truth, which is hidden from elated and occupied minds, is revealed to the afflicted and humbled. — Because the light of truth, which is hidden from elated and occupied minds, is revealed to the afflicted and humbled. For light arrives when the afflicted mind acknowledges the very darkness of tribulations which it tolerates concerning perishable things, because unless it perceived something from the internal light, it would not see even this very thing, that it had lost the light. Which can be understood especially also of the Jews, who for this reason dared to contradict our Redeemer coming in the flesh, because they stood forth as immense within themselves. But from these immense ones light was hidden, because the proud, while they persecute the light of truth, lost it. But because at the end of the world they are to be received to the faith, it is rightly subjoined: And He commandeth it that it return again. Whence also it is said through Isaiah: If the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved (Isa. 10:22). For then the light returns to them, when they themselves return to confess the power of our Redeemer.

27. God, as He wills, either hides or reveals light. — But if by in the hands (in manibus), we accept by no means one noun in the dative case, but two parts of speech; it can be understood, that light is hidden in the hands, when before the right judge all the iniquitous are blinded

in their own works. To whom nevertheless it is commanded that it return again, because while sinners have known that they cannot be saved by their own strengths, they receive the light of grace, and are illustrated by the rays of intimate protection, so that they may afterwards love the heavenly country with greater ardor, than they before burned in earthly delight. But while we speak these things concerning the heavenly country, in which we hear the hosts of angels endowed with wonderful clarity to be present, over which the Founder of all things presides, which He fills by refreshing with His vision, whose true inheritance is light and no defect of the same light is there, we reduce the mind to ourselves, and we think that we bear earthly members, we weigh that, born in darkness and alien from the rays of intimate light, we have lived the more wickedly as, given to corporeal things, we lived the further from spiritual things. By which consideration the heart, moved and evilly conscious to itself, trembles, and despairs that it can become a citizen of that so great a country of which it hears. Whence here also it is aptly subjoined, by which the fearful mind may be reduced to confidence. For concerning this light it is soon added:

CHAPTER XV

[Rec. VIII].

VERSE 33. — He announceth concerning it to His friend that it is his possession, and that he may ascend to it.

28. God promises heavenly glory to men almost despairing. — The friend of truth is the lover of right action. Whence also the Truth Itself says to the disciples: You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you (John 15:14). For a friend is called a keeper of the soul. Whence not undeservedly he who strives to keep the will of God in His precepts, is called His friend. Hence it is that again to the same disciples the Truth says: But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard from My Father, I have made known to you (ibid., 15). Concerning this light of the eternal country, therefore, God announces to His friend that it is his possession, so that he may by no means despair because of the fragility of his infirmity, by no means weigh this that he was created, but that he was recreated, but know so much more certainly that he possesses the clarity of that light, as he now more truly treads down the darkness of the vices that beat upon him. Moreover, it is well subjoined in the promise: And that he may ascend to it. For what is more difficult than for a man brought forth on earth, bearing earthly and fragile members, to climb the heights of the heavens, to penetrate the secrets of the heavenly spirits?

29. Christ composed peace between angels and men. He made us equal to angels. — But the Founder of those same spirits came to us, and exhibited Himself as man even under them, as it is said concerning Him to the Father through the Prophet: Thou hast made Him a little less than the angels (Ps. 8:5). And because between

us and those same spirits He found the scandal of a discordant life, with wonderful power, with even more wonderful piety creating the highest things, assuming the lowest, He joined the lowest with the highest. Hence it is that, the same King being born, choirs of angels come forth in His announcement, they say a hymn, and the discord of a perverse life being conquered, they acknowledge as citizens those whom they had recently despised, preaching with consonant mouth: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will (Luke 2:14). As if they were to say openly: Those whom malice had disjoined from us, let goodness now born on earth join. Hence it is that before His incarnation, in the Old Testament, a man is read to have adored an angel, nor yet is he prohibited from adoring (Gen. 18:2); but after the advent of the Mediator, when John had prostrated himself to adore an angel, he heard: See thou do it not, I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren (Rev. 19:10; 22:9). For why is it that before they equanimously allowed themselves to be adored, afterwards the angels refuse it from a man, except that before they knew man given to carnal corruptions, and not yet redeemed from the same carnal corruptions, whom as they knew him to be more abject, they more justly contemned; but afterwards they could no longer have human nature as subject, as they saw this in its Author led even above themselves? For no longer ought human nature to be despised as subject in the members, which in the Head of the members itself merited to be

preferred and venerated. He therefore who for us existed as less than the angels, made us equal to angels by the virtue of His minoration. Whence also by dying He taught that death is not to be feared, by rising that there is confidence in life, by ascending that there is glorying in the inheritance of the heavenly country, so that where they see the Head to have gone before, thither the members may congratulate themselves that they follow. Whence well it is said by the same Head of ours: Wheresoever the body shall be, thither shall the eagles also be gathered together (Matt. 24:28). Whence Peter says: Unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade, reserved in heaven (1 Pet. 1:4). Whence Paul says: We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1).

30. Christ alone ascended into heaven, which is open to His members alone. — But if we also, who are brought forth on earth, climb to heaven, where is that which the Truth says again: No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven (John 3:13)? Which sentence certainly that which this same Truth says immediately meets: Father, I will that where I am, they also may be with Me (John 17:24). Which does not disagree with Itself in Its words, but inflames the study of our mind to inquire into these things as if discordant. For all we who are born in His faith, without doubt exist as His body. Because

therefore by a wonderful dispensation of piety the Lord was made the Head of His members, the multitude of the reprobate being repulsed, He alone is also with us. No man therefore hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven (John 3:13), because while we have now been made one with Him, whence He alone came in Himself, thither He alone returns also in us; and He who is always in heaven, ascends daily to heaven, because He who by His divinity remains above all things, by the framework of His humanity daily draws Himself to the heavens. Human fragility, therefore, let it not despair of itself, let it consider the blood of the Only-begotten, and in its price let it behold how great it is which is worth so much. Let it weigh solicitously whither the Head preceded, and as it is bound by precepts for living, let it be strengthened by example for hoping; let it trust the heavens, hope for the heavenly country, know itself as the associate of angels, and in its Head let it rejoice that it is preferred even to angels. Let it be said therefore rightly concerning this light of the eternal country: He announceth concerning it to His friend that it is his possession, and that he may ascend to it. [Vet. XII.] But these things are very wonderful, very terrible, that man brought forth on earth, and for a long time damned far from the heavenly country as merits demanded, is not only reduced to the state of his condition, but is also more gloriously exalted, so that he who lost paradise should receive heaven; and not only does the guilt of his

debt not hold him, but to him after the fault gifts grow more cumulatively, so that that contemner of God, that imitator of the devil, if he should return to the fruit of penance, should ascend even to the height of the intimate light to be contemplated. Whose heart, therefore, should not leap in admiration of this piety? Whose torpor should not be terrified in the elevation of so great a consideration? Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. IX].

CHAPTER XXXVII, VERSE 1. — At this my heart hath trembled, and is moved out of its place.

31. The light of the eternal country being considered, the mind is rapt into ecstasy. — Because dread (pavor) while it strikes the mind, renders it alien from itself, sometimes Latin interpreters call ecstasy dread, as it is said by the Psalmist: I said in my dread, I am cast away from before Thy eyes (Ps. 31:22). Where indeed not dread, but excess (excessus) could have been said; but dread is placed there for excess, because as in excess, so in dread the mind is alienated. Whence here also the light of the eternal country being considered, it is rightly subjoined: At this my heart hath trembled. As if he were to say: It transferred itself in the excess of admiration, and because the mind was breathed upon by the spirit of new hope, it left itself such as it had been in its old thought.

32. The heart, earthly things being despised, sighs for heavenly things alone. — Moreover, it

is well said: And is moved out of its place. For the place of the human heart is the delight of the present life. But when the place of our heart is touched by divine aspiration, it becomes the love of eternity. By the consideration, therefore, of the eternal country, the mind is moved out of its place, because lowest things being abandoned, it is placed in heavenly thoughts. For before it did not know what were eternal things, it had torpified in the delight of present things, and at the same time itself passing away it held passing things by love. But after it knew what were eternal things, after it touched the rays of heavenly light by contemplating them snatchedly, raised up from lowest things it elevated itself by admiration of the highest, so that now none but those which are eternal please it, and, transitory things being despised, it requires those alone which remain. Well therefore is it said: At this my heart hath trembled, and is moved out of its place, because the sluggish heart, and recently given to earthly thoughts, when suddenly through excess it suspends itself to the highest things, it changed the place of its lowest thought. But because by itself the mind prostrate in the love of the present world slumbers, and unless it be beaten upon by the aspiration of divine grace, it torpifies cold and insensible in its delights, it is necessary that he should add how it is touched by internal thought, or in what manner it is made sensible to spiritual things. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII

[Vet. XIII, Rec. X].

VERSE 2. — He shall hear a hearing in the terror of His voice, and the sound proceeding out of His mouth.

33. God first chastises us with fear of judgment, afterwards He refreshes us with the consolation of heavenly sweetness. — It is the custom of sacred eloquence that when it insinuates to hear something by hearing, it says that the same hearing is heard, as Habakkuk says: O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and was afraid (Hab. 3:2). Whence here also it is said: He shall hear a hearing in the terror of His voice. But it is to be noted that the voice of God is asserted to be heard not in joy, but in terror, because indeed every sinner while he thinks only of those things which are earthly, while he bears a heart oppressed by lowest thoughts, if suddenly he is touched by the aspiration of divine grace, he understands this before all things, that all things which he does are punished by the strict animadversion of the eternal Judge. The hearing of the voice of God, therefore, first happens in terror, so that afterwards it may be turned into sweetness, because first He chastises us with fear of strict judgment, that He may refresh those already chastised with the consolation of heavenly sweetness. For when the violent delight of temporal things possesses us, and presses the eyes of our mind in the sleep of torpor, if we are excited by the sudden hand of heavenly respect, soon we open those same eyes of the mind, long closed, to the light of truth, we

remember the evils we have done, we see how strictly the Judge comes against these: there is revolved in the mind how great that advent of so great a Judge will be, what then will be that frequency of men and angels, with how great force the burning elements will fight against the reprobate, how terribly the eternal sentence will proceed from the mouth of the strict Judge, by which it is said to the reprobate: Depart from Me, ye cursed, into eternal fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). The punishment of the same reprobate is rolled before the eyes, and what the darkness of Gehenna is, is weighed with grave obscurity of bitterness. Because therefore the proud heart is first shaken with terror, that being shaken it may be solidified in love, rightly now it is said: He shall hear a hearing in the terror of His voice. Where also it is well subjoined: And the sound proceeding out of His mouth.

34. Both are provided by the Holy Spirit proceeding from the mouth of the Lord. — The sound from the mouth of God is the force of fear rushing in from heavenly aspiration, because when the Lord fills us by aspiring concerning things to come, He undoubtedly terrifies us concerning the evil deeds of the past. Moreover, the only-begotten Son can be designated by the mouth of God, who is called His arm, because through Him the Father works all things, of whom the prophet says: And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? (Is. 53:1); of whom John says: All things were made by Him (John 1:3); so

also He is called the mouth. For hence it is that the prophet says: For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken these things (Is. 58:14). Through whom He speaks all things to us, as if by the name of the mouth the Word were patently called, just as we also are accustomed to call the tongue for words, as when we say the Greek or Latin tongue, we point out Latin or Greek words. Therefore, we not undeservedly accept the mouth of the Lord as Himself. Whence also the spouse says to Him in the Song of Songs: Let Him kiss me with the kiss of His mouth (Cant. 1:1). As if she said: Let Him touch me with the sweetness of the presence of the only-begotten Son, my Redeemer. [Vet. XIV.] Truly, by the sound of the mouth the Holy Spirit of the same Lord can be designated. Whence also elsewhere in the signification of the same Spirit it is written: Suddenly there was a sound from heaven as of a mighty spirit coming (Acts 2:2). Therefore, the sound proceeds from the mouth of the Lord when the Spirit, consubstantial with Him, coming to us through the Son, breaks the deafness of our insensibility, just as the mouth of the Lord speaks of the same uncircumscribed and incorporeal sound, saying: He shall receive of mine, and shall announce it to you (John 16:15). Therefore, the force of dread can be understood by the terror of the voice, and the sweetness of consolation by the sound of the mouth, because those whom the Holy Spirit fills, He first terrifies concerning earthly action, and afterwards consoles with the hope of heavenly things, so that they may afterwards rejoice in trusting for

rewards as much as they previously feared in beholding punishments alone. Hence it is that concerning the Spirit of the only-begotten, as if concerning this sound of the mouth, Paul says: For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba, Father (Rom. 8:15). Hence Truth says through itself: Receive ye the Holy Spirit: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose you shall retain, they are retained (John 20:22-23). Behold, the terror of the converted is turned into power, because while they punish their evils by repenting, they ascend even to exercising judgment; so that they may receive this power in God, which previously they themselves feared from God. For they become judges who have perfectly feared the heavenly judgment, and they begin to remit the sins of others who previously had dreaded lest their own should be retained. But because this same judgment which is spiritually performed is not seen now by carnal men, there are some who do not think that God cares for human affairs, and think that they are carried by fortuitous motions. Against whom it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. XI].

VERSE 3. — Under all the heavens He Himself considers, and His light is upon the bounds of the earth.

35. God's providence toward the highest and the lowest things. — As if it were plainly said: He who rules the highest things, also does not desert the extreme, because He is so bestowed upon the greatest, that nevertheless this same care of governance is not impeded by the small. For He who is everywhere present, and everywhere equal, is not dissimilar even in things dissimilar to Himself. Therefore, He respects all things equally, He disposes all things equally, who being present in all places, is neither held locally, nor is varied by caring for various things. But if we accept the holy heavens as preachers, the Prophet attesting who says: The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps. 18:1), after the advent of the Holy Spirit is designated by the sound of the mouth, it is rightly subjoined: Under all the heavens He Himself considers, and His light is upon the bounds of the earth.

36. Why miracles were granted in the beginnings of the Church. — For there are some who when they hear the wonderful works of the apostles, that having received the Holy Spirit they raised the dead by a word, drove out demons from the possessed, removed infirmities by their shadow (Acts 5:12, seq.), predicted future things by prophesying, and preached the only-begotten Word of God, speaking the language of all nations (Acts 2:4), because they do not see these virtues now in the Church, they suspect that heavenly grace has already been withdrawn from the Church, not knowing how to weigh what is written: A helper in opportunities, in tribulation

(Ps. 9:10). For then the holy Church needed the helps of miracles when the tribulation of persecution pressed it. For after it subdued the pride of infidelity, it no longer requires signs of virtues, but only the merits of works, although He also shows those through many when opportunity demands. For it is written: Tongues are for a sign, not to the faithful, but to the infidels (1 Cor. 14:22). Where therefore all are faithful, what cause demands that signs be shown? Whence perhaps we satisfy more quickly if we remember something concerning the apostolic dispensation itself.

37. Signs given not to the faithful, but to the infidels. — For Paul, that eminent preacher, coming to Malta, and knowing the island full of infidels, saved by praying the father of Publius, vexed with dysentery and fevers (Acts 28:8), and yet he prescribed to the sick Timothy, saying: Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thy frequent infirmities (1 Tim. 5:23). What is it, Paul, that you recall to health by praying a sick infidel, and you care for such a helper of the Gospel in the manner of a physician through foods, unless because exterior miracles are performed for this reason, that the minds of men may be led to interior things, so that through that which is shown visibly as wonderful, those things which are more admirable may be believed as invisible? For by the sign of virtue the father of Publius was to be healed, that he might live again in mind, while he returned to health by a miracle; but to Timothy an exterior miracle was not to be applied, because

he already lived entirely within. What wonder is it then if, faith having been propagated, miracles are not frequently performed, when these same apostles did not perform them in some who were already faithful? [Vet. XV.] The heavens being elevated, therefore, the Lord considers the lower things, because even the highest preachers being taken away, He incessantly cares even for the lowest of our infirmity. And as it were under the heavens His light respects the bounds, because after the sublime life of those preceding, He also comprehends the manners and acts of sinners by the illustration of His grace. Who although He does not frequently exert signs of virtues now through the life of the faithful, nevertheless never recedes from the same faithful through the virtue of works. His light upon the bounds of the earth can also be so understood, that the preaching of heavenly grace, while it gathers the nations to the faith, has closed within itself the limits of the world.

38. The miracle of divine grace in the conversion of sinners placed in the extreme. — Or certainly the bounds of the earth are the ends of sinful men. And it often happens that many desert God, and spend the times of their life in carnal desires; but nevertheless, being respected by heavenly grace, they return to God in their last moments, they know what the eternal judgments are, and all things which they remember to have done perversely, they punish with weepings, and show that they truly follow these things with right works. To whom, justice following,

indeed all that they previously committed is forgiven. For hence Anna says through the spirit of prophecy: The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth (1 Sam. 2:10), because indeed God does not judge the past life, when He illustrates the later things of sinners by the respect of heavenly piety. Hence Moses says: The firstborn of an ass thou shalt change for a sheep (Ex. 13:13). For by the ass indeed uncleanness is designated, but by the sheep innocence. Therefore, to change the firstborn of an ass for a sheep, is to convert the beginnings of an unclean life into the simplicity of innocence, so that after the sinner has done those things which the Lord rejects as unclean, he may now bring forth by acting those things which he may impose upon the sacrifice of God. Because therefore after crooked works the sinner is converted, and is sometimes recalled from the darkness of his actions near the end, it is rightly said now: And His light is upon the bounds of the earth. But the same grace, which fills the mind after crimes, affects it with grave grief. For it brings back evil deeds to memory, and shows the man to himself how justly he is to be damned. Whence it happens that every sin which he remembers to have done, he follows with daily weepings; and the more he is able now to discern what is just, the more ardently he desires to punish his unjust self with groans. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. XII].

VERSE 4. — After Him shall a sound roar.

39. As grace breathes and shines, the groans and roars of penance are heard. — For whomsoever the Lord shall have filled by illustrating, His life He undoubtedly turns into lamentation; and to the illuminated mind, the more He insinuates eternal punishments, the more He fatigues it harshly with groans concerning past wickedness; and the man grieves for what he was, because he already begins to see the good which he was not; he hates such as he remembers himself to have been, he loves such as he knows he ought to have been, and he loves now only the bitterness of penance, because he cautiously considers in how great pleasures he sinned by his own delight. Well therefore is it said: After Him shall a sound roar, because when God enters the mind, it is certain without doubt that the groan of penance soon follows, so that it may already please it to weep healthfully, which previously rejoiced with weep-worthy jollity concerning iniquities. [Vet. XVI.] But the more abundantly the fault is wept for, the more deeply the knowledge of truth is reached, because for seeing the internal light the formerly polluted conscience, baptized with tears, is renewed. Whence after the roar of penance it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XX

[Rec. XIII].

IBID. — He shall thunder with the voice of His majesty.

40. The voice of God exciting the sluggish sinner is like thunder. — For God thunders with the voice of His majesty, when He insinuates to us, already well prepared through lamentations, how great He is in heavenly things. For as it were thunder proceeds from heaven when the respect of grace suddenly strikes us, sluggish with neglect and negligence, with fear, and we who are placed on earth hear the sound from the higher regions, because we who think of earthly things suddenly dread the sentence of heavenly terror, and the mind now well solicitous concerning the highest things trembles, which previously in the lowest things sluggishly was badly secure. But in what modes this terror of secret visitation insinuates itself into us is unknown; nor is it comprehended by the sharpness of the mind itself, whose intention is changed for the better. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI.

IBID. — And it shall not be searched out, when His voice shall be heard.

41. In what modes this voice insinuates itself into the ears of the heart is unknown. — The voice of the Lord is heard when the aspiration of His grace is conceived in the mind, when the deafness of secret insensibility is broken, and the heart, excited to the study of supreme love, is penetrated by the cry of internal virtue. But this voice of the supervening Spirit, which insinuates itself into the ears of the heart, not even the mind itself which has been illustrated through it

searches out. For the invisible virtue is not able to weigh by what passages it flows into it, in what modes it comes to it, in what modes it recedes. Whence also it is well said through John: The Spirit breatheth where He will; and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh, and whither He goeth (John 3:8). For to hear the voice of the Spirit, is to rise up into the love of the invisible Creator by the force of internal compunction. But no one knows whence He comes, because it is unknown by what occasions He pours Himself out to us through the mouths of those preaching. And no one knows whither He goes, because when many hear one preaching, it undoubtedly cannot be understood whom deserting He may reject, or in whose heart entering He may rest. For one thing is done outwardly, but by this the hearts of those looking are not penetrated in one way, because He who invisibly modifies visible things, incomprehensibly plants the seeds of causes in human hearts. Hence it is that some believed when Lazarus was raised, but yet very many of the Jews were moved to the zeal of persecution by this very resuscitation (John 11:45). Therefore, one and the same miracle which provided the light of faith to some, blinded others from the light of the mind through the darkness of envy. Hence it is that each thief saw both the same death of the Redeemer and one similar to his own death (Luke 23:39); but one by being proud did not fear to provoke Him with contumelies, whom the other by fearing honored; and in one thing there was not one thought in both,

because the internal Arbiter distinguished this by invisibly modifying it. But these modes of secret aspiration, because they cannot be comprehended by our thought, indeed the footsteps of the divine voice are not known. Well therefore is it said: And it shall not be searched out, when His voice shall be heard. Whence also it is yet subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSE 5. — God shall thunder with His voice wonderfully.

42. God sounds wonderfully, because He silently and by a secret power refreshes with heavenly food at the same time. — God thunders wonderfully with His voice, because by a secret power He incomprehensibly penetrates our hearts. Which while He presses them with hidden motions in fear, and forms them in love, He cries out silently in some way with how great ardor He is to be followed, and there becomes a certain excess of impulse in the mind, while nothing sounds in the voice. Which sounds the more powerfully with us, the more He makes the ear of our heart deaf to all exterior noise. [Vet. XVII.] Whence also the soul, soon collected to itself by this internal cry, wonders at what it hears, because it perceives the force of an unknown compunction. Whose admiration itself is well signified by the manna coming from above in Moses (Ex. 16:15). For the sweet food which is received from heavenly things is called manhu. For manhu means What is this? And we say

What is this? when we wonder at what we see, not knowing it. Therefore, the soul perceives the heavenly manna, when, being elevated by the voice of compunction, it is astonished at a new kind of internal refreshment, so that being filled with divine sweetness it rightly responds, What is this? because while it is suspended from lowest thought, it unusually wonders at those things which it beholds from heavenly things. And because with this voice the deafness of our torpor is broken, the use of the old life is immediately changed, so that the soul, breathed upon by the heavenly Spirit, both desires in the highest things what it had despised, and despises in the lowest things what it had desired; rightly it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII.

IBID. — Who doeth great and unsearchable things.

43. God works wonderful and stupendous things in the conversion of a sinner. — For that a man given to earthly uses, pressed by iniquitous desires, should suddenly burn for new things, and freeze toward customary things, renounce exterior cares, and pant in internal contemplations, who may be sufficient to consider this virtue of the heavenly voice? who by considering may comprehend? Great are the things which the Lord does through His voice, but they would be less great if they could have been thoroughly searched out. He does therefore great and unsearchable things, because He shows the perfection of the work outwardly, but the quality of

the operation itself lies hidden within. Through His voice He sounds outwardly even through the apostles, but the hearts of those hearing He illustrates through Himself interiorly, Paul attesting who says: I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. Neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase (1 Cor. 3:6-7). Although therefore they themselves do not provide the hearing of the heavenly voice to our minds, yet they are sent, that they may condescend to us by exterior words. Whence it is aptly subjoined.

CHAPTER XXIV

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 6. — Who commandeth the snow to descend upon the earth, and the rains of winter, and the shower of His strength.

44. Holy preachers whose conversation is in heaven, nevertheless condescend to weak brothers. — Because the Psalmist says: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow (Ps. 50:9), what in this place do we accept as snow, unless the hearts of the saints white through the light of justice? Moreover, waters led in the higher regions are thickened, that they may become snows. But when these same snows come to the earth, they are turned again into the liquid of waters. Therefore, the minds of preachers are waters: which while they erect themselves to contemplate heavenly things, are solidified by a higher understanding. And when they are

snatched into the highest consideration, they receive the virtue of confirmation. But because they are still held in the earth by fraternal charity, they modify themselves from high understanding, and humbly preaching to the weak, like snows, they water the parched hearts by being melted. Therefore, snows come to the earth from heavenly things, when the sublime hearts of the saints, which are already fed by solid contemplation, descend for fraternal charity to the humble words of preaching. [Vet. XVIII.] For as snow covers the earth when it lies, but waters it when it is melted, so the virtue of the saints both protects the life of sinners by its firmness with God, and through its condescension, as if liquefied, it pours into the parched earth that it may bring forth fruit. And because water is first drawn from the lowest things, that afterwards being scattered from the higher regions it may be rendered, all the saints also even when they consist in the citadel of virtues, consider whence they were elevated, lest they despise the abject things of another's infirmity. Therefore, as it were waters return to the lands from which they were raised, while the just condescending to sinners do not cease to remember what they were. Certainly Paul had still been water in the lands, when he savored the law carnally; but being led to heavenly things, he was turned into snow; because what he previously savored as weak he changed to the solidity of true intelligence; and yet condescending to his brothers like snow he sought again the lowest things, because even after the culmens

of virtues he acknowledges how unworthy he was, saying: Who previously was a blasphemer and a persecutor (1 Tim. 1:13), etc. Behold how clemently he remembers his own imbecility, that he may equanimously suffer the weak things of others. For as it were water returned to the earth from which it had been taken after heaven, while after such great secrets of his contemplation Paul remembers himself as a sinner, that he may be able humbly to profit sinners. Let us see therefore this water that is to be turned into the solidity of snow, how it is drawn to the highest things. He says: Whether we exceed in mind, to God (2 Cor. 5:13). Let us see how snow returns to the lowest things, that while it is melted it may water. He says: Whether we are sober, to you (Ibid.). Let us see by what hand it is led, that it may both be able to be elevated when lying, and to be recalled when sublevated. He says: For the charity of Christ urgeth us (Ibid., 14). Because therefore the charity of Christ, which sublevates the minds of the saints to heavenly things, forms them by pious moderation for fraternal charity also to the humility of condescension, rightly is it said: Who commandeth the snow to descend upon the earth. Where also it is aptly subjoined: And the rains of winter and the shower of His strength.

45. Winter is the present life, in which the rains of holy preachers abound. — For winter is the present life, in which although hope already erects us to heavenly things, yet still the cold torpor of our mortality constrains us, because it is written: The body which is corrupted aggrieveth

the soul, and the earthly habitation depresseth the sense thinking many things (Wisd. 9:15). Moreover, this winter has rains, undoubtedly the preachings of the rulers. Concerning which rains indeed it is said through Moses: Let my speech be expected as the rain, and let my words descend as the dew (Deut. 32:2). These rains indeed are congruent to winter, they shall cease in summer, because while now heavenly life is hidden from the eyes of carnal men, it is necessary that it be bedewed for us by the preachings of the saints. But when the heat of the eternal judgment shall have burned up, no one then will have the words of those preaching necessary, because, the Judge coming, each one is reduced to his own heart, so that he may feel now the holy things which he is not able to do, and may know the right which he ought to have followed from the punishment of his own crookedness. Whence it is well said through the prophet: Gather them together as a flock for the victim, and sanctify them in the day of slaughter (Jerem. 12:3). For in the day of slaughter the reprobate are sanctified, because then they feel the holy things which they ought to have done, when they can no longer decline the worthy punishments of their own depravity. Because moreover holy preachings will cease with the present life, that is, rains with winter, rightly to the soul going out, and hastening to the summer heats of eternal felicity, it is said by the voice of the spouse persuading: Arise, make haste, my love, my beautiful one, and come; for now the winter is past, the rain is gone and departed

(Cant. 2:10-11). For as winter passes, the rain departs, because when the present life is completed, in which the torpor of corruptible flesh had constrained us with the cloud of ignorance, all ministry of preaching ceases. For we shall then see more clearly through ourselves that which we now hear more obscurely through the voices of the saints. Therefore, the Lord commandeth the snow, and the rains of winter, that they descend upon the earth, while by the aspiration of the Holy Spirit He humbles the hearts of the saints to the ministry of preaching for correcting sinners. Where it is rightly added: And to the shower of His strength.

[Rec. XV.] 46. The shower of strength is the preaching of the divinity; the shower of weakness is the preaching of the humanity of Christ. — For the shower of the strength of God is the preaching of His divinity. For the shower of weakness is the preaching of His incarnation, concerning which it is said through Paul: That which is weak of God is stronger than men (1 Cor. 1:25). And again: If He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth through the virtue of God (2 Cor. 13:4). For thus holy men preach the weak things of His humanity, that they may also infuse into the hearts of their auditors the strong things of His divinity. Let us hear through the thunder of the cloud the shower of strength: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word (John 1:1). Let us hear also the shower of weakness: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (Ibid., 14). Let us hear

the shower of strength: All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing. That which was made, in Him was life (Ibid., 3-4). Let us hear also the shower of weakness: He came into His own, and His own received Him not (Ibid., 11). Therefore, He commandeth the shower of His strength that it descend upon the earth, because He so preaches to us the weak things of His humanity through the voices of His saints, that also the wonderful and strong things of His divinity may become known to us. But when we hear the virtue of our Creator, immediately we are compelled by fear to return to our own hearts, and weighing so great a Judge over us, we weigh what things we have done worthily, and what unworthily. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XVI].

VERSE 7. He sealeth in the hand of all men, that every one may know his own works.

47. By knowing God we recognize ourselves, and judge ourselves more severely. — For men despise to weigh the evils which they do. But when they hear the virtue of heavenly strictness, they recognize this weight of wicked works which depresses them. For being smitten by the words of preaching, they awake, that they may weigh to what punishments the merit of their former action draws them. While therefore the shower of strength descends upon the earth, it is sealed in the hand of each one, that he may know

his own works; because while the incomprehensible virtue of majesty is recognized, his own life is more subtly weighed by each one.

48. By the natural light, as by the law of the mind, what is wicked and what is right become known. — Which, however, can be understood otherwise. For the almighty Creator formed man a rational creature, distinct from all insensible and irrational things, so that he could not be ignorant of what he did. For by the law of nature he is compelled to know whether what he works be wicked or right. For why does he come to judgment for an action, if he could be ignorant of what he did? And they themselves, therefore, who despise to be instructed by the divine precepts, know whether the things they do are good or evil. For if they know not that they do good, why do they glory in ostentation concerning some deeds? Again, if they are ignorant that they act evilly, why do they avoid the eyes of others in those same deeds? For they are witnesses to themselves, because they know that what they do is evil, which they fear to be seen by others. For if they did not truly believe it to be evil, they would by no means dread its being seen by others. Whence also it is well said by a certain wise man: Since wickedness is fearful, it giveth testimony to condemnation (Wisd. 17:10). Because while fear, smiting the conscience, reproves its deed, it bears testimony to itself that what it does is damnable. On the other hand, it is said by John: If our heart reprehend us not, we have confidence towards God (1 John 3:21). Let the wicked,

therefore, flee human eyes; they certainly cannot flee themselves. For because they know the evil which they do, they have their conscience as a witness, they have their own reason as a judge. In the sin, therefore, which they commit, they first find the judgment of their own reason against themselves, and afterwards they are brought to the strictness of the eternal examination. And this is perhaps what is said by the Psalmist: Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy cataracts (Psal. 42:7). Because while by a wonderful order of secret dispensation the evil that is done is not permitted to be unknown, and the sinner already condemns himself in his conscience by his own judgment, and after his own condemnation he hastens to the sentence of the eternal Judge. Therefore, for deep to call unto deep is to pass from judgment to judgment. Let the holy preachers go, then, let them reprove the deeds of the sinning; but let the wicked auditors despise the words of the just, let them defend their wickednesses as much as they will, and by impudently defending their impudently committed deeds let them multiply them: certainly they are witnesses to themselves in their conscience that they are not excusable. For by that very fact that God formed man a rational creature, He sealeth in the hand of all men, that every one may know his own works.

But because Eliu brought forth a sentence concerning the wickedness of individuals, he immediately turns the eyes of his mind to the author of wickedness itself, through whom every

evil arises; that because he had in this one verse touched upon the members of the wicked head, he may also describe under brevity this very head of the members. Or certainly because he had above (Num. 19) introduced the virtues of the clouds of God, he now acts so that against the life of the good the assaults of the adversary may also become known. For it follows:

CHAPTER XXVI

[Vet. XIX, Rec. XVII].

VERSE 8. The beast shall go into his covert, and shall abide in his den.

49. Antichrist and all the reprobate are the den of the devil. — Who else is understood by the name of the beast, but the ancient enemy, who cruelly assailed the deception of the first man, and by evil persuasion tore the integrity of his life? Against whom it is promised by the voices of the prophets concerning the holy Church of the elect, that is to be restored to its ancient state: And the evil beast shall not pass through it (Isai. 35:9). But when this beast, after the coming of the Redeemer, after the voices of the preachers, as it were after the thunder of the clouds, shall at the end of the world have invaded that damned man who is called Antichrist, what else does he do but enter into his covert, that he may abide in his own den? For that vessel of the devil is the den and covert of the beast, that lying in wait for men who are treading the path of this life, he may both lie hid in him through signs, and kill

through malice. Who, however, even now, before he appears openly, possesses the hearts of all the reprobate, and holds them through secret malice as his own den, and hides himself in their obscure minds for everything that he desires to hurt the good. Were not the hearts of the persecuting Jews the den of this beast, in whose counsels he long lay hid, but suddenly broke forth in the voices of those crying: Crucify him, crucify him (John 19:6)? And because by tempting he could not reach the tearing of the mind in our Redeemer (Matth. 4:3), he panted for the death of the flesh. This beast, indeed, held many hearts of the elect, but the dying Lamb drove him out from them. Whence also He says in the Gospel: Now shall the prince of this world be cast out (John 12:31). Who by a wonderful and righteous judgment, while He received the confessions of the humble by enlightening them, He closed the eyes of the proud by deserting them. Whence it is said to Him by the Psalmist: Thou hast appointed darkness, and it is made night, in it all the beasts of the woods shall pass through; the young lions roaring that they may seize, and seek their meat from God (Psal. 104:20, 21). For the Lord appoints darkness, when, repaying judgments for sins, He withdraws the light of His intelligence. And it is made night, because the mind of the wicked is blinded by the errors of its own ignorance. In which all the beasts of the wood pass through, while the malignant spirits, lying hid under the opacity of fraud, run through the hearts of the reprobate to fulfill their wickednesses. In which

also the young lions roar, because the ministering spirits of the most wicked but yet eminent powers rise up with importunate temptations. Who, however, seek their meat from God, because they certainly cannot take souls unless they are permitted by divine power to prevail by a just judgment. Where also it is aptly subjoined: The sun is risen, and they are gathered together, and they have laid themselves down in their dens (Psal. 104:22). Because the light of truth appearing through the flesh, being driven out from the minds of the faithful, they returned as it were to their dens, while they held only the hearts of the infidels. That, therefore, which is there called the den of lions, is here called the den of the beast.

50. The devil sometimes enters the minds of the good, but he does not abide in them. — But I think it greatly to be noted that this beast is said not only to enter his den, but also to abide in it. For sometimes he enters even the minds of the good, suggests unlawful things, wearies them with temptations, endeavors to bend the rectitude of the spirit to the delight of the flesh, and strives to bring delight also to consent; but yet, through the resistance of heavenly aid, he is prohibited from prevailing. He can, therefore, enter into the minds of the good, but he cannot abide in them, because the heart of the just is not the den of this beast. For those whom he possesses as his own den, he undoubtedly holds by dwelling in their minds, because he leads them first in thoughts even to wicked desires, and after wicked desires even to most foul works. For the

reprobate do not study to repel his suggestions with the right hand of judgment, whose wills they desire to serve with subject delight. And when anything wicked arises in their hearts, it is soon nourished by the study of delight; and when it is not at all resisted, it is immediately strengthened by consent, and at once the consent is led to the work, and the work is even weighed down by habit. Rightly, therefore, is this beast said to abide in his den, who holds the thoughts of the reprobate for so long, until he also pierces their life with the sting of a wicked work. Whence the Lord says well to Judea through the prophet: How long shall noxious thoughts abide in thee? (Jerem. 4:14). For He does not reprove why they come, but why they abide. Even into good hearts unlawful thoughts come, but yet they are prohibited from abiding, because all the upright, lest they should offer the house of their conscience to be taken captive, drive away the enemy from the very threshold of the heart. Who even if at any time he should have crept up to the first vestibule by sudden suggestions, yet he does not reach the door of consent. To this beast indeed, being overcome by the impulse of sudden fear, Peter opened the door of his heart by denying, but more quickly he resisted by recognizing, and closed it by weeping (Matth. 26:70). [Vet. XX.] But because the ancient enemy not only held the hearts of the persecutors by entering, but also possessed them by holding, let it be rightly said: The beast shall go into his covert, and shall abide in his den. For we learn how much he delayed in the minds

of the Jews, when we hear their counsels by the attestation of the evangelical narrative. For in it is described, when they saw our Redeemer raising the dead to life, with what anxiety of cruelty they were insane for His death, how many wicked desires they ardently wished to fulfill against Him, but yet they feared the people (John 11:47-48, 53); how many occasions of killing they sought, and could not find (Matth. 26:3-4); how many hands of foreigners they used for the wish of their cruelty, because they delivered Him, whom they themselves could not legally kill, to the Gentiles to be smitten, so that from power alone the Roman governor might act what they themselves panted might be acted from malice alone (John 18:28-31). Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Rec. XVIII].

VERSE 9. Out of the inner parts shall come a tempest, and cold from Arcturus.

51. Christ suffered persecution from Jews and Gentiles. — When Holy Scripture mentions the inner parts over against Arcturus, it designates the southern region as different from the parts of the North. Whence it is written in this same book: Who maketh Arcturus, and Orion, and the inner parts of the South (Job 9:9). Because, therefore, a more fervent sun holds the inner parts of the South, but in Arcturus it has no course at all, by the name of the inner parts the Jewish people is expressed, but by the word Arcturus in this place

the Gentile people. For they who knew the one and invisible God, and served His law at least carnally, were held as it were under the noonday sun, fervent in the heat of faith. But the Gentiles, because they had reached no knowledge of heavenly cognition, remained as it were cold without the sun under the North. Because indeed a tempest impels, but cold oppresses with numbness, it is now rightly said: Out of the inner parts shall come a tempest, and cold from Arcturus. As if it were openly said: From the Jews arises persecuting malice, and from the Gentiles pressing power. For the precepts of the law had not forbidden miracles to be done, and yet the Jews for those same miracles sought to kill the Redeemer of the human race (John 11:47). Whence, not being able to fulfill what they had begun, they ran together to the judgment-hall of Pilate, that he might kill Him whom no law would restrain him from unjustly killing (John 18:28-31). Out of the inner parts, therefore, the tempest, and from Arcturus the cold came forth, while what Judea sought from envy, that the Gentile judge perpetrated from Roman authority. Whence well against this same envy it is yet subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Vet. XXI].

VERSE 10. By the breath of God frost is congealed.

52. The hearts of the Jews had grown hard with the frost of envy. — Because the more

the Holy Spirit breathed into the hearts of the faithful, and the greater miracles of virtues He conferred, the more did a heavier numbness of envy grow in the minds of the infidels, and the infidel people grew hard against God from the very same source from which the humble people softened the former hardness with which they had bound themselves. For by the breath of God they had been turned into frost, who, envying when they saw the miracles, said: Behold, the whole world is gone after him (John 12:19). They beheld the signs, they saw the miracles through His ministers, they foresaw that the whole world would now follow the preachings of the faith; and yet the more the Holy Spirit had filled the world (Wisd. 1:7), the more closely did the malice of envy bind their minds. Water, therefore, had been turned into frost while, as the world went after God, Judea remained sluggish in envy. But because it belonged to the heavenly power to dissolve even the hardness of so great cruelty and to melt the hearts of the infidels to love Him, after this frost it is soon well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID.---And again very wide waters are poured out.

53. Of some afterwards softened, and melted into rain. ---After the frost, indeed, the Lord poured out very wide waters, because after He endured the cruelty of the Jews even unto death, He straightway melted their hearts from the hardness of unbelief by the aspiration of His love;

so that they might run more desirably to obey afterwards, the more obstinately they had resisted His precepts before. Wherefore it is well said by a certain wise man: As ice in the fair weather, so shall thy sins be melted (Eccli. III, 17). From this frost of icy torpor the Prophet had desired to be loosed, when he said: Turn, O Lord, our captivity, as a torrent in the South (Psal. CXXV, 4). Of these waters, that is, of the peoples running together to God, it is again said: He shall send His word, and shall melt them, His spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow (Psal. CXLVII, 18). Waters run from the frost, because many from being hard persecutors become great preachers. The frost, therefore, is melted into water, when the torpor of internal cold is turned to the irrigation of preaching. Was not Paul frost, who having received letters and going to Damascus (Acts IX), sought to restrain in the hearts of the faithful, as in seeds of the word of God cast into the earth, that they might not rise to the perfection of works? But this frost returned into water, because those whom he first studied to oppress by persecuting, these he afterwards watered with the streams of holy exhortation; so that the harvest of the elect might rise so much the more abundant, as the rain of God watered it even from the mouth of the persecutor. Wherefore also it is well added:.

CHAPTER XXX

[Vet. XXII, Rec. XIX].

VERS. 11.---The grain desires the cloud.

54. The elect are grain, for which the rain of the divine Word is necessary. ---For what are all the elect, but the grain of God to be stored in the heavenly barns? Which now endure the chaff in the threshing of the floor, because in this purging of holy Church they bear the contrary manners of the reprobate, until the internal husbandman separates them with the fan of judgment, and receiving His elect into the heavenly habitations, as grains already clean, delivers the chaff to eternal fires. Wherefore it is well said by John: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire (Matth. III, 12). But this grain, until it comes to the perfection of fruits, expects the rains of the clouds that it may grow, because the mind of the good is watered by the words of those preaching, lest it be dried up by the sun of carnal desires from the moisture of charity. This grain the supreme husbandman had seen rising in the world and desiring the clouds, when He said: The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest (Matth. IX, 37). Those who, therefore, are here called grain, there harvest, those who truly are here clouds, there are called labourers, because the holy preachers are both clouds and labourers; clouds namely by doctrine, labourers by life; clouds because they flow with words, labourers because they cease not to do what they speak. Wherefore also it is added;

CAPUT XXXI.

IBID., 6. And the clouds spread their light.

55. The clouds are the holy preachers. — For the clouds to spread their light is for the holy preachers to enlarge the examples of their life both by speaking and by acting. But although they spread the light of inward annunciation, yet they do not reach to converting the hearts of all whom they desire. For it follows:

CAPUT XXXII.

VERSE 12. Which go round about everything, whithersoever the will of Him who governeth them shall lead them.

56. They survey all things, God governing their course. — For often the holy preachers wish to exhort some, but they cannot. Often they desire to decline some, but yet by the impulse of internal instigation they are compelled most instantly to exhort them. Let us see the cloud of God, how by the hand of the Governor it is led even to those things which it does not desire, and again from its own impulse is restrained by the hand of the Governor. Certainly Paul, when, shaking his garments, he wished to depart from the Corinthians, heard: Fear not, but speak, and hold not thy peace, because I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city (Acts 18:9-10). Again, when he would have gone to the Thessalonians, he was hindered, saying: I Paul would have come unto you, even once and again, but Satan hindered me (1 Thess.

2:18). For Satan could not by himself hinder the ways of so great an Apostle, but by the uses of secret dispensation, while he opposes, he unknowingly served; that so Paul, while he wished to go to others and could not, might more aptly profit those from whom he could not depart. The clouds of God, therefore, go round about everything, because by the light of preaching they enlighten the ends of the world. But because, being subject to divine nods, they cannot fulfill what they will, they cannot go unless whithersoever the will of the Governor shall lead them. Whence it is yet subjoined:

CAPUT XXXIII.

IBID. To every thing which He shall command them upon the face of the world.

57. And moderating their internal movements. — For often they are led with the will of the Governor; they desire to act otherwise, but they are disposed otherwise. For for the most part they study to correct some of their auditors gently, and yet their speech is led into asperity. For the most part they desire to cut off some harshly, but yet their vigor is restrained by the spirit of gentleness. As therefore they cannot go whither they will, so also they cannot act as they will. For because the internal Arbiter holds them when He sends them, so also He receives them by modifying them when He leads them, that sometimes they may dispose one thing in thought, but perform another in work; sometimes they may begin in one way, but consume in another. Because

therefore they serve according to that which is commanded them, let it be rightly said: Whithersoever the will of the Governor shall lead them, to everything which He shall command them upon the face of the world. For by so much the more open a way of preaching they find, as they are led to it not by their own nods, but by those of their Preceptor. Whence it is yet subjoined:

CAPUT XXXIV

[Rec. XX].

VERS. 13. Whether in one tribe, or in His own land, or in whatever place of His mercy He shall command them to be found.

58. Not to the Jews only, but also to the Gentiles, the preaching of the Gospel was granted. — One tribe is surely understood as Judah, which is mentioned in sacred Scripture as more illustrious and manifold than the rest. Which, in that it brought forth from itself the flesh of our Redeemer, received a special gift above all. But the whole of Judea together is called the land of God, because she then brought forth to Him the fruit of her faith, when the whole world wandered, the nations having fallen under the worship of idols. But the place of God's mercy is Gentility itself, whose faults if the strict Judge had justly noticed, it would never have come to the reconciliation of grace. Which, since it had no merits with God, yet received the grace of reconciliation from mercy alone. Whence it is well said by Paul: But that the Gentiles should honor God for His mercy

(Rom. xv. 9). Whence again it is written: Who in time past had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy (1 Pet. ii. 10). God therefore leads His clouds, whether in one tribe, or in His own land, or in whatever place of His mercy He shall command them to be found, because He sometimes bestowed the preachers of the Old and New Testament on the tribe of Judah alone, and reprobated almost the whole of Israel from the wicked government of its kings. Sometimes also He makes these clouds to rain in His own land, because He recalled the same Israelitish people to their ancient grace after correction and captivity. Sometimes He willed them to shine from the place of His mercy, because through holy preachers He showed the miracles of virtues even to the Gentiles, that by mercy alone He might absolve from the yoke of error those whom the wrath of innate perfidy was depressing. [Vet. XXIII.] But behold Eliu, because he felt future things through the prophetic spirit, because he brought forth many things sublimely, being an arrogant man, wearied by the weight of his own elation, is not able to carry what he says. For through boasting he straightway subjoins:

CAPUT XXXV.

VERS. 14. Hearken to these things, Job; stand, and consider the miracles of God.

59. What it is to consider the miracles of God standing, what lying down. — He saw him as it were lying down in comparison of himself, whom he admonished to stand to such words of

preaching. Although also by that which he says, Hearken, he inflicts a heavy insult on blessed Job, because, as we have already said of him above (Lib. xii. n. 38, and often afterwards), it is the arrogance of a minor to wish to extort a hearing for himself from a major. But although Eliu knows not how to weigh the good things which he says to him to whom he says them, we who seek to be instructed by all, ought to investigate the words of his doctrine subtilely. For perhaps it is said with a great art of virtue: Stand, and consider the miracles of God. For there are some indeed who consider the miracles of God lying down, because they admire the power of His operation without following it. For to stand is to act rightly. Whence also it is said by Paul: Let him who thinks that he stands, take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. x. 12). And often indeed they admire the heavenly judgments, they love the preachings of the heavenly country when they hear them, they are amazed at the wonderful works of the internal disposition, but yet by loving and living they neglect to rise up to these same works. They consider therefore the miracles of God lying down, who weigh His power by knowing it, but love it not by living. By contemplation indeed they stretch their eyes in consideration, but yet by intention they do not raise themselves from the earth. Whence it is well said to the reproach of Balaam: Who falling hath his eyes open (Num. xxiv. 16). For he had said many things of the coming of the Redeemer, and foresaw those things which were to come in the last times, but yet he would not rise up to Him

by living, whom he preached by foreseeing. Lying down therefore he had his eyes open, when both prophecy stretched his mind to heavenly things, and avarice retained it on the earth. Lying down he had his eyes open, because he was able to see Him from superior things, whom prostrate in the lowest things he loved not. Eliu therefore, who by no means believed that blessed Job had held by living what he said, as if admonishing him, says: Stand, and consider the miracles of God. Whom he yet discusses concerning things to come, and as if humbling him for his ignorance subjoins:

CAPUT XXXVI

[Rec. XXI].

IBID. 15. Dost thou know when God commanded the rains, that they should show the light of His clouds?

60. Preachers inspired by God irrigate and shine. — If the clouds are the holy preachers, the rains of the clouds are the words of their preachings. But when clouds fly across the air, unless the rains come down, it is not known how great an immensity of waters they carry. Unless the flashing sun break out between the rains, it cannot be understood what clarity also lies hid in them, because surely if the holy preachers are silent, and do not show by speaking how great is the clarity of heavenly hope which they bear in their hearts, they seem either like other men, or far more despicable than these. But when they have begun to open by preaching what is the reward of the

heavenly country which they hold within; when, being pressed by persecution, it becomes known in what citadel of virtue they have profited; when, being despised in sight, they insinuate by speaking whence they should be feared, the very rains which flow from the clouds show us the light of the same clouds. For through the words of the preachers we know how to venerate in them with great humility the clarity of life which they aim at. Paul surely showed this light to the disciples, when he said: That ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe (Ephes. i. 18). The Corinthians had recognized this light through the words of his writings as through drops of rain, when they said: His letters are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible (2 Cor. x. 10). But for the most part holy preachers desire to show themselves that they may profit, and yet they cannot; for the most part they desire to lie hid that they may be quiet, and yet they are not permitted. No one therefore knows when the rains show the light of the clouds, because no one comprehends when God bestows the power of preaching, that the glory of those preaching may shine forth. He says therefore: Dost thou know when God commanded the rains, that they should show the light of His clouds? As if he were to say plainly: If thou already beholdest the preachers who are to come into the world, dost thou apprehend when the Lord by the filling of

the Holy Spirit impels them to preach, or in what ways the clarity of their life becomes known to the world? Whence it is yet aptly subjoined.

CAPUT XXXVII

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 16. Dost thou know the great paths of the clouds, and perfect knowledges?

61. The strict doctrine of living well is not a wide way, but a path. — These clouds have most subtle paths, namely, the ways of holy preaching. For narrow is the gate which leads to life (Matt. vii. 14). They therefore restrain by paths those who do not go out from the track of their intention by wandering through the broad desires of the world. For the strict censure of living well is not a wide way, but a path, in which every preacher is studiously constrained, because he is solicitously coarctated under the custody of the precepts. Or is it not as it were a certain narrowness of the journey, to live indeed in this world, but to have nothing of the concupiscence of this world, not to desire the things of others, not to hold one's own, to despise the praises of the world, and to love reproaches for God, to flee glory, to follow contempt, to despise those flattering, to honor those despising, to dismiss from the heart the evils of those hurting, and to retain in the heart toward them an immovable grace of love? Which all surely are paths, but great ones, because by how much they are narrow in the present life for the very custody of living,

by so much more are they dilated in the eternal retribution. Whence also it is well subjoined: And perfect knowledges.

62. Perfect knowledge is to know oneself to be nothing. — For it is perfect knowledge, both to do all these things solicitously, and to know oneself from one's own merits to be nothing. Whence also the clouds themselves are taught concerning this perfect knowledge, when it is said to them by the voice of Truth: When ye shall have done all things which are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants (Luke xvii. 10). It is perfect knowledge to know all things, and yet after a certain manner not to know that one knows, because although we already know the precepts of God, although we already weigh the power of His words with solicitous intention, although we already do those things which we believe we have understood, yet we do not yet know by what strictness of examination those same acts are to be discussed, we do not yet discern the face of God, we do not yet see His hidden counsels. How great therefore is our knowledge, which as long as it is pressed by the weight of mortality, is blinded by the very cloud of its uncertainty? Of which it is well said by Paul: If any man think that he knows anything, he has not yet known how he ought to know (1 Cor. viii. 2). In this world therefore while we live, then we perfectly know the things which are to be known, when profiting through understanding, we recognize that we know nothing perfectly. He says therefore: Dost thou know the great paths of the clouds, and per-

fect knowledges? As if he were to say plainly: Dost thou already behold the highest acts of those preaching, who after they elevate themselves to high things through knowledge, humbly incline themselves downwards through the recognition of their own ignorance? Which because it is done by the gift of the Holy Spirit alone, that the human heart may be perfectly taught not only concerning knowledge, but also concerning its own ignorance, and may fervently glow with the heat of love for heavenly things, while it weighs that the things which it has known in the lowest things are less, it is rightly subjoined:

CAPUT XXXVIII

[Rec. XXIII].

VERS. 17. Are not thy garments warm, when the earth has been blown through by the South wind?

63. Those who adhere to the Church glow with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. — We have often said already that blessed Job holds the figure of the holy Church. But the garments of the Church are all who are joined to her by the union of faith. Concerning whom the Lord says to the same Church by the prophet: As I live, for thou shalt be clothed with all these as with an ornament (Isai. xlix. 18). But by the South wind, which surely is a warm wind, not undeservedly is the Holy Spirit designated, by whom while anyone is touched, he is delivered from the torpor of his iniquity. Whence it is well said in the Song

of Songs: Arise, O North wind, and come, thou South wind; blow through my garden, and let its spices flow (Cant. iv. 16). For the North wind is commanded to arise, that namely the adversary spirit who binds the hearts of mortals may flee. For the South wind comes and blows through the garden, that its spices may flow abroad, because through the coming of the Holy Spirit, while the mind of men is filled, from it soon is scattered the report of virtues, so that now the tongue of the saints as a garden blown through by the South wind may rightly say: We are a good odor of Christ to God (2 Cor. ii. 15). The garments therefore of the holy Church are warm, while the earth is blown through by the South wind, because they who adhere to her through faith, glow with the fervent studies of charity, while their mind is bathed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Which indeed nothing prevents from being understood also of the same blessed Job, because we so say these things generally in the holy Church, as nevertheless to hold them specially through its individual members.

64. From the mutual concord of teachers and auditors, charity glows in them. — For everyone who lives rightly, and has been accustomed to teach this also to others, has as it were as many garments as he has auditors concordantly adhering to him.

[Vet. XXV.] For it is the nature of garments that they cannot be warm by themselves, but being joined to a living body, while they cover the exhaling pores of the members, they press the heat

emanating from within, by which heat surely these same garments become warm, but being warmed they return to the body the heat which they have received by retaining it. What therefore is signified by the garments adhering to a living body, but the life of the disciples joined to teachers living well? Which receives heat as it were through the pores, because it is ignited to the love of God both by the example of action and by the impulse of exhortation. Which expels its own cold as it were, while it departs from its former iniquity; it retains the heat which it received, because it grows strong in that fervor which it took up by preaching. But holy teachers, while they feel their auditors profit in the love of God, themselves glow the more in the virtue of doctrine; and because they behold them to burn and glow for the highest things, they are more strongly enkindled to preach the good things of the heavenly country. Who even if sometimes, because they still lead the corruptible life of human infirmity, they are tempted concerning any fault at least slightly in work, in speech, in thought, they behold the profiting of their disciples, and they themselves are ashamed to be reprehensible even in the least things, lest by chance they should provide any examples of crookedness to those whom they call by the voice of preaching to the rule of internal rectitude. While therefore the auditors are enkindled by the word of the teachers, the garments are warmed as it were from a living body. But while from the profit of the auditors the life of the teachers also profits, the heat as it were

returns from the warmed garments to the body. But let not the teachers by any means attribute to themselves that they see the auditors profit to the highest things through their exhortation, because unless the Holy Spirit fill their hearts, the voice of those teaching sounds in vain to the ears of the bodies. For teachers can form the voice outwardly, but they cannot impress it inwardly: For neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase (1 Cor. iii. 7). Let it be said therefore: Are not thy garments warm, when the earth has been blown through by the South wind? Because surely then the auditors who already adhere to teachers living well receive the heat of supernal love, when they are excited through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; as if he were to say plainly to blessed Job: In vain dost thou attribute to thyself if thou contemplatest any to have profited in virtues through thee, because these whom thou esteemest to have become warm through thee, unless the fervor of the Holy Spirit touched them, would remain cold in their own insensibility. But after he has said these things strongly, being lightly moved through arrogance, he straightway subjoins words of derision, saying:

CAPUT XXXIX

[Rec. XXIV].

VERS. 18. Thou perhaps with Him hast fashioned the heavens, which are most solid as if of molten brass.

65. By the heavens as it were of molten brass, the holy angels and the minds of the elect are signified. — By the heavens, those angelic spirits who are established in heavenly things can be designated. Whence also in our prayer we are instructed by the voice of Truth to say: Thy will be done as in heaven and in earth. That surely as the will of God is done by the superior creature, so in all things it may be kept even by human infirmity. Concerning whom it is well said: Who are most solid as if of molten brass (Matt. vi. 10). For it is the nature of brass to be consumed with difficulty by rust. And the angelic virtues which persisted fixed in divine love, when the proud angels fell, received this in the gift of retribution, that they should no longer be bitten by any rust of creeping fault, that they should remain in the contemplation of the Creator without end of happiness, and should subsist in that which they were created with eternal stability. Which the very words of the history concerning the origin of the world in Moses testify (Gen. i. 6), since both the heaven is said to be made first, and this same is afterwards called the firmament, because namely the angelic nature was both first created more subtilely in superior things, and afterwards more wonderfully confirmed that it might never be able to fall. By the heavens also, as we have often said, the minds of the elect can be expressed, suspended from all earthly contagions by internal love. Who although they dwell in the body in the lowest things, yet because in heart they already adhere to the highest, they truly say: Our conversation

is in heaven (Phil. iii. 20). Who are most solid as if of molten brass, because they are consumed by no rust of mutability from the integrity of their begun fortitude. To whom also, enduring strongly against adversities, it is said by the voice of the Author: Ye are My friends, who have continued with Me in My temptations. But although the learned and arrogant man, when he strives to deride the holy man, mingles strong sayings with his derision, yet from strong sayings he always relapses to superfluous words. For again deriding he subjoins:

VERS. 19. Show us what we may say to Him, for surely we are involved in darkness.

66. As if he were to say: Thou, who already enjoyest the great light of understanding, oughtest to teach us who are involved in the darkness of ignorance. Who presently leaping back from derision, subjoins by despising:

VERS. 20. Who shall relate to Him the things which I speak?

As if he were to say plainly: Those things which I, acutely sensing, speak to Him concerning His praises, things not heard, who can relate these even after he has heard them? But because with doctrine and arrogance it conflicts in the habitation of one mind, from the mouth of the speaker sounds not only the levity of living, but also the gravity of sensing; after Eliu has lightly swelled through arrogance, saying: Who shall relate to Him the things which I speak? presently through doctrine he added:

CHAPTER XL

[Vet. XXVI, Rec. XXV].

IBID. — Even if a man have spoken, he shall be devoured.

67. For a man to speak of God is for a blind man to discourse of light. — Everything which devours anything, drawing this inwards, hides it from the eyes of beholders, and snatches into the deep the thing which could be seen on the surface. Man therefore, when he is silent concerning God, seems by the reason in which he was created to be something. But if he begins to speak of God, it is instantly shown how much he is nothing, because he is devoured by the immensity of that magnitude, and as if snatched into the deep is hidden, because desiring to speak the ineffable, he is swallowed up by the very narrowness of his own ignorance. For the flesh speaks of the spirit, the circumscribed spirit of the uncircumscribed, the creature of the Creator, the temporal of the eternal, the mutable of the immutable, the mortal of the vivifying; and since placed in darkness he knows not the internal light as it is, man, desiring to discourse of eternity, speaks as a blind man of the light. If therefore a man have spoken, he shall be devoured, because if a man seeks to utter eternity as it is, he withdraws from himself even that which even while silent he feels concerning it. But behold, eternity then truly became known to men, when it showed itself to them by the humanity assumed. Which because it had not

yet been revealed, concerning the same men it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLI.

VERS. 21. — But now they see not the light.

68. Through Christ the light has shone upon men. — Concerning which light also it is said by the Prophet: The people that sat in darkness, saw a great light (Matt. iv. 16; Isa. ix. 2). But how this same light is seen by men, he intimates, when he immediately subjoins:

IBID. — Suddenly the air shall be thickened into clouds.

For the air is so dispersed by its own very tenuity, that it is solidified by no firmness. But clouds are so much firmer as they are denser. But the air is thickened into clouds, when flux minds are strengthened by the solidity of virtue through the grace of heavenly regard, so that they may collect themselves within the bosom of the heart by sensing right things, and may not melt away in vain thoughts.

69. Peter and the other apostles solidified into clouds by grace. — Peter had been air, when dispersed through earthly desires, the care of fishing agitated him like a passing breeze for the life of the flesh (Matt. iv. 18). All the apostles also had been air, who already through the law had learned deep things, but not yet through faith did they taste firm things (Ibid.).

What then is designated by the air but the minds of the worldly, which, given up to the

innumerable desires of this life, are dispersed hither and thither, fluid after the manner of air?

But suddenly the air was thickened into clouds, because through the regard of heavenly grace the flux hearts of the fishers were turned into the solidity of preachers, so that their weak thoughts might become dense by sensing strong things, and after the manner of clouds might receive the waters of knowledge, and water the earth lying beneath with words of preaching; which ministry being performed, they might return to the secrets of heaven, and arrive at eternal rest, their labor being finished. Whence also it is well subjoined presently:

CHAPTER XLII.

IBID. — And the wind passing by shall drive them away.

70. The world having been watered by the preaching of the Gospel, those clouds were driven away from our eyes. — For the wind passing by is the present life. The wind passing by, therefore, drives away the clouds, because the mortal life running through hides the holy preachers corporally from our eyes. The wind passing by drives away the clouds, because the course of temporal life withdraws the apostles from the flesh, and hides them from the surface of the earth in secret rest as if in the hinge of the heavens. But because they do not cease to preach even unto death, and they run through the space of the present life like clouds with the rain of words, he adds what is

done by their labors in the holy Church, when he immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER XLIII

[Rec. XXVI].

VERS. 22. — Gold shall come from the North.

71. The Christian religion was most of all propagated from the Gentiles. — What is designated by the North, but Gentility bound by the cold of sin? which he held under the yoke of his tyranny who proudly said: I will sit in the mountain of the testament, in the sides of the North, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High (Isa. xiv. 13, 14). But what is expressed by the name of gold, but faithful souls? Concerning whom it is said by Jeremiah: How is the gold become dim, the most excellent color changed (Lam. iv. 1)! For he grieved for the gold become dim, because in some he saw the brightness of innocence turned into the blackness of fault. Gold therefore is said to come from the North, because through the regard of the grace of the Redeemer, from Gentility lately cold with the numbness of perfidy, the life of the faithful, precious to God, is multiplied within the holy Church. For gold comes from the North when from the very worshippers of idols true faith in the Lord shines forth. But when the Gentiles are converted to the faith, Judea contradicts, and disdains to receive to the retribution of heavenly rewards those who lately had been worshippers of idols. Whence after the conversion of the Gen-

tiles it is said to Peter: Why didst thou go in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them (Acts xi. 3)? Against which the Lord rightly says by Isaiah: I will say to the North: Give; and to the South: Prohibit not (Isa. xliii. 6). For as by the North Gentility, so by the South Judea is signified, which glowed as it were with the midday sun, because, the Redeemer appearing in the flesh, she first received the fervor of faith. To the North therefore "Give" is said when Gentility is commanded to offer to God the gifts of its faith. But it is commanded to the South that it prohibit not, because it is enjoined on the Hebrews persisting in the faith that they should not condemn the life of the Gentiles by rejecting it. Whence here also because it was said: Gold shall come from the North, it is fitly subjoined:

IBID. — And from God fearful praise.

72. For the conversion of the Gentiles the apostles and other faithful of the circumcision praised God. — For so fearful praise is said to come from God, as if it were said to come from those who are on the part of God, that is, from the faithful. The gold therefore coming from the North, fearful praise proceeded from God, because while Gentility offered the brightness of its faith, the multitude of the faithful Hebrews, greatly fearing the divine judgments, praised Him. But how gold comes from the North, how from those who are under God fearful praise breaks forth, the very history of sacred eloquence shows us. For it is written: Cornelius, a centurion of the cohort which is called the Italian, a reli-

gious man and fearing God, with all his house, giving much alms to the people, and praying to God always, saw in a vision manifestly, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God entering to him, and saying to him: Cornelius. But he beholding him, seized with fear, said: Who art thou, Lord? But he said to him: Thy prayers and thine alms have ascended for a memorial in the sight of God (Acts x. 1 seq.). Gold therefore comes from the North, while in the sight of God prayer with alms ascends from the Gentiles. Which when Peter had related to the brethren (Ibid., 12), how either Cornelius had seen the angel, or he himself had seen the sheet let down from heaven to him with beasts, creeping things, and fowls, or how the Holy Spirit even before baptism poured Himself over the hearts of the Gentiles, Who never came into the minds of the Jews except after the water of baptism, presently it is written: Having heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying: Therefore God also to the Gentiles has given repentance unto life (Acts xi. 18). The multitude therefore of the faithful offered fearful praise to God, which, the Gentiles being saved, restrained itself from its murmur, wondering at the gifts of heavenly grace. Whence Peter himself also wonders, saying: In truth I have found that God is no respecter of persons (Acts x. 34).

73. And they feared concerning the reprobation of the Jews. — But when the Gentiles receive the faith, why is it said that fearful praise comes from those who are already faithful, when it

ought to have come joyful rather than fearful? But for this reason, the Gentiles being converted, fearful praise proceeded from the Hebrews already faithful, because surely Judea was justly rejected, while Gentility was piously called; and she feared the losses of her own rejection, while she saw the gains of another's calling. Whence we also daily, while we suddenly behold any wicked men promoted to an unlooked-for loftiness of life, rejoice with fear under the hidden judgments of God, lest through hidden judgments God should desert some who are thought worthy, Who through these calls to Himself those who are esteemed unworthy. It follows:

CHAPTER XLV.

VERS. 23. — Worthily we cannot find Him.

74. Concerning God Who is great in fortitude, judgment, and justice, we cannot worthily think. — And if we can already find Him, yet not worthily, because whatever we feel in Him is from faith, and not from sight. This however which he considers that he has already found, he adds, saying:

IBID. — Great in fortitude and judgment and justice, and He cannot be related.

For He is great in fortitude, because He overcomes the strong adversary, and taking the vessels of contumely from his house, He changes them into vessels of mercy. Great in judgment, because even if here He depresses His elect by adversities, He sometime exalts them in the glory of eternal prosperity. Great in justice, because

even if here He tolerates long, yet sometime He condemns the reprobate without end. But it is well subjoined: And He cannot be related. For He Who cannot be worthily felt, how much less can He be spoken? But better we speak Him in any way, if we be silent by wondering under the fear of His consideration. It follows:

CHAPTER XLVI

[Rec. XXVII].

VERS. 24. — Therefore men shall fear Him, and all who seem to themselves to be wise shall not dare to contemplate Him.

75. They who preach rightly, but live not so, become the heralds of their own damnation. — In this place Eliu calls "men" those who are strong for understanding. And it is to be noted that he does not say: And the wise shall not dare to contemplate Him; but, Who seem to themselves to be wise. By which words namely he intimates the skilled indeed, but the arrogant. Eliu therefore, while he senses many things strongly, in the end of his speech touched himself. For arrogant and learned men, when they live not rightly, but yet are compelled by the impulses of doctrine to speak right things, they themselves become in some way the heralds of their own damnation, because while preaching they intimate those things which they refuse to do, they cry themselves damned by their own voices. Against whom it is well said by the Psalmist: They are turned into a perverse bow (Psal. lxxvii. 57).

For a perverse bow strikes him by whom it is stretched. And in their own sayings the tongues of the arrogant are like to a perverse bow, because while they make words against elation, they fix arrows in their own authors. Whence with the greatest care it is to be provided, lest wisdom being received, when it illuminates the darkness of ignorance, it should take away the light of humility, and can no longer be wisdom. Which although it may shine by the power of speech, yet by the veil of elation it obscures the heart of the speaker.

76. Some goods are supreme, others intermediate. — For some goods are supreme, others intermediate. For supreme goods are, faith, hope, charity. Which when they are truly possessed, cannot be turned into evil. But intermediate goods are, prophecy, doctrine, the power of healings, and the rest (1 Cor. xii. 10), which are so placed between both, that sometimes by these alone the eternal country, sometimes truly earthly glory is sought. We call these virtues intermediate, therefore, which we incline to whatever the mind desires. Which being perceived, the mind can so use as earthly riches. For by earthly riches some are proud in the ostentation of glory, others work ministries of piety towards the indigence of neighbors. When therefore by doctrine and prophecy exterior praise is sought, as if by corporal riches the height of earthly glory is courted. But when doctrine and prophecy is expended for gaining souls, as it were received riches are bestowed on needy brethren. Because

therefore often by the very gifts, in which it exults to perceive itself, the incautious mind removes itself from the hand of the giver, it is to be cared for with vigilant provision, that both vices be first subdued, and afterwards the gifts be held under circumspection. For if in them the mind incautiously deserts itself, it is not by these assisted and carried up, but as it were rewarded for past labors it is rejected. Whence it also happens that a virtue received, while it is assumed in the use of transitory praise, because it serves vice, is not a virtue. For because the origin of virtue is humility, that virtue truly buds in us which endures in its own root, that is, in humility. From which surely if it be cut off it withers, because it loses the moisture of charity vivifying it in the inmost parts.

77. Wonderful humility of David in the highest things. By fighting he conquered enemies; by following humility he conquered himself. — But because by that which is said by Eliu, All who seem to themselves to be wise shall not dare to contemplate Him, the hidden elation of the heart is reproved, it is pleasant to behold how great gifts of virtues David had received, and in all these with how strong humility he kept himself (1 Sam. xvii. 36; xviii. 25). For whom would it not puff up to break the mouths of lions, to scatter the arms of bears, to be chosen when his elder brethren were despised, to be anointed to the government of the kingdom when the king was rejected, to lay low Goliath who was to be feared by all with one stone, to bring back numerous foreskins after the

Philistines were slain, as proposed by the king, to perceive at length the promised kingdom, and to possess the whole Israelitish people without any contradiction (2 Sam. iii. 18)? And yet when he brings back the ark of God into Jerusalem (Ibid., vi. 14), as if forgotten that he was preferred to all, being mingled with the peoples he dances before the ark. And because to dance before the ark, as it is believed, had been the custom of the common people, the king wheels himself in a dance in the divine service. Behold him whom the Lord singularly preferred to all, despises himself under the Lord both by equaling himself to the least, and by exhibiting abject things. The power of the kingdom is not brought back to memory, he fears not to become vile in the eyes of his subjects by dancing, he recognizes not himself preferred in honor to the rest before His ark Who had given the honor. Before God he did vile or extreme things, that he might solidify by humility those strong things which he had done before men. What may be felt of his deeds by others I know not; I wonder at David more dancing than fighting. For by fighting he subdued enemies, but by dancing before the Lord he conquered himself. Whom Michal the daughter of Saul, still insane from the tumor of royal race, when she despised him humiliated, saying: How glorious was the king of Israel to-day uncovering himself before the handmaids of his servants, and was naked, as if one of the buffoons were naked (Ibid., 20), presently heard: The Lord liveth, for I will play before the Lord, Who chose me rather than thy

father. And a little after he says: And I will play, and will become more vile than I have been made, and I will be humble in my own eyes (Ibid., 22). As if he should say plainly: I desire to become vile before men, because I seek to keep myself noble before the Lord through humility.

78. Some sensing humble things of themselves, fear to be despised; others desiring to be despised, are proud of their own humility. — But there are some who feel humble things of themselves, because placed in honors they weigh that they are nothing but dust and ashes, but yet they fly from appearing despised before men, and against that which they think internally of themselves, they are cloaked as it were with a rigid elegance externally. And there are some who desire to seem vile to men, and despise all that they are by exhibiting themselves dejected: but yet within themselves they swell as if from the very merit of shown vileness, and they are so much more elated in heart as they more fully suppress elation in appearance. Both of which wars of one elation David detected with great circumspection, and overcame with wonderful virtue. For that he intimates that, sensing humble things within of himself, he seeks not honor externally, he says: I will play and will become more vile (Ibid., 22). And because by this that he showed himself vile externally, he by no means swelled internally, he adds: And I will be humble in my own eyes (Ibid., 22). As if he should say: Such as I exhibit myself externally by despising, such I attend myself also internally. What then

are they to do whom doctrine elevates, if David knew the Redeemer to come from his flesh, and announced His joys by prophesying, and yet in himself depressed the neck of the heart with the strong heel of discretion, saying: And I will be humble in my own eyes?

79. They cannot contemplate the wisdom of God who seem to themselves to be wise. Laudable fatuity is to be followed. — Well therefore is it said by Eliu: Therefore men shall fear Him, and all who seem to themselves to be wise shall not dare to contemplate Him. For they cannot contemplate the wisdom of God who seem to themselves to be wise, because they are so far from His light, as they are not humble within themselves, because while the tumor of elation grows in their minds, it closes the edge of contemplation; and whence they estimate themselves to shine above the rest, thence they deprive themselves of the light of truth. If therefore we desire to be truly wise and to contemplate wisdom itself, let us humbly know ourselves to be fools. Let us relinquish noxious wisdom, let us learn laudable fatuity. Hence namely it is written: God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, that He may confound the wise (1 Cor. i. 27). Hence again it is said: If any one seems among you to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise (Ibid., iii. 18). Hence the words of the evangelical history testify because Zacchaeus when he could see nothing for the crowd, ascended a sycamore tree, that he might see the Lord passing by. For the sycamore is called the "foolish fig." The little

Zacchaeus therefore went up into the sycamore, and saw the Lord (Luke xix. 4 seq.), because they who humbly choose the foolishness of the world, they themselves subtilely contemplate the wisdom of God. For the crowd hinders our littleness from seeing the Lord, because the tumult of worldly cares presses the infirmity of the human mind, lest it should intend the light of truth. But prudently we ascend the sycamore, if with foresight we hold in mind that foolishness which is divinely commanded. For what is more foolish in this world than not to seek things lost, to relax things possessed to those who snatch them away, to return no injury for injuries received, yea even others being added to offer patience? For the Lord commands us as it were to ascend the sycamore, when He says: He who takes away what are thine, ask them not again (Luke vi. 30). And again: If any one shall strike thee on the right cheek, offer to him also the other (Matt. v. 39). Through the sycamore the Lord is seen passing by, because through this wise foolishness, although not yet solidly as He is, yet already through the light of contemplation the wisdom of God is seen as if in passage. Which according to the words of Eliu they cannot see, who seem to themselves to be wise, because caught in the elated crowd of their own thoughts for beholding the Lord, they have not yet found the sycamore tree.

Part Sixth

, and the last, COMPRISING EIGHT BOOKS.

BOOK TWENTY-EIGHT.

The first eleven verses of chapter XXXVIII are explained in a manifold sense, especially the moral one.

891 PREFACE.

Nothing harms the soul more grievously than the consciousness of virtue, unless it be exercised by corrections. Job was most great, because he was less only than God.---After the loss of goods, after the funerals of his children, after the wounds of his body, after the words of his evil-counseling wife, after the insulting speeches of those who comforted him, after the darts of so many sorrows bravely received, the blessed Job was to be praised by the Judge for such great virtue of constancy, if he were now to be called away from this present world. But since he is yet to receive double in this world, since he is restored to his former health, so that he may use the things returned for a longer time, lest the sword of elation (elationis) should strike him down by his very victory, almighty God must rebuke through strict justice (districtam justitiam)

him whom He preserves for life. For what more often kills the soul than the consciousness of virtue? Which, while it puffs it up by its own consideration, empties it of the fullness of truth; and while it suggests that it is sufficient for perceiving rewards, it distends it from the intention of improvement. The righteous Job, therefore, stood before the scourges, but remained more righteous after the scourges; and praised before by the voice of God, he afterwards increased from the stroke. Truly, like a ductile trumpet (tuba ductilis) produced from the striking, he was elevated so much higher in the praise of God, as he was struck with greater chastisement. But he was to be humbled who, prostrated by ulcers, thus stood by virtues. He was to be humbled, lest the weapons of elation should pierce so very robust a breast, which it was certain that even the inflicted wounds had not conquered. Truly, a man was to be sought by comparison with whom he ought to have been surpassed. But what is it that is said of him by the voice of the Lord: Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth (Job 1:8; 2:3)? By comparison with whom, then, could he be conquered, of whom it is said by God's testimony that he cannot be equaled by comparison with any man? What then is to be done, unless the Lord Himself should narrate His own virtues from His own person, 892 and say to him: Canst thou bring forth the morning star (luciferum) in its time, and makest the evening star (vesperum) to rise upon the sons of earth? And again: Have

the gates of death been opened to thee, and hast thou seen the darksome doors? Or certainly: Hast thou since thy birth commanded the morning (diluculo), and shown the dawn (aurorae) its place (Job 38:32, 17, 12)? Who indeed can do these things, except the Lord? And yet man is questioned, that he may know that he cannot do these things, so that the man who has increased by such immense virtues, and is not conquered by the example of any man, should not be puffed up, but be surpassed by comparison with God. But O how powerfully is he raised up who is so sublimely humbled! O how great is the victory of man, to have lost by comparison with God! O how much greater is he than men who is convinced by testimonies to be less than God! Truly he is very powerful who is shown by such questioning that he is not powerful. But because we are led to discuss things that are very obscure, let us now come to the words of the same text:

CHAPTER ONE [OLD AND REC. II].

CHAP. XXXVIII, VERSE 1.---Then the Lord answering Job out of a whirlwind, said.

1. In how many and what ways God speaks to men.---I see it is to be noted that if the speech were said to have been made to one sound and healthy, the Lord would by no means be written to have spoken out of a whirlwind (de turbine). But because He speaks to one who has been scourged, He is described as having spoken out of a whirlwind. For the Lord speaks to His servants in one way when He advances them

within through compunction (compunctionem), in another way when He presses them through strictness (districtionem) lest they be puffed up. For by the mild speech of the Lord His lovable sweetness is shown; but by the terrible speech His power to be feared is demonstrated. In the former the soul is persuaded to profit, in the latter that which profits is repressed. In the former it learns what to desire, in the latter what to fear. Through the former He says: Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Sion, for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee (Zech. 2:10); 893 through the latter it is said: The Lord shall come in a tempest, and in a whirlwind are His ways (Isa. 66:15). For He is mild who comes that He may dwell in the midst. But when He insinuates Himself through a tempest and a whirlwind, He surely disturbs the hearts which He touches; and He exerts Himself to tame elation (elationion), when He makes Himself known as powerful and terrible.

2. God speaks either by angels, or by Himself. ---It is to be known besides that the divine speech is distinguished in two ways. For either the Lord speaks by Himself, or His words are formed to us through an angelic creature. But when He speaks by Himself, He is opened to us only by the force of internal inspiration. When He speaks by Himself, the heart is taught of His word without words and syllables, because His power is known by a certain inward lifting up. Upon which the full mind is suspended, the empty is weighed down. For it is a certain weight which lifts up every soul

which it fills. It is incorporeal light which both fills the interior, and circumscribes the filled exteriorly. It is a speech without noise, which both opens the hearing and knows not how to have a sound. For that which is written of the coming of the Holy Spirit: There was made suddenly a sound from heaven, as of a mighty spirit coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting; and there appeared to them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them (Acts II, 2); by the fire indeed the Lord appeared, but by Himself He made the speech inwardly. And neither was the fire God, nor was that sound, but by this which He exhibited exteriorly, He expressed this which He wrought interiorly. For because He rendered the disciples both kindled with zeal and learned by the word within, He showed fiery tongues without. In significance therefore the elements were applied, that bodies might feel the fire and the sound, but hearts might be taught by the invisible fire and by the voice without sound. Without then was the fire which appeared, but within that which gave knowledge. And when the eunuch of queen Candace presiding over his chariot took his journey, and having Isaiah in his hands not understanding him, doubtless in his heart the spirit had said to Philip: Join thyself to the chariot (Acts VIII, 29). And when Cornelius had directed God-fearing soldiers to call Peter, in his mind without doubt from the spirit Peter heard: Behold three men seek thee, arise therefore, descend and go with them (Acts X, 19). For the Spirit of God to speak as it were certain words

to us is to intimate by hidden power those things which are to be done, and to render the ignorant man, without applying noise and slowness of speech, suddenly skilled concerning hidden things. For because the hearing does not comprehend all things said at once as they are made to it, since it perceives both causes through words, and words piecemeal through syllables; but our sight in that which it directs itself, apprehends all suddenly and at once; the speech of God made to us intrinsically is seen rather than heard, because while He insinuates Himself without delay of speech, He enlightens the darkness of our ignorance with sudden light. Wherefore also Baruch, the son of Neriah, when being asked he explained how he had heard the words of Jeremiah prophesying, said: From his mouth he spoke as if reading, and I wrote (Jerem. XXXVI, 18). For he who speaks reading, to one thing he attends, but of another he makes the word, because what he sees he speaks. The prophets of God, therefore, because they see His words rather in the heart than hear them, speak as if reading.

3. How He is wont to speak by angels. Sometimes by using words; sometimes things; sometimes at once words and things; sometimes by images shown to the eyes of the heart or of the body. ---When truly by an angel the Lord indicates His will, sometimes He demonstrates it by words, sometimes by things, sometimes at once by words and things, sometimes by images shown to the eyes of the heart, sometimes by images even before the bodily eyes assumed for

a time from the air, sometimes by heavenly substances, sometimes by earthly; sometimes at once by earthly and heavenly. Not unfrequently truly even by an angel God so speaks to human hearts, that the angel himself also is presented to the views of the mind.

4. For God speaks by words through an angel when nothing is shown in an image, but the words of the heavenly speech are heard, as when the Lord said: Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee, it is immediately answered: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again (John 17:1; 12:28). For God, who without time cries out by the force of inward impulse, did not in time through His own substance emit that voice, which He distinguished as circumscribed by time through human words, but surely, speaking of heavenly things, He formed His words which He willed to be heard by men through the administration of a rational creature.

5. Sometimes God speaks by things through angels, when nothing is said by word, but those things which are to come are announced by an image assumed from the elements; as Ezekiel, hearing no words, saw the appearance of amber (electri) in the midst of fire; so that, forsooth, while he beheld only the appearance, he might perceive what things were to come in the last times (Ezek. 1:4). For amber (electrum) is mixed from the metal of gold and silver, in which mixture the silver is indeed rendered brighter, but yet the brightness of the gold is tempered. What then is demonstrated in amber (electro) except

the Mediator of God and men? Who, while He composed Himself for us from the divine and human nature, both rendered the human brighter through the deity, and tempered the divine through the humanity for our sights. For because through the power of His divinity His humanity shone with so many miracles, from the gold the silver increased; and that through the flesh God could be known, and that through the flesh He tolerated so many adversities, the gold was as it were tempered from the silver. Which is well shown also in the midst of the fire, because the flame of the subsequent judgment accompanies the mystery of His incarnation (incarnationis). For it is written: The Father judgeth no man, but hath given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22).

[Old III.] 6. Sometimes God speaks by words and things together through angels, when He insinuates by certain movements that which He narrates in speeches. For Adam after his fault could not hear the Lord in the substance of the divinity, but he heard the words of rebuke through an angel, of whom it is written: When he had heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise at the breeze after midday, he hid himself among the trees of paradise (Gen. 3:8). For what is it that after the sin of man the Lord no longer stands in paradise, but walks, except that when fault rushed in He showed Himself moved from the heart of man? What is it that it was at the breeze after midday, except 895 that the more fervent light of truth had departed, and the frosts of her fault were binding the sinful soul? He

rebuked Adam, therefore, walking, that he might open their wickedness to blind minds not only by speeches, but also by things, so that the sinful man might both hear through words what he had done, and through the walking, having lost the state of eternity (aeternitatis), he might discern the inconstancy of his own mutability (mutabilitatis), and through the breeze, the fervor of charity (charitatis) being expelled, he might notice his own torpor, and through the declining of the sun he might know that he was approaching darkness.

[Old IV.] 7. Sometimes God speaks through angels by images shown to the eyes of the heart, as Jacob while sleeping saw a ladder reaching to heaven (Gen. 28:12); as Peter, caught up in an ecstasy, beheld a sheet full of creeping things and four-footed beasts (Acts 10:11), who unless he had discerned these things with incorporeal eyes, would not have been in an ecstasy; as to Paul in a vision of the night a man of Macedon appeared (Acts 16:9), who besought him to pass over into Macedonia. Sometimes God speaks through angels by images also before the bodily eyes assumed for a time from the air, as Abraham was not only able to see three men, but also to receive them into an earthly habitation, and not only to receive them, but also to apply foods for their uses (Gen. 18:2, seq.). For unless the Angels, announcing certain internal things to us, assumed bodies for a time from the air, they would surely not appear to our external sights; nor would they take foods with Abraham, unless for our sake

they carried something solid from a heavenly element (coelesti elemento). Nor is it a wonder that there those very ones who were received are called now angels, now the Lord, because by the word of angels those are expressed who were ministering externally, and by the appellation of the Lord He is shown who was presiding over them internally, so that by the latter the empire of the president might be clear, and by the former the office of those ministering.

[Old V.] 8. Various other ways in which God speaks to men.---Sometimes God speaks through angels by celestial substances, as, when the Lord was baptized, it is written that a voice sounded from a cloud, saying: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matt. 3:17). Sometimes God speaks through angels by earthly substances, as when He rebuked Balaam, He formed human words in the mouth of an ass (Num. 22:28). Sometimes God speaks through angels by both earthly and celestial substances together, as when He uttered the words of His command to Moses on the mountain, He associated fire and a bush, and joined one thing from above, another from below (Exod. 3:2). Which, however, is then only done when something is signified from that very conjunction. For by speaking to Moses through the burning bush, what else did He show except that he should become the leader of that people who should both perceive the flame of the law, and yet by no means avoid the thorn of sin; or that He should go out from that people who in the fire of the Deity (Deitatis) should receive

the sins of our flesh like the thorns of a bush, and should preserve the unconsumed substance of our humanity (humanitatis) even in the very flame of the divinity (divinitatis)?

[Vet. VI.] 9. Prophets are sometimes inspired through angels. But sometimes God also pours the power of His inspiration into human hearts through the secrets of their presence by means of angels. Whence also Zechariah says: And the angel who spoke in me said to me (Zech. 1:14). While he says indeed that the angel spoke to him but yet in him, he clearly shows that he who addressed words to him was not outside through a bodily appearance. Whence also a little later he added: And behold, the angel who spoke in me went forth (Ibid. 2:3). For often they do not appear outwardly, but even as they are angelic spirits, they make known the will of God to the senses of the prophets, and they raise them up to sublime things, and they demonstrate things that are to be in the future as present in their original causes. For the human heart, weighed down by the very weight of the corruptible flesh, sustaining this very corpulence of its own like an obstacle, does not penetrate internal things, and lies heavy on the outside, because it does not have a hand lifting it up from within. Whence it happens, as has been said, that to the senses of the prophets the very subtlety of the angelic power appears as it is, and their mind is lifted up by the subtle spirit by which it is touched; and it no longer lies sluggish and torpid in the lowest parts, but filled with inward inspirations, it ascends to heavenly things,

and from there, as if from a certain summit of things, it sees those things which are to come below it. But lest anyone should think that in the aforesaid words of Zechariah either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit is designated by the name of angel, if he considers the text of Sacred Scripture, he quickly corrects what he thinks, since it never calls the Father, never the Holy Spirit, and the Son only through the preaching of His incarnation, an 'angel.' Whence also in the words of the same Zechariah it is clearly shown that in him truly an angel, that is, a creature, was speaking, when it is said: And behold, the angel who spoke in me, went forth (Zech. 2:3). And immediately it is added: And another angel went forth to meet him, and said to him: Speak to this young man, saying: Jerusalem shall be inhabited without a wall (Ibid. 2:3). Therefore, the angel who is sent, to whom words are commanded by an angel which he ought to say, is not God. But because in the sight of the Creator the angelic ministries are distinguished by an ordered position of ranks, so that both for the common felicity of blessedness they may rejoice together seeing their Maker, and yet according to the disposition of dignity some may minister to others, an angel sends an angel to the prophet, and him whom he sees rejoicing together with himself concerning God, he both teaches and directs, because he exceeds him both through superior knowledge by the power of cognition, and through more excellent grace by the height of power.

10. How God answered Job. These things, therefore, have been said so that it might be demonstrated in what ways God speaks to men. But when the Lord is said to have answered blessed Job from the whirlwind, it is doubted whether He spoke through Himself, or to him through an angel. For indeed the commotions of the air could have been made through an angel, and these words which are subjoined could have been commanded to him through him. And again, an angel could have shaken the air in a whirlwind outwardly, and yet the Lord Himself inwardly through Himself could have sounded the force of His sentence into his heart without words, so that it may be believed that he himself now brought forth through words the divine sayings which follow, who, filled with God, heard these things without words. [Vet. VII, Rec. III.] Therefore it is said:

CHAPTER II.

VERS. 2.---Who is this that wrappeth up sentences in unskilful words?

11. Those who think rightly but speak proudly are reproved. The first folly of the Angel was elation.---As we have already said in the upper part, such a question is the first reproach, by which it is said: Who is this? For Elihu had spoken arrogantly. And we do not say Who is this? except concerning him whom we do not know. But for God to know is to approve; not to know is to reprove. Whence He says to certain ones whom He reproves: I know you not whence you are; depart

from Me, all ye workers of iniquity (Luke 13:25, 27). What is it then to ask concerning this arrogant man, Who is this? except to say openly: I do not know the arrogant, that is, I do not approve their life in the citadel of My wisdom? Because while they are inflated by human praises, they become empty of the true glory of eternal retribution. But in that which He says, Sentences, and did not add of what kind, we certainly take them as good ones, which indeed He asserts were wrapped up in unskilful words, because they had been brought forth with words of boasting. For it is a vice of unskilfulness not to be rightly wise concerning what is right, that is, to incline a heavenly gift to the appetite for earthly praise. For as it often happens that both good things are brought forth badly and bad things well, so arrogant Elihu brought forth right things not rightly, because he did not speak humbly the humble sentences in defense of God. Whence also he not undeservedly holds the type of those who within the Catholic Church study vain glory: who while they believe themselves skilled above others, are redargued of unskilfulness by the divine judgment, because as the Apostle says: If any man think that he knoweth anything, he hath not yet known as he ought to know (1 Cor. 8:2). For since the first folly of the Angel was the elation of the heart, the humility of a man's own estimation is made true wisdom. Which whosoever deserts, even by being wise in great things, by that very fact he is vehemently foolish, in that he knows not himself. Whence Elihu both brought forth

sentences and sentences wrapped up in unskilful words, because he both knew what was right that he should say concerning God, and yet his foolish elation infatuated those sayings concerning himself. This man therefore being despised, the words are turned to the instruction of Job:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. IV.]

VERS. 3.---Gird up thy loins like a man.

12. The luxury not only of the flesh but also of the elated heart is to be coerced.---Sacred Scripture is accustomed to call those 'men' who indeed follow the ways of the Lord with strong and not dissolute steps. Whence it is said through the Psalmist: Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened (Ps. 31:24). Whence Paul says: Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees (Heb. 12:12). Whence also Wisdom in Proverbs: O men, to you I call (Prov. 8:4). As if she said openly: I speak not to women, but to men, because those who are of a flux mind can by no means perceive my words. But to 'gird the loins' is to refrain from luxury either in work or in thought. For the delight of the flesh is in the loins. Whence also it is said to the holy preachers: Let your loins be girt, and your lamps burning (Luke 12:35). For through the loins luxury, but through the lamps the brightness of good works is designated. They are therefore commanded to gird their loins, and to hold lamps. As if they heard openly: First restrain luxury in yourselves,

and then show examples of good works to others from yourselves. But since we have known blessed Job to be endowed with so much chastity, why is it said to him after so many scourges: Gird up thy loins like a man, that is, like a strong one restrain luxury, except because there is one luxury of the flesh by which we corrupt chastity, but another luxury of the heart by which we glory in chastity? It is said to him therefore: Gird up thy loins like a man, so that he who had first conquered the luxury of corruption, might now restrain the luxury of elation, lest boasting of his patience or chastity, he should exist as much worse luxurious within before the eyes of God, as he appeared both patient and chaste before the eyes of men. Whence it is well said through Moses: Circumcise the foreskins of your heart (Deut. 10:16), that is, after you extinguish luxury from the flesh, also cut off the superfluity of thoughts. It follows:

CAPUT IV

[Rec. V.]

IBID.---I will question thee, and do thou answer Me.

13. God questions us in three ways: by scourging; by commanding hard things; by hiding some things from us.---Our Creator is accustomed to question us in three ways, when either He strikes us with the severity of the scourge, and shows how much patience is in us, or is lacking: or He commands certain things which we do not

want, and makes manifest to us our obedience or disobedience; or He opens some hidden things to us, and hides others, and makes known to us the measure of our humility. For He questions with a scourge when He strikes the mind well subject to Himself through tranquility with afflictions, just as the same Job is both praised by the attestation of the judge, and yet is granted to the blows of the smiter (Job 2:3, 7), so that his patience might shine forth the more truly the more harshly it had been inquired into. But by commanding hard things He questions us, as Abraham is commanded to go out of his land and to proceed whither he knew not (Gen. 12:1), to lead his only son to the mountain, and to immolate him whom he as an old man had received for consolation (Gen. 22:2). To whom indeed, answering well to the questioning, that is, obedient to the command, it is said: Now I know that thou fearest God (Ibid. 12). Or as it is written: The Lord your God trieth you, that He may know if you love Him (Deut. 13:3). For God to try is to question us with great commands. To know is also to make us know our own obedience. [Vet. VIII.] But by opening some things to us, and closing some things, God questions us, as is said through the Psalmist: His eyelids question the sons of men (Ps. 11:4). For with open eyelids we see, with closed ones we see nothing. What then do we take as the eyelids of God, but His judgments? Which are closed to men according to something, and according to something are unbarred, so that men who do not know themselves may become

known to themselves, inasmuch as while they comprehend some things by understanding, but can by no means know other things, their hearts may secretly search themselves, if the divine judgments neither stimulate them when closed, nor inflate them when open. For by this questioning Paul was proved, who after receiving internal wisdom, after the bars of paradise were opened, after the ascent to the third heaven, after the mysteries of heavenly speech, still says: I do not think myself to have apprehended (Phil. 3:13). And again: I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle (1 Cor. 15:9). And again: Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God (2 Cor. 3:5). Paul, therefore, questioned by the open eyelids of God, answered rightly, who both touched heavenly secrets, and yet stood sublimely in the humility of heart. Who again, when he discussed the secret judgments of God concerning the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and could not arrive at them, was questioned as if by the closed eyelids of God. But he returned a very right answer, who knowingly bowed himself to God in his very ignorance, saying: O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are His judgments, and His ways unsearchable! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor (Rom. 11:33)? For behold, being inquired into by hidden mysteries as if by closed eyelids, he answered pleasing and right things, who,

knocking at the entrance of the secret, because he was not able to be let in to the interior things through knowledge, stood humble before the doors through confession; and what he could not comprehend within, he praised from without by fearing. Whence now also blessed Job after the questioning of the stroke is discussed by the questioning of speech, that he may consider what things are heavenly; which while he by no means comprehends, he may return to himself, and know how he is as nothing in comparison with heavenly things. Let him hear therefore: I will question thee, and do thou answer Me. As if it were said more openly: By My words I excite thee to consider sublime things, and while thou perceivest that thou knowest not those things which are above thee, I render thee more known to thyself. For then thou truly answerest Me, if thou understandest what things thou art ignorant of. It follows:

CAPUT V

[Rec. VI.]

VERS. 4-6.---Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest, or who hath stretched the line upon it? Upon what are its bases fastened?

14. By the foundations of the Church the apostles are to be understood; by the Foundation, Christ alone.---Behold, all things are woven to-

gether as if in a historical narration concerning the origin of the world. But suddenly that is subjoined which may seem to be said not of the condition of the world, but of the Church. For it is said:

Or who hath laid the corner-stone thereof?

For by this, which was not done in the origin of the world, that upper part also is shown, because it was not said of the origin of the world. For on this account some obscure and dissonant things are mingled with plain and patent things, so that by this which disagrees with the understanding of the letter, that also might be sought mystically which sounds as said according to the letter. For as by some open things we know other closed things, so by some closed things we are compelled also to knock with a deeper understanding at those things which we believed to be open. Let Him say therefore: Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth. [Vet. IX.] In Sacred Scripture what else do we take as the foundations but the preachers? Whom while the Lord first placed in the holy Church, the whole structure of the following fabric rose up in them. Whence also the priest, when he enters the tabernacle (Exod. 28:17), is commanded to carry twelve stones on his breast, because indeed our High Priest, offering Himself as a sacrifice for us, while He exhibited strong preachers in the very beginning, carried twelve stones under the head in the first part of His body. Therefore the holy apostles are stones on the breast for the first showing of ornament, and foundations in the

soil for the first solidity of the edifice. Whence David the prophet, when he beheld the holy Church being placed and built up in the sublime minds of the apostles, says: Its foundations are in the holy mountains (Ps. 87:1). But when in sacred eloquence not 'foundations' but 'Foundation' is said in the singular number, no other is designated but the Lord Himself, by the power of whose divinity the wavering hearts of our infirmity are solidified. Concerning whom Paul also says: Other foundation can no man lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 3:11). For He indeed is the Foundation of foundations, because He is both the origin of those beginning and the constancy of the robust. Since therefore our foundations are those who have carried the weights of our iniquities, lest blessed Job should be lifted up into pride from the power of his virtues, in this very first part of the Lord's speech he is discussed concerning the commemoration of the holy preachers, so that by how much he should behold them coming as admirable, by so much he might estimate himself more lowly in comparison with them. Which on this account is now described by the Lord as if past, because whatever is to be in the future in work, is already done within in predestination. It is said therefore to him: Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? As if it were said openly: Consider the virtue of the strong, and think of Me as their Author before the ages; and when thou suspectest them to be admirable whom I created in time, consider how much thou oughtest to be

subject to Me, whom thou knowest to be the Author of admirable things without time. It follows:

CHAPTER VI.

VERS. 4, 5.---Tell me, if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest, or who hath stretched the line upon it?

15. At His nod the holy preachers are sent to certain parts of the world, and repelled from others. ---The lines of measures are stretched out in the partition of lands, that the equity of dimension may be held from the very stretching of the lines. But the Lord, coming in the flesh to the Church, measured the measures of the earth with lines, because He distinguished the boundaries of the Church with the subtlety of hidden judgment. The measures or lines of this hidden earth were stretched out when the holy preachers, by the operation of the Spirit, were called to other parts of the world that they might go, but were kept back from other parts that they might not approach. For the apostle Paul, when he neglected to preach to Macedonia, there appeared to him in a vision a man of Macedonia saying: Passing into Macedonia help us (Acts XVI, 9). But on the contrary, as it is written: The apostles assayed to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not (Ibid., 7). While therefore the holy preachers are both called to Macedonia and prohibited from Asia, that line of hidden measures was drawn thither, and withdrawn from hence. It is stretched thither, that Macedonia may be gathered within the spaces of holy

Church; it is drawn back from hence, that Asia may be left without the boundaries of the faith. For there were then in it those who were not to be gathered, who being lost according to their merit, even now Asia has been received within the measures of the Church by the bounty of God.

16. Within the measures placed by Christ are the elect, without the reprobate. In God's hand, not man's, is the disposal thereof. ---Within these measures therefore are all the elect, without these all the reprobate, even if they seem to be within the limit of the faith. Wherefore also in the Apocalypse it is written: The court which is without the temple cast out, and measure it not (Apoc. XI, 2). For what else does the court signify than the latitude of the present life? And rightly they are without the temple who are designated by the court, and therefore they are not to be measured, because strait is the gate which leadeth unto life (Matth. VII, 14), and the latitude of the life of the wicked is not admitted to the measures and rules of the elect. These spiritual lines were stretched out by hidden judgment when to a certain one saying: Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest (Matth. VIII, 19), it was answered by the voice of the same master: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (Ibid., 20). These measures and lines were stretched out when to a certain one saying: Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father (Luke IX, 59), it was answered by the voice of the same master: Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the

kingdom of God (Ibid., 60). Behold, one promises he will follow, and is rejected; another asks to be released, and is retained. Whence is this, but because over the hidden spaces of the heart the lines of heavenly judgments were stretched out, so that both incomprehensible measures might constrain this one within, and that one might not unjustly remain without? But since no one is ignorant that God stretches out these lines of hidden judgments, why is it said to Job: Tell me, if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest, or who hath stretched the line upon it? Is it therefore required for this, that what he could know, but yet might pass over, may be remembered, so far as he may more solicitously weigh the weight of the secrets of God, namely, that the disposal of man consists not in human strengths, but in the hand of the Creator, so that while he considers who does these things invisibly, he may attribute nothing to his own virtue, nor now dare anything of himself, when he fears the hidden judgments of God; but weighing from above the measures and lines incomprehensibly stretched out, he may so much the more stand in the humility of fear, as he sees all things hang in the power of the measurer. It follows.

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 6.---Upon what are its bases fastened?

17. The bases of the Church are the holy doctors and prophets.---What else do we take for the bases of this earth but the doctors of the

holy Church? For in the bases the columns, and in the columns the weight of the whole fabric is erected. Not therefore undeservedly are the holy doctors designated by the name of bases, because while they preach right things, and agree with their preaching by living, they sustain the whole weight of the Church by the fixed gravity of their manners, they bear harsh temptations from infidels; and whatever things are dreaded as difficult by the faithful in the precepts of God, they show to be easy by the examples of their works. Whence also well, when the tabernacle was being fixed in a type of the Church, it is said to Moses: Thou shalt make four columns, and thou shalt clothe their bases with silver (Exod. 26:32). For in silver what else is taken but the clarity of the divine word? as it is written: The words of the Lord are pure words, silver tried by fire, proved from the earth, purified seven times (Ps. 12:6). The bases therefore clothed with silver sustain the four columns of the tabernacle, because the preachers of the Church, decorated with divine eloquence, so that they may present themselves as an example to all, carry the sayings of the four evangelists both in mouth and in works.

18. By the bases also the prophets may be signified, who while they were the first to speak openly of the Lord's incarnation, we behold them as if certain bases rising from the foundation, and sustaining the weights of the superimposed fabric. Whence again the Lord to Moses, when He commanded the boards of the tabernacle to be erected, orders their silver bases to be cast (Exod.

26:32). For what are signified by the boards but the apostles, expanded by their preaching extended into the world, and what by the silver bases but the prophets? who, themselves firm and cast, sustain the superimposed boards, because the life of the apostles, while it is instructed by their preaching, is also solidified by their authority. Whence also two bases joined together are placed under each board, because while the holy prophets agree in their words concerning the incarnation of the Mediator, they indubitably build up the following preachers of the Church; and since they do not disagree with themselves, they fix those others more robustly in themselves. Nor undeservedly is it commanded that the bases by which the prophets are signified should be cast from silver. For the clarity of silver is preserved by use, but without use it turns into blackness. The sayings of the prophets also before the coming of the Mediator, because they were not in the use of spiritual intelligence, while they could not be seen for their obscurity, remained as it were black. But after the Mediator coming wiped them with the hand of His incarnation before our eyes, whatever light was lying hid in them became clear, and He gave the sense of the preceding fathers into use, because He explained words by things. Whether therefore He signifies by the appellation of bases the prophets, or the doctors following in the last times, let Him say: Upon what are its bases fastened? thou understandest, but upon Me, who hold all things wonderfully, and within principally provide the

origin for exterior goods. For he who attributes to himself what is good, is not a solid basis, because while he does not lean upon the foundation, he is precipitated into the depths by his own weight. But since many things are already related concerning the construction of the holy Church, the mind desires to hear by what virtue the hostile nations are joined together, that is, by what art the diverse buildings of this house agree with themselves. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

IBID.---Or who hath laid the corner-stone thereof?

19. Christ is the corner-stone, in whom Jews and Gentiles have met.---Now by divine grace it is clear to all whom Sacred Scripture calls the corner-stone, Him surely who, while He receives into Himself the Jewish people from here and the Gentile people from there, joins as it were two walls in the one fabric of the Church, Him of whom it is written: He hath made both one (Eph. 2:14). Who exhibited Himself as the corner-stone not only in the lower things, but also in the heavenly things, because He associated the nations of the Gentiles on earth to the Israelite people, and both together at once to the angels in heaven. For at His birth the angels cried out: On earth peace to men of good will (Luke 2:14). For at the rising of the King they would by no means offer the joys of peace to men for a great thing, if they had not had discord. Concerning this stone it is said by the Prophet: The stone which the builders rejected, the same

is become the head of the corner (Ps. 118:22). King Jechonias held the type of this stone, whom Matthew, while he described the fourteen generations, numbered a second time (Matt. 1:11). For him whom he inserted at the end of the second, the same he inserted again at the beginning of the third generation. For he himself was migrated into Babylon with the Israelite people, who while he is led from some to others, is numbered a second time not undeservedly for the side of each wall. By the bending of which migration he designates the corner-stone. For where the order is deflected from rectitude, so that it may go into a different direction, it makes as it were a corner. Rightly therefore could he be numbered twice, because through each wall he showed as it were two sides in himself, whence also he well held the image of Him, who being born in Judea, gathering the Gentiles, came as it were from Jerusalem to Babylon, and wove together by the art of charity this fabric of the faith in Himself, previously rent by the study of discord.

But these things which have been said concerning the signification of the holy Church, it pleases that they be discussed morally in a shortened replication. For it is worthy that by those things which we know to be said to blessed Job, we should be recalled to our own hearts, because the mind then more truly understands the words of God when it seeks itself in them. For behold it is said:

CHAPTER IX.

VERS. 4.---Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

MORAL SENSE.---20. What we were of ourselves must always be considered, lest we attribute to ourselves what we are by God's gift. If the mind of a sinner is dust, which is lifted up on the surface and snatched away by the breeze of temptation, whence it is written: Not so the wicked, not so, but as the dust which the wind casteth away from the face of the earth (Ps. 1:4), nothing hinders the earth from being understood as the soul of the just, concerning which it is written: For the earth often drinking the rain that cometh upon it, and bringing forth herbs, receiveth a blessing timely for them by whom it is tilled (Heb. 6:7). [Vet. X.] But the foundation of this earth is faith. The foundation of this earth is laid when divine fear is inspired in the secrets of the heart as the first cause of solidity. This one does not yet believe the eternal things which he hears; when faith is given to him, the foundation is already placed for the edifice of the following work. That one already believes eternal things, yet does not fear, he despises the terror of the coming judgment, he boldly involves himself in the sins of the flesh and the spirit; when the fear of future things is suddenly poured into him, so that the edifice of a good life may rise, the foundations are already being constructed. The foundation of prosperous dread being therefore placed, when the fabric of virtues is led into the height, it is necessary that each one progressing should cautiously measure his own strengths, so

that when he has already begun to be great by the divine construction, he may behold himself without ceasing as what he was, so that attending humbly to what he was found through merit, he may by no means arrogate to himself what he was made through grace. Whence also now blessed Job is recalled to himself by the heavenly voice, and lest he should dare to glory concerning his virtues, he is reminded of his past life, and it is said to him: Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? As if the Truth should say openly to the justified sinner: Attribute not to thyself the virtues received from Me, be not extolled against Me from My gift. Recall where I found thee when I placed the first foundations of virtues in thee by My fear. Recall where I found thee when I solidified thee by My fear. That I therefore may not destroy in thee what I have constructed, do thou thyself not cease to consider what I found. For whom has Truth found except either in crimes or in excesses? But after these things we can well preserve what we are, if we never neglect to weigh what we were. Sometimes, however, a clandestine elation is wont to creep even into solicitous hearts, so that the thought of good things, although it be subtle and suppressed, when it increases greatly in virtues, having forgotten its own infirmity, by no means recalls to memory what it was in vices. Whence also Almighty God, because He beholds infirmity to be increased even from the remedies of salvation, imposes a measure upon our very progresses, so that we may have some goods of

virtues which we never sought, and may seek some, yet not be able to have them, so that our mind, while it cannot have these which it desires, may also understand that it does not have from itself those which it has, and through those which are present those which are missing may be considered, and through those which are usefully missing those goods which are present may be preserved humbly. Whence also rightly for the dispensation of this earth, that is, of the just soul, there is subjoined:

CHAPTER X.

VERS. 4, 5.---Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest, or who hath stretched the line upon it?

21. How wisely God distributes His gifts, not all to all, but each to each.---For who but our Creator hath laid the measures of this earth (1 Cor. 12:8)? Who, by the secret moderation of internal judgment, hath given to one the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another full faith, to another the grace of healings, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discerning of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of words; so that in one and the same spirit this one may be powerful in the word of wisdom, yet not be supported by the word of knowledge, that is, of doctrine, because it suffices to perceive and find even that which he has not apprehended through the study of learning; that one may shine in the word of knowledge, yet not be strong in the

word of wisdom, because it suffices to fulfill as much as he has learned, and yet nothing subtle arises from himself for perception. This one by faith commands the elements, yet does not by the grace of healings cure the infirmities of bodies; that one by the aid of prayer removes diseases, yet does not restore rains to the parched earth by a word. This one by the working of miracles recalls even the dead to the present life, and yet, not having the grace of prophecy, is ignorant of the things that are to come to him; that one attends to all future things as if present, and yet puts himself forth in no operation of signs. This one by the discerning of spirits subtly beholds minds in their deeds, but yet knows not tongues of diverse kinds; that one examines tongues of diverse kinds, but yet in similar things does not weigh dissimilar hearts. Another in one tongue which he knows prudently discusses the weights of words by interpreting, and yet patiently lacks the remaining goods which he has not.

22. Thus humility and charity are provided for.---Thus therefore our Creator and Disposer moderates all things, so that he who could be extolled from the gift which he has may be humbled from the virtue which he has not. Thus He moderates all things, so that while He uplifts each one by the bestowed grace, He also subjects one to another through unequal grace, and each one attends to him who is subjected to him as better in some other gift; and although he feels himself to go before others, yet in other things he postpones himself to the same one whom he

surpasses. Thus He moderates all things, so that while each particular gift belongs to all, by a certain interposed necessity of charity, all things become the property of each one, and each one so possesses in another what he has not received, that he himself humbly bestows upon the other what he has received to be possessed. [Vet. XI.] For hence it is said through Peter: Each one as he hath received the grace, ministering the same one to another, as good dispensers of the manifold grace of God (1 Pet. 4:10). For then the manifold grace of God is well dispensed, when the received gift is believed to be also his who has it not, when it is thought to be given to oneself on account of him to whom it is bestowed. Hence it is said through Paul: By charity serve one another (Gal. 5:13). For then charity renders us free from the yoke of fault, when in turn it subjects us to our service through love, when we both believe the goods of others to be our own, and exhibit our own to others as if offering them their own. Hence again it is said through Paul: For the body also is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say: Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say: Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were the eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling (1 Cor. 12:14, seq.)? And a little after: But if they all were one member, where were the body? But now there are indeed many members, yet one body (Ibid. 19).

23. In the body of the Church one is the eye, another the hand, another the foot, etc.---For what is the holy Church but the body of its heavenly Head? In which one is the eye by seeing high things, another the hand by working right things, another the foot by running to the things enjoined, another the ear by understanding the voice of the precepts, another the nose by discerning the stench of the bad and the fragrance of the good. Who, after the manner of the bodily members, while in turn they bestow on each other the offices they have received, render one body out of all themselves; and while they perform diverse things in charity, they prohibit that where they are contained from being diverse. But if all should do one thing, they would surely not be a body which is contained of many, because indeed it would not exist as manifoldly compacted, if this concordant diversity of members did not hold it. Because therefore the Lord divides the gifts of virtues to the holy members of the Church, He lays the measures of the earth. Whence again Paul says: To each one as God hath divided the measure of faith (Rom. 12:3). And again: From whom the whole body compacted and connected through every joint of subministration, according to the operation in the measure of each member, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity (Eph. 4:16).

24. Let the individual members perform the offices assigned to them, and not usurp those of others.---But while by a wonderful counsel our

Author and Disposer bestows those things on this one which He denies to another, and denies those to another which He bestows on this one, he strives to go out of the measures placed for him whoever endeavors to be able to do more than he has received; as if perhaps he to whom it has been given only to discuss the secrets of the precepts should attempt also to sparkle with miracles, or he whom the gift of heavenly virtue strengthens for miracles alone should contend also to lay open the secrets of the divine law. For he puts forth his foot on a precipice who does not attend to the limit of his measures. And for the most part he also loses what he was able to do who boldly hastens to snatch those things which he is not able to reach. For we also then well use the ministries of our members when we preserve for them their offices distinctly. For we behold light with the eyes, but hear a voice with the ears. But if any one, the order being changed, should accommodate the eyes to a voice, the ears to light, both are open to him in vain. If any one should wish to discern odors with the mouth, to taste savors with the nose, he destroys for himself the ministry of each sense, because he perverts it. For while these are not adapted to their proper uses, they both desert their own offices and do not rise to extraneous ones.

25. Within those measures David contained himself, and Paul.---Well therefore had David the prophet pressed the foot of his heart within the measures received from the divine bounty, when he said: Neither have I walked in great matters,

nor in wonderful things above me (Ps. 131:1). For he would walk above himself in wonderful things, if he sought to appear great beyond what he was able. For he is lifted up above himself in wonderful things who endeavors to be seen as fit even in those things to which he is not sufficient. Well within these measures also Paul coarcted himself in the very breadth of his preaching, when he said: For I dare not to speak any of those things which Christ hath not wrought through me (Rom. 15:18). But then the received measure is rightly preserved, when the life of spiritual men placed before the eyes is respected. Whence also it follows:

CHAPTER XI.

VERS. 5.---Or who hath stretched the line upon it?

26. The rule of living is to be taken from the saints.---For the line is stretched upon this earth, when to each elect soul the examples of the preceding fathers are shown for taking the rule of living, so that from their life it may consider what it should preserve in its own acts, so that having respected the path of the just limit, it may neither fail by neglecting beneath the smallest things, nor stretch by being proud beyond the greatest things, nor endeavor to fulfill less than is sufficient, nor snatch more than it has received, lest it either should not reach to the measure which it ought, or deserting the same measure, should fall outside the limit. For narrow is the gate which leadeth unto life (Matt. 7:14); and he enters this

who in all things that he does is solicitously coarcted by the subtlety of discretion on account of this. For he who through his own wills dilates himself with a secure mind, damns for himself the entrance of the narrow gate. That therefore the measure of this earth may be preserved, the line is stretched upon it divinely, because so that our works may either profit from being smaller, or be moderated from being larger, the subtle life of the saints is expanded before us through the sacred eloquence, and what and how much is to be done by us is defined by the shown discretion of those.

[Vet. XII.] 27. In the examples of Peter the measure of authority and of humility is proposed.---Behold some one fearing either the loss of things or the affliction of the body, dreads the threats of earthly power, and does not presume to defend the truth against the force of those resisting. This one Peter, because he respects the narrowness in fear, the line of his examples being shown, stretches to the breadth of virtue. For he indeed having been scourged by the princes of the people (Acts 5:40), when he saw himself to be released on this account, that he should cease from preaching; when he was prohibited to speak for the future, he by no means yielded at least for the present. For answering immediately, he said: We ought to obey God rather than men (Ibid. 4:29). And again: For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. But that one formerly weak, and dreading present losses, while he contemplates the examples of so

great fortitude, now follows the line of Peter in the authority of the word, now fears nothing of adversity, now contemns the powers of the world resisting God even with the laceration of the body. But yet by how much he strongly destroys the strengths of the persecutors by suffering, and by how much amidst adversities he yields to no terrors, by so much for the most part even in these things which being placed among the faithful he has perceived he prefers himself to the others, chooses rather his own counsels, and trusts himself rather than others. This one surely while, not yielding to unjust objections, he exerts himself in virtue, even not receiving the right counsels of others, stretches his foot outside the limit. This one Peter recalls within the line of measure, who after he pressed the authority of the princes with the liberty of his voice, heard through the humility of heart the counsel of Paul concerning not circumcising the Gentiles (Acts 15:7). For so he took care to erect himself against adversaries out of authority, that yet he did not trust himself in those things which he did not perceive rightly, so that he both might exceed with the liberty of fortitude the swelling powers, and might exhibit obedience in right counsel even to lesser brothers with the humility of gentleness, and sometimes by himself should meet others, sometimes meet himself with others. In the deeds of Peter therefore a certain line of authority and of humility is stretched before our eyes, lest our mind either through fear should not reach to the measure, or through tumor should exceed the limit.

28. Discretion persuades sometimes to exercise the works of the same virtue, sometimes to omit them. ---It has been said how the line is stretched, lest through the strength of one action we pass to the vice of another cause; let it now be said how in one and the same virtue we desert the line of discretion, if we know not when this should be acted upon and when postponed. For virtue is not always the same thing, because through the moments of time the merits of actions often change. Whence it happens that when we do anything well, we often better cease from its action, and the mind more laudably leaves for a time what in its own time it laudably held. For if for our smallest goods, by the performance of which we profit, but yet do not perish if they are intermitted, greater evils of labours threaten our neighbours, we necessarily lay aside the increases of virtues, lest we generate detriments of faith to our weaker neighbours, lest what we do should no longer be virtue, so far as by the occasion of itself it destroys the foundations of virtues in the hearts of others.

29. An example of this discretion in Saint Paul. ---What a line of discretion Paul well stretched before the eyes of those beholding, who both prohibited the Gentiles coming to the liberty of faith from being circumcised (Acts XV, 2), and yet passing through Lystra and Iconium, he himself circumcised Timothy, who had been born of a Gentile father (Acts XVI, 3). For seeing that unless he showed himself to keep the mandates of the letter, he would excite the rage of the Jews even

against those who were then his companions, he postponed the force of his assertion, and without damage of faith he guarded himself and his companions from the cruelty of persecution. He did what he prohibited from being done for the love of faith, but he turned back to the ministry of faith what he did as if not faithfully. For frequently virtue, when it is held indiscreetly, is lost; and when it is discreetly intermitted, it is more held. Nor is it to be wondered at if in incorporeal things we understand what we see done also in corporeal things. For by design the bow is unbent, that in its own time it may be bent with utility. Which if it receives not the ease of relaxation, it loses the power of striking by the very use of tension. So sometimes virtue in exercise, when it is passed over through discretion, is reserved, that it may afterwards strike vices so much the more valiantly, as it prudently ceases from striking in the meantime. Therefore a line of subtle discretion is stretched over this earth, when by showing to each soul the examples of preceding fathers, virtue is both usefully kindled for operation, and sometimes more usefully tempered.

[Vet. XIII.] 30. Care must be taken lest, under the name of discretion, one's own interests be served.---But when for a little while the fortitude of zeal is set aside from work, there is need of deep consideration, lest perhaps by no means by the counsel of the common good, but by one's own fear or by the study of any ambition, one should cease from the exercise of virtue. Which surely when it is done, service is no longer rendered to

dispensation, but to fault. Whence it must be solicitously cared for that when any one dispenses an undertaken business with the cessation of virtue, he should first inspect himself in the root of the heart, lest through this he should greedily desire something for himself, or through this should obey himself alone as a fearful person; and that which follows in work should become perverse for that reason, because it is not generated from a right intention of thought. Whence well in the Gospel the Truth says: The lamp of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be simple, thy whole body shall be light. But if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be dark (Matt. 6:22). For what is expressed by the eye but the intention of the heart preventing its own work? which before it exercises itself in action, already contemplates this which it desires. And what is designated by the appellation of the body but each particular action, which follows its own intention as if an eye looking on? The eye therefore is the lamp of the body, because the merits of the action are illustrated through the ray of a good intention. And if thy eye be simple, thy whole body shall be light, because if we intend rightly through simplicity of thought, a good work is effected, even if it should seem to be less good. And if thy eye be evil, thy whole body shall be dark, because when anything even right is done with a perverse intention, although it be seen to shine before men, yet it is obscured in the examination of the internal Judge. Whence also rightly it is subjoined: See therefore lest the light which is in

thee be darkness. If the light which is in thee be darkness, how great shall that darkness be (Ibid. 23)? because if we darken this which we believe ourselves to do well from an evil intention, how great are those evils which we are not ignorant to be evil even when we do them? And if we discern nothing there where we hold as it were the light of discretion, with what blindness do we stumble into those things which we perpetrate without discretion? With vigilant care therefore through all works our intention must be weighed by us, so that it may desire nothing temporal in those things which it does, but may fix itself entirely in the solidity of eternity, lest if the fabric of our action be placed outside the foundation, it should be dissolved as the earth gapes. Whence here also fitly it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

VERS. 6.---Upon what are its bases fastened?

31. The bases of the soul are its intentions.---For the bases of each soul are its own intentions. For as a fabric rests upon columns, and columns upon bases, so our life subsists in virtues, but virtues in the intimate intention. And because it is written: Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 3:11), then the bases are on the foundation when our intentions are strengthened in Christ. In vain indeed do bases erect high buildings upon themselves, if they themselves do not consist in the solidity of the foundation, because indeed they do in vain however supreme works, if the intentions of the

hearts are deflected outside the certainty of eternity, and do not seek the rewards of the true life; and they build up so much heavier damages of ruin upon themselves, by how much they carry higher buildings outside the foundation, because when they do not intend toward the rewards of eternal life, the more they erect themselves as if in virtues, the deeper they fall into the pit of vain glory. Not therefore is it to be weighed what the bases sustain, but where they are sustained, because surely human hearts are divinely scrutinized, not only what they do, but what they seek in their works. Whence when Paul described the strict Judge, and narrated the goods of actions, saying: Who will render to every man according to his works, to them indeed, according to patience in good work, glory and incorruption (Rom. 2:6); because, by naming the patience of good work he had said as it were the whole fabric of elect action, he immediately subtly inquired where the bases of the same fabric consisted, saying: To them that seek glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life (Ibid. 7). As if he said openly: And if some show patience in good work, they do not receive glory and incorruption, if they do not fix the intentions of the heart, that is, the bases of the fabric, in the foundation, because indeed God does not inhabit even an edifice of an honest life which, being placed outside Himself, He does not Himself sustain.

32. They are to be directed to the hope of eternity.---Because therefore the intentions of each elect soul lean upon the hope of eternity,

rightly by the Lord's voice it is said of this earth: Upon what are its bases fastened? As if He said openly, Unless upon Me. To whom while each just soul intends, all that it does temporally, it undoubtedly constructs in Me not temporally. But because we are then more robustly solidified in the foundation, when we both follow the words of God in exterior precepts, and weigh them by understanding more subtly in the intimate senses, rightly it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XIII

[Vet. XIV].

IBID.---Or who laid the corner stone thereof?

33. Christ the corner stone, because He joined in Himself the active and contemplative life.---For the corner stone in sacred eloquence is a twofold understanding. Which is then divinely laid, when it is by no means bound by the strict judgment in the darkness of its own ignorance; but enjoys a certain liberty, while in the precepts of God it suffices either to act by executing exterior things, or to feel by contemplating internal things. To which our understanding would never rise, if our Creator Himself had not come to take upon Him our nature. Who is called a corner stone in one way, because He joined two peoples in Himself; and in another way, because He showed in Himself examples of both lives joined together, namely, the active and the contemplative. For the contemplative life is far distant from the active; but our incarnate Redeemer coming,

while He exhibited both, associated both in Himself. For when He worked miracles in the city, but continued all night in prayer on the mountain, He gave an example to His faithful ones, that they should neither neglect the care of their neighbors through the study of contemplation, nor again, being too immoderately bound by the care of their neighbors, abandon the studies of contemplation; but should so join the mind by partitioning it in both, that neither the love of neighbor should impede the love of God, nor the love of God, because it transcends, should cast away the love of neighbor. Because therefore the Mediator of God and man appeared to the human heart that was ignorant of what it should do, who both by acting should dispose transitory things, and by contemplating should show from whence all things depend, it is rightly said: Or who laid the corner stone thereof? As if the Lord said openly: Unless I, who showed in time for the saving of men the Only-begotten whom I begat without time, in whose life they might learn that even diverse studies of living do not disagree. And it is to be noted that He asserts not that He sent Him forth (emisisse), but that He let Him down (dimisisse), because surely the Son, taking human nature, came to the lowest from the highest. Because even the elect angels wondered at the mystery of His incarnation, who were not redeemed by the same mystery, it is rightly subjoined:

CAPUT XIV

[Rec. VII].

VERS. 7.---When the morning stars praised me together.

34. Why the angels are called morning stars.---For because the nature of rational spirits is believed to have been the first created in time, not undeservedly are the angels called morning stars. Which if it is so, while the earth was invisible and uncomposed, while darkness was upon the abyss (Gen. 1:2), they by existing preceded the coming day of the following age through the light of wisdom. Nor is it to be heard negligently what is added, Together, because indeed the morning stars praise the power of the Redeemer even with the evening stars, while the elect angels even with the men redeemed at the end of the world glorify the bounty of supernal grace. For they themselves, that they might kindle us to the praise of the Creator, as we have said above, the light having arisen through the flesh, cried out: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will (Luke 2:14). Together therefore they praise, because they accommodate the voices of their exultation to our redemption. Together they praise; because while they behold us being received, they rejoice that their number is being filled up. Who also perhaps are mentioned as morning stars, because they have often been sent to exhort men; and while they announce the coming morning, they put to flight the darkness of the present life from human hearts. But behold, the angels praise the divine power, because

the vision itself of such great clarity expands them. But we who are redeemed, but yet are still burdened by the corruption of the flesh, by what virtue do we praise the gift which we receive? For how will the tongue be able to say, what our mind is not sufficient to feel? It follows:

CAPUT XV

IBID.---And all the sons of God shouted for joy.

35. What jubilation is, and why it befits men, not angels.---For jubilation is so called when the joy of the heart is not filled by the efficacy of the mouth; but in certain ways the joy breaks forth, which he who rejoices is neither able to conceal nor to fulfill. Let the angels therefore praise, who already see the altitude of such great clarity in the highest places. But let men jubilate, who still sustain the narrowness of their mouth in the lower places. Which things because the Lord knew certainly were to be, He does not so much insinuate what is to be done, as He narrates what is done. But what do we do, that when the good jubilate concerning the mystery of their redemption, envy inflames the bad; while the elect profit, the reprobate are excited to the madness of fury, and they persecute the nascent goods because they are unwilling to imitate them? But nevertheless among these also He who redeemed does not leave us. For it is written: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10:13). For our Creator knows when He

should permit the storm of persecution to rise, and when He should repress it as it rises. He knows how to restrain for our protection what He permits to go out against us for our exercise, so that the raging storm may wash us and not drown us. Whence also it follows:

CAPUT XVI

[Vet. XV, Rec. VIII].

VERS. 8.---Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

36. The world raging against the saints shut up by God. The earthly princes being humiliated, through them the Lord raised the Church above the summit of the world.---For what do we understand by the sea but the world, what by the womb but the conception of carnal thought? For in this place by the name of womb the hidden and malicious thought of carnal men is designated. Which womb does not conceive the substance of the body for bringing forth offspring, but for fulfilling wickedness the cause of sorrow. Concerning this womb of the heart of the iniquitous it is elsewhere said: He hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity (Psalm 7:14). Through this womb the wicked conceive when they think evil things. Through this womb they bring forth when they work the evil things which they have thought. Therefore the sea brake forth as if issuing out of the womb, when the waves of secular threats, conceived from the iniquity

of carnal thought, raged unto the destruction of holy Church. But by the author God, this sea was shut up with doors, because against the swellings of persecutors holy men were opposed as certain doors, that by their miracles and reverence the wrath of persecutors might be broken. For the Lord having humiliated earthly princes, through them He raised holy Church above the summit of the world, and restrained the impulses of the raging sea, the power of the same Church being erected. But what the Lord did to this raging sea, let us hear. It follows:

CAPUT XVII

[Rec. IX.]

VERS. 9.---When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it.

37. God constrained the malice of persecutors who savor of childish things.---The raging sea is clothed with a cloud, because the cruelty of persecutors is dressed in the veil of its own folly. For by the interposition of the thick darkness of their own infidelity, it is not sufficient to see the clear light of truth; and that which it does through the impulse of cruelty, it does not acknowledge through the merit of its own blindness. For if they had known, as the Apostle says, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8). This cloud is wont not only to press upon infidels placed outside, but also to darken some who live carnally within the Church. Whence

holy men, who also compassionate the negligence of others, and think that they themselves suffer what they feel others endure, say to God in prayer: Thou hast opposed a cloud, that prayer may not pass through (Lam. 3:44). As if they said openly: To our mind accustomed to earthly pleasures Thou dost object by a just judgment the phantasms of its own cares, by which Thou dost confound it in the very intention of its own prayer; and her whom Thou knowest to be given up to lowest desires, Thou dost rightly reverberate blinded from beholding the clarity of Thy light, so that when she is intended toward Thee, she is reflected from Thee by the very cloud of her own thoughts; and she who assiduously thinks these earthly things because she wills, should also tolerate these in prayer when she wills not. Because therefore the very wickedness of persecutors is constrained by supernal dispensation, lest it should be unbridled against holy men as much as it would, after He said: When I made the cloud the garment thereof; He aptly subjoined: And thick darkness a swaddlingband for it. For by the swaddlingbands (pannis) of infancy the feet and arms are constrained, lest they should be tossed hither and thither in dissolute liberty. Because therefore the persecutors of holy Church, unquiet by instability of heart, and given up to this world, do not savor of things of great age, but of childish things, who indeed are constrained by obscurity and thick darkness, not by understanding of supernal judgment, lest they should be able to persecute as much as they will, they

are reported as wrapped in the swaddlingbands of infancy, because, as has been said, they savor indeed of childish things, but being constrained by divine dispensation, they do not extend their arms whither they will, and if they lightly desire to perpetrate all evils, they are by no means permitted to fulfill all things which they desire. It follows:

VERS. 10.---I compassed it about with my boundaries.

The Lord compasses the sea about with His boundaries, because He modifies the wraths of persecutors by the dispensation of His judgments, so that the swollen wave of insane fervor may be broken upon the level shore of hidden dispensation. It follows:

CAPUT XVIII

[Vet. XVI].

VERS. 10, 11.---And I set bars and doors, and said: Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.

38. Holy preachers as doors opposed to the raging sea of the world, could be beaten by waves, but not broken, Christ strengthening them. These doors are open to the humble, and closed to the proud.---What is designated by the doors but holy preachers, what by the bar but the incarnate Lord? Who indeed opposed these doors against the impulse of the raging sea as much more powerful, as He strengthened them by His own observation. For because these doors

of holy Church were solidified by the opposition of this bar, they were able indeed to be beaten by the waves, but they could not be broken, so that the wave of persecution might strike them exteriorly, but by no means penetrate the internal parts of their heart. And because holy doctors are indeed open by preaching to those following, but closed by their authority to those resisting, not undeservedly are they called doors, that is, open to the conversation of the humble, and closed to the terrors of the proud. Not undeservedly are they called doors, because they both open the entrance to the faithful, and again oppose themselves to the perfidious lest they enter. Let us consider what a door of the Church Peter stood forth, who received Cornelius investigating the faith, and repelled Simon seeking miracles for a price. Saying to the former: Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), he benignly opened the secrets of the kingdom. Saying to the latter: Thy money perish with thee (Acts 8:20), through the sentence of strict damnation he shuts the entrance of the heavenly court. What are all the apostles but doors of holy Church, when they hear by the voice of their Redeemer: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained (John 20:22)? As if it were said to them openly: Through you they shall enter to Me to whom you open yourselves; and they shall be repelled to whom you are shut. Therefore while the sea rages, the Lord opposes the bar and doors,

because while the storm of persecution expands itself in the world from bitter and perfidious hearts, God exalts the glory of His Only-begotten and the reverence of His preachers; and while the mysteries of divine fortitude become known, He breaks the waves of fury in the impious.

39. By divine providence the storm of persecution either leaps forth or rests.---But it is well said: Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further. Because indeed there is a measure of hidden judgment, both when the storm of persecution should leap forth, and when it should rest, lest either not being agitated it should not exercise the elect, or not being moderated it should drown them in the depth. But when the knowledge of faith is extended even to the persecutors, the swelling of the troubled sea is stilled; and there the sea breaks its waves, because coming to the knowledge of truth, it blushes for all that it has done wickedly. For the broken wave is thrown back upon itself, because the vanquished wickedness is also accused by the thought of its own heart; and as it were it receives the very force which it had brought, because from the depravity which it had carried on it feels the stings of its own guilt. Whence it is said to some through Paul: What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? (Rom. 6:21). As if it were said: Why did the waves of your depravity lift themselves on high, which now being broken in themselves, whence they had inflated you when perverse, thence confound you when converted? Rightly therefore is it said: And here

shalt thou break thy proud waves. But that which is said a second time concerning doors in this conclusion of the sea, after the manner of sacred eloquence, a thing once said is repeated for confirmation.

40. By the sea can be understood the world, to which God opposed doors, the precepts of the law and of the New Testament.---But if in this place we ought to take the sea not specifically as the crowd of persecutors, but generally as the world, the Lord opposed doors against this sea twice, because He gave both first to the human race the precepts of the law, and afterwards the testament of new grace. He shut the impulse of this sea by doors being objected twice, because those whom He assumed to the service of His worship, He both first coerced from idols by the given law, and afterwards corrected from carnal understanding by revealed grace. The sea received doors twice, because God first prohibited the human race from works of iniquity, but afterwards He also constrained them from the fault of thought. Let us see how the Lord imposes the first doors upon the swelling sea. For behold, through the Law it is said: Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness (Exod. 20:13, 14). Let us see how the Lord shuts this sea by the second doors. Behold, in the Gospel He says: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his

heart (Matt. 5:27, 28). And again it is said: Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that hate you (Ibid. 5:43, 44). He therefore who first prohibits the wickednesses of work, and afterwards exhausts the faults of the heart, surely imposes doors twice upon the swelling sea, lest it should pass the compassed shores of justice.

[Vet. XVII.] 41. Laws were placed for the world still near to its origin. To which nevertheless God had not yet shone. The world wrapped under the darkness of the letter as it were in swaddling-bands of infancy. First bound by fear, afterwards having attained liberty. The old law imperfect and weak.---But well when He said: Who shut up the sea with doors, He immediately also added the time, saying: When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb. Because indeed He then met the human race with the precepts of the law, when the world was still near to its origin, and as it were was issuing from its own birth to the progress of carnal life. For to issue out of the womb is to appear carnally in the light of present glory. And it is rightly subjoined: When I made the cloud the garment thereof. Because indeed God did not then bring Himself to men by an open showing, but while He snatched them from the error of perfidy, He nevertheless did not open to them the clarity of His own light; He as it were took them out of darkness, but still clothed them with a cloud, so that they should both leave the former acts of depravity, and yet should not

yet see more certainly the future goods. Whence also it is aptly subjoined: And thick darkness a swaddlingband for it. For while He taught the rude peoples not by open preaching of the spirit, but bound them by the precepts of the letter in figured speech, He wrapped them savoring still of weak things in the thick darkness of His words as it were in swaddlingbands of infancy, so that being bound by grosser mandates they might grow, lest they being evilly free should perish in their pleasures. Whom while not yet charity, but still fear bound to the way of justice, divine dispensation as it were pressed them that it might nourish them. For the weak people while they bore unwillingly the swaddlingbands (pannis) of the precepts, arrived at a firmer state from their very binding. For because fear first coerced them from fault, they competently afterwards went out into the liberty of the spirit. These swaddlingbands of infancy, which He gave to those beginning, the Lord Himself reproved through the prophet, saying: I gave them statutes that were not good (Ezek. 20:25). For evil things as it were cease to be evil by comparison with worse, and good things as it were are not good by comparison with better. For as to Judaea more wickedly delinquent than Sodom and Samaria it is said: Thou hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done (Ezek. 16:51), so by better precepts of the New Testament following, the good precepts which were given to the rude are remembered as not good. For neither could minds adhering to the use of carnal life be

raised from the lowest things, unless they profited by preaching led gradually. Hence indeed it is that, being placed in Egypt, by a pious and just moderation their latent concupiscence is condescended to, and the golden and silver vessels of their neighbors being taken away, they are commanded to depart (Exod. 3:22). Who being led to mount Sinai, the law being received, soon hear: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house (Exod. 20:17). And hence it is that in the same law they are commanded to exact an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth (Exod. 21:24), and yet sometime, grace being revealed, they are commanded being struck to offer the other cheek (Matt. 5:39). For because wrath always exacts more in vengeance than injury received, while they learn not to render evils more manifoldly, they might sometime learn to tolerate them even multiplied spontaneously. Hence it is that He prohibited the same rude people from certain things, but certain things He preserved for them in former use, but these very things nevertheless He composed in the figure of a better life. For they sacrificed brute animals to idols in Egypt, and He afterwards retained for them the sacrifice of animals in use, but He forbade the worship of idols, so that while they lost something of their use, their weakness might be consoled by this, that they had something of their use. But by a wonderful dispensation of counsel, that which the Lord retained for them of carnal custom, He turned more powerfully into a figure of the spirit. For what do the sacrifices of those animals designate but the

death of the Only-begotten? What do the sacrifices of those animals signify but the extinction of our carnal life? Whence therefore the imbecility of the rude people is condescended to, thence a greater fortitude of the spirit is announced to them through the shadowed species of allegories. Rightly therefore is it said: And thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, because whence it bore the weak things of its tenderness, thence He made a high cloud of spiritual significations.

[Vet. XVIII.] 42. Precepts of the new life opposed to the immoderate movements of the mind, strengthened by the examples of Christ.--- Because He girded it by the limit of precepts from immoderate wanderings of the mind, He rightly subjoins: I compassed it about with my boundaries. And because He coerced the movements of this human race by the Mediator being sent, He aptly subjoins: And I set bars and doors. For He set bars and doors, because our Redeemer being sent against the faults of the delinquent, He confirmed the predications of the new life. For closed doors are strengthened by the opposed bar. Therefore God opposed the bar, because against the lascivious movements of the human race He sent the Only-begotten, who solidified by acting the spiritual precepts which He taught by speaking. But well is subjoined: And said: Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. For this sea had transcended the former doors, because the wave of human swelling leaped over the bars of the opposed law. But after the world found

the Only-begotten opposed to itself, it broke the impulse of its own elation, and was not able to pass over, because by His fortitude it found the boundary of its own fury closed. Whence it is rightly said through the Prophet: The sea saw it, and fled (Psalm 114:3). His open passions can also not inconveniently be understood by the doors. To which He set a bar from the hidden, because He strengthened them from the invisible divinity. Against which the waves of the world come, but being broken they leap asunder, because the proud by seeing them despise them, but by experiencing their powers they greatly fear. For while the human race first mocked the passions of the Only-begotten, afterwards it was struck with fear; as it were against opposed doors, after the manner of a sea to be dashed, it both came elated with swelling, and being broken by virtue it leaped asunder.

But because for this reason this is said to blessed Job, that the glory of his heart concerning so many virtues might be pressed down, lest he should perhaps attribute to himself that which he is not ignorant he stands sublimely, we consider with how much edification of him these things are said, if we also discuss these things morally. Let Him say therefore:

CAPUT XIX.

VERS. 8.---Who shut up the sea with doors?

43. The human heart a boiling sea, which God alone is able to coerce.---What is the sea, but our heart turbid with fury, bitter with strifes, swollen

with the elation of pride, obscure with the fraud of malice? Which sea how much it rages, he attends whosoever understands in himself the hidden temptations of thoughts. For behold, we already leave perverse things, we already adhere to right desires, we already cut off depraved works without; but nevertheless we are secretly fatigued within by that storm of the old life with which we came hither, which unless the bars of immense fear should constrain by respect of judgment and dread of eternal torment, all the foundations of the work built upon us would have utterly collapsed. For if that which rages inwardly through suggestion, should break forth through deliberation, the fabric of our life would have lain utterly overturned. For being conceived in iniquity, and brought forth in sin (Psalm 51:5), we bring hither with us a fight through the molestations of innate corruption, which we may overcome with labor. Whence also it is rightly said of this sea: When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb. For the womb of depraved thought is youth. Concerning which the Lord says through Moses: For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth (Gen. 8:21). For the evil of corruption, which each one of us took from the rise of carnal desires, he exercises in the progress of age; and unless the hand of divine dread should repress this more quickly, fault suddenly devours in the depth every good of created nature. Let no one therefore attribute to himself the victory of his thoughts, since Truth says: Who shut up the sea with doors, when

it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? Because unless from the very primordial of thought divine grace should retain the waves of the heart, the raging sea would undoubtedly have overwhelmed the earth of the human mind with the storms of temptations, so that being infused with salt waves it would dry up, that is, being delighted with the pernicious pleasures of the flesh it would perish. Only the Lord therefore shuts the sea with doors, who objects the bars of inspired dread to the depraved movements of the heart. But because we are prohibited from following those things which we see, because we are beaten back from the delight of corporeal things, it is pleasing even to lift up the eyes of the mind to invisible things, and to see these very things which we are commanded to follow. But what do we do? Those things are not yet open to weak gazes. Behold we are called to the love of them, but nevertheless we are restrained from the vision, because even if sometimes we behold something stealthily and slightly, we are still too much in thick darkness under an uncertain sight. Whence it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XX

[Old XIX].

VERS. 9.---When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and wrapped it in darkness as in the swaddling clothes of infancy.

44. This sea is wrapped in shadows and darkness.---This tumultuous sea, namely our heart

fluctuating with thoughts, is clothed with a cloud, because lest it should purely behold internal quiet, it is darkened by the confusion of its own restlessness. This sea is wrapped in darkness as if in the swaddling clothes of infancy, because it is bound from contemplating sublime things by the still tender senses of its own infirmity. Let us see Paul wrapped in a certain darkness as if in the swaddling clothes of infancy, while he says: We see now through a mirror in a riddle, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known (1 Cor. 13:12). Who, if he did not discern himself an infant for comprehending heavenly things, would in no way have premised the comparison of his age to these things, saying: When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. Then therefore we ascend to youthful strength, when with a strong sense we see that life toward which we tend; but now because the edge of our intention is beaten back from the internal light by its own infirmity, our mind is held bound by the swaddling clothes of infancy. Where it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 10.---I compassed it about with my bounds.

45. What bounds are set to this sea.---For the Lord compasses this sea with His bounds, because He humbles our heart, still turbulent with the molestation and care of its own corruption, under the measure of contemplation, so that al-

though it may desire more, yet it may not ascend further than is granted to it. Or certainly the Lord compasses this sea with His bounds, because He mitigates our heart, swollen with temptations, by the hidden distributions of gifts, now acting so that a depraved suggestion may not come to delight, now so that a depraved delight may not break forth even to consent. He therefore who regards the unlawful movements of the heart, and in some things prohibits them from coming even to consent, but in some things even restrains them from delight, undoubtedly imposes bounds on the raging sea, so that it may by no means go out in work, but that within the bosom of the mind the murmuring wave of temptations may dash itself. Which because it is then powerfully restrained, when it is met by the delight of God and by inspired virtues, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII

VERS. 10, 11.---And I set my bar and doors, and said: Hitherto thou shalt come, and shalt go no further: and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves.

46. That raging sea dissipates virtues, unless they be strengthened by charity.---For what do we understand morally by the doors, but the virtues; what by the bar, but the strength of charity? These doors, therefore, namely the virtues of operations, the raging sea dissipates, unless charity placed from the secret of the mind should bind them together. But easily every good of virtues is destroyed when the temptation of the

heart rushes in, unless it be solidified from within by fixed charity. Whence also Paul in his preachings, while he opposed certain doors of virtues to the sea of temptation, immediately added to those same doors as if the strength of a bar, saying: But above all these things having charity, which is the bond of perfection (Coloss. 3:14). For charity is called the bond of perfection, because every good that is done is undoubtedly bound by it lest it perish. For any work whatsoever is more quickly plucked away by the tempter, if it be found loosed from the bond of charity; but if the mind be constrained by the love of God and of neighbor, when the movements of temptations shall have suggested any unjust things to it, that same love opposes itself as an obstacle to them, and breaks the waves of depraved persuasion by the doors of virtues and the bar of internal love. [Old XX.] Because therefore the Lord by the fortitude of inspired charity represses the vices rising in the heart, He restrains the impetus of the rising sea by locked bars. Wrath perhaps exasperates in secret; but lest heavenly quiet be lost, the office of the tongue is withdrawn from the perturbation of the mind, lest that should go out even to the voice, which sounds tumultuous in the bosom of the heart. Lust is kindled in hidden thoughts; but lest the mind should lose heavenly cleanness, it chastises those members which could serve it, lest the stench of the heart should exhale even to the corruption of the body. Avarice stimulates; but lest the mind should lack the heavenly kingdom, it binds itself within the bars of parsimony,

content with its own, lest it should dilate itself in a depraved work, and the heat of internal concupiscence should sweat out even to exterior acts. Pride puffs up; but lest it should lose true height, each one by considering that he is dust humbles himself from the height of conceived elation, striving undoubtedly lest that which he tolerates in the suggestion of thought should break forth into the exercise of work. Well therefore is it said: I set my bar and doors, and said: Hitherto thou shalt come, and shalt go no further, and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves, because while each elect one is both tempted by vices, and yet resists doing evil suggestions, he is held as a shut up sea. Which although it strikes the mind within with tumultuous waves of thoughts, yet it does not exceed the appointed shores of living well. Which sea indeed raises itself in swelling, but while it is dashed against the fixed deliberation of the heart, it returns broken. Let blessed Job therefore, lest he should attribute to himself that he stands bravely against the storms of the heart, hear the divine voice: Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb, and the rest. As if it were openly said to him: In vain do you weigh yourself exteriorly in good works, if you do not consider Me interiorly, who restrain in you the waves of temptation. For that you may be able to bear the waves in work, is of My power, who break the waves of temptation in the heart.

Book twenty

NINE.

Two and twenty verses of chapter 38, from 12 to 33 inclusive, are explained; and many things are taught, especially concerning the arts and snares of Satan, concerning grace, concerning predestination, reprobation, and the hidden judgments of God.

CHAPTER I

1. The Son of God unknown to us in His eternal birth, willed to be born in time, that He might offer Himself to be imitated.---The Lord our God Jesus Christ, in that He is the power and wisdom of God, was born of the Father before all times (1 Cor. 1:24); or rather because He neither began to be born, nor ceased, let us say more truly always born. We cannot however say always being born, lest He should seem imperfect. But indeed that He may be able to be designated as eternal and perfect, let us say both always and born, so that both born may pertain to perfection, and always to eternity, so that in whatever way that essence without time may be designated by temporal speech; although by this very thing which we call perfect, we deviate much from the expression of

that truth, because what was not made cannot be said to be perfect. And yet the Lord condescending to the words of our infirmity, says: Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matth. 5:48). In that divine birth therefore He could not be known by the human race; wherefore He came in humanity that He might be seen, He willed to be seen that He might be imitated. Which birth of the flesh seemed despicable to the wise men of the world; for they contemned the infirm things of His humanity, judging these unworthy of God. To whom man was so much more a debtor, by how much for him God undertook even unworthy things. For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Cor. 1:21). As if He should say: When the world by no means found God, who is wisdom, by its own wisdom, it pleased that it should know God made man through the foolishness of humanity, so that His wisdom might descend to our foolish things, and our blindness illuminated might see the light of heavenly prudence by the clay of His flesh. Born therefore of the Father without time, He deigned to be born of a mother in time, so that by this, that He should conclude His rising between beginning and end, He might open to the eyes of the human mind the rising which is neither taken from a beginning, nor narrowed by an end. Whence it is well said now to blessed Job:

CHAPTER II

[Rec. II.]

VERS. 12.---Hast thou since thy birth commanded the morning, and shewed the dawning of the day its place?

2. At the rising of the Lord, the Church like the dawn turned from darkness into light.---You understand, as I have done. For the rising of His divinity has no before or after. To which while to be is always through eternity, while it circumscribes all that slides away, it closes within itself the discourse of times. But the rising of His humanity, because it both began and ceased, received from time to have both before and after. But because, while He Himself undertook the shadows of our temporality, He infused into us the light of His eternity, rightly after this rising which the Creator made for Himself in time, the dawn knew its place without time. For because the morning (diluculum) or dawn (aurora) is turned from darkness into light, not undeservedly by the name of morning or dawn is the whole Church of the elect designated. For while she is led from the night of infidelity to the light of faith, like the dawn she is opened into day after darkness by the splendor of heavenly brightness. Whence also it is well said in the Song of Songs: Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising (Cant. 6:9)? For the holy Church, desiring the rewards of heavenly life, is called dawn, because while she leaves the darkness of sins, she shines with the light of justice.

[Old II.] 3. As long as we live, it is dawn, not perfect day.---We have however something more subtle to weigh, considering the quality of the morning or dawn. For the dawn or morning announce indeed that the night has passed, yet they do not show the integral brightness of the day; but while they expel the one, they receive the other, they hold light mixed with darkness. What therefore are we all who follow the truth in this life, but dawn or morning? because we already do some things which are of the light, and yet in some things we are not yet without the remains of darkness. For it is said to God through the Prophet: In thy sight shall no man living be justified (Psalm 143:2). And again it is written: In many things we all offend (James 3:2). Paul also says: I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (Rom. 7:23). Where therefore the law of sin contends with the law of mind, it is certainly still dawn, because the light which has already broken forth has not yet utterly suppressed the passing darkness. It is still dawn, because while the law of the flesh strikes the law of the mind, and the law of the mind the law of the flesh, light and shadow conflict with one another in turn. Whence again Paul when he said: The night is far spent (Rom. 13:12), by no means added, The day is come, but The day is at hand. For he who, after the departure of the night, suggests that the day has not yet come but is at hand, demonstrates

that he is undoubtedly before the sun after the darkness still in the dawn.

4. It will be day, when no shadows of sin shall remain.---Then however the holy Church of the elect will be fully day, when the mixed shadow of sin shall no longer be in her. Then she will be fully day, when she shall have shone with the perfect fervor of internal light. Then she will be fully day, when tolerating no tempting memory of her evils, she shall hide from herself even all remains of darkness. Whence also well this dawn is shown as if still in transition, when it is said: And shewed the dawning of the day its place. For to whom its place is shown, it is certainly called from one thing to another. For what is the place of the dawn, but the perfect brightness of the eternal vision? To which when she shall have come having been led, she already has nothing of the darkness of the night passed. But now still sustaining the molestations of temptations, because through the intention of the heart the Church hastens to another thing, as the dawn she tends to her place. Which place if she did not discern in her mind, she would remain in the night of this life. But since she daily strives to be perfected, and to be increased daily into the light, she already beholds her place, and seeks the sun to shine fully for her. The dawn considers her place, when the holy soul burns for contemplating the species of her Creator. The dawn was busy to reach her place, when David said: My soul hath thirsted for the living God, when shall I come and appear before the face of God (Psalm 42:2)?

Truth showed the place of the dawn, when it said through Solomon: What hath the wise man more than the fool; and what hath the poor man, but to go thither where life is (Eccl. 6:8)? Which place indeed the Lord showed also to the fathers preceding His incarnation after His rising, because unless through the spirit of prophecy they should know the King of the heavenly country to be incarnated, they would not see how desirable were the goods of the same country. Truth laid open the place of the dawn, when it sought the Father in the presence of the disciples, saying: Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am (John 17:24). He showed the dawn her place, when He said: Wheresoever the body shall be, thither will the eagles also be gathered together (Matth. 24:28). To this place which she had known the dawn was hastening to arrive, when Paul said that he had a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ: And again: To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Philip. 1:21). And again: We know that if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1). But well He asserts that He showed the dawn its own place after His rising, because the blessedness of the future retribution, before He himself should become known through the body, He contained in the understanding of a few. But when He undertook the infirm things of human birth, He dilated the knowledge of the coming brightness in the love of an innumerable multitude. But since mercy so

performs the mystery of the divine work, that yet wrath also accompanies it, in so far as the hidden Arbiter looking upon some redeems them, and deserting others destroys them, because we have known how He illuminates the elect through His incarnation, let us hear now how He damns the reprobate. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERS. 13.---Hast thou taken hold of the ends of the earth, shaking them, and hast thou shaken the wicked out of it?

5. The Lord chose the abject and the humble.---The Lord took hold of the ends of the earth, because at the end of the ages He came to the synagogue already destitute and subject to foreign kings; and He shook the wicked out of it, because rejecting the spiritual preachings of faith, He repelled them even from the glory of carnal sacrifice. Or certainly He took hold of the ends of the earth, because from Judea He chose a few abject and humble men (Matth. 4:18, seq.). He took hold of the ends of the earth, because deserting the doctors of the law, He undertook fishermen. And while He holds its ends, He shakes the wicked out of it, because while He strengthens the weak faithful, He damns the strong unfaithful in it. But rightly also He added shaking, because through His coming He moved with immense dread even the hearts of the reprobate. For they had been shaken who said: We prevail nothing,

behold the whole world is gone after him (John 12:19). But a thing which is shaken is fatigued being led hither and thither. Judea therefore had been shaken, which through some was saying of Christ: That he is a good man (John 7:12). And through others she resisted, saying: Nay, but he deceiveth the people (Ibid.). Through some she said: Unless this man were of God, he could do nothing (John 9:33). And at the extreme through others she cries out: If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee (John 18:30). The reprobate indeed were shaken, but not prostrated, while now admiring they discerned miracles, now despising they mocked the reproaches of infirmity. Or were they not shaken, who said: How long dost thou hold our soul in suspense? if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly (John 10:24). Or certainly He shook and held the ends of the earth, because when He terrified the weak hearts of the humble with pious fear, He by no means left them by strict judgment. For thence the multitude of them that believe in God stood more robustly, whence being humbled in itself it trembled. For that God holds him whom He shakes, He insinuates through the prophet, saying: Upon whom shall my spirit rest, but upon him that is humble and quiet, and trembleth at my words (Isai. 66:2)? That He holds him whom He shakes, is intimated by Solomon attesting, because he says: Blessed is the man that is always fearful; but he that is of a hard mind shall fall into evil (Prov. 28:14). Therefore because the Lord held the ends of Judea in the apostles, and out

of it He reprobated the Scribes and Pharisees and pontiffs, the merit of their impiety requiring it, let us hear what is still subjoined concerning their damnation. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 14.---It shall be restored as the clay the seal, and shall stand as a garment.

6. The Jews first liberated from the work of bricks, while they savor earthly things, returned again to bricks.---What else did the Lord find the Israelitish people but clay, whom He found serving with bricks in Egypt, devoted to the services of the Gentiles? Whom while He led to the land of promise by so many miracles (Exod. 5, seq.), while He filled them having been led with the knowledge of His science, while He conferred so many secrets of mysteries upon them through prophecy; what else did He make them but the seal of a mystery to be preserved? For divine prophecy itself contained shut up whatever Truth revealed of itself in the end. But while after so many divine secrets, after so many miracles perceived at the coming of its Redeemer, it loved the earth more than the truth, saying through the priests: If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation (John 11:48), it returned as if to those bricks which it had left in Egypt; and she who had already been made the seal of God, bent herself again to that which she had deserted; and she exhibited herself as clay after the seal in the eyes of the truth, when through

the malice of impiety she lost the mysteries of the word received, and chose to savor only earthly things which defile.

7. Serving the letter alone, they willed not to adhere to God through charity.---Where it is aptly subjoined: And shall stand as a garment. For unpolished and coarser garments even when they have been put on, because they do not adhere well applied to the members of the one putting them on, are said to stand. Judea therefore concerning the knowledge of the truth even when she seemed to serve, stood as a garment, because through exterior mandates she showed herself to serve the Lord, but she willed not to adhere to Him through the understanding of charity. While she held only the letter in the precepts of God, and by no means joined herself to the intimate senses through the spirit, she did not adhere as if to Him who had put her on. Where also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER V.

VERS. 15.---From the wicked their light shall be taken away.

8. They lost the knowledge of the law, because they refused to believe the truth.---Because while they refuse to believe the truth, they lose the knowledge of the law forever; and while they are proud of the law received, they are undoubtedly blinded concerning the glory of their science. For it is written: Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not (Psalm 69:23). And again it is written: Make the heart of this people fat, and make their

ears heavy (Isai. 6:10). And again it is written: For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind (John 9:39). And because they extolled themselves concerning the works of the law against the founder of the law, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER VI.

IBID.---And the high arm shall be broken.

9. Proud observation of the law reproved.---For the high arm is broken, when, the grace of faith being preached, the proud operation of the law is reproved, when it is said: By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Rom. 3:20).

10. What it means that God both holds and shakes the ends of the Church.---All these things, however, can be understood in another way. For sacred Scripture is accustomed to call the Church "the earth." Therefore the Lord holds and shakes the ends of the earth, because He permits the last things of His Church to be troubled by the most cruel persecution through the coming of Antichrist, yet in permitting it He does not desert her. Sometimes the Lord holds this earth and does not shake it; sometimes He holds and shakes it, because at one time He possesses it in the tranquil peace of faith, at another He commands it to be moved by the impulse of persecution.

11. In the persecutions of the Church false Christians are shaken out like chaff.---Rightly, then, when He said: Hast thou held, shaking the ends of the earth, He immediately added: And

hast Thou shaken the ungodly out of it? For as Paul witnesses, there are many in it who confess they know God, but in their deeds they deny Him (Titus 1:16). The ungodly, therefore, the Lord shakes out of her, because those whom secret vices now possess, will then fall into the abyss of open infidelity; and they pass into the heap of chaff, when they are moved by the breeze of that temptation. And although they now cover themselves under the appearance of faith within the bosom of the floor, then surely they will fly back from the heap of grains by the winnowing-fan of the strict examination.

12. In them the seal of faith is turned into clay.---Whence also it is aptly subjoined: The seal shall be restored as clay. As if He said openly: These who now seem a seal in the bosom of the Church, then before the eyes of all shall be restored as clay, that is, they no longer deceive the judgments of men by the profession of religion, but are demonstrated to savor of earthly things. For sacred Scripture is accustomed to call faith a "seal" (*signaculum*), and iniquity "clay" (*lutum*). For the younger son who, having consumed his substance, returned to his father (Luke 15:22), received a ring as a gift. For the Gentile people, who, having lost immortality, return to God by repenting, are fortified by the seal of faith. Whence also it is said to the Church by her bridegroom: Put me as a seal upon thy heart (Cant. 8:6). For a seal is placed on things for this reason, lest they be violated by any presumption of those who would seize them. The

bridegroom, therefore, is placed as a seal in the heart when the mystery of His faith is impressed in the custody of our thought, so that that unfaithful servant, namely our adversary, when he considers the hearts sealed with faith, may not presume to break into them by tempting. By clay, truly, earthly contagions are demonstrated, the Psalmist witnessing who says: Thou hast brought me out of the lake of misery, and from the clay of dregs (Psalm 40:2). Because, therefore, many found in earthly contagions, being led to the Church, are sealed by the sacrament of heavenly faith, and yet do not depart from wicked works, and now cover themselves with the veil of faith, but when they find the time, show truly what they are, it is rightly said: The seal shall be restored as clay. For those whom we now believe to be faithful, we shall then find to be enemies of the faith; and although they appear, when not tempted, a seal, they will be, without doubt, when tempted, clay. Whence also it is rightly said, "It shall be restored," because such as their conscience could be before faith, such does their reprobate life convince them of being afterwards. Of whom it is aptly subjoined: And it shall stand as a garment.

13. The Church is now adorned with many things as if with garments, of which she shall be stripped when persecution rages.---Holy Church is now clothed with as many garments as she is adorned with the veneration of the faithful. Whence also, the Gentiles being shown to her, it is said by the Lord through the Prophet: As I

live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely be clothed with all these as with an ornament (Isai. 49:18). Yet with many who are but seemingly faithful she is now clothed in appearance, but at the knocking of the impulse of persecution, then being stripped of them she shall be made bare; of whose lot it is said here: And it shall stand as a garment. Truly "to stand" is placed in this spot for "to persist in sin." Whence it is written: And hath not stood in the way of sinners (Psalm 1:1). Or certainly every reprobate is said to stand as a garment, that he may be shown not to be able to stand, because as a garment when put on is stretched through the body in the appearance of its sight, but when taken off is folded up brokenly, so every one who shall then depart from the state of holy Church, was stretched and comely as it were while he was being put on, but afterwards being stripped off, he shall lie broken and cast aside. If indeed we understand "to stand" as "to endure," every reprobate stands as a garment who lasts for a short time in this life which he loves. Whence also it is said by the Prophet: All shall grow old as a garment, and as a covering Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed (Psalm 102:26). These things, therefore, which He brought in rightly through the cloud of allegories, He now makes known in plainer words, subjoining:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 15.---From the wicked their light shall be taken away.

14. From those who believe and live wickedly the light of faith shall be taken away, especially in the time of the persecution of Antichrist.--- For the light of God does not now enlighten those who cloak (*palliant*) the malice of their iniquity with the name of faith. For while they neglect to live according to the preaching of faith, and yet worship that same faith in appearance only, they seek the honor of the present life from the name of religion, and this shines to them from faith, that faith supports them before men. There are indeed some, who truly believe the eternal things they hear, and yet contradict that same faith which they hold by living wickedly. These also have their light in darkness, because while they do perverse things, and yet feel rightly concerning God, lest they should be darkened utterly, they are enlightened in some part by the brightness of light. Who while they love earthly things more than heavenly, more what they see than what they hear, at the knocking of the moment of persecution, lose that which they seemed to believe rightly. Which in that time especially is done more manifoldly, when, the head of the wicked himself rising, in the last persecution against holy Church, his strength rages with its free powers. There then the heart of everyone is shown, where whatever was lurking in secret is opened; and they who are now pious in mouth, and are wicked in heart, their malice being made public, fall, and lose the light of faith which they had held in appearance only. But amidst these things it is necessary that each of us return to

the secret of his heart, and dread the losses of his action, lest, merits requiring it, through the strict justice of the judgments of God he should run into the number of such men.

15. Antichrist already lives and rages in his members.---But let no one flatter himself incautiously, and therefore believe himself a stranger to such a case, because he does not think he will reach the storm of that tempest. O how many have not seen the times of that temptation, and yet are involved in the storm of his temptation! Cain did not see the time of Antichrist, and yet was a member of Antichrist by merit (Gen. 4). Judas was ignorant of the cruelty of that persecution, and yet succumbed to the powers of his cruelty, avarice persuading him (Matt. 26:15). Simon existed far divided from the times of Antichrist, and yet joined himself to his pride, perversely desiring the power of miracles (Acts 8:19). Thus the wicked body is joined to its head, thus members to members, when they do not know each other by acquaintance, and yet are coupled to each other by wicked action. For neither had Pergamos known the books or words of Balaam, and yet following his wickedness, she heard the voice of heavenly rebuke: Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat and to commit fornication (Rev. 2:14). Also the knowledge of Jezebel and her times and places divided her from the church of Thyatira; but because a like guilt of life had bound her, Jezebel is said to be in her, and to insist on

perverse works, the angel witnessing, who says: I have a few things against thee; because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols (Ibid. 20). Behold, because those could be found who followed the life of Jezebel by reprobate action, Jezebel is remembered as found there, because forsooth a wicked body and conjoined manners make one, even if places or times divide them. Whence it comes to pass that in his perverse imitators every wicked man who has already passed away remains, and in his workers the very author of the wicked already appears, who has not yet come. Hence John says: Even now are there many Antichrists (1 John 2:18), because all the wicked are already his members, which, being perversely brought forth, have preceded their head by living wickedly. Hence Paul says: That he might be revealed in his time; for the mystery of iniquity doth already work (2 Thess. 2:6). As if he said: Then Antichrist shall be seen manifest; for in the hearts of the wicked he now works his secrets in hiddenness. For, that I may be silent concerning more open crimes, behold another silently envies his brother in his heart, and if he find opportunity, strives to supplant him; of whom else is he a member, but of him of whom it is written: Through envy of the devil death came into the world (Wisd. 2:24)? Another, thinking himself to be of great merit, preferring himself to all through the tumor of his heart, believes all to be inferior to himself; of whom else

is he a member, but of him of whom it is written: He beholdeth every high thing, and he is a king over all the children of pride (Job 41:34)? Another seeks the power of this world, not that he may profit others, but that he himself may not be subject to another; of whom else is he a member, but of him of whom it is written: Who said: I will sit in the mount of the testament, in the sides of the North; I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High (Isai. 14:13)? For the Most High alone so rules over all, that He cannot be subject to another. Whom the devil perversely wished to imitate, when seeking his own dominion, he refused to be subject to Him. He therefore imitates the devil whosoever desires his own power for this reason, because he loathes to be subject to him who is set over him by heavenly ordination.

[Vet. IV.] 16. They are guilty of infidelity who deny the truth. ---There are besides very many things which declare that some, established in the very peace of the Church, are infidels. For I see some so accept the person of the powerful that, being required by him, for his favour they doubt not to deny the truth in the cause of their neighbour. And who is the truth, but He who said: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John XIV, 6)? For neither did John the Baptist die being required concerning the confession of Christ, but concerning the truth of justice (Mark VI, 28); but because Christ is the truth, he therefore reached even unto death for Christ, because namely he reached it for the truth. Let us then set before our eyes that

someone being questioned accepted the person of the powerful, and lest he should suffer at least the injury of a word, denied the truth. What, I ask, would he do in the pain of punishments, who was ashamed of Christ among the scourges of words? Behold even after these things before the eyes of men he is still a Christian, and yet if the Lord has disposed to judge him strictly, he is so no longer.

17. And those who neglect to correct, when they are bound to do so. Antichrist's temptations are not wanting in the peace of the Church. ---But I see others, to whom through the place of mastery the offices of exhorting and rebuking have been committed, who see something unlawful admitted, and yet while they fear to offend the grace of certain powerful ones, they presume not to rebuke. Whosoever this one is, what else does he, but sees the wolf coming, and flees (John X, 12)? He flees, because he was silent; he was silent, because, having despised eternal grace, he loved temporal glory more. Behold before the face of the powerful he hides himself within the lurking-places of his silence, and just as to public persecution, so he gave place to hidden fear. Well is it said of such: They loved the glory of men more than of God (John XII, 43). Whosoever therefore is such, if these things are strictly judged, although public persecution was wanting, yet by being silent he denied Christ. Antichrist's temptations, therefore, are not wanting even in the peace of the Church. Let no one therefore dread those times of the extreme persecution as if alone. For among the iniquitous the business of Antichrist

is daily carried on, because in their hearts his mystery even now, hidden, operates. And if many now established within the Church according to appearance simulate they are what they are not, in the coming of the judge however they shall be betrayed to be what they are: of whom Solomon well says: I saw the wicked buried, who even while they yet lived, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city, as if of just works (Eccl. VIII, 10). Therefore after it has been said of the iniquitous: The seal shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment, and their light shall be taken away from the wicked, which certainly is to be done in that persecution of Antichrist, presently, consoling us concerning the perdition of the same Antichrist, he says.

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 15.---And the high arm shall be broken.

18. The pride and fall of Antichrist. The fallen angel and man, because they wished to be like God by power, not by justice.---For what else is understood by the "high arm" but the proud loftiness of Antichrist, which is raised up over the reprobate minds of men by the arrogance of worldly glory, so that a sinful man, yet a man despising to be esteemed as such, should falsely claim to be God over men? Whence also the Apostle Paul says: So that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God (2 Thess. 2:4). To show his swelling more fully, he premised: Who opposeth and is lifted up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped

(ibid.). For a man can sometimes be called God, according to what is said to Moses: Behold, I have set thee as the God of Pharaoh (Exod. 7:1). But a mere man cannot be worshipped as God. But because Antichrist lifts himself up both above every holy man and above the power of the Divinity itself, he endeavors to pass beyond the name of glory exacted for himself, both that which is called God and that which is worshipped as God. But it is to be noted into how great a pit of pride he has fallen, who did not remain in the measure of the ruin by which he fell. For the devil or man fell from the state of their own condition with an elated mind, so that either the one said: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High (Isa. 14:13); or the other hearing believed: Your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods (Gen. 3:5). Therefore both fell because they desired to be like God not by justice, but by power. But man, being set free by grace, who by perversely seeking the likeness of God had fallen, knowing himself in the guilt of his crime to be far unequal to God, cries out: Lord, who is like unto Thee (Ps. 89:8)? But the devil, being left in the fall of his crime by a just judgment, by no means remained in the measure of his ruin; but the longer he was wanting from the grace of the Almighty, the more he heaped up the guilt of his crime. For he who therefore fell because he wished to be like God in a perverse order, has been brought to such a point that, coming in Antichrist, he disdains to be seen as like God, and, being damned, thinks Him inferior whom as a proud one he could not

have as an equal. For when that which we have already premised is said of him: Lifting himself up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped (2 Thess. 2:4), it is plainly shown that by seeking long ago the likeness of God, he wished as it were to raise himself next to God, but by growing in the fault of pride, he now lifts himself up above all that is called God and is worshipped. Since therefore this pride of his is to be struck by the coming of the strict Judge, as it is written: Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming (ibid., 8), it is rightly said: And the high arm shall be broken.

9. The virtue of the divine word, by which the more it is bruised, the more it is increased.---Nevertheless, all these things which have been twice discussed can still be understood in another way. For the words of God are as it were certain pigments of our help. And as a pigment, the more it is bruised, the more its virtue is increased in the cup, so the divine oracles, the more we bruise them by expounding, the more we help the hearers as it were by drinking. Since therefore the merciful God long endures the sins of men, and when He now regards the end as near, He for the most part changes the minds of the sinners, rightly says He of Himself, insinuating the power of so great a piety:.

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 13.---Hast thou held the ends of the earth, shaking them, and hast thou shaken the ungodly out of it?

20. God does not desert man, and in the last things He purges the elect more carefully.---By the "earth" indeed is designated man savoring low things, to whom in his sin it was said: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Gen. 3:19). But because the pious Creator does not desert His handiwork, He both endures the evils of men through His wisdom, and sometimes releases them through their conversion. But when He regards hard and insensible minds, He terrifies them now with threats, now with stripes, now with revelations, that those which had hardened by a most wicked security might soften by a wholesome fear, so that they might return even late, and at least be ashamed of this very thing, that they have been long expected. For so the Lord, because He judges the ends of our life more, and therefore purges His elect more carefully at the end. For it is written: The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth (1 Sam. 2:10). He watches over our last moments so much the more earnestly, by how much He considers that the beginnings of the following life depend upon them. Because He does this mercifully, His piety being brought into the midst, by which He receives even late-converted sinners, He instructs the justice of blessed Job, saying: Hast thou held the ends of the earth, shaking them, and hast thou shaken the ungodly out of it? You understand "that" therefore I, who often in their last moments shake sinners by ter-

rifying them, hold them by converting them, and pluck out from their hearts the ungodly motions of thoughts. And rightly the Lord insinuates to blessed Job how He converts sinners near the end. As if He should say plainly: Regard the power of My mercy, and suppress the elation of thy justice. Which ends of man because, even when he is converted through the death of the flesh, that vengeance of the ancient fault accompanies, He immediately insinuates, when He says:.

CHAPTER X.

VERSE 14.---The seal shall be restored as clay, and it shall stand as a garment.

21. Man is the seal and image of God; in punishment of pride, through death he becomes earth and ash.---For the Lord made man, whom He created after His own likeness, as it were a certain seal of His power. Which nevertheless shall be restored as clay, because although he escapes eternal punishments through conversion, yet in vengeance of perpetrated pride he is condemned by the death of the flesh. For man, being created of clay, and having received the reason of the mind, being adorned with the likeness of the divine image, swelling with the elation of the heart, forgot that he was formed from the lowest things. Whence it was brought about by the wonderful justice of the Creator, that because he swelled through the sense which he received as rational, he should again become earth through death, which he would not humbly consider himself to be; and because by sinning he lost the likeness

of God, but by dying he returns to the matter of his own slime, it is rightly said: The seal shall be restored as clay. And because when the spirit is called from the body, it is stripped as it were of a certain covering of its flesh, it is aptly subjoined concerning the same clay: And it shall stand as a garment. For our clay to "stand as a garment" is to continue void and stripped until the time of the resurrection. But because even they do not pass by this punishment of pride, who even overcome the same pride by living humbly; He subjoins what is the special punishment of the proud, saying:.

CHAPTER XI.

VERSE 15.---From the wicked their light shall be taken away, and the high arm shall be broken.

22. Death, which restores the elect to light, takes away the light, namely the glory of the present life, from the reprobate.---For the death of the flesh, which restores the elect to their light, takes away their light from the reprobate. For the light of the proud is the glory of the present life. Which light is then withdrawn from him, when through the destruction of the flesh he is called to the darkness of his retributions. There then the high arm is broken, because the loftiness of the heart, violently snatched up beyond the order of nature, is scattered by the weight of the divine justice overwhelming itself, so that because it had perversely raised itself for a short time, it may know itself broken for ever by the weight of judgment. But none of us would know what would

follow after death, unless the Creator of our life had come even to the punishment of our death. For unless He had mercifully sought the lowest things, He would by no means justly recall to the highest things us who were lost after His image. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:.

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 16.---Hast thou entered into the depths of the sea, and hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss?

23. The Lord descended for us not only into the world, but also into hell.---As if He should say: As I, who not only sought the sea, that is, the world, through assumed human flesh and soul, but also through the same being voluntarily placed in death, descended even to the last parts of hell, as it were to the depths of the sea. For if the sea, according to the manner of divine eloquence, ought to be understood as the world, nothing forbids the depths of the sea to be felt as the bars of hell. Which depths of the sea the Lord sought, when He entered the last parts of hell, to rescue the souls of His elect. Whence also it is said by the prophet: Thou hast made the depths of the sea a way, that the delivered might pass over (Isa. 51:10). For this depth of the sea before the advent of the Redeemer was not a way, but a prison, because it closed in itself even the souls of the good, although not in penal places. Which depth nevertheless the Lord made a way, because coming thither, He granted His elect to pass over from the bars of hell to the heavenly

things. Whence also it is aptly said there: That the delivered might pass over (ibid., 10). But what He had called the depths of the sea, this, repeating it in other words, He calls the last of the abyss, because as the abyss of waters is comprehended by no vision of ours, so the secrets of hell are penetrated by no sense of our knowledge. For we see who are withdrawn from hence, but we see not what retribution of punishments awaits them according to their merit.

24. He walked in hell, because He came free to the bound.---But it is to be considered with vigilant care that He asserts Himself to have walked in the last of the abyss. For to walk is the part not of one constrained, but of one free. For him whom chains bind, they nevertheless impede his steps. Because therefore the Lord bore no chains of sin, He walked in hell. For He came free to the bound. Whence it is written: I am become as a man without help, free among the dead (Ps. 88:4-5). For the Lord to walk in the last of the abyss is to find nothing of His own retention in the place of damnation, as Peter attests, who says: Having loosed the sorrows of hell, forasmuch as it was impossible that He should be holden by it (Acts 2:24). Or certainly because by walking when we are led from place to place, we are found present here and there; the Lord is said to have walked in hell, that He might be shown to have been present to the elect souls in each place through the power of the Divinity. Whence also the spirit of wisdom is described as movable (Wisd. 7:22), that by this, that it is nowhere wanting, it might

be designated to meet us everywhere. Which descent of His the Lord regards as so much more wonderful, by how much He more frequently infuses it into redeemed man. For repeating it still, He adds:.

CHAPTER XIII.

VERSE 17.---Have the gates of death been opened to thee, and hast thou seen the dark doors?

25. He overcame the gates of death, that is, the adverse powers.---For the gates of death are the adverse powers. Which the Lord descending opened, because by dying He overcame their strength. Which are also called by another appellation "dark doors," because while by the snares of their concealment they are not seen, they open the way of death to deceived minds. Which dark doors the Lord sees, because He both looks upon and suppresses the fraudulent malice of unclean spirits. Whom unless He Himself by seeing prohibited for us while we were ignorant, both our mind would know nothing of their snares, and being captured by the same snares it would perish. Which dark doors we also discern, when we are illustrated by the rays of heavenly light. Whence also it is said by the prophet: The Lord is my helper, and I shall see my enemies (Ps. 118:7). He therefore Himself sees our enemies, who by His gift makes them visible to us. Or certainly the Lord then saw the dark doors, when penetrating the bars of hell, He struck the cruel spirits, and by dying condemned those set over death. Which

is therefore said here not as yet concerning the future, but already concerning the past, because that which He was about to do in work, He had forsooth already done in predestination. But because after His death and resurrection the Church increased, and was dilated in all nations, it is aptly subjoined:.

CHAPTER XIV.

VERSE 18.---Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?

26. The Church increased by the death of Christ. Like Samson, dying He slew more of the enemies than living.---For while the Lord sought the straits of death, He dilated His faith among the nations, and extended the holy Church to the innumerable hearts of believers. To which it is said by the prophet: Enlarge the place of thy tent, and stretch out the skins of thy tabernacles, spare not, make long thy cords, and strengthen thy nails; for thou shalt penetrate to the right and to the left, and thy seed shall inherit the nations (Isa. 54:2-3). Which breadth of the earth would surely not be made, unless He first both despised by dying the life which we know, and showed by rising again the life which we know not. For in His death He opened the eyes of our mind, and showed what was the life which followed. Whence also keeping this order in the Gospel, He says to the disciples: Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name through all nations (Luke

24:46-47). For few from the Israelite people believed when He Himself preached; but innumerable people of the nations followed the way of life when He died. For He endured the proud while He yet lived as passible, but being dead from passible life He overthrew them. Which Samson well expressed long ago figuratively in himself (Judg. 16:30), who indeed slew few while he lived; but the temple being destroyed, he slew innumerable enemies when he died, because forsooth the Lord extinguished few from the elation of pride when He lived, but more when the temple of His body was dissolved (John 2:19); and the elect from the nations whom He sustained while living, He prostrated all together by dying. Rightly therefore after He taught that He had penetrated the hells, He soon subjoined the breadth of the earth to be considered: Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? As if He should say to the scourged man: Weigh what I have endured, and consider what I have bought; and do not thou complain of the stripe, while thou knowest not what rewards await thee in retribution. Amidst these words of the Creator, I think it worth the while, if we turn our eyes for a little from the common and public good, and behold what He does secretly in each of us. For He says:.

CHAPTER XV.

VERSE 16.---Hast thou entered into the depths of the sea?

27. God enters the depth of the sea when He visits the mind of the sinner.---For the sea

is the human mind, whose depths God enters when through the knowledge of Himself it is perturbed from its inmost thoughts to the laments of penance, when He brings to memory the wickednesses of the former life, and shakes the soul fluctuating in its confusion. God penetrates the depth of the sea when He changes even desperate hearts. For He Himself enters the sea when He humbles the worldly heart, He enters the depth of the sea when He does not disdain to visit minds even oppressed by crimes. Whence also it is rightly subjoined by questioning: And hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss? For what is the abyss but the human mind, which while it is not able to comprehend itself, is hidden from itself in all that it is, as an obscure abyss? Whence it is well said by the prophet: The abyss gave forth its voice, from the height of its phantasy (Hab. 3:10), because while the human mind does not penetrate itself, by comparison with itself, it more humbly praises the power of the divine nature which it is not sufficient to comprehend.

28. He walks in the lowest parts of the abyss when He converts the hearts of the most wicked.---For God to walk in the lowest parts of the abyss is to convert the hearts of even the most wicked men, and wonderfully to reform desperate minds by touching them with the footsteps of His visitation. For when after immense crimes each one is pricked to the heart, what else but God walking in the lowest parts of the abyss is seen? For as it were in an abyss God walks, when penetrating the obscure heart, He treads upon

the invisible waves of vices. For for the most part we bewail some past things, and are urged by other present things, so that we are fatigued now by pride, now by anger, now by luxury, now by avarice tempting us. But when the Lord represses all these in our heart by the fear of His secret visitation, what else does He but place His steps in the abyss? Which steps we behold with the mind, when against the insurgent vices we consider how the gifts of His fear meet them. For these steps the Prophet had beheld, when he said: Thy goings have been seen, O God, the goings of my God, my King, who is in His holy place (Ps. 68:24). For he who beholds the inordinate motions of the soul repressed in himself by the memory of the divine judgments, sees as it were the steps of the Lord walking in him. Let it be said therefore to blessed Job: Hast thou entered into the depths of the sea, and hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss? You understand "that" therefore I, who by wonderful mercy tread upon now anger, now luxury, now avarice, now rising pride in the hearts of sinners. As if it were said to him plainly: If thou beholdest Me alone repress the latent vices of the heart, thou wilt cease to be lifted up concerning thy own justification. And because when we are divinely visited we are led even to confession concerning the hidden and unlawful motions of the mind, it is rightly subjoined:.

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 17.---Have the gates of death been opened to thee?

29. The gates of death are wicked thoughts, which we open to God through confession.---For the gates of death are wicked thoughts, which we open to God when we confess them weeping in penance. Which also He beholds when not confessed, but He enters when confessed. For then He opens a way for Himself in the gates of death, when, wicked thoughts being loosed, He comes to us after confession. Which were therefore called "gates of death," because forsooth the way to destruction is always opened through iniquous thoughts. Which is still repeated, when it is subjoined:.

IBID.---And hast thou seen the dark doors?

30. Dark doors are the latent evils of the mind.---For dark doors are the latent evils of the mind, which both can be held within, and yet cannot be seen by another. Which nevertheless the Lord discerns, when He destroys them by the secret regard of grace. For it is written: A king that sitteth on the throne of judgment, dissipateth all evil with his look (Prov. 20:8). And because every vice narrows, but every virtue dilates the mind, after vices have been destroyed it is rightly subjoined: Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? For unless virtue dilated the mind, Paul would by no means say to the Corinthians: Be ye also enlarged, and be not yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:13-14). But it is to be carefully considered what is said:.

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 18.---Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth?

31. The saints, while they are pressed without by straits, are dilated within.---For the breadth of interior goods is by no means comprehended, unless it be cautiously considered. For for the most part want humbles them without, the torture of punishment narrows them; but yet amidst these things interior fortitude always dilates itself even to the hope of heavenly things. The Apostles had been narrowed without, when they sustained scourges; but they stood free within in great breadth, who had turned these same scourges into joy among themselves. For it is written: The Apostles went rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41). This breadth Paul had found amidst straits, who said: But I would have you know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel, so that my bonds became manifest in all the palace (Phil. 1:12-13). This breadth David obtained amidst straits, saying: In tribulation Thou hast enlarged me (Ps. 4:1). Then therefore this earth, that is, the conscience of the saints, is dilated, when it is pressed without by the adversities of this world. For when it is repelled from the security of the present life, it is driven inward to itself, so that it is tended to the hope of supernal things. And when it is not permitted to wander without, being as it were recalled into its own bosom it is dilated. But we see what adversities good men

endure, but we see not within how much they rejoice. We know the breadth of their mind by considering it now in words, now in works, but yet we are ignorant how great an amplitude of the same breadth is in them. Let human wisdom therefore hear, and let it learn itself to be foolish: Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? As if He should say: as I, who alone fully consider the hidden joy of the just girt with scourges, because I alone mercifully form it. Or certainly for this reason is it inquired of blessed Job whether he has considered the breadth of the earth, that he may be humbled by the example of the breadth of others. As if it were said to him plainly: Consider those whom the innumerable evils of the present life cannot narrow, and cease to glory concerning the state of thy heart amidst stripes. It follows:.

CHAPTER XVII

[Vet. et Rec. IX].

VERS. 18-20.---Tell me, if thou knowest all things, in what way the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness, that thou mayest lead each one to its own borders, and understand the paths of its house.

32. By light, justice is designated; by darkness, iniquity. It is hidden from us who will persevere in justice, or who will die in sin. Blessed Job is discussed with a grave question, so that he is asked both concerning the way of light and the place of darkness; that he may lead each one to its own borders, and understand the paths of its

house. For what is understood by the name of light, if not justice? and what is designated by darkness, if not iniquity? Whence it is said to certain ones converted from the wickedness of sins: Ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord (Ephes. 5:8). And of certain ones remaining in sin it is mentioned: They that sleep, sleep in the night (1 Thess. 5:7). Therefore it is said to blessed Job: Tell me if thou knowest all things, in what way the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness? As if it were said to him: If thou suspectest that thou hast full knowledge, tell me either into whose heart that innocence which is now lacking shall come, or in whose heart that malice which now is shall persevere. In what way the light dwelleth, that is, whose mind justice, when it comes, shall fill: And what is the place of darkness, that is, in whom blind iniquity shall endure: That thou mayest lead each one to its own borders, that is, that thou mayest judge whether even he who is now seen as iniquitous shall finish his life in iniquity; or he who is seen as just shall conclude the extremity of his life with the perfection of justice: And understand the paths of its house, that is, that thou mayest consider and discern, either for whom a persevering good action shall provide an eternal mansion in the kingdom, or whom a depraved action, constraining him even to his end, shall damn to eternal punishment. For the house is put for the mansion, the path for the action. The path, therefore, leads to the house, because the action draws one to the mansion. But who among men,

when discussed, could say these things? who could even hear these things without terror? For we see many every day who resplend with the light of justice, and yet at their end are darkened by the obscurity of wickedness; and we behold many enveloped in the darkness of sins, and yet near the end of their life are suddenly rendered free by the light of justice. We have also known many who, having once found the way of justice, have held it blamelessly even unto death, and we have seen many who, even unto their departure, have without ceasing accumulated the crimes they once began.

33. The clouds of God's judgments are impassable to the rays of our mind.---But who, amidst these clouds of hidden judgments, could send the ray of his mind, so as to discern by some consideration either who may endure in evil, or who may persevere in good, or who from the lowest things may be converted to the highest, or who from the highest may return to the lowest? These things are hidden from the senses of men, nor is anything known concerning the end of anyone, because the abyss of divine judgments is in no way penetrated by the eye of the human mind. For we see that that paganism, once adverse to God, is now bathed in the light of justice, and Judea, once beloved, is now blinded by the night of perfidy. We know also that the thief passed from the gibbet to the kingdom (Luke 23:43), and Judas from the glory of the apostleship fell into Tartarus (Matt. 27:5). And again, because sometimes the lots that have begun do

not change, we have known another thief to have come to punishment, and we know the apostles to have received the kingdom they had desired. Who, then, could discuss in what way the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness, that he may lead each one to its own borders, and understand the paths of its house? I see Paul called from that cruelty of persecution to the grace of the apostleship (Acts 9:1, seq.), and yet he so fears amidst hidden judgments, that he dreads lest he be reproved, even after he has been called. For he says: I chastise my body, and bring it into servitude, lest perhaps while preaching to others, I myself should become a reprobate (1 Cor. 9:27). And again: I do not think that I have apprehended; but one thing, forgetting indeed the things that are behind, stretching myself forth to those that are before, I follow toward the mark, to the prize of the supernal vocation of God, in Christ Jesus. But I follow if I may apprehend, in which also I am apprehended (Philip. 3:13). And certainly it had already been said of him by the divine voice: He is a vessel of election to me (Acts 9:15); and yet still chastising his body he fears lest he be reproved.

34. Let fear rather than security accompany our hope. Woe even to a laudable life, if it be judged with piety removed.---Woe to us miserable ones, who have as yet known no voice of God concerning our election, and already we grow torpid in ease as if from security. Truly, there ought to be, there ought to be not only security in hope, but also fear in conversation, so that both

the former may cherish those who are struggling, and the latter may prick those who are torpid. Whence it is rightly said by the prophet: Ye that fear the Lord, hope in the Lord (Psal. 115:11). As if he should say plainly: He presumes upon hope in vain, who refuses to fear God in his works. But why is blessed Job asked concerning so powerful a question, which is entirely unknown by men, that he might comprehend the end of the just and the unjust, unless that, not being able to know the end of others, he might return to his own, because just as he knows not the end of others, so also he knows not his own, and not knowing he may fear, fearing he may be humbled, being humbled he may no longer be lifted up concerning his works, and not being elated he may persist in the citadel of grace? Let it be said to him, therefore: Tell me, if thou hast understanding, in what way the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness; that thou mayest lead each one to its own borders. As if it were said: Just as thou knowest not those who may be converted from evil to good, or those who from good may return to evil, so also thou understandest not concerning thyself what is being done, thy merits so requiring. And just as thou in no way comprehendest that of another, so also thou art not able to foreknow thine own end. For already thou knowest how much thou hast profited, but what I still think of thee in secret, thou knowest not. Already thou considerest the acts of thy justice, but how strictly they are weighed with me, thou art ignorant. Woe even to the laudable life of

men, if it be judged with piety removed, because, strictly discussed, it is overwhelmed before the eyes of the judge by that from which it suspects itself to please. Whence it is rightly said to God by the Prophet: Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified (Psal. 143:2). Whence it is well said by Solomon: There are just men and wise men, and their works are in the hand of God; and yet man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or of hatred, but all things are kept uncertain for the future (Eccl. 9:1). Hence again it is said by the same Solomon: Who of men will be able to understand his own way (Prov. 20:24)? And certainly anyone doing good or evil is known by the attesting conscience. But for this reason it is said that his way is unknown by men, because even if anyone understands that he is doing right works, yet under a strict examination whither he tends, he knows not.

Therefore, after He has terrified him by this consideration of his own end, He returns to examining his beginning; and lest he should complain why he knows not his end, he is reminded also that he does not understand by what beginning he came hither. For it follows:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 21.---Didst thou know then that thou wast to be born, and didst thou know the number of thy days?

35. No man knows his beginning or his end.---As if He should say plainly: What wonder is it

if thou understandest not thy end, who dost not even comprehend thy beginning? And thou who art ignorant by what beginning thou camest hither, what wonder is it if thou knowest not by what end thou shalt be withdrawn? If, therefore, it was mine to produce thee through a beginning from hidden things to things manifest, it will also be mine to recall thee from things manifest to hidden things. Why dost thou complain of anything concerning the dispensation of thy life, who art held, thyself unknowing, in the hand of the Artificer? Therefore, thou oughtest not to be lifted up so much more in that which thou doest, as, shut up within the bosom of eternity, thou dost not recognize by what order thou camest hither, nor when or how thou shalt be led hence.

36. Christ is exempted from this law.---These things, however, can also be understood otherwise: Didst thou know then that thou wast to be born, and didst thou know the number of thy days? Thou understandest "as I", who knew that I was to be born, because even before the birth of My humanity I always lived substantially in the divinity. For men then begin to be, when they are born in their mothers' womb. For conception itself is also called birth, according to that which is written: That which is born in her, is of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20). And for this reason they do not know they are to be born, because they do not exist before they are created. But God, who always existed without beginning, foreknew concerning Himself this which took a beginning in the womb of the Virgin; and because He foreknew, He or-

dained; because He ordained, He truly tolerated nothing in human form without His own will. Let man be convinced, therefore, why he complains concerning his scourges, who could not foreknow his own birth, if He Himself, who ordained His own birth by foreknowing it, prepared Himself among men for scourges. It follows:

CHAPTER XX

[Rec. XI].

VERS. 22, 23.---Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, or hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared for the time of the enemy, for the day of fight and war?

37. The wicked are kept for the trial of the just.---What else is to be understood by snow or hail, but the cold and hard hearts of the wicked? For as charity is wont to be designated in sacred eloquence by heat, so is malice by cold. For it is written: As a cistern maketh its water cold, so malice maketh the soul cold (Jerem. 6:7). And again: Iniquity shall abound, and the charity of many shall grow cold (Matt. 24:12). In the cold, therefore, of snow, or in the hardness of hail, what can be more fitly accepted than the life of the wicked, which both grows cold through torpor, and strikes through the malice of hardness? Whose life, however, the Lord tolerates, because He keeps them for the trial of His just ones. Whence He also rightly added: Which I have prepared for the time of the enemy, for the day of

fight and war. That when our adversary the devil strives to tempt us, he may use their manners as if his own arms against us. For through them, raging, he tortures us, but, unknowing, he purges us. For they become scourges for our sins, by whose life, while we are struck, we are delivered from eternal death. Whence it is brought about that even the lost life of the reprobate profits the life of the elect, and while their perdition serves our utility, it is done by a wonderful dispensation that everything which perishes does not perish for the elect of God.

[Vet. XI.] 38. Some from among them are elect, and called to the greatest things.---This also can be understood otherwise, so that because it seems annexed to the preceding words, it may not differ from the exposition of the superior verse. For because He had indicated that either the good can be converted to evil, or the evil to good, He immediately added following: Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, or hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared for the time of the enemy, for the day of fight and war? In snow or hail, as has been said, we accept the cold or hard hearts of the wicked. But because Almighty God has chosen His saints from such, and knows how many elect He still has reposited among the life of the wicked, He aptly claims that He has treasures in the snow or hail. For treasure is named from *thesis*, that is from position. And He looks upon many lying hid for a long time in a cold life, whom He produces into the midst when He commands,

and shows them bright with the luster of justice through supernal grace. For it is written: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow (Psal. 51:9). Whom He covers for a long time within the bosom of His foreknowledge, prepared for the day of fight and war; but when He has suddenly brought them forth, He strikes the resisting breasts of adversaries with their words and redargutions as if with certain hails. Whence it is written elsewhere: Before the brightness in his sight the clouds passed, hail and coals of fire (Psal. 18:12). For before the brightness the clouds pass, because the holy preachers run through all the spaces of the world with the clarity of miracles. Who also were called hail and coals of fire, because they both strike through correction and kindle through the flame of charity. The free rebuke of the saints is also conveniently expressed by the nature of hail. For hail coming strikes, and when melted, it waters. But holy men both strike the hearts of the hearers by terrifying, and pour in by soothing. For how they strike, the Prophet testifies, saying: They shall speak of the power of thy terrible things, and shall tell of thy greatness (Psal. 145:6). And how, soothing, they water, he added following: They shall utter the memory of the abundance of thy sweetness, and shall exult in thy justice (Ibid., 7). Therefore, treasures are held in the snow or hail, because many, cold with the torpor of iniquity, being assumed to supernal grace, resplend with the light of justice in the holy Church, and beat the depraved knowledge of adversaries with the blows of their doctrine.

Whence also it is aptly added: Which I have prepared for the time of the enemy, for the day of fight and war. For Saulus had been snow or hail through cold insensibility; but he was made snow and hail against the breasts of adversaries, either by the whiteness of justice, or by the correction of strict eloquence. O what a treasure He had in this snow and hail, when the Lord already then secretly saw him, placed among the life of the wicked, as His elect! O against how many breasts of adversaries He took this hail in His hand, through which He prostrated so many hearts resisting Him!

39. Let no one be lifted up, let no one despair.---Let no one, therefore, be lifted up concerning his works; let no one despair of those whom he still sees cold, because he does not see the treasures of God in the snow and hail. For who would believe that he would precede the stoned Stephen through the grace of the apostleship, who at his death kept the garments of all those stoning him (Acts 7:57)? If, therefore, we recur to these gifts or hidden judgments, despairing of none at all, nor do we prefer ourselves in our heart to those over whom we are for the time set, because although we already see how much we have preceded them, we know not how much we may be preceded when they have begun to run. Well, therefore, is it said to blessed Job: Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, or hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared for the time of the enemy, for the day of fight and war? As if it were said plainly:

Prefer thyself to none concerning thy works, because concerning these whom thou beholdest still cold through fault, thou knowest not how many workers of justice and defenders of the right faith I am about to make. Because since this is done through the advent of the Mediator, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER XXI

[Rec. XII].

VERS. 24.---By what way is the light scattered?

40. Through the advent of the Mediator light was scattered.---He Himself is the way, who says: I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). Through this way, therefore, the light is scattered, because through His presence all paganism is illuminated. But He said *scattered* conveniently, because through the voices of the apostles the light of preaching shone forth, not narrowed and coarctated, but widely shining. Because, indeed, having received the light of conversion, the force of love burns within, so that either past evils are anxiously mourned, or future goods are most ardently sought, it is competently added:

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID.---Heat is divided upon the earth.

41. From this light burns the ardor of charity and the heat of persecution.---For the light

being scattered, heat is divided upon the earth, because, justice being preached openly, the anxiety of the heart to seek God is dilated in the exercise of virtues, so that this one may shine in the word of wisdom, that one in the word of knowledge; this one may grow strong in the grace of healings, that one in the operation of virtues; and while each one receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit disparately, all being joined unanimously are necessarily kindled (1 Cor. 12:8). [Vet. XIII.] But after light is said to be scattered, it can be conveniently understood that by heat persecution is designated, because as the light of preaching grew bright, immediately from the hearts of the perfidious the ardor of persecution blazed forth. For that by heat persecution is expressed, the divine word testifies, concerning the seeds cast upon stony ground, saying: When the sun was risen they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away (Matt. 13:6). Which when he explained a little after, he called heat persecution. Scattered light, therefore, the heat was divided upon the earth, because, the life of the faithful becoming clear, the cruelty of the perfidious was kindled. For divided was the heat when now in Jerusalem, now in Damascus, now in other far regions persecution was raging. For it is written: There was made on that day a great persecution in the Church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all dispersed through the region of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1). And again it is written: Saul as yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples

of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any men and women of this life, he might lead them bound to Jerusalem (Acts 9:1, seq.). Because, therefore, now here, now there persecution had grown, those who had recognized the light of truth panted as if under the ardor of divided heat.

42. Justice is light, which is not scattered except successively.---But because we have heard blessed Job questioned concerning hidden judgments in the superior words, it is necessary that we subtly search out this which is said concerning scattered light or divided heat. For he is still discussed with a high interrogation, so that at least because he knows not he may be taught, and it be said to him: By what way is the light scattered, the heat divided upon the earth? For what is designated by the name of light, if not justice? Concerning which it is written: The people that sat in darkness, saw a great light (Isai. 9:2). But everything which is scattered is not cast continuously, but under a certain intermission. And for this reason light is said to be scattered, because although we already perceive some things as they are, yet some things we do not see as they are to be seen. For scattered light had held the heart of Peter, who had shone with so much faith, with so much brightness of miracles, and yet when he imposed the weight of circumcision upon the converted Gentiles, he knew not what he said right. Light, therefore, is scattered in this life, because for the understanding of every thing it is

not held continuously. For while we comprehend one thing as it is, and are ignorant of another, we both see in part as if by scattered light, and we remain in part in obscurity. But then light will no longer be scattered for us, when our mind, snatched funditus to God, shall resplend.

43. In what ways it is insinuated into the human heart, we know not.---And because it is unknown in what ways this same light is insinuated into the human heart, it is rightly said in the interrogation: *By what way is the light scattered?* As if it were said plainly: Say in what order I infuse My justice into the hidden recesses of hearts, since I am not seen by my approach, and yet I invisibly change the visible works of men, since I irradiate one and the same mind now with this virtue, now with that, and yet I permit it through scattered light still to remain in some part in the darkness of temptation. Let man, unknowing, be asked by what way the light is scattered, as if it were said openly: While I soften hard hearts, while I bend rigid ones, while I mitigate rough ones, while I kindle cold ones, while I strengthen weak ones, while I stabilize wandering ones, while I confirm wavering ones, behold, if thou canst, in what passages I illuminate them, coming incorporeally. For we see all these things done, but how they are effected within, we know not. That this way of light is invisible to us, the Truth shows in the Gospel, saying: *The Spirit breatheth where He will; and thou hearest His voice, and knowest not whence He cometh and whither He goeth* (John 3:8).

[Vet. XIV.] 44. This light increasing, temptations grow.---But because when light is scattered immediately temptations grow from the hidden adversary against the shining mind, it is rightly added: *Heat is divided upon the earth.* For the crafty enemy contends to inflame the minds of those whom he sees shine with the light of justice with illicit desires, so that for the most part they feel themselves more urged by temptations than then when they did not see the rays of internal light. Whence also the Israelites, after they were called, complain against Moses and Aaron concerning increasing labor, saying: *May the Lord see and judge, because ye have made our odor to stink before Pharaoh and his servants, and ye have given him a sword to kill us* (Exod. 5:21). For to those willing to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh had withdrawn the chaff, and yet required the works of the same measure. As if against the law the mind murmurs, after the knowledge of which it carries sharper stings of temptations; and when it sees labors increase for itself, in that which displeases the adversary, it grieves as if it stank in the eyes of Pharaoh. After light, therefore, heat follows, because after the illumination of the divine gift the struggle of temptation is increased.

45. According to the disposition of each one the enemy solicits us to evil.---But rightly also is heat said to be divided, because surely individuals are not fatigued by all vices, but by certain ones near and placed close. For first the ancient adversary perceives the constitution of each one,

and then he applies the snares of temptation. For one is of a joyful, another of a sad, another of a timid, another of an elated disposition. Whither, therefore, the hidden adversary may easily take, he prepares deceptions near the constitutions. Because, forsooth, the pleasure of joy is near, he proposes luxury to joyful manners. And because sadness easily falls into anger, he offers the cup of discord to the sad. Because the timid fear punishments, he intends terrors for the fearful. And because he sees the elated to be lifted up by praises, he draws them to whatever he will with bland favors. He lies in wait for individual men, therefore, with convenient vices. Nor would he easily captivate, if he should propose either rewards to the luxurious, or harlots to the avaricious; if he should strike either the voracious concerning the glory of abstinence, or the abstinent concerning the weakness of the gullet; if he should seek to take the mild through the study of struggle or the wrathful through the fear of dread. Because, therefore, in the ardor of temptation craftily lying in wait for individuals he hides snares near to their manners, it is rightly said: *Heat is divided upon the earth.*

46. God moderates temptations, lest they be either many or excessive.---But when it is premised: *By what way is the light scattered?* And immediately it is subjoined: *Heat is divided upon the earth.* Truly, by the same way by which the light is scattered, the dividing of the heat is also indicated. For the high and incomprehensible grace of the Holy Spirit, when it irradiates

our minds with its light, also modifies the temptations of the adversary by dispensing them, so that many do not come at once, or only those which can be borne touch the soul already illuminated by God, so that when they torture us with the ardor of their touch, they may not burn us up with the fire of perfection; Paul attesting, who says: *But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able, but will make also with the temptation an issue, that ye may be able to bear it* (1 Cor. 10:13). This heat, therefore, the crafty supplanter divides in one way, the merciful Creator in another. The former divides that he may more quickly destroy through it, the latter that He may render it tolerable. And because when we are fatigued with temptation, we are not only instructed by the internal spirit of God, but are also aided by the external words of those who preach, rightly after the divided heat is added:

CHAPTER XXIII.

[Old XV, New XIII].

VERSE 25.---Who hath given a course to the most vehement shower?

47. As persecution increased, the ardor of the apostles and holy preachers increased. Preaching, when grace ceases, does not pass to the heart.---If indeed, as we said above (Num. 41), that persecution in the regions of Judea is designated by the name of "divided heat," because the very sharpness of the persecution did not restrain

the holy preachers, aided by a heavenly gift, from the ministry of their preaching by any fear, he aptly subjoins: *Who hath given a course to the most vehement shower?* As if he were to say: "unless I." For to have given a course to the most vehement shower when the heat was divided, is to have strengthened the impetus of preaching amidst the very straits of persecution, so that the virtue of the preachers might increase all the more as the cruelty of the persecutors opposed it, in order that they might pour upon the parched hearts of the hearers the drops of rain, and more abundantly irrigate the dryness of perfidy, so that although the heat of cruelty might glow against them, yet through them the voice of grace might not be silent. Paul both endured and irrigated this heat of persecution, when he said: *I labor even unto bonds, as an evildoer; but the word of God is not bound* (2 Tim. 2:9). Of this shower it is said elsewhere: *I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it* (Isai. 5:6). Of this course of the shower which takes place in the hearts of the elect, the Psalmist bears witness, saying: *His word runneth swiftly* (Ps. 147:15). Frequently, however, there is a shower, and it has no course, because the preaching comes to the ears, but, internal grace ceasing, it does not pass through to the hearts of the hearers. Of the words of this preaching it is said for the sake of the elect: *For Thine arrows passed through* (Ps. 77:17). For the arrows of God pass through when the words of His preaching descend from the ears to the hearts. Because this is done by a divine gift

alone, the Lord bears witness that He has given a course to the shower.

48. The efficacy of the divine word persuading to relinquish all things, to endure all things. But I see it must be noted that He calls the same shower not "vehement," but "most vehement." A vehement shower is a great force, but a most vehement shower is an immense force of preaching. For it was a vehement shower when the holy preachers persuaded men to believe in eternal joys. But it was a most vehement shower, when on account of hope they admonished that everything be forsaken, that all visible things be despised for the sake of the invisible, and that for the sake of the joys heard of, the joys of the present world, the pains and tortures be endured. But when, faith being known, while the heat of persecution was raging, so many elect left what they possessed, forgot carnal affection, and for the joy of the spirit placed their limbs in tortures, what else did the Lord do, but provide a course even for the most vehement shower, which even to the execution of the highest precepts irrigated the invisible parts of the heart through the words of the body? Where it is also aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Old XVI].

IBID.---And a way for the sounding thunder.

49. Thunder is said to be like this. God alone opens hearts through grace. For what is understood by thunder, except the preaching of

heavenly terror? While human hearts perceive this terror, they are shaken. Sometimes, however, the incarnate Lord Himself is figured in the thunder, who from the convenient prophecy of the ancient fathers was brought to our knowledge as if from the collision of clouds. Who appearing visibly among us, terribly sounded those things which were above us. Whence also the holy apostles themselves, generated from His grace, were called *Boanerges*, that is, "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). Sometimes, however, as has been said, thunder is understood as His preaching itself, through which the terror of heavenly judgments is heard. But because any preacher can give words to the ears, but cannot open hearts; and unless through internal grace the omnipotent God alone invisibly provides an entrance for the words of those who preach to the hearts of the hearers, preaching is perceived in vain by the ear of the hearer, which is prohibited from reaching the innermost parts by a deaf heart, the Lord asserts that He gives "a way for the sounding thunder," who, when He bestows the words of preaching, pricks the hearts through terror. This way the eminent preacher Paul, while he terribly sounded forth heavenly mysteries, perceiving that he could not have it from himself, admonished his disciples, saying: *Praying together also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ* (Col. 4:3). He therefore who spoke mysteries, but prayed that a door might be opened by the Lord to those same mysteries in the heart of the hear-

ers, had indeed already the thunder, but sought that a way might be given him from above. John had known that he could by no means give this way, who said: *Ye have no need that any man teach you, but as His anointing teacheth you of all things* (1 John 2:27). This way again Paul intimated who it was that gave it, saying: *Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase* (1 Cor. 3:7). Having therefore received the way, let us hear what this shower and thunder do. It follows:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 26.---That it might rain on the earth without man in the desert, where no mortal dwells.

50. Gentility is a desert, bedewed with heavenly grace like a shower. To rain upon the earth without man in the desert is to preach the word of God to Gentility. Which, while it held no worship of the Divinity, and showed in itself no form of good work, was clearly a desert. In which, because there was no legislator, and there was none who reasonably sought God, there was as it were no man, and as if occupied by wild beasts alone, it remained void of mortals. Of this land of the desert it is said elsewhere: *He hath placed a way in the desert* (Isai. 43:19). Of this preaching granted to Gentility the Psalmist bears witness, saying: *He hath placed rivers in the desert* (Ps. 107:33). [Old XVII.] But it is to be noted that

after the heat was divided upon the earth, the most vehement shower received its course, that it might rain in the desert, because after the sharpness of persecution grew terrible in Judea, so that it not only did not receive the faith at all, but even attacked it with swords, every preacher sent to Israel turned aside to call the Gentiles. Whence the holy apostles say to the persecuting Hebrews whom they forsake: *It behooved us first to speak the word of God to you; but because ye reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles* (Acts 13:46). The heat being divided, therefore, the desert land and without man is rained upon, because, the persecution of the faithful being dispersed in the regions of Judea, Gentility, long ago forsaken and as it were alien to the infusion of reason, is bedewed with the drops of preaching. Which Gentility is shown as if even now found by the preachers, when it is subjoined:

VERSE 27.---To fill the pathless and desolate. But what it rendered when rained upon is shown, when immediately it is added:

CHAPTER XXVI.

IBID.---And should bring forth green herbs.

51. First pathless to prophecy, it became open to grace.---For Gentility was once pathless, to which the way of God was not open by the word. For when our Redeemer came, it so received the vocation of grace, that the way of prophecy had not been in it before. Rightly also was it called "desolate," either because it was destitute of the

reason of counsel, or of the fruit of good work. The Lord therefore gave a course to the most vehement shower, and a way for the sounding thunder, that it might rain in the desert, and fill the pathless and desolate, and bring forth green herbs; that is, He bestowed internal aspiration upon external preaching, that the parched hearts of the Gentiles might grow green, the closed parts might be opened, the empty might be filled, the unfruitful might germinate.

52. It germinated the works and doctrine of eternal life.---For in Sacred Scripture sometimes "herb" is understood as the greenness of temporal glory, sometimes as the refreshment of the devil, sometimes as the sustenance of preachers, sometimes as good operation, sometimes as the knowledge and doctrine of eternal life. For the greenness of temporal glory is understood as the Prophet says: *In the morning as an herb let it pass away, in the morning let it flourish and pass away* (Ps. 90:6). For to flourish and pass away in the morning like an herb is for the beauty of temporal glory to wither away quickly in the prosperity of this world. "Herb" is understood as the refreshment of the devil, as is said of him by the Lord: *To him the mountains bring forth herbs* (Job 40:20). As if he were to say: the proud and puffed up, while they extol themselves in unlawful thoughts and actions, feed him with their iniquities. "Herb" is shown to be the sustenance of those who preach, when it is said: *He bringeth forth grass on the mountains, and herb for the service of men* (Ps. 147:8). For

grass on the mountains and herb for the service of men is brought forth, when the sublime ones of this world, called to the knowledge of the faith, bestow transitory nourishment on the holy preachers in the journey of this life. "Herb" is put for good operation, as it is written: *Let the earth bring forth the green herb* (Gen. 1:11). Although we hold this to have been done historically in the creation of the world, yet we accept not inconveniently that the earth figured the Church, which in that germinated the green herb, in that it brought forth fertile works of mercy at the word of God. Sometimes we understand "herb" as the knowledge and doctrine of eternal greenness, as is said through Jeremiah: *The wild asses stood in the rocks, they drew in the winds like dragons, their eyes failed because there was no herb* (Jer. 14:6). By which saying the proud and most wicked persecution of the Jews was prophesied. For they themselves are called "wild asses" for the elation of their mind, and "dragons" for their virulent thought. Who "stood in the rocks," because they trusted not in God, but in the highest powers of this world, saying: *We have no king but Caesar* (John 19:15). They "drew in the winds like dragons," because puffed up with the spirit of elation they swelled with malicious pride. "Their eyes failed," because namely their hope fell from that which it intended. Which loving temporal things, neglected to wait for eternal ones, and therefore lost earthly things because it preferred them to God. For they said: *If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe in

Him, and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation* (John 11:48). They feared lest they should lose their place if the Lord were not killed, and yet having killed Him they lost it. But why these things happened to the miserable ones, he subjoins: *Because there was no herb;* that is, because their hearts lacked the knowledge of eternity, and it refreshed them with no food of the greenness of internal doctrine. In this place, therefore, what else do we understand by "green herbs" but the knowledge of holy doctrine or congruous operations? The desert land, therefore, is rained upon, that green herbs may be produced from it, because when Gentility perceived the shower of holy preaching, it germinated both the works of life and the herb of doctrine. This greenness is promised to the desert land by the prophetic voice, when it is said: *In the dens in which dragons dwelt before, there shall spring up the greenness of the reed and the rush* (Isai. 35:7). For what is designated by the "reed" (*calamus*) but preachers, and what by the "rush" (*juncus*) which always grows near the moisture of water, but the small and tender hearers of the sacred eloquence? In the dens of dragons, therefore, the greenness of the reed and the rush arises, because in those peoples whom the malice of the ancient enemy possessed, both the knowledge of the teachers and the obedience of the hearers are gathered together.

[Vet. XIX.] 53. The hearts of individuals are like a desert, before they are fertilized by the shower of grace.---If we skillfully inspect these things

which have been said generally about Gentility, we see them being acted out in individuals within the bosom of holy Church. For there are many very insensible to the words of God, who are indeed reckoned by the name of faith, and hear the words of life with their ears, but by no means allow them to pass through to the internal parts of the heart. What are these but a desert land? Which land namely has no man, because their mind lacks the sense of reason. And no mortal dwells in this land, because even if at any time the thoughts of rational senses come into their conscience, they do not persist. For crooked desires find a seat in their hearts, but right ones, if they ever come, run off as if they were pushed away. But when the merciful God deigns to give a course to His rain and a way to the sounding thunder, those pricked by internal grace open the ears of the heart to the words of life. And the pathless land is filled, because while it offers hearing to the word, it is crowded with mystery. And it produces green herbs, because being infused through the grace of compunction, it not only freely receives the words of preaching, but also renders them abundantly, so that what it could not hear it now desires to speak; and that which by not hearing had also withered within, now by speaking those things which are holy may feed any hungry ones with its greenness. Whence it is well said by the prophet: *Thou shalt send forth Thy spirit and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth* (Ps. 104:30). For thus, thus the face of the earth is changed by the

power of renovation, while the mind, for a long time dry, is rained upon by coming grace, and after its former aridity, as if herbs were produced, it is clothed with the greenness of knowledge. Which grace of our Creator is still more deeply commended to us, when it is subjoined:

CAPUT XXVII

[Vet. XX, Rec. XV]. VERS. 28.---Who is the father of rain? or who begot the drops of dew?

54. This voluntary rain is not given for our merits. Sometimes it drips as dew, sometimes it flows abundantly as rain.---As if He were to say: None but I, who gratuitously sprinkle the dry earth of the human heart with the drops of knowledge. For of this rain it is said elsewhere: *Thou, O God, shalt set aside a voluntary rain for Thine inheritance* (Ps. 68:9). For the Lord sets aside a voluntary rain for His inheritance, because He bestows it upon us not for our merits, but for the gift of His bounty. And therefore in this place He is called the father of rain, because heavenly preaching is generated for us not from our merit, but from His grace. For the drops of dew are the holy preachers themselves, who, through the grace of heavenly bounty, water the fields of our breast which are parched among the evils of this present life, as if among the darkness of a dry night. Of these drops it is said to rebellious Judea: *Therefore the drops of the rains were withheld, and there was no latter rain* (Jer. 3:3). For the drops of dew are the same as the drops

of the rains. For when by some dispensation they temper their preaching, they sprinkle it like tender dew. But when they speak those things which they perceive of heavenly things with the power by which they prevail, they pour it out like abundantly flowing rain. Paul was sprinkling dew when he said to the Corinthians: *For I judged not myself to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified* (1 Cor. 2:2). And again he was flowing with rain, saying: *Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged* (2 Cor. 6:11). Hence it is that Moses, who knew that he would speak both strong things to the strong and tender things to the weak, said: *Let my speech be expected as the rain, and let my words descend as the dew* (Deut. 32:2).

But behold we have heard by what gift Gentility is called; let us now hear by what strictness Judea is rejected. We have heard how He cultivates the deserts, and waters the parched places; let us now hear how He casts out those things which seem as it were internal. For He does not so gather the elect as not also to judge the reprobate; nor does He so release the faults in some as not also to strike in others. For it is written: *For mercy and wrath are from Him* (Ecclus. 5:6). Whence here also after He brought in so many gifts of grace, He also did not hide the judgments of His wrath. For it follows:

CAPUT XXVIII

[Vet. XXI]. VERS. 29.---Out of whose womb came the ice? and the frost from heaven who begot it?

55. The reprobate Jews, as if cast out from the womb of divine mercy, although born from the holy patriarchs.---For what else do we understand by the frost or the ice but the cold hearts of the Jews, constricted by the numbness of perfidy? Who once, through the reception of the law, through the keeping of the commandments, through the ministries of sacrifice, through the mysteries of prophecy, were held within the bosom of grace, as if within the womb of the Creator. But because, when the Lord came, being constricted by the cold of perfidy, they lost the fervor of faith and charity, they were cast forth from the secret bosom of grace, and as ice, they went out from the womb of the Creator: *And the frost from heaven who begot it?* What else should be understood here by heaven, but the sublime life of the saints? to which heaven it is said: *Give ear, O heaven, and I will speak* (Deut. 32:1). For He was not speaking to an insensible, but to a rational creature. Of this heaven the Lord says: *Heaven is My seat* (Isai. 66:1). Of which seat it is elsewhere written: *The soul of the just is the seat of wisdom.* Because therefore God is wisdom, if the seat of God is heaven, and the soul of the just is the seat of wisdom, then the soul of the just is certainly heaven. Abraham was heaven, Isaac heaven, Jacob heaven. But because the high priests of the Jews, the persecutors of the Lord, cold with the numbness of perfidy, proceeded from the progeny of those fathers, frost

went out as if from heaven, because the cold people of the unfaithful proceeded from the sublime offspring of the saints. For when Caiaphas was born from Abraham, what else but frost proceeded from heaven? Which frost, however, the Lord says He begot for this reason, because the Jews, whom He Himself created good by nature, He permitted by a just judgment to go out from Him cold through their own malice. For the Lord is the author of nature, not of fault. He begot them therefore by creating them naturally, whom He permitted to live iniquitously by tolerating them patiently. And because those hearts of the Jews, once tender and penetrable by faith, were afterwards hardened in the obstinacy of perfidy, it is rightly subjoined:

CAPUT XXIX.

VERS. 30.---The waters are hardened like a stone.

56. From the children of Abraham they were made stones, because of the hardness of the heart; and the Gentiles, previously stones, were converted into children of Abraham.---I remember that I have already quite often taught that the waters are understood as peoples. In a stone, indeed, because of its very hardness, the Gentile peoples are sometimes designated. For they themselves worshipped stones. And of these it was said through the prophet: *Let them that make them become like unto them, and all that trust in them* (Ps. 115:8). Whence John, seeing the Jews extolling themselves from the lineage

of their generation, and foreseeing the Gentiles passing over to the offspring of Abraham by the knowledge of faith, said: *Will not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father.* *For I say to you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham* (Matt. 3:9); calling namely the Gentiles stones, hard in perfidy. Because therefore Judea first believed in God, while all Gentility remained in the obstinacy of its perfidy, but afterwards the hearts of the Gentiles were softened to faith, and the infidelity of the Jews was hardened, it was well said: *The waters are hardened like a stone.* As if he were to say: Those soft and penetrable hearts of the Jews are turned into the insensibility of the Gentiles. For when the merciful God drew the Gentiles, being angry He rejected Judea. And it was brought about that as for a long time Gentility had been hardened to perceiving the faith, so afterwards, Gentility having received the faith, the people of Judea should grow hard in the numbness of perfidy. Whence the apostle Paul says to those same Gentiles: *As you also in times past did not believe God, but now have obtained mercy through their unbelief; so these also have now not believed in your mercy, that they also may obtain mercy.* *For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all* (Rom. 11:32). Which sentence of his, first indeed concerning the calling of the Jews and the rejection of the Gentiles, but afterwards concerning the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews, subtly weighing, and considering that

he could not comprehend the secret judgments of God, he subjoined by exclaiming: *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are His judgments, and His ways unsearchable!* (Ibid., 33). Whence here also, when the Lord was speaking of the perfidy of the Jews: *The waters are hardened like a stone,* so that He might show His judgments concerning their rejection to be secret, He fitly added:

CAPUT XXX

[Vet. XXII]. IBID.---And the surface of the abyss is constricted.

57. The judgments of God are a great abyss.---Because, with a certain veil of our ignorance thrown over them, the eye of the human mind by no means penetrates the incomprehensibility of the divine judgment. For it is written: *Thy judgments are a great abyss* (Ps. 36:6). Let no one, therefore, desire to search out why, when one is rejected, another is chosen; or why, when one is chosen, another is rejected; because the surface of the abyss is constricted, and, as Paul attests: *His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out* (Rom. 11:33).

58. What was said of the hardness and rejection of the Jews, can be understood of Satan.---In that which was said: *Out of whose womb came the ice? and the frost from heaven who begot it? * nothing prevents Satan from being understood in the ice and the frost. For he himself, as ice,

proceeded from the womb of God, because, cold with the numbness of malice, he went out from the warmth of His secrets as the master of iniquity. He was begotten as the frost from heaven, because, being about to constrict the hearts of the reprobate, he was permitted to fall from the heights to the depths. Who, having been well created in the heavenly places, when he fell, constricted the minds of his followers as frost in the cold of fault. Who, coming to the earth, what he did in men is completed when it is subjoined: *The waters are hardened in the likeness of a stone.* For by the waters the peoples are designated, but by the stone the hardness of the same Satan is designated. When he, therefore, came to the depths, the waters were hardened in the likeness of a stone, because men, imitating his malice, lost the soft bowels of charity. Because his fraudulent designs cannot be detected by seduced men, it is rightly subjoined: *And the surface of the abyss is constricted.* For one thing lies hidden within him, and another he shows outwardly. For he transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), and by the crafty art of deception he very often proposes commendable things, that he may draw to unlawful ones. The surface of the abyss, therefore, is constricted, because while the kind of good appearance of his persuasion is shown from above like solid ice, his malice lying hidden in the deep is not seen.

59. And of the proud who become insolent because of the gifts they have received.---We can understand all these things in another way also,

if we search for them morally. [Vet. XXIII]. For Almighty God, while He forms the minds of men in His fear, as it were conceives them, and while He promotes them to open virtues, He begets them; but if they are extolled because of the virtues they have received, He leaves them. And we have often known some to be pricked by the consideration of their evils, to grow fervent with the dread of divine terror, and through the beginnings of dread to reach the heights of virtues; but while they are extolled because of those same virtues which they receive, being bound by the snare of vain glory, they return to their former numbness. Rightly therefore, when the Lord casts out such ones, He says: *Out of whose womb came the ice?* For as if out of the womb of God ice goes forth, when these who had already grown warm within grow cold from the gift of virtues; and from there, growing numb, they seek external glory, whence they ought to have burned more ardently to love internal things. And while this one is powerful in signs, that one in knowledge, this one in prophecy, that one in great works, and through these gifts he seeks to please men, everything that had previously been warm within, loving external praise, he turns into numbness. As if therefore ice goes forth from the womb, while after the benefits of gifts he is separated from the bowels of heavenly piety. Are they not ice, who in the virtues which they receive seek praises from men? And yet, to the coming Judge, recalling His gifts to His memory, they say: *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in

Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many virtues?* (Matt. 7:22). But how the Lord casts out this ice He shows, saying: *I know you not whence you are, depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity* (Ibid.). The Lord now carries this ice in the womb, because He tolerates it within the bosom of the Church. But then He openly casts it out, when He rejects such ones from heavenly secrets through the final and public judgment. By these words, therefore, what is openly being done, but that blessed Job may be humbled concerning his highest virtues, lest in that in which he had grown warm by living well, he should grow cold by being proud, and being rejected should go out from the womb of the Divinity, if he should extol himself puffed up within the bosom of his own heart?

[Vet. XXIV.] 60. The punishment of pride, hardening. In what sense God is said to harden.---And because by a just judgment He permits proud minds to go out to fault from the virtue they have received, it is still rightly subjoined: *And the frost from heaven who begot it?* For very often He grants the knowledge of sacred eloquence, but while he who receives it is extolled because of that same knowledge, he is blinded in that same sacred eloquence by the wrath of the strict Judge, so that following external favors through it, he may no longer see its internal things; and he who remaining within could have been warm, by going out may grow cold, and being hardened may fall to the depths, who previously stood liquid in the heights for the

knowledge of God as one tractable. Is not sacred eloquence heaven, which opening to us the day of understanding, illustrates us with the sun of justice, which while the night of the present life contains us, shines for us with the stars of the commandments? But because it is necessary that there be heresies, that they who are approved may be made manifest (1 Cor. 11:19), when the proud mind is rejected from a sound understanding, by the vengeance of the strict Judge frost is begotten from heaven, so that while the Sacred Scripture itself is warm in the hearts of the elect, it may send forth from itself those who proudly desire to know it as cold ones. For they err there where they ought to have corrected their errors; and while from the heavenly understanding of the resplendent eloquence, being both hardened themselves and about to seduce others, they fall, coming to the depths as frost, it also constricts others. Nevertheless, the Lord asserts that He Himself begets this frost, not that He Himself forms the minds of the wicked to fault, but that He does not deliver from fault, as it is written: *I will harden the heart of Pharaoh* (Exod. 10:27). Because He would not mercifully soften it, He certainly announced that He had strictly hardened it.

61. When the virtue is lost, the image of virtue is often retained. But because when the virtue of the fear of God, which had been begun, is lost, the image of virtue is retained for the sake of human praises, it is rightly subjoined: *The waters are hardened like a stone, and the surface of the abyss

is constricted.* For waters grow hard through ice on the surface, but remain fluid in the internal parts. And what do we understand by the waters but the fluid hearts of the reprobate? Which, when they desert virtue by purpose, show themselves strong in good works through hypocrisy; and while in their internal parts they flow down to vices, and outwardly they feign themselves imitators of the holy and the strong, *the waters are hardened like a stone, and the surface of the abyss is constricted,* because through the superinduced appearance of holiness their fluid and unstable conscience is covered from men. For since they are base to themselves within, yet before the eyes of others they are clothed with a certain ancient manner of living.

62. God wisely presses the premature fruits of virtue.---But lest any one should wish these words of the Lord to be understood in a good part, we ought also to build up for those who so seek, provided that we be by no means judged to have neglected those things which were to be searched out. For in the preceding verse it is said: *Who is the father of rain? or who begot the drops of dew?* And immediately it is added: *Out of whose womb came the ice? and the frost from heaven who begot it?* If therefore the following sentence is joined to the preceding words with no disparate sense, certainly its understanding is opened to us in a good part without the obstacle of difficulty. [Vet. XXV.] For when the earth is rained upon, the seeds cast into it are more fruitfully bound. But again, if the rain irrigates it

too immoderately, it changes the fatness and the virtue of the grain into the stalk. But if the cast seed is pressed by frost after the rain, by which it is repelled from appearing outwardly too quickly, it is more fruitfully rooted within; and where it is forbidden to go forward, it is forced to multiply, because when it is restrained from an immature rising, it is more abundantly filled for fruit from the slowness of its conception. What is it therefore that the Lord first indeed insinuates Himself as the father of rain, but afterwards narrates that ice goes forth from His womb, and pronounces that He begets the frost from heaven, but that in a wonderful way He both first waters the earth of our breast for receiving the seeds of the word through the rain of secret grace, and afterwards, lest it should flow forth too immoderately in the conceived virtues, He presses it by the discipline of internal dispensation, so that what the rain of received grace irrigates, the rigor of discipline also constricts, lest if it should bring forth the conceived virtues either before it ought, or more than is necessary, it should turn the fruits into herb? For very often from those beginning a good work, while it is shown before it is opportune, it is emptied of the grain of perfection, and very often virtues, while they are exuberant more than is necessary, they exhale. Whence also the Lord either refuses the desires of His elect before the time, or again in the time presses their progress beyond measure, lest if they should profit either before they ought, or more than they ought, through the magnitude of their own progress

they should fall into the defect of elation. For when the heart is pricked after sins, the earth which had dried up is watered by the infusion of rain; and when, having left iniquities, it proposes to execute good works, it receives the seed as if after the infusion. And many, when they conceive holy desires, burn to be exercised already in the highest virtues, so that not only may fault not stain the operation, but nor even knock at the thought. And as yet they are placed in the body, but they wish to suffer nothing already from the communion of the present life; they desire through the internal intention of the mind to imitate stability, but they are reverberated by intervening temptations, so that namely they may remember their own infirmity, and may not be elated concerning the virtues which they receive. Which while it is done by a wonderful repression of discipline, what else but frost from heaven is generated over the infused earth? What else but ice is produced from the womb of God, when from the internal secret the dispensation goes forth, and our wills are bridled even in good desires?

63. Which is confirmed by the example of St. Paul.---Let us see Paul, namely the infused earth, how much he is pressed by the ice of discipline, while he says: *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not* (Rom. 7:18). For he who asserts that he has the will, already shows through the infusion of grace what seeds lie hidden in him. But while he does not find how to perform that which is good,

he certainly indicates by how much ice of heavenly dispensation he is pressed. Had not this ice pressed their hearts, to whom he said: *So that you do not the things that you would* (Gal. 5:17)? As if he were to say openly: The secret seeds of your heart already seek to go forth into fruit, but they are pressed by the frost of heavenly moderation, so that they may afterwards go forth so much more fruitfully, as they patiently bear the pressing weights of the divine judgment.

[Vet. XXVI.] 64. Thence heavy temptations emerge, which are overcome by the custom of living well.---And because human hearts very often, since they are not able to break forth to the virtues which they desire, by that very thing by which they recoil from the perfection of their intention, they are fatigued by the goads of temptations, but nevertheless they compress those same temptations of thoughts, and compose themselves through the use of exercise in a certain rigor of living, it is well subjoined: *The waters are hardened in the likeness of a stone.* Because even if fluid thoughts harass them within, by no means however do they draw them even to the consent of an evil work. But the mind, under the ingrained custom of living well, hides outwardly as if under a certain hardness whatever is softened within from the pulsation of temptation. Whence also it is well subjoined: *And the surface of the abyss is constricted.* Because an evil thought, even if it comes as far as suggestion, does not leap forward as far as consent, be-

cause the rigor of holy deliberation superinduced presses the fluctuating movements of the soul.

65. Adversity makes the saints more valiant.---Adversity of the present life can also be designated in the frost or the ice, which while it compresses the saints by its asperity, renders them more valiant. For while Almighty God permits us to be exercised by troubles, and promotes us to the state of a better life through intervening sadness, by a wonderful counsel He begets frost and ice over the future fruit, so that each elect person in this life, as in winter, may tolerate the adversities of winds and colds, and as if in summer serenity may afterwards show the fruits which he has conceived here. Whence also by the voice of the Bridegroom it is said to each soul hastening to those pleasant things of eternity after the whirlwinds of this world: *Arise, make haste, my love, my beautiful one, and come; for already the winter is past, the rain is over and gone* (Cant. 2:10-11). And because if only prosperous things are present to us we are dissolved, but to virtues we are better solidified through adverse things, it is rightly subjoined: [Vet. XXVII.] *The waters are hardened in the likeness of a stone.* For minds which had flowed softly through prosperous things, being constricted by adversities, grow hard; and water is brought to the likeness of a stone, when each weak person, through the tolerance received from above, imitates the sufferings of his Redemption. For water had hardened in the likeness of a stone, when he, previously an impatient persecutor, afterwards Paul, said: *I fill

up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh* (Coloss. 1:24).

66. And more solicitous to guard internal gifts.---And because when they are depressed by adverse things, they more skillfully guard their internal gifts, it is rightly added: *And the surface of the abyss is constricted.* For joy is accustomed to open the secrets of the mind, and by opening to lose them; but adverse things, when they depress us outwardly, render us more cautious inwardly. After the frost or the ice, therefore, the surface of the abyss is constricted, because our mind is fortified by adversities to preserve the deep gifts which it has received. Isaiah had constricted the surface of his abyss when he said: *My secret to me, my secret to me* (Isai. 24:16). Paul had constricted the surface of his abyss, who, toiling through so many perils and adversities, speaks of himself under a certain pretext, saying: *I heard secret words, which it is not lawful for a man to speak* (2 Cor. 12:4). And again: *But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or heareth anything from me* (Ibid., 6). He, therefore, who tolerating adverse things outwardly, lest perhaps he should flow out in praises, feared to open his secrets, what else had he done but pressed the abyss of his secrets through a constricted surface? It follows:

CAPUT XXXI

[Rec. XVI]. VERS. 31.---Shalt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades, or canst thou dissipate the gyration of Arcturus?

67. What the Pleiades and Arcturus are. Considering the omnipotence of God, we are admonished of our infirmity.---The Pleiades stars are named *apo tou pleistou*, that is, from plurality. Moreover, they are created so near to one another and yet divided, that they are both together, and yet can by no means be joined, so that they are joined by proximity, but disjoined by touch. Arcturus, however, so illustrates the nocturnal times, that placed in the axis of heaven it turns itself through various parts, and yet does not set. For it is not rolled running outside itself, but situated in its place, it is by no means inclined to fall in any parts of the world. What is it, therefore, that man, made from the earth and placed on the earth (Gen. 2:7), is discussed concerning the heavenly administration, because he is not able to join together the Pleiades, which he sees created near to one another and almost joined, because he cannot dissipate the gyration of Arcturus, which nevertheless he can see by its own turning almost dissipated? Is it not that in these ministries, considering the power of the Author, he may remember his own infirmity, and may weigh how inestimable He is in that very government of the heavenly ministries, whom he was not yet able to see in His majesty?

MYSTIC SENSE.---The saints are designated by the name of the Pleiades.---68. But why do we speak these things, who are urged by the goad of reason, that we may know these words to be pregnant with mystic senses? [Vet. XXVIII.] For what else do the shining Pleiades, which are also

seven, announce but all the saints, who illustrate us with the light of the sevenfold grace of the Spirit among the darkness of the present life, who from the very beginning of the world even to its end, sent at various times to prophesy, are both joined to one another according to something, and disjoined according to something? For the Pleiades stars, as was said above, are joined to one another by proximity, and disjoined by touch. They are situated together indeed, and yet they pour forth the rays of their light individually. So all the saints, appearing at different times for preaching, are both disjoined by the vision of their image, and joined by the intention of the mind. They shine together, because they preach one thing; but they do not touch themselves, because they are divided in different times.

69. All, even those who preceded Christ, preach Him, and the mystery of the Trinity.---In what different times did Abel, Isaiah, and John appear! They were divided indeed in time, but not in preaching. For Abel, signifying the passion of our Redeemer, offered a lamb in sacrifice (Gen. 4:4), of whose passion Isaiah says: *He shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and He shall not open His mouth* (Isai. 53:7). Of whom John also says: *Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world* (John 1:29). Behold, they were sent indeed at different times, and yet agreeing concordantly concerning the innocence of our Redeemer, John spoke of the same Lamb by showing Him, Isaiah by foreseeing Him, Abel by offering Him; and Him whom John

held in showing, whom Isaiah in speaking, this one Abel held in his hands by signifying Him.

70. How the saints, though divided in time, are joined in faith and preaching.---And because all the saints, who appeared from the beginning of the world until the end, preached the incarnation of our Redeemer, He who truly joins the Pleiades is He who, in their various times, makes them one in the concord of preaching and the intention of faith. For they are divided in times, but they are joined in preaching. They are disjoined in the vision of their image, but they are one in the intention of the mind. God therefore joins the shining Pleiades, because He makes His saints, in the variety of their times, one in the unity of faith. They are seven, because they illustrate us with the sevenfold grace of the Spirit. And because they were sent to different times, they were created divided; but because they preached one thing, they were created joined. Shalt thou be able to join these together? As if He were to say: None but I, who truly join them, because I make them one in My knowledge.

71. What Arcturus is. How its gyration is dissipated.---*Or canst thou dissipate the gyration of Arcturus?* Arcturus, as we said above, rotates around the axis of heaven, and yet does not set. What else do we understand by Arcturus, but the Church, which, placed in the axis of its own stability, turns itself through various parts? For the Church, while it always stands in its own stability, is rolled through the various partings of its own works. Or Arcturus can be understood as

the carnal observation of the Law, which turns itself through various parts, but by no means sets, because it remains in the letter. But the gyration of Arcturus is dissipated, when the carnal observation of the Law is ended by the coming of the grace of the Gospel. For when the carnal things are turned into spiritual ones, the gyration of Arcturus is as it were dissipated, because that which was being done according to the letter is no longer done according to the flesh. Shalt thou be able to dissipate this gyration? As if He were to say: None but I, who, by the presence of My grace, have turned the carnal observations of the Law into spiritual understandings. For man was not able to dissipate the gyration of Arcturus, because he was not able to change the carnal observation of the Law into a spiritual sense. But God dissipated the gyration of Arcturus, because, by the light of the Gospel, He ended the carnal observations of the Law.

72. Reflection on the shining of the saints.--- The saints, therefore, shine as the Pleiades, because they illustrate us with the light of the sevenfold Spirit. They are joined in proximity, but disjoined in touch, because, as we said, they are one in preaching, but divided in time. God joins them, because He makes them one in faith. And He dissipates the gyration of Arcturus, because He ends the carnal observations of the Law. All these things, therefore, are discussed with Job, that he may consider how much he is inferior to the divine power, which he sees to be so inestimable in heavenly things. For if he cannot

join the Pleiades, nor dissipate the gyration of Arcturus, how can he understand the deep judgments of God concerning human things? He who is not able to reach the heavenly ministries, how can he search out the secret counsels of the Creator? Which still more deeply follows, when it is subjoined:

70. Since we have already spoken of how the Pleiades stars harmonize concerning the humanity of the Redeemer, let us now demonstrate how they shine concordantly in showing the unity of the Trinity. Indeed, David, Isaiah, and Paul appeared to this world at different times; yet none of them felt differently from the others, because even if they did not know each other by face, they had learned one and the same thing from divine knowledge. For David, in order to show God as the author of all things in the Trinity, said: *May God bless us, our God, may God bless us* (Psalm 66:8). And lest by naming God three times he should be thought to have spoken of three Gods, he immediately added, insinuating the unity of the same Trinity: *And let all the ends of the earth fear him* (Ibid.). For by subjoining not "them" but "him," he intimated that the three things he had spoken of were one. Isaiah also, when he would open the praise concerning the unity of the Trinity, expressing the voices of the Seraphim, said: *Holy, holy, holy* (Isaiah 6:3); and lest by naming "holy" three times he should seem to divide the unity of the divine substance, he added: *Lord God of Sabaoth.* Because he added not "lords gods," but "Lord God," he indicated that

what he had called "holy" three times existed as one. Paul also, to show the operation of the Holy Trinity, said: *From him, and through him, and in him are all things* (Romans 11:36). And to intimate the unity of the same Trinity, he immediately added: *To him be glory for ever and ever, amen* (Ibid.). He therefore who subjoined not "to them," but "to him," made known one thing naturally, and three according to persons, which he had said thrice above as the same thing. As if, therefore, the Pleiades are situated in one place, because they feel concordantly concerning God, and yet they do not touch each other, because, as has been said, they are divided through the various times of this world.

71. All the saints are joined by the unanimity of faith and virtues.---Which the prophet Ezekiel well and briefly describes, who when he said he saw animals of different kinds, added: *And their wings were joined one to another* (Ezekiel 1:9). Indeed, the wings of the animals are joined one to another, because although the things they do are dissimilar, the voices and virtues of the saints are associated with each other in one and the same sense. And although one, by doing all things reasonably, is a man, another, strong in passions by not fearing the adversities of the world, is a lion, another, by offering himself as a living victim through abstinence, is a calf, another, by snatching himself on high in the flight of contemplation, is an eagle, yet they touch each other with their wings while they fly, because they are joined both by the confession of their voices

and by the unanimity of their virtues. Because it belongs to divine virtue alone both to join those sent at disjoined times in the preaching of faith, and to unite those endowed with dissimilar virtues in the brightness of intention, it is rightly said: *Shalt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades?* As if He were to say: As I, who alone fill all things, and join the minds of the elect by filling them in the sense of unity.

72. Arcturus signifies the whole Church. It teaches the necessity of faith as well as good works.---In Arcturus, however, which by its rotation illustrates the nocturnal spaces without setting, the life of the saints is designated not in part, but the whole Church together, which indeed suffers fatigues, yet is not inclined to the failure of its own state: it tolerates the gyration of labors, but does not hasten to its setting with the times. For Arcturus is not led to the lowest parts of the pole with the nocturnal time, but while it itself revolves, the night is ended; because, undoubtedly, while the holy Church is shaken by innumerable tribulations, the shadow of the present life is ended; and while she stands, the night passes away, because while she remains in her safety, the life of this mortality runs its course. There is in Arcturus something that we can contemplate more considerately. Indeed, it revolves in seven stars, and now indeed it raises three to the highest, and inclines four to the lowest, and now it erects four above, and presses three below. The holy Church also, when it preaches sometimes the knowledge of the Trinity to unbe-

lievers, and sometimes the four virtues, that is, prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice, to the faithful, as if by the rotation of preaching, it changes in a way the appearance of its state. For when it evacuates the confidence of their own labor from certain ones glorying in their works, and exalts the faith of the Trinity, what else does Arcturus do but raise three stars and incline four? And while it prohibits certain ones not having good works from presuming on faith alone, but commands them to work more earnestly what has been enjoined, what else does Arcturus do but erect four stars and depose three? Let us see how it raises three and deposes four. Behold, through Paul it is said against those being proud of their work against faith: *If Abraham was justified by works, he hath glory, but not with God* (Romans 4:2). For what saith the Scripture? *Abraham believed God, and it was reputed unto him for justice* (Genesis 15:6). Let us see how it raises four and deposes three. Behold, through James it is said against those being proud of faith against works: *As the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead* (James 2:26). Arcturus, therefore, revolves, because the holy Church, according to the minds of its hearers, is turned in a different side by the art of preaching. Arcturus revolves, because she is rotated in the tribulations of this night. But the Lord sometimes dissipates this gyration of Arcturus, because He changes the labors of the Church into rest. Then also He joins the Pleiades more fully, when He destroys the gyration of Arc-

turus, because then undoubtedly all the saints are coupled even by the appearance of vision, when at the end of the world the holy Church is released from these labors which she now sustains. Let Him say therefore: *Shalt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades, or canst thou dissipate the gyration of Arcturus? * You understand, "as I," who then unite the life of the saints even through vision, when I dissolve the body of the universal Church corporally. And who of men is ignorant that this is of divine virtue alone? But that man may know what he himself is, let him assiduously remember what the Lord alone can do.

73. Again, by Arcturus the Old Law, and by the Pleiades the grace of the New Testament is signified.---We have still something else to feel concerning the stars the Pleiades and Arcturus. Indeed, the Pleiades rise from the East, but Arcturus from the part of the North. Moreover, whithersoever Arcturus shall have turned itself by its rotation, it shows the Pleiades; and when the light of day is already become near, the order of its stars is extended. It is possible, therefore, that by Arcturus, which is born from the region of cold, the Law may be signified; but by the Pleiades, which rise from the East, the grace of the New Testament. For as if from the North the Law had come, which terrified its subjects with such great asperity of rigidity. For while for their faults it commanded some to be overwhelmed with stones, others to be punished with the death of the sword, the region being numb, and

as it were alien to the sun of charity, it rather oppressed the seeds of its precepts from cold than nourished them from heat. Peter had dreaded the weight of this oppression, when he said: *Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?* (Acts 15:10). Nor is it a wonder that by the seven stars of Arcturus the Old Testament is expressed, because both by the veneration of the Law the seventh day existed as venerable, and through an entire week the vows of the constituted sacrifice were extended. But the Pleiades, which themselves also, as we said above, are seven, indicate the grace of the New Testament so much more clearly as we all plainly discern that through it the Holy Spirit illustrates His faithful ones with the light of the sevenfold gift. Whithersoever, therefore, Arcturus turns itself, it shows the Pleiades, because through all that the Old Testament speaks, the works of the New Testament are announced. For under the text of the letter it covers the mystery of prophecy. And Arcturus as it were inclines itself and demonstrates, because when it is bent to a spiritual understanding, the light of the sevenfold grace signified through it is opened. And as the light of day approaches, the order of its stars is extended, because after Truth made itself known to us through itself, it relaxed the precepts of the letter from carnal observances.

74. Christ alone had all the operations of the Holy Spirit remaining in Himself.---But our Redeemer, coming in the flesh, joined the Pleiades,

because He had at once both all and remaining in Himself the operations of the sevenfold Spirit. Of whom it is said through Isaiah: *A rod shall go forth from the root of Jesse, and a flower shall ascend from his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety, and the spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill him* (Isaiah 11:1). Of whom Zechariah saith: *Upon one stone there are seven eyes* (Zechariah 3:9). And again: *And in the golden candlestick seven lamps* (Ibid. 4:2). But none of men had all the operations of the Holy Spirit at once, except the Mediator of God and men alone, whose is the same Spirit, who proceeds from the Father before all ages. Well, therefore, it is said: *Upon one stone there are seven eyes.* For for this stone to have seven eyes is to retain at once all the virtue of the sevenfold grace of the Spirit in operation. For one receives prophecy, another knowledge, another virtues, another kinds of tongues, another interpretations of speeches according to the distribution of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8); but to have all the gifts of the same Spirit at once no one reaches. But our Creator, taking up our infirmities, because He taught through the power of His divinity that He had all the virtues of the Holy Spirit at once, joined without doubt the shining Pleiades. But while He joins the Pleiades, He dissipates the gyration of Arcturus, because while He made known that He, being made man, had all the operations of the Holy Spirit, He dissolved the

labor of the letter in the Old Testament, so that every faithful one may now understand with the liberty of the spirit that to which he before served in fear among so many discriminations. Let blessed Job, therefore, hear: *Shalt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades?* As if it were openly said: Thou canst indeed have the lights of certain virtues, but art thou sufficient to exercise all the operations of the Holy Spirit at once? Contemplate Me, therefore, joining the Pleiades in all virtues, and do thou restrain thyself from elation concerning a few. Hear what is said: *Or canst thou dissipate the gyration of Arcturus?* As if it were openly said to him: And if thou already feelest those things which are right, dost thou by thy virtue destroy the labor of a grosser understanding also in the hearts of others? Consider Me, therefore, who correct the foolish things of the carnal ones, while I manifest Myself through the foolishness of the flesh, that thou mayest so much more humble these strong things which thou thinkest of thy virtues, as thou dost not even apprehend the footsteps of My infirmity. Because, however, in the very mystery of the Lord's incarnation the light of truth is shown to some, but the hearts of others are darkened through scandal, there is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXII.

*VERSE 32.---*Canst thou bring forth the morning star in its time, and makest thou the evening star to rise upon the children of the earth?*

75. Christ the true morning star, especially in the resurrection; but the evening star is Antichrist. To him men given to the earth are justly subjected.---The Father indeed brought forth the morning star in its time, because, as it is written: *When the fullness of time was come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law* (Galatians 4:4). Who, being born of a Virgin, appeared as it were a morning star among the darkness of our night, because, the obscurity of sin being put to flight, He announced to us the eternal morning. Moreover, He made Himself known as the morning star, because He arose from death at dawn, and by the brightness of His light He pressed the darkness of the earth of our mortality. To whom it is well said through John: *The bright and morning star* (Revelation 22:16). Appearing alive indeed after death, He was made for us the morning star, because while He provided in Himself an example of resurrection for us, He indicated what light should follow. But the Lord makes the evening star to rise upon the sons of the earth, because He permits Antichrist to dominate the unbelieving hearts of the Jews, their merit requiring it. Who for this reason are justly subjected by the Lord to this evening star, because they of their own accord willed to be sons of the earth. For seeking earthly and not heavenly things, they were blinded from beholding the clarity of our morning star; and while they expect the evening star to be over them, they are merged in the eternal night of the subsequent

damnation. Hence in the Gospel the Lord saith: *I am come in the name of My Father, and ye received Me not; another shall come in his own name, and him ye will receive* (John 5:43). Hence Paul saith: *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, therefore God shall send them the operation of error, that they may believe a lie, that all may be judged who believed not the truth, but consented to iniquity* (2 Thessalonians 2:10). By no means, therefore, would the evening star rise upon them, if they had willed to be sons of heaven. But while they desire visible things, the light of the heart being lost, they grow dark under the leader of the night.

76. The speech of God, which is a morning star to the elect, becomes an evening star to the reprobate.---Yet if we discuss this morally, we find how it is acted daily, because undoubtedly both to the elect the morning star arises, and to the reprobate, God permitting, the evening star dominates. For one and the same is the speech of God in the mouth of the preacher. Which while these hear rejoicing, but those envying, they turn the clarity of the morning star for themselves into the darkness of the evening star. While these humbly receive the voice of holy preaching, they open as it were the eyes of the heart to the light of the star; but while those envy him who blesses, and seek not the cause of salvation, but the glory of elation, they close their eyes in the sleep of death, the evening star of their iniquity breaking forth. By a secret judgment, therefore, He who is the morning star to the elect becomes

the evening star to the reprobate hearers, because by holy exhortation, by which the good return to life, the wicked die more wretchedly in fault. Whence it is well said through Paul: *We are the good odor of Christ to God in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to some indeed the odor of death unto death, but to others the odor of life unto life* (2 Corinthians 2:15). He saw, therefore, His word to be the morning star and the evening star at once to the hearers, through which He beheld both some to be raised from iniquity, and on the contrary others to be lulled to sleep in iniquity. Because this is acted by the secret judgments of God, which cannot be comprehended by men in this life, it is rightly subjoined there: *And to these who is so sufficient?* (Ibid., 16). As if he were to say: We are indeed sufficient to consider these things because they are done, but we are not sufficient to investigate why they are done. Whence here also the Lord, because He had said the morning star was produced for some, but the evening star was made to rise for others, lest man should dare to search out the secret judgments of God, immediately subjoins:

CHAPTER XXXIII

[Old XXXII, Rec. XVIII].

VERSE 33.---Knowest thou the order of heaven, and canst thou set down the reason thereof on the earth?

77. No one knows the causes of the judgments and predestination of God; let no one search

them out.---To know the order of heaven is to see the secret predestinations of the heavenly dispositions. But to set down the reason thereof on the earth is to open before human hearts the causes of such secrets. To set down the reason of heaven on the earth is, namely, either to discuss the mysteries of the heavenly judgments by considering them, or to manifest them by speaking. Which indeed no one placed in this life can do. For that we may come from small things to greater, who can understand what can be the reason of the secrets, that often a just man returns from judgment not only not vindicated, but even punished, and his wicked adversary departs not only not punished, but even a victor? Who can understand why another lives who lies in wait for the deaths of his neighbors, and another dies who would have been profitable to the life of many? Another attains the height of power, who only studies to hurt; another only desires to defend those who are hurt, and yet he himself lies oppressed. Another desires to be at leisure, and is involved in innumerable businesses; another desires to be involved in businesses, and is at leisure by constraint. Another, beginning badly, is drawn out even to the term of his life to worse things; another, beginning well, through length of time profits to the increase of merits. But on the contrary, another living badly is reserved for a long time that he may correct himself, but another indeed seems to live well, but lasts in this life only until he breaks forth into perverse things. Another, born in the error of infidelity,

fails in error; another, begotten in the rectitude of the Catholic faith, is consummated in the rectitude of the Catholic faith. On the contrary, indeed, another brought forth from the womb of a Catholic mother is devoured by the whirlpool of error near the term of life, but another completes his life in Catholic piety, who, having arisen in perfidy, had sucked in the poison of error with his mother's milk. Another both wants and is able to desire the highness of living well; another neither wants nor is able. Another wants, and is not able; another is able, and does not want. Who then can discuss these secrets of the heavenly judgments? Who can understand the secret balance of hidden equity? For no one ascends to know these recesses of the secret judgments. Let it be said, therefore, to man, that he may know that he knows not; let him know that he knows not, that he may fear; let him fear that he may be humbled; let him be humbled lest he presume in himself; let him not presume in himself, that he may seek the aid of his Creator; and he who, trusting in himself, was dead, seeking the help of his Author, may live. Let the just man therefore hear, now indeed knowing himself, but still not knowing what are above him: *Knowest thou the order of heaven, and canst thou set down the reasons thereof on the earth?* that is, dost thou comprehend the secret orders of the heavenly judgments, or art thou sufficient to open them to human ears? Blessed Job, therefore, is required concerning the investigation of incomprehensible judgments, as if it were plainly said to him:

Thou oughtest to tolerate all things which thou sufferest the more patiently, by as much as, being ignorant of the heavenly secrets, thou knowest not why thou sufferest these things.

BOOK THIRTIETH.

It comprises the exposition of the last eight verses of chapter XXXVIII, and as many of chapter XXXIX. Wherein the holy Doctor discourses many things, especially concerning the preaching of the Gospel, with piety and erudition.

955 [Old and Rec. I.] 1. Why Job was questioned by God concerning so many and such great things.---Blessed Job is required, the Lord questioning him, whether he has done such things, such indeed as a man cannot do, so that while he detects himself not to be able to do these things, he may flee to Him whom alone he understands to be able to do such things, and may appear more powerful before the eyes of his Judge, if he more truly knows his own infirmities. That, therefore, which is not unknown to be done wonderfully by the Lord, is required of Job by the divine voice; and it is said to him:

CHAPTER I.

JOB XXXVIII, VERSE 34.---Shalt thou lift up thy voice in a cloud, and shall the impetus of waters cover thee?

2. The word of God is scattered in a cloud, while it is announced to the faithless.---The Lord lifts up His voice in a cloud when, through the

tongues of His preachers, He forms an exhortation to the dark hearts of the faithless; and the impetus of waters covers him while the crowd of resisting peoples presses upon His members who are acting well. For hence it is that it is written: *The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying: Stand in the court of the house of the Lord, speaking to all the cities of Judah, from which they come to adore in the house of the Lord, all the words which I have commanded thee* (Jeremiah 26:2). And a little after: *And the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. And when Jeremiah had finished speaking, the priests and the prophets and all the people apprehended him, saying: Let him die the death, because he has prophesied in the name of the Lord* (Ibid., 7). Behold, the Lord lifted up His voice in a cloud, because the Prophet corrected the obscure minds of the proud directly. Behold, the impetus of waters immediately covered him, because from the rising peoples, instigated by the cause of his correction, He Himself endured all things in Jeremiah, who commanded the words of correction. Through Himself also the Lord lifted up His voice in a cloud, when, exhibiting Himself also in the assumed body, He preached many things to His persecutors, but veiled in the figures of enigmas. He lifted up His voice in a cloud, because His truth sounded to the faithless who were not to follow it, as if through a mist. Whence also it is well written in the books of Kings: *A cloud filled the house of the Lord, and

the priests could not minister because of the cloud* (1 Kings 8:10, 11). For their merits demanding it, while the proud pontiffs of the Jews hear the divine mysteries through parables, the priests in the house of the Lord were unable to minister, as it were, because of the cloud. Who also in the Old Testament, while they despise to investigate the mystical senses covered by the veil of the letter among the obscure darkness of allegories, lost the due ministry of their faith because of the cloud. To whom also now the Lord brought forth His voice in the cloud of His doctrine, when He narrated even open things concerning Himself. For what is more open than: *I and the Father are one* (John 10:30)? What more open to say than: *Before Abraham was made, I am* (John 8:58)? But because the darkness of infidelity had filled the minds of the hearers, as if an emitted ray of the sun, the intervening cloud hid it.

3. The impetus of waters covers the preachers of the divine word when the faithless rage against them.---For to this lifting up of the voice the impetus of waters immediately covered Him, because the crowd of peoples soon rose up raging against Him. For it is written: *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God* (John 5:18). Concerning this impetus of waters He cries through the Prophet: *They surrounded me like water all the day, they surrounded me together* (Psalm 88:17). And again: *Save me, O God, for the waters have entered even unto

my soul* (Psalm 69:1). Which waters indeed He endured in Himself before death, but in His own also after the ascension. For hence it is that He cries concerning the former: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* (Acts 9:4). Behold, He had already ascended to heaven, and yet still Saul, persecuting Him by the impetus of the faithless waters, and a wave more swollen than the rest, touched Him. For it is He Himself who speaks right things through the good, He Himself who is torn in the passion of the good. That therefore the Lord, by a wonderful unity of charity, might show that it is He who preaches to unworthy hearers through the mouths of His saints, He says: *Shalt thou lift up thy voice in a cloud?* But that He might show that it is He who suffered all adverse things in His saints, He subjoined: *And shall the impetus of waters cover thee?* understand, as Me, whom all the wicked neither understand speaking through the saints preaching, nor see patient through those dying. The Lord therefore narrates what He suffers from men, that the pain of afflicted man may be mitigated, as if He were to say to him plainly: Weigh My things subtly, and temper thine equably. For it is much less that thou shouldst tolerate wounds than that I should tolerate human things.

4. To the secret inspirations of God even the hearts of the just are dark.---Yet still we can search these words more subtly, if we weigh our hearts solicitously among the heavenly gifts. Already indeed we are faithful, already we believe the heavenly things which we hear, already we

love what we believe. But while we are pressed by certain superfluous cares, being overshadowed by confusion, we are dark; and when the Lord insinuates even to us, being such, certain wonderful things to be felt concerning Himself, He lifts up His voice, as it were, in a cloud. While He speaks Himself to our dark minds, He who is not discerned is heard as it were in a cloud. For the things which we know concerning Him are supreme, but yet we do not yet see Him in the secret inspiration by which we are instructed. He therefore who affords indeed speech to our hearts, but hides His species, forms as it were a voice in a cloud. But behold, we already hear the words of God speaking Himself within, and we already recognize by what continuation, by what study we ought to inhere in His love, and yet we fall back from the height of internal consideration to our accustomed things by the very mutability of this mortality, and we are tempted by the evil, busy importunity of imminent sins. When therefore He insinuates subtle things concerning Himself to our blind minds, He lifts up His voice in a cloud.

5. By the temptations which overwhelm the understanding concerning God, God Himself is as it were covered with waters. God does not leave us, not even while He is rejected.---But when by the temptation of vices our very understanding concerning God is oppressed, God is as it were covered in His voice by the impetus of waters. For we send as many waters over Him, as after the inspiration of His grace, we revolve

illicit thoughts in the heart. Nor yet does He desert us even when oppressed, for immediately He returns to the mind, discusses the clouds of temptations, infuses the rain of compunction, and brings back the sun of subtle intelligence; and thus He shows how much He loves us, who does not leave us even when He is rejected, so that at least thus the instructed human conscience may blush to admit temptations, which its Redeemer does not cease to love even while it is wandering. This He tolerates in us through Himself, this He carries daily from the faithless through His preachers. For His gift is repelled by the temptation arising in us, and yet it is by no means revoked by our infirmity from infusing the gift within. His words are publicly rejected, and yet He is restrained by no iniquity of the faithless from bestowing the largess of grace. For when wicked men despise the preachings, He joins even miracles which they may venerate. Whence after the voice brought forth, after the impetus of the inundating waters, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER II

[Rec. II].

VERSE 35.---Shalt thou send lightnings, and shall they go, and returning say to thee, Here we are?

6. From God go forth the holy preachers and to Him they return, attributing to Him alone the miracles by which they shine.---Lightnings indeed go forth from the clouds, just as wonder-

ful works are shown from the holy preachers. Who, as we have often said, are wont for this reason to be called clouds, because they both flash with miracles, and rain with words. And because human hearts, after they have not been moved by preaching, are troubled by these flashes of miracles, we have learned from the Prophet attesting, who says: *Thou shalt multiply lightnings, and shalt trouble them* (Psalm 18:14). As if he were to say: While they hear not the words of Thy preaching, they are troubled by the miracles of those preaching. Whence elsewhere it is written: *Thy arrows shall go in the light, in the splendor of the lightning of Thy arms* (Habakkuk 3:11). The arrows of God to go in the light is for His words to resound with open truth. But because men often despise the words of life even when understood, miracles are also joined. Whence he subjoined there: *In the splendor of the lightning of Thy arms.* For the lightning of the arms is the clarity of miracles. For by arms we defend ourselves, by arrows we destroy adverse things. Arms therefore with arrows are miracles with preachings. For the holy preachers strike their adversaries with their words as with certain arrows; but they defend themselves with arms, that is miracles, so that both how much they are to be heard may sound through the impetus of the arrows, and how much they are to be revered may shine through the arms of the miracles.

It is said, therefore, to blessed Job: *Shalt thou send lightnings, and shall they go, and returning say to thee, Here we are?* understand, as for Me.

For the lightnings go when the preachers flash with miracles and transfix the hearts of the hearers with heavenly reverence. But returning they say, *Here we are*, when they attribute not to themselves, but to the powers of God, whatever they recognize they have done strongly. What is it, therefore, to say to God, *Here we are*? For a certain obedience is declared in this word. The holy preachers returning, therefore, to say, *Here we are*, is to attribute praise to that grace from which they feel they have received the victory of the battle, lest they should attribute to themselves what they work. And indeed lightnings can go by working, but they cannot return by being proud.

7. Peter did this.---Let us see therefore the lightning going; Peter says to a certain lame man: *Silver and gold I have none; but what I have, this I give to thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.* *And having apprehended his right hand, he lifted him up, and immediately his bases and soles were consolidated, and leaping he stood, and walked* (Acts 3:6). But when the crowd of Jews had been moved by this fact, let us see now the lightning returning, what he says: *Ye men of Israel, why wonder ye at this, or why look ye on us, as if by our own virtue or power we had made this man to walk?* *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus* (Ibid., 12). And a little after: *Of whom we are witnesses, and in the faith of His name, Him whom ye have seen and known, His name hath

confirmed, and the faith which is through Him hath given this entire soundness in the sight of you all.* The lightning went therefore when Peter did the miracle; it returned when he attributed not to himself, but to the Author, what he did. The lightnings go when the holy preachers show wonderful works, but returning they say *Here we are*, when in that which they do they recur to the power of the Author.

8. Preachers sent to the public of operation, should care to return to the secret of contemplation.---Which, however, can be understood also otherwise. For the lightnings, as was said above, are sent and go when holy men go out from the secret of contemplation to the public of operation. They are sent and go when they are diffused from the hidden of internal speculation into the breadth of active life. But returning they say to God, *Here we are*, because after the exterior works which they perform they always recur to the bosom of contemplation, that there they may refit the flame of their ardor, and as it were from the touch of heavenly clarity may take fire. For they would more quickly grow cold among those exterior works, even though good, unless by solicitous intention they incessantly returned to the fire of contemplation. Whence it is well said through Solomon: *To the place from which the rivers go out they return, that they may flow again* (Ecclesiastes 1:7). They themselves indeed are called rivers there who here are called lightnings. For because they water the hearts of the hearers, they are rivers; but because they set them

on fire, they are called lightnings. Concerning whom elsewhere it is written: *The rivers have lifted up, O Lord; the rivers have lifted up their voices* (Psalm 93:3). And again: *His lightnings shone to the world* (Psalm 97:4). To the place, therefore, from which the rivers go out they return, because holy men, although they come out from the sight of their Creator, whose clarity they endeavor to behold with the mind, for our sake to the ministry of active life, yet they incessantly recur to the holy study of contemplation; and if in their preaching they pour themselves out externally to our ears through corporeal words, yet with silent mind they always return to consider the very fount of light. Concerning whom it is also well said: *That they may flow again.* For unless they always returned with a solicitous mind to contemplate God, undoubtedly internal dryness would dry up even the exterior words of their preaching. But while they incessantly thirst to see God, rivers as it were about to flow out are always born within, so that they may take in there by loving what they may flow down to us by preaching. Let it be rightly said, therefore: *Shalt thou send lightnings, and shall they go, and returning say to thee, Here we are?* Understand, as I, who compose My preachers, when I will, after the grace of contemplation to the ministry of active life; whom, however, I always recall from good exterior things to the internal height of contemplation, so that now commanded they may go out to exercise works, now recalled they may live more familiarly with Me in the study of

speculation. Returning, therefore, they say *Here we are*, because although through exterior acts they may seem to be wanting a little to contemplation, yet through the ardor of desire, which they continually kindle in their mind, obeying God they show their presence. For to say *Here we are* is to show themselves present by loving. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSE 36.---Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts of man? or who hath given intelligence to the cock?

9. Preachers figured by the cock foretelling the day by his song, intelligence given by God. Why the loins of this cock are girded.---Who are designated in this place by the name of the cock, but the same holy preachers repeated in another way, who among the darkness of the present life study to announce the coming light by preaching, as if by singing? For they say: *The night is far spent, but the day is at hand* (Romans 13:12). Who by their voices shake off the sleep of our torpor, crying out: *It is now the hour for us to rise from sleep* (Romans 13:11). And again: *Awake, ye just, and sin not* (1 Corinthians 15:34).

Concerning this cock it is written again: *There are three things which go well, and the fourth which walketh happily: a lion, the strongest of beasts, he will not dread at the meeting of any; a cock girded in his loins, and a

ram, neither is there a king who can resist him* (Proverbs 30:29). For He Himself is set in this place as a lion, concerning whom it is written: *The lion of the tribe of Judah hath conquered* (Revelation 5:5). Who is called the strongest of beasts, because *that which is weak of God in Him, is stronger than men* (1 Corinthians 1:25). Who dreads at the meeting of any. For He says: *The prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath nothing* (John 14:30). The cock girded in his loins, that is, the holy preachers announcing the true morning among the darkness of this night. Who are girded in their loins because they restrain from their members the fluxes of luxury. For in the loins is luxury. Whence also it is said to the same by the Lord: *Let your loins be girt* (Luke 12:35). And a ram, neither is there a king who can resist him. Whom else do we take in this place for a ram, but the first order of priests within the Church? Concerning whom it is written: *Bring to the Lord the sons of rams* (Psalm 29:1); who by their examples draw the walking people, as a subsequent flock of sheep. To whom living spiritually and rightly, no king at all suffices to resist, because whatever persecutor may meet them, he is not able to impede their intention. For they know how both to run anxiously to Him whom they desire, and to arrive by dying. The lion is set therefore first, the cock second, the ram third. For Christ appeared, then the holy preachers the apostles, and then finally the spiritual fathers the prelates of the Churches,

namely the leaders of the flocks, because they are teachers of the subsequent peoples.

10. Antichrist, elevated to the height, will appear as a fool. In this life not everything that is well is happy, nor everything that is happy is well.---But these things we affirm still better, if we subjoin the rest of the same place by exposing them. For because after these Antichrist also will appear, he subjoined this fourth there, saying: *And he who appeared a fool, after he was elevated to the height. If he had understood, he would have put his hand to his mouth* (Proverbs 30:32). For he himself will be elevated to the height, when he will lie that he is God. But elevated to the height he will appear as a fool, because in that elevation of his he will fail through the advent of the true Judge. Which if he had understood, he would have put his hand to his mouth; that is, if he had foreseen his punishment when he began to be proud, he would by no means have been elevated to the boasting of so great pride, having been well established at some time. Concerning whom let not that move which was said above: *The fourth which walketh happily* (Ibid., 29). For he said three go well, and the fourth happily. For not everything that is happily is well; nor in this life is everything that is well happily. For the lion, the cock, and the ram go well, but not happily here, because they suffer the wars of persecution. But the fourth goes happily, and not well, because Antichrist will walk in his fallacy, but according to the brief time of the present life that fallacy will prosper

for him, as was said concerning him under the species of Antiochus through Daniel: *Strength was given him against the continual sacrifice, because of sins, and truth shall be prostrated on the earth, and he shall do and shall prosper* (Daniel 8:12). What Solomon says: *Walketh happily*, this Daniel says *shall prosper*. According to this testimony, therefore, which is said through Solomon: *A cock girded in his loins* (Proverbs 30:31), we aptly in this place also take the cock for the holy preachers. Referring all things therefore to Himself, the Lord says: *Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts of man? or who hath given intelligence to the cock?* As if He were to say: Who infused the grace of heavenly wisdom into the heart of man, a human wise man? or who, but I, gave intelligence to those same holy preachers, that they may know when or to whom they ought to announce the coming morning? For for this reason they feel when and what they should do, because they recognize this within by My revealing it. It is to be noted indeed that wisdom divinely inspired is put in the inward parts of man because undoubtedly, as much as pertains to the number of the elect, it is given not in voices alone, but also in senses, so that the conscience may live according to what the tongue speaks, and its light may shine so much more clearly on the surface as it truly burns within the heart.

[Rec. IV.] 11. How much the rulers of souls stand in need of discretion.---But it is of great labor to discuss by a still subtler exposition that which is added: *Or who hath given intelligence

to the cock?* For the intelligence of teachers ought to be so much subtler, as it exercises itself to penetrate invisible things, as it discusses nothing material, as even speaking through the voice of the body, it passes over everything that is of the body. Which indeed would by no means be congruous to the highest things, unless the Creator of the highest Himself ministered it to the singing cock, that is the preaching teacher. The cock also received intelligence, that he may first discuss the hours of the nocturnal time, and then finally emit the voice of excitation, because namely every holy preacher considers first the quality of life in his hearers, and then finally forms a congruous voice of preaching for their instruction. For as it were to discern the hours of the night is to judge the merits of sins; as it were to discern the hours of the night is to correct the darkness of actions by a fit voice of rebuke. Intelligence therefore is bestowed from above on the cock, because to the teacher of truth, the virtue of discretion is divinely ministered, so that he may know to whom, what, when, or how he should bring it.

[Old VI.] 12. Exhortation which profits some hurts others.---For not one and the same exhortation is congruous to all, because neither does a like quality of manners bind all. For often those things hinder some which profit others. For also for the most part herbs which refit these animals, kill others; and a gentle whistle mitigates horses, instigates whelps; and a medicine which diminishes this disease, joins strength to another; and bread which corroborates the life of the strong,

kills little ones. According to the quality of the hearers therefore the speech of the teachers ought to be formed, so that it may be congruous to each for their own, and yet never recede from the art of common edification. For what are the intent minds of the hearers, but as it were certain tensions of strings stretched on a cithara? which the artist of touching, so that they may not make a song dissimilar to themselves, strikes dissimilarly. And for this reason the strings return a consonant modulation, because they are struck indeed by one plectrum, but not by one impulse. Whence also every teacher, that he may build up all in one virtue of charity, ought to touch the hearts of the hearers from one doctrine, but not by one and the same exhortation.

13. For the quality of each, let various admonitions be given.---For in one way men, in another are women to be admonished; in one way youths, in another old men; in one way the poor, in another the rich; in one way the joyful, in another the sad; in one way subjects, in another prelates; in one way servants, in another masters; in one way the wise of this world, in another the dull; in one way the impudent, in another the bashful; in one way the forward, in another the faint-hearted; in one way the impatient, in another the patient; in one way the benevolent, in another the envious; in one way the simple, in another the impure; in one way the sound, in another the sick; in one way those who fear scourges, and therefore live innocently; in another those who have so hardened in iniquity, that they are

not corrected even by scourges; in one way the too silent, in another those given to loquacity; in one way the timid, in another the audacious; in one way the sluggish, in another the precipitate; in one way the mild, in another the irascible; in one way the humble, in another the elated; in one way the pertinacious, in another the inconstant; in one way those given to gluttony, in another the abstinent; in one way those who mercifully bestow their own, in another those who contend to seize the things of others; in one way those who neither seize the things of others, nor bestow their own, in another those who both bestow those things which they have of their own, and do not desist from seizing the things of others; in one way the discordant, in another the pacified; in one way those sowing discords, in another the peaceful; in one way are they to be admonished who do not rightly understand the words of the sacred law, in another those who indeed understand rightly, but do not speak these things humbly; in one way those who, when they are able to preach worthy things, dread through too much humility, in another those whom imperfection or age prohibits from preaching, and yet precipitation impels; in one way those who prosper in that which they temporally desire, in another those who indeed desire those things which are of the world, but yet are fatigued by the labor of adversity; in one way those bound by marriages, in another those free from the bonds of marriage; in one way those who have experienced the commixtion of the flesh, in another

those ignorant; in one way those who deplore sins of works, in another those of thoughts; in one way those who bewail things committed, and yet do not desert them; in another those who desert them, and yet do not bewail them; in one way those who even praise the illicit things which they do, in another those who accuse their own wicked things and yet do not avoid them; in one way those who are overcome by sudden concupiscence, in another those who are bound in fault by counsel; in one way those who, although very small, yet frequently do illicit things, and in another way those who keep themselves from small things, but sometimes are submerged in grave ones; in one way those who do not even begin good things, in another those who by no means consummate things begun; in one way those who do evil things secretly, and good things publicly, in another those who hide the good things which they do, and yet by certain facts permit evil things to be thought of them publicly. And indeed concerning each one what might be the order of admonition we ought to have subtly insinuated, but we are impeded by the feared prolixity of the speech. But God being the author, the mind desires to fill this up in another work, if however some little time of this laborious life shall still remain.

[Old VII.] 14. The wicked are to be rebuked with high and great voices, those who have receded from iniquity are to be admonished with gentle and flattering ones.---We have indeed another thing which we ought to consider concern-

ing the understanding of this cock (*gallus*), because in the deeper hours of the night he is wont to utter stronger and more prolonged songs, but when now the morning time approaches, he forms in every way gentler and smaller voices. In which what the understanding of this cock suggests to us, the considered discretion of preachers demonstrates. Who when they preach to minds as yet wicked, intimate the terrors of the eternal judgment with high and great voices, because forsooth they cry out as it were in the darkness of deep night. But when now they know the light of truth to be present to the hearts of their hearers, they turn the magnitude of their clamor into the gentleness of sweetness, and do not so much proffer those things which are terrible concerning punishments as those which are flattering concerning rewards. Who also then sing with small voices, because as the morning approaches they preach every subtle thing concerning the mysteries, so that their followers may hear every smaller thing concerning heavenly things, the more they approach the light of truth, and whom the long clamor of the cock had excited when sleeping, the shorter one may delight when waking; in order that it may please anyone corrected to know subtly sweet things concerning the kingdom, who before dreaded adverse things concerning the judgment. Which is well expressed through Moses, when the trumpets are commanded to sound more concisely for leading forth the army. For it is written: Make thee two trumpets of beaten silver (Num. 10:2). And a

little after: When the concise clangor shall have sounded, the camps shall be moved (Ibid. 5). For by two trumpets the army is led, because by two precepts of charity the people are called to the preparation of faith. Which are commanded to be made of silver for this reason, that the words of the preachers may lie open with the brightness of light, and confuse the mind of the hearers with no obscurity of their own. But for this reason beaten (*ductiles*), because it is necessary that those who preach the life to come should grow by the beatings of present tribulations. But it is well said: When the concise clangor shall have sounded, the camps shall be moved (Num. 10:5), because doubtless when the speech of preaching is handled more subtly and minutely, the hearts of the hearers are more ardently excited against the contests of temptations.

15. Those who from office exhort others, should first exercise themselves in good works.--- There is still another thing to be skillfully looked into in the cock, because when he now prepares to utter songs, he first shakes his wings, and smiting himself, renders himself more vigilant. Which we patently discern, if we vigilantly see the life of holy preachers. For they themselves when they move the words of preaching, first exercise themselves in holy actions, lest torpid in work in themselves, they excite others with their voice; but first they shake themselves through sublime deeds, and then render others solicitous for acting well. First they smite themselves with the wings of their thoughts, because whatever in

them torps uselessly, they detect by solicitous investigation, they correct by strict animadversion. They first take care to punish their own things with weepings, and then denounce those things which are to be punished in others. Therefore they first sound with their wings before they emit songs, because before they proffer words of exhortation they cry out with works everything which they are about to speak; and when they perfectly watch in themselves, then they call others sleeping to watchings.

16. That preachers and teachers may rightly discharge their office, they have it from God.--- But whence is this so great understanding to the teacher, that he may both watch perfectly for himself, and call those sleeping to watchings under certain advancements of clamor, that he may both first cautiously discuss the darkness of sins, and discreetly show afterwards the light of preaching, that he may be congruous to each according to measure and times, and at the same time show to all those things which follow them? Whence is it tended to such great and so subtle things, unless he be taught intrinsically by Him by whom he was created? Because therefore the praise of so great understanding is not the virtue of the preacher, but of the Author, it is rightly said through the same Author: Or who gave understanding to the cock? As if He said: Unless I, who have more wonderfully instructed for understanding those things which are hidden the minds of teachers which I wonderfully created from nothing. Whence well that He may show

Himself not only the Inspirer of understanding in the sayings of those preaching, but also the Author of speech, He adds:

VERSE 37.---Who shall declare the reason of the heavens?

[Rec. V.] Whose words nevertheless He withdraws because He has shown Himself to us through sight, He immediately added:

CHAPTER IV.

IBID.---And the concert of heaven who shall make to sleep?

17. God being revealed in His majesty, preaching shall cease. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and the Son, coeternal to both.---For in this life the Lord has spoken to our infirmity not by the open sight of His majesty, but by the voice of His preachers, so that the carnal tongue might strike hearts as yet carnal, and they might perceive unusual things so much more easily, as they might hear them through the sound of a customary voice. But after that the flesh is resolved into dust through death, and through resurrection the dust is animated, then we do not seek to hear words concerning God, because we now see through sight the very one which fills all things, the Word of God. Which sounds to us so much more deeply as it also penetrates our minds by the force of internal illumination. For the strong and dying words being withdrawn, the very image of internal vision becomes as it were a certain sound of eternal preaching. Whence also the Lord rightly now says to blessed Job: Who shall declare

the reason of the heavens, and the concert of heaven who shall make to sleep? For what is the reason of the heavens understood to be, but the heavenly force of secrets? What is signified by the concert of heaven but the concordant speech of those preaching? Therefore our Creator, when He shall have begun to declare the reason of the heavens, makes the concert of heaven to sleep, because when He is now shown to us through sight, doubtless the words of those preaching are withdrawn. For hence the Lord says through Jeremiah: No longer shall a man teach his neighbor, and his brother, saying: Know the Lord. For all shall know me from the least of them even to the greatest, saith the Lord (Jer. 31:34). Hence Paul saith: Whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed (1 Cor. 13:8). [Old VIII.] Or certainly the reason of the heavens is that very vivifying virtue, which forms the spirits of angels. For God as He is the cause of causes, as the life of the living, so also the reason of rational creatures. Then therefore the Lord declares the reason of the heavens, when He insinuates Himself to us how He is set over the elect spirits. Then He declares the reason of the heavens, when, the darkness of our mind being wiped away, He manifests Himself by a clear vision. Whence also the Lord says in the Gospel: The hour cometh when I shall no longer speak to you in proverbs, but I shall announce to you plainly concerning the Father (John 16:25). For He asserts Himself to announce plainly concerning the Father, because through the sight of

His majesty then made open, He shows both how He is born not unequal to Him begetting, and how the Spirit of both proceeds coeternal to both. For we shall then see openly how this which is by being born is not subsequent to Him from whom He is born, how He who is produced through procession is not preceded by those proferring Him. We shall then see openly how both three are one divisibly, and three one indivisibly. Therefore the tongue of God then declaring is the seen brightness of Him lifting up. And the concert of heaven shall then sleep, because the Retributor of works appearing in judgment, the words of exhortations shall now cease. Whence also the very time of resurrection is openly joined, when there is immediately proffered:

CHAPTER V.

VERSE 38.---When the dust was poured into the earth, and the clods were fastened together.

18. The time of resurrection foreseen and foreannounced by Job.---For after its wont the divine speech describes those things which are yet future as if already past, observing this in itself forsooth which is said through it: Who made those things which are future (Isa. 45:11, according to LXX). Therefore the dust is then poured into the earth, because it is reduced into solid members. And the clods are fastened together, because doubtless firm bodies collected from dust arise. But after we have said how these words of the Lord are to be understood concerning the future,

now also let us indicate what they intimate concerning the present.

[Old IX.] 19. Heavenly things are hidden from the reprobate, revealed to the elect.---Who shall declare the reason of the heavens, and the concert of heaven who shall make to sleep? The Lord declares the reason of the heavens, while now by insinuating heavenly secrets He illuminates the minds of His elect. But He makes the concert of heaven to sleep, while by a just judgment He hides from the hearts of the reprobate the concordant hymns of the angels and those joys of the heavenly virtues. Which concert of heaven, although it watches intrinsically in itself, yet in the very ignorance of the reprobate it sleeps extrinsically. Therefore the reason of the heavenly secret is declared, and yet the concert of heaven is permitted to sleep, because both to some the knowledge of heavenly retribution is opened through inspiration, and to others what the sweetness of internal praise is, is hidden.

20. Visible things delay the reprobate here, but compel the holy to better things.---The reason of the heavens is declared, because to the minds of the elect what the retribution of heavenly things is, is incessantly opened, so that doubtless they may profit without cessation, and passing through visible things may extend themselves to invisible ones. For every visible thing which in this life fixes the reprobate, this impels the elect to other things, because while they respect the good things which were made, they burn for Him by whom they were made; and they love Him

so much more excellently, as they consider Him to precede this good thing which He Himself created. For the invisible tongue of compunction silently sounding speaks this to them intrinsically. Which they hear so much more fully within, as they are more perfectly turned away from the noise of exterior desires. To these therefore the concert of heaven does not sleep, because their mind knows what the sweetness of heavenly praise is, the ear of love being applied. For they hear within what they desire, and they are instructed concerning the rewards of heavenly goods by the very desire of the Divinity. Whence also they bear the present life heavily, not only when adverse, but even when favoring, because every thing which is discerned is burdensome to them, while they are deferred from that which they hear within. Every thing which is at hand to them they estimate as grave, because that is not that to which they pant; but incessantly their mind, tired by the very labors of temporality, is suspended to be resumed into that heavenly joy, while, the concert of heaven breaking into the ear of the heart within, they daily expect for themselves the society of the heavenly citizens. That concert of heavenly praise had broken out in his ear, who said: I shall enter into the place of the admirable tabernacle, even to the house of God with the voice of exultation and confession, the sound of a city feasting (Ps. 42:4). He therefore who had heard within the voice of exultation and confession and the sound of a city feasting, what else than the concert of heaven excited him?

21. The concert of the heavens is not heard by the wicked.---Which concert nevertheless sleeps to the reprobate, because it by no means becomes known to their hearts through the voice of compunction. For they do not study to consider that desirable frequency of the heavenly citizens, with no ray of ardor do they behold those feasts of internal solemnity, they are lifted up by no wing of contemplation in their inmost parts. For they serve visible things alone, and for that reason they hear nothing of heavenly sweetness intrinsically, because, as we said above, the deaf tumults of secular cares press them in the ear of the heart. Because therefore by the dispensation of a hidden judgment that which is opened to some is closed to others, that which is detected to some is hidden from others, let it be rightly said: Who shall declare the reason of the heavens, and the concert of heaven who shall make to sleep? Which nevertheless then became more widely known to us, when our Redeemer appearing through the mystery of dispensation, both showed mercy to the unworthy, and excluded from Himself those who seemed worthy. Whence here also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER VI

[Old X, Rec. VI].

VERSE 38.---When the dust was poured into the earth, and the clods were fastened together.

22. Sinners similar to dust, are snatched by any blast of temptation. They are solidified by the

grace of the Holy Spirit, and fastened together by charity.---Whom do we understand in the dust but sinners, who solidified by no weight of reason are snatched by the blast of any temptation? Concerning whom it is written: Not so the impious, not so, but as the dust which the wind casteth away from the face of the earth (Ps. 1:4). Therefore the dust was poured into the earth, when sinners called in the Church were solidified by the reason of the delivered faith, so that they who before mobile in inconstancy were lifted up by the breeze of temptation, might afterwards consist immobile against temptations, and perseveringly adhering to God, might hold a fixed weight of living well. But clods are coagulated from moisture and dust. Therefore in this earth the clods were fastened together, because sinners called and infused through the grace of the Holy Spirit were united in the collection of charity. These clods were fastened together in the earth, when peoples who before as it were in the dispersion of dust thought diverse things, afterwards, the grace of the Holy Spirit being received, met in that most peaceful concord of unanimity, so that when they were three thousand, or again five thousand, Scripture testifying, it was said that there was in them one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32). These clods from one dust indeed, but distinguished as it were by diverse mass, the Lord daily fastens together in the earth, because, the unity of the sacrament being preserved, He collects faithful peoples in the Church according to the variety of manners and tongues. These

clods the Lord already then designated, when He commanded fifties or hundreds to sit down to the eating of bread and fishes (Matt. 14:19, 20).

23. In the Church there are diverse orders.---Which clods nevertheless if we attend to in the Church from the diversity of merits, perhaps we are able still to distinguish more subtly. For while there is one order of those preaching, another of those hearing; one of those ruling, and another of those subject; one of those married, another of the continent, another of the penitent, another of virgins; it is as it were a diverse form of clods distinguished from one earth, while in one faith, in one charity, unequal merits of those working well are demonstrated. These clods that people signified, which for the construction of the tabernacle under one study offered diverse gifts, concerning whom it is written: Whatever was necessary for the worship of the tabernacle and for the holy vestments, men with women provided, bracelets and earrings, rings and right-hand ornaments, every golden vessel was separated for the gifts of the Lord. If any one had hyacinth, purple, and scarlet twice dyed, fine linen and goats' hair (Exod. 35:22), etc.

24. Each one, for fulfilling the worship of the Church, offers gifts.---In the ornament of the tabernacle therefore men offer gifts with women, because in fulfilling the worship of the holy Church, both the sublime deeds of the strong, and the extreme works of the weak are numbered. But what are demonstrated by the bracelets which bind the arms but the works

of the prelates laboring valiantly? And what is expressed by the earrings but the obedience of subjects? What by the rings but the seal of secrets? For for the most part teachers seal what they consider not to be able to be taken by the hearers. And what are remembered by the right-hand ornaments but the ornaments of the first operation? What is understood by the golden vessel separated for the gifts of the Lord but the understanding of the divinity, which is so much disjoined from the love of inferior things, as they are lifted up to love those things alone which are eternal? What by the hyacinth but the hope of heavenly things? What by the purple but the blood and tolerance of passions exhibited for the love of the perpetual kingdom? And what by the twice-dyed scarlet but charity is demonstrated, which is twice dyed for perfection, because it is decorated by the love of God and neighbor? What by the fine linen but the immaculate incorruption of the flesh? And what by the goats' hair, from which the asperity of haircloths is woven, but the hard affliction of the penitent is designated? While therefore some through bracelets and rings exercise a strong mastership, others through earrings and right-hand ornaments exhibit devoted obedience and right operation, others through the separated golden vessel hold a clear and more subtle understanding of God; others through hyacinth, purple and scarlet, do not desist from hoping, believing, loving the heavenly things heard, even those which as yet they by no means know by a more

subtle intellect, others through the fine linen offer the incorruption of the flesh; others through the goats' hair harshly deplore what they freely committed; as it were innumerable clods are proffered from one earth, because from one and like obedience the unequal deeds of the faithful proceed. Which clods doubtless being concreted would by no means arise from dust, unless the dust first received water, and solidified itself with the humidity conceived, because unless the grace of the Holy Spirit infused every sinner, the unity of charity would not hold them constrained to the works of faith. When therefore the Lord shall declare the reason of the heavens, or make the concert of heaven to sleep, let Him open. For He saith: When the dust was poured into the earth, and the clods were fastened together. As if He said: Then first by manifest vocation and discretion, I opened spiritual secrets both not without mercy to some, and not without justice closed them to others, when I rejected some, and united others within the Church by the concord of charity. Which holy Church because repulsed by the perfidy of the Jews, she betook herself to seizing the Gentiles, and to those to be converted in her body, which indeed she did not by her own, but by the Lord's strengths, is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER VII

[Old XI, Rec. VII].

VERSE 39.---Shalt thou take the prey of the lioness, and shalt thou fill the soul of her whelps?

25. The Church is a lioness, whose whelps were the apostles.---This doubtlessly is that lioness of which Job spoke, when he saw the proud Judea passed over while the Church was preaching: Non calcaverunt eam filii institorum, nec pertransivit per eam leaena (Job 28:8). For this lioness therefore the Lord takes the prey, that He may fill the soul of her whelps, because for the increase of this Church He snatched innumerable from Gentility, and satisfied the hungering vows of the apostles through the gain of souls. For they themselves were called whelps for the tenderness of their mind and the infirmity of fear, because, the Lord having suffered, they resided with closed doors, as it is written of them: When it was late on that day, one of the Sabbaths, and the doors were closed where the disciples were gathered for fear of the Jews, Jesus came, and stood in the midst of them (John 20:19). Whence here also is aptly subjoined concerning the same whelps:

CHAPTER VIII.

VERSE 40.---When they couch in dens, and lie in wait in holes.

26. They first couched in dens, whence they leaped out to drive preys into the world.---For when the holy apostles by no means rose up against the members of the devil in the voice of free preaching, and not yet after the passion of the Lord solidified by the effusion of the Holy Spirit preached their Redeemer with firm authority, they still lay in wait against their adversaries

as it were in dens. For the doors being closed as it were in certain hidden holes of their own, the whelps about to seize the world couched, that afterwards presuming they might snatch the prey of souls, of whom it is then certain that they dreaded the impetus of the world even by hiding themselves. Those doors being closed these whelps lying in wait sought the death of our death, that they might slay our fault, and kill every life of sin in us. To that first hungry whelp of these, but already valiant, Gentility being shown through the sheet, as if a prey being shown, it is said: Kill and eat (Acts 10:13). To these whelps as if still infirm it is commanded that they ought to couch in dens, when it is said to them by the Lord's voice: Sit ye here in the city until ye be endued with virtue from on high (Luke 24:49). Or are they not rightly called the whelps of the lioness, who brought forth in the Church have seized the adverse world with their mouth?

27. Perfect teachers imitate them. He knows how to speak rightly, who knows how to be silent orderly.---And these things indeed we know were done by the holy apostles, these things now also we see done by perfect teachers. For they although they are the fathers of the following peoples, yet are the sons of the preceding ones; whence also they are not unmeritedly called whelps. Or certainly because although they are the masters of certain faithful, yet they glory themselves to be the disciples of the universal Church. Therefore the Lord takes the prey of the lioness, because by the virtue of His inspira-

tion He snatches the life of those delinquent from error; and He fills the souls of her whelps, because by the conversion of many He satisfies the pious desires of teachers. Concerning which whelps it is well subjoined: When they couch in dens, and lie in wait in holes. For not all times are congruous for doctrine. For for the most part the virtue of sayings is lost, if they be proffered unseasonably. But often even that which is said more gently is animated by the meeting of a congruous time. He therefore knows how to speak rightly, who also knows how to be silent orderly. For what does it profit to rebuke an angry man at that time, when with an alienated mind he is not only not able to perceive the words of another, but scarcely is able to bear himself? For he who rebukes a raving man through invective, as it were to one who does not feel, imposes stripes on a drunken man. Doctrine therefore so that it may be able to reach to the heart of the hearer, let it weigh the moments of times which are congruous to it. Well therefore is it said of these whelps: When they couch in dens, and lie in wait in holes. For holy teachers when they both behold things to be blamed and yet retain themselves in thoughts through silence, as it were hide in holes, and as it were cover themselves in dens because they are hidden in their own hearts. But when they have found an opportune time, they suddenly leap forth, they withhold none of those things which are to be spoken, and they hold the neck of the proud by the bite of a harsh rebuke. Therefore whether through the apostles,

or through the teachers, whom He substituted in the place of the apostles, the Lord daily takes the prey for this lioness, and through those whom He took He does not desist from taking others also. For to this the just seize the sinners of this world, that through those converted others also may be seized from the world. Whence also that very twinness, which was seized by the pious mouth of the apostles, now hungers for others with as great a famine as it knows itself to have been desired by the apostles. Accordingly also is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER IX

[Old XII, Rec. VIII].

VERSE 41.---Who prepareth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry to God, wandering because they have no meat?

28. Gentility converted is the raven, whose young ones are the holy preachers.---For what is designated by the name of the raven and his young ones but Gentility black with sins? Concerning which it is said through the Prophet: Who giveth to the beasts their food, and to the young ravens that call upon him (Ps. 147:9). For the beasts receive food, while minds formerly brute are satisfied with the fodder of sacred Scripture. But food is given to the young of the ravens, to wit the sons of the Gentiles, when their desire is refitted by our conversation. This raven was food while the holy Church sought him.

But now he receives food, because he himself searches out others for conversion.

29. These know that they can do nothing by their own virtue.---Whose young ones forsooth, that is the preachers brought forth from him, do not presume in themselves, but in the strengths of their Redeemer. Whence it is well said: When his young ones cry to God. For they know that they can do nothing by their own virtue. And although they hunger for the gains of souls with pious vows, yet they greatly desire these things to be done by Him who works all things intrinsically. For they comprehend with true faith, because neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase (1 Cor. 3:7).

30. They burn with zeal for gaining souls.---But what is said: wandering because they have no meat, in this wandering nothing else than the vows of burning preachers are signified. Who while they ambition to receive peoples into the bosom of the Church, kindled with great ardor, send their desire now to these, now to those to be gathered. For the very burning of thought is as it were a certain wandering; and they pass as it were to various places with changed nods, while for uniting souls they run to and fro with a hungering mind in innumerable modes and into diverse parts.

[Vet. XIII.] 31. Paul's solicitude for almost all the churches. Charity, which unites what is divided, divided the heart of Paul among many.

---This wandering the young of the ravens, that is, the children of the Gentiles, learned from the very master of the Gentiles. For he himself, as much as he burns with valid charity, so much he changes himself in excessive wandering from place to place; he desires to pass to others from others, because the very charity which fills him impels him. For being placed far from the Romans he writes: I make mention of you always in my prayers, beseeching if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you; for I long to see you (Rom. I, 9, 10). Being detained at Ephesus he writes to the Corinthians: Behold the third time I am ready to come to you (II Cor. XII, 14). Again staying at Ephesus, he speaks to the Galatians, saying: I could desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice (Gal. IV, 20). At Rome also shut up in the custody of the prison, because he is not permitted to go to the Philippians by himself, he promises to send a disciple, saying: I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state (Philip. II, 19). Constrained also by bonds and detained at Ephesus, he writes to the Colossians: For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit (Coloss. II, 5). Behold how he wanders as if by a holy desire: here he is held in the body, there he is led in the spirit; and he exhibits the affection of paternal love to these present, and shows it to those absent; to those set before him he bestows his works, to those hearing he expresses his vows, effectively present

to those with whom he was, yet not absent from those with whom he was not. Whose wandering we know better, if we still weigh his words to the Corinthians. For he says: I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia. For I do pass through Macedonia; but it may be that I will abide, or even winter with you (I Cor. XVI, 5). Let us weigh, I pray, what this wandering is. Behold he abides in one place for the meantime, asserts he will go to another, and promises he will turn aside to another. What is it that he so anxiously partitions through so many places, but that he is constrained by one charity concerning all? For charity which is wont to unite what is divided, compels the one heart of Paul to be divided through many. Which however it gathers so much the more closely in God, as it spreads it more widely through holy desires. In preaching therefore Paul wishes to say all things at once, in loving he wishes to see all at once, because both by remaining in the flesh he wishes to live for all, and by passing from the flesh through the sacrifice of faith he wishes to profit all. Let the young of the ravens therefore wander, that is, let the children of the Gentiles imitate their master, let them shake off the torpor of the mind, and when they find very little the gain of souls, that is, their food, let them not rest; let them extend themselves to progress from advancements, and, seething in the utility of many, let them hunger for their refreshment as if wandering. Because truly by running to and fro through the works of preachings, they cease not to satisfy the Gentiles

with the refreshment of faith, let it be rightly said: Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God, wandering because they have no meat?

[Vet. XIV.] 32. By the name of the raven also the Jewish people is signified. Seeing the conversion of the Gentiles, it will at length repent and blush at its own folly.

---The Jewish people may also be designated by the name of the raven, black through the merit of infidelity. For its young ones are said to cry unto God, that food may be prepared for the same raven by the Lord, because doubtless the holy apostles, generated in the flesh from the Israelite people, while they poured out prayers to the Lord for their nation, as the young of ravens, fed with spiritual understanding the kindred people from whom they were carnally born. Therefore, while its young cry, food is prepared for the raven, because while the apostles entreat, the people lately faithless is led to the knowledge of the faith, and is satisfied from the preaching of the children as from the voice of the young ones. Yet in this verse we ought carefully to observe, that food is said to be prepared for this raven first when the young are crying and afterwards when they are wandering. For while the young were crying food was prepared for the raven, when Judea hearing the word of God as the apostles preached, was satisfied with spiritual understanding, now in three thousand, now in five thousand. But when through the multitude of the reprobate it exercised its cruelty against those preaching, and as

if it would kill the life of the young, the same young ones were dispersed into the spaces of the whole world. Whence also they say to the same carnal fathers resisting spiritual preaching: It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles (Acts XIII, 46); knowing surely that after the Gentiles should believe, Judea also should come to the faith. Wherefore also it is written: Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved (Rom. XI, 25). Because therefore the holy apostles both studied most of all first to preach to those hearing, and afterwards to show to those resisting the examples of the converted Gentiles, as hungry young ones they sought their food for this raven first by crying and afterwards by wandering. For whence the young wander, thence the raven finds food, because while through the labour of those preaching the Jewish people beholds the Gentiles converted to God, at the last it sometimes blushes at the folly of its infidelity; and then it understands the sentences of holy Scripture, when it recognizes that they had been made known to the Gentiles before they were to itself, and, the wandering of the young being completed, it opens the mouth of the heart to perceive the sacred oracles; because the courses of the apostles through the world being finished, it perceives spiritually late those things from which it fasted for a long time while perfidy bound it. Because since the power of the

divine potentiality alone works all these things, it is rightly said: Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God, wandering because they have no meat? Understand "except I", who both bear with the faithless people through its children entreating, and feed it through those preaching, and sustain it to be converted at some time in the end while they wander to other things.

[Vet. XV.] 33. Skillful teachers withdraw the food of more sublime doctrine from disciples who do not feel humbly enough about themselves.---There is yet another thing which can be understood morally concerning the raven. For when the young are brought forth, as it is related, it dissembles to provide food fully, before they grow black as they fledge, and suffers them to be affected by want, until in them its own likeness is seen through the blackness of the feathers. Who wander here and there in the nest, and seek the aid of food with open mouth. But when they have begun to grow black, so much more ardently it requires the food to be provided for them, as it has longer delayed to nourish them. The raven indeed is every learned preacher, who cries with a great voice, while he carries the memory of his sins and the knowledge of his own infirmity as if a certain blackness of color. To whom certain disciples are born in the faith, but perhaps they do not yet know how to consider their own infirmity, perhaps they turn away their memory from past sins, and through this they do not show that blackness of humility which ought to be assumed

against the glory of this world. These as if to receive food open their mouth, when they seek to be taught concerning sublime secrets. But to them their teacher bestows the food of sublime preachings so much the less, as he knows that they deplore past sins less worthily. For he waits and admonishes that from the brightness of the present life they should first grow black through the lamentations of penance, and then at last perceive the congruent nourishments of the most subtle preaching. The raven in the young looks back at the gaping mouths, but first seeks that in them the bodies be clothed with the blackness of feathers. So also the discreet teacher does not minister internal mysteries to the senses of those whom he considers to have by no means cast themselves down from this world. By how much therefore the disciples are less as it were black outwardly through the cult of the present life, by so much less are they filled inwardly through the food of the word; and by what they do not empty themselves of corporal glory, by that they fast from spiritual refreshment.

34. Otherwise if they be humbled in the confession of sins.---But if in the confession of the past life they bring forth the groans of their lamentation as if blackening feathers, immediately in contemplation the teacher, as the raven thinking of the refreshment of the young, flies to bring food from sublime things, and calls back food into their gaping mouths, while from that intelligence which he has begun he ministers the food of life by speaking to the hungry disciples.

Whom he refreshes so much more ardently from above, as he more truly knows them to grow black from the brightness of the world by the lamentation of penance.

35. By how much greater the humility is, by so much greater also is the hope of advancement.--- But the young while they clothe themselves with the black color of feathers, also promise flight of themselves, because by how much more the disciples feel abject things of themselves, by how much more they afflict themselves despising themselves, by so much more they promise the hope of their advancement into higher things. Whence also the teacher cares to nourish more hastily those whom already through certain indications he foresees can also profit others. For hence Paul admonishes Timothy, to nourish more solicitously as it were fledging young, when he says: The things that thou have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2). Which discretion of doctrine while it is cautiously kept by the preacher, a more large abundance of preaching is given to him divinely. For while through charity he knows how to suffer with afflicted disciples, while through discretion he understands the congruent time of doctrine, he himself receives greater gifts of his intelligence, not only for himself, but also for those upon whom he bestows the studies of his labor. Whence here also it is aptly said: Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God, wandering because they have

no meat? For when the young cry that they may be satisfied, food is prepared for the raven, because while good hearers hunger for the word of God, greater gifts of intelligence are bestowed upon teachers for refreshing them. It follows:

CHAPTER X

[Vet. XVI, Rec. IX].

CAP. XXXIX, VERS. 1.---Knowest thou the time when the wild goats bring forth among the rocks, or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?

36. Why spiritual teachers are signified by wild goats and hinds. Description of wild goats. Which hinds cross rivers. The things we do before God increase the more by merit, as they decrease with ourselves through humility. ---The southern part calls ibices birds, which inhabit the streams of the Nile. But the Eastern and Western region names ibices small quadrupeds which are accustomed to bring forth among the rocks, because they know not how to dwell except among the rocks. Which if ever they even fall from the high summits of the crags, they receive themselves unhurt upon their own horns. For in falling they strike the head, and while they oppose their first horns, the whole body is made free from the damage of the fall. But it is the manner of hinds to extinguish serpents they have found, and to tear their limbs with bites. It is said moreover that if ever they cross rivers, they place the weights of their heads upon the backs of those preceding them, and succeeding each

other in turn they feel not at all the labour of the weight. What is it then that blessed Job is questioned concerning the birth of wild goats and hinds, but that in hinds or wild goats the person of spiritual teachers is signified? For they bring forth as wild goats among the rocks, because in the doctrine of the fathers, who are called rocks for their solidity, they beget souls to conversion. They as wild goats feel the damages of no fall, while they are received upon their horns, because whatever temporal ruin shall have come upon them, they receive themselves in the testaments of holy Scripture, and are saved as if by the reception of the horns. For of these testaments it is said: Horns are in his hands (Habac. III, 4). To the consolation of the Scriptures therefore they flee, while they are struck by any damage of temporal fall. Did not Paul, falling in the adversities of this world, as it were receive himself upon his own horns, like the wild goats, when he said: Whatsoever things were written, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope (Rom. XV, 4)? They are also called hinds, as it is said through Jeremiah of teachers incautiously deserting the children they have begotten: The hind also calved in the field, and forsook it (Jerem. 14, 5). They, after the manner of hinds, the vices being slain, live as if the serpents were extinguished, and from the very extinction of vices, they burn more sharply towards the fountain of life. Whence the Psalmist says: As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God (Psal. XLI, 1).

They also while they cross the gliding moments of this temporality as it were certain rivers, compassionating in charity, place their burdens upon each other in turn, because they keep with cautious observation that which is written: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ (Galat. VI, 2). Because truly after the coming of the Lord spiritual teachers were scattered through the world, who could have brought forth the souls of their hearers in conversion by preaching, and because this same time of the incarnation of the Lord was not known before the voices of the prophets, although the future incarnation itself was foreknown to all the elect, well is blessed Job questioned concerning the time of the birth of wild goats and hinds, and it is said to him: Knowest thou the time when the wild goats bring forth among the rocks, or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? As if it were said to him: Thou thinkest for this that thou hast done something sublimely, because thou dost not yet foresee that time in which spiritual teachers being sent into the world beget children through the doctrine of the ancient fathers, and by their labours bring to me the gains of souls. For if thou didst behold their fruit as the births of wild goats and hinds, thou wouldst feel very humbly concerning thy own virtue. For the great things which we do we account as very small, when we weigh these by stronger examples. But then they increase before God through merit, when with ourselves they decrease through humility.

[Vet. XVII.] 37. By hinds, teachers; by wild goats, hearers may be understood. The examples of the saints are to be inspected. King David's humility and patience. He believed contumelious words were not reproaches, but aids. To them more grace than anger is due.

---By the significance of hinds teachers may indeed be understood, but by the name of wild goats, which are very small animals, hearers. But among the rocks the wild goats bring forth, because for the exercising of holy works they are fecundated by the examples of the preceding fathers, so that when perhaps they hear sublime precepts, and, conscious of their own infirmity, they distrust they can fulfil them, they may behold the life of their elders, and in their considered fortitude place the births of good works. For that I may speak a few things out of many, so far as the studious reader may understand many in few, let this one, being pressed by the contumelies of words, when he does not suffice to keep the virtue of patience, bring back to memory the deed of David, whom when Shimei urged with so many reproaches, and the armed nobles contended to avenge him, he said: What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Let him alone that he may curse; for the Lord hath bidden him curse David; and who is he that shall dare say, wherefore hast thou done so (II Sam. XVI, 10)? And a little after: Let him alone that he may curse according to the precept of the Lord, if perhaps the Lord may look on my affliction, and requite me good for this his cursing this day (Ibid., 12).

By which words he truly indicates that for the crime committed with Bathsheba, fleeing from his son rising against him, he brought back to mind the evil which he committed, and bore with equanimity what he heard; and believed contumelious words were not so much reproaches as aids, by which he judged he could be purged and that mercy could be had upon him. For then we bear well the reproaches brought upon us, when in the secret of the mind we recur to the things evilly committed. For it will seem light that we are struck by injury, while in our action we behold that it is worse what we should deserve; and so it happens that to contumelies grace rather than anger is due, by whose intervention it is trusted a heavier punishment can be declined before God the judge.

[Vet. XVIII.] 38. By what art Joseph overcame luxury. Let us convert the grace brought of the external gifts of God into weapons of virtues. Let it shame us to fight against God from His benefits.

---Behold another, while he profits in the successes of this world, the joy of the heart playing the pander, feels himself tempted by the stings of luxury; but he calls back to memory the deed of Joseph, and keeps himself in the citadel of chastity. Who while he saw the losses of pudicity were persuaded to him by his mistress, said: Behold my master, all things being delivered to me, knoweth not what he hath in his house, neither is there anything which is not in my power, or he hath not delivered to me except thee, who art his wife; how then can I do this evil, and sin against

my master (Gen. XXXIX, 8)? By which words it is shown that the goods which he had attained he suddenly brought to memory, and the evil which was beating him he overcame; and because he remembered the grace received, he broke the force of the imminent fault. For when slippery pleasure tempts in prosperities, these very prosperities are to be opposed to the sting of temptation, that we may so much the more blush to commit depraved things, as we remember to have gratuitously received goods from God, and let us convert the grace brought of external gifts into weapons of virtues, that those things which we have received may be before our eyes, and we may subdue those things which allure us. For because pleasure itself is born from prosperity, by the consideration of the same prosperity it is to be struck, so far as our enemy from whence he arises, from thence he may die. It is to be considered indeed lest we turn the gift received into vice, lest through the favour of life the whirlpool of iniquity absorb us. For we kindle the wrath of the supreme judge unquenchably against us, if against His benignity we fight even from His own bounty.

39. Daniel is to be imitated by one gasping for contemplation. The taste of carnal things is to be repressed. To one restraining the wandering of exterior things, the interior retreat is opened. ---Another, seeking the sweetness of internal knowledge, yet not prevailing to reach its secrets, beholds the life of Daniel for imitation, and apprehends the desired height of knowledge. For he who afterwards by the angelic voice is called

a "man of desires" (Dan. 10:11) because of his concupiscence for internal cognition, is remembered to have first tamed in himself the desires of the flesh in the royal court, so that he touched nothing of the delectable foods, but preferred harder and rougher food to the sumptuous and softer dishes (Dan. 1:12), so that while he withdrew from himself the flatteries of exterior food, he might arrive at the delights of internal nourishment; and might receive the taste of wisdom within so much the more greedily, as he had more robustly repressed the flavor of the flesh without for the sake of the same wisdom. For if we cut off from the flesh that which pleases it, we soon find in the spirit that which delights. For to the intention of the soul, if the exterior wandering is closed, the interior retreat is opened. For where the mind cannot be scattered outside itself on account of discipline, there it can intend above itself through progress, because a tree is also forced to grow on high which is prohibited from being diffused through branches; and when we obstruct the streams of a fountain, we provoke the currents to rise to higher things. Therefore, while all studious persons behold the life of the saints by imitating it, the wild goats bring forth their young in the rocks. Hence it is that Paul admonished his hearers to bring forth as it were wild goats in the rocks, when, having enumerated the virtues of the elders, he said: "Having so great a cloud of witnesses set over us, laying aside every weight, and the sin which surrounds us, let us run through patience to the struggle proposed

to us" (Heb. 12:1). And again: "Beholding the end of whose conversation, imitate their faith" (Heb. 13:7).

[Vet. XIX.] 40. When we conceive divine precepts, we do not immediately bring them forth. ---But when we conceive divine precepts in the heart, we do not immediately bring them forth as if they were already solidly thought. Whence also blessed Job is questioned not concerning the birth of the wild goats, but concerning the time of birth. Which time, if we scarcely comprehend in ourselves, much more we do not know in the mind of another. For first the seeds of heavenly fear, received in the womb of the heart, are coagulated through the meditation of study that they may remain; afterwards, the fixed intention of thought being attached, while they tend toward the reason of discretion, they are formed as if into the distinction of members; then, confirmed by the use of perseverance, they come as it were into the solidity of bones; but at last, strengthened by perfect authority, they proceed as if into birth; which increments of divine seeds no one considers in the mind of another, except He who creates. For even if we know by the attestation of certain things that someone has already conceived the force of heavenly concupiscence, yet we are ignorant when he may break forth in birth.

41. Some fetuses are abortive because they are premature. Human praise extinguishes tender good. ---But often seeds conceived in the mind are unable to arrive at perfection, because in being born they precede the time of birth. And

because, not yet fully formed in thought, they come forth before human eyes, they die as it were abortive. For human tongue, while it praises as if already strong, for the most part extinguishes tender good things. For by so much the more quickly they die, as they break forth unseasonably to the notice of favor. But sometimes our imperfect thought, not yet strengthened, while it is shown too quickly to men, is dissipated by the adversity of those resisting; and when it endeavors to be seen to be because it is before the time, it acts so that it is not. But holy men, because they study that all things which they think well may secretly convalesce, and first form the offspring as if about to proceed within the womb of the mind, rightly blessed Job is discussed concerning the time of birth, which namely when it may be congruous for each one is known by none but the Creator. Who, while He beholds the secret places of the heart, apprehends when our good things may congruously be born to human notice. Well therefore is it said: "Do you know the time of birth of the wild goats in the rocks?" (Job 39:1). As if He should say openly: "As I, who therefore make the offspring of the elect long-lived, because I produce them in the foreknown time." But after the offspring of the hearers has been completed, it is well added: "Or have you observed the hinds bringing forth?" (Job 39:1). For to observe the hinds bringing forth is to weigh with cautious consideration those labors of the fathers who generate spiritual children.

42. What are the pains, what the gifts of the souls of preachers bringing forth. For it is to be cleverly looked into that this word is so vigilantly impressed, that it is said: "have you observed," because indeed it belongs to very few to weigh what labor there is in the preachings of the fathers; with what great pains, as if by certain efforts, they bring forth souls in faith and conversation; with how cautious observation they look around themselves, so that they may be strong in precepts, compassionate in infirmities, terrible in threats, bland in exhortations, humble in showing mastery, dominating in contempt of temporal things, rigid in enduring adversities, and yet while they do not attribute their strengths to themselves, weak; how great is their pain for those falling, how great their fear for those standing; with what fervor they seek some things not yet attained, with what dread they preserve other things attained. Because therefore it belongs to very few to weigh these things, it is well said to him: "Or have you observed the hinds bringing forth?"

[Vet. XX.] 43. They who are fathers through the vigor of discipline, let them be mothers through the bowels of piety. ---But nothing hinders that God, making words concerning teachers, designates them by the species not of hinds (stags), but of hinds (females), because doubtless those are true teachers, who while they are fathers through the vigor of discipline, have known how to be mothers through the bowels of piety. Who endure the labors of holy conception, and carry

the children to be brought forth to God within the womb of charity. For in bringing forth offspring mothers labor more, who sustain the conception growing within the womb for a long time of months, and who deposit that which proceeds from the womb not without great pains. Whence also here by a fit consideration is subjoined:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. X].

VERSE 2.---Have you numbered the months of their conception? 44. The offspring conceived through a congruous time is to be carried in the womb of the heart that it may live. ---For holy men, when they think concerning the progress of their hearers, carry as it were a conception already in the womb. But when they defer some things which are to be said, and seek a fit time for their exhortations, they are as it were dilated in the length of months from the birth which they desire to happen. And often while they are unwilling to say unseasonably to their hearers certain things which they feel, in that very tardiness of bringing forth the sentence, whether for those things which are to be persuaded, or for those which are to be rebuked, they are strengthened by a higher counsel. And while the life of the children is thought upon, yet the tongue does not cast out the counsel of the mind before the time, the offspring already conceived grows within the womb, so that the sentence of the heart may then go out to the notice of the hearers, when being

brought forth usefully it may live as if through a congruous time of birth. And because men are ignorant when or how these things are acted in the mind of teachers, but God for the glory of retribution not only considers the effect, but also marks the moments of thoughts, it is rightly said to blessed Job: "Have you numbered the months of their conception?" You understand: "as I, who in holy preachers number not only the fruits of exterior works, but those very long-continued thoughts, who also keep them for retribution."

[Vet. XXI.] 45. They who prepare themselves for preaching, let them first interially innovate themselves with virtues. ---Multiplied virtues can also be understood by months, because they are days heaped together. In months also the moon is reborn; and nothing hinders if the new creature of regeneration be signified by months. Concerning which the Apostle Paul says: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 5:6; 6:15). Holy men therefore, when they prepare themselves for preaching, first interially innovate themselves with virtues, that they may concord by living to that which they teach by speaking. First they consider their own internal things, and cleanse themselves from all the filths of vices, caring above all that they may resplendent with the light of patience against anger, that they may shine with the purity of the heart against the luxury of the flesh, that they may glow with zeal against torpor, that they may be ruddied with serene gravity against the confused

motions of precipitation, that they may light up with true humility against pride, that they may be clear with the rays of authority against fear. Because therefore they first heap together so great studies in themselves, there are made as it were months of virtues in the conception of holy preaching. Which months the Lord alone numbers, because no one weighs those same good things in their hearts except He who gave them. And because according to the measure of virtues the effect also follows of fruits, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XII.

IBID.---And have you known the time of their birth?

46. The reason of fruits follows the measure of virtues. ---You understand: "As I, who while I number the months in the thought of virtues, know when they may be able to bring forth that which they desire to fulfill, because indeed while I behold the secrets of the heart, I weigh the future exterior effect of the work within in the weight of the thought." It follows:

CHAPTER XIII.

VERSE 3.---They bow themselves for the offspring, and bring forth, and emit roarings. 47. Preachers cannot bring forth spiritually except by weeping. ---For they roar, while through their bowing they bring forth the souls of their hearers into the conversation of light, because they can-

not remove us from eternal punishments except by weeping and grieving. For holy preachers now sow in tears, that they may afterwards reap the harvest of joys. Now they are as it were hinds in the pain of birth, that they may afterwards be fecund with spiritual offspring. For to speak of one from many, I see Paul as if a certain hind emitting roarings of great pain in his birth. For he says: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you, I would wish to be with you now, and to change my voice, because I am confounded in you" (Gal. 4:19). Behold, he wishes to change his voice in his birth, that the word of preaching may be turned into a roar of pain. He wishes to change his voice, because those whom he had already brought forth by preaching, he was again in labor with, groaning, by reforming them. What a roar this hind bringing forth emitted, when he was forced to cry out to those same ones returning after themselves, saying: "O foolish Galatians, who has fascinated you; and are you so foolish, that having begun with the spirit, you are now consumed by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:1); or certainly: "You were running well, who hindered you from not obeying the truth?" (Gal. 5:7). What a roar was in the birth of this hind, who brought forth with so many difficulties children long conceived, and knew that those once brought forth had returned to the womb of malice? Let us consider what pain she had, what labor, who also after she was able to bring forth those conceived, was again compelled to raise up the extinguished.

[Vet. XXII.] 48. Unless they descended to our infirmity and bowed themselves, they would not procreate children in the faith. They ought to be wise unto sobriety. ---But it is especially to be noted that these hinds bow themselves in order to bring forth, because surely if they stood erect, they would not be able to bring forth. For unless holy preachers descended from that immensity of internal contemplation which they grasp, to our infirmity by a most humble preaching as if by a certain bowing, they would never procreate children in the faith. For they could not benefit us if they persisted in the erectness of their height. But let us see the hind bowing herself that she may bring forth: I, he says, could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto little ones in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not meat (1 Cor. 3:1). And soon he follows up the causes of that same bowing, saying: For you were not yet able, nor indeed are you yet able (Ibid., 2). But this hind, who for our sake was bowed down, let us see, I pray, standing erect. He says: We speak wisdom among the perfect (1 Cor. 2:6). And again: Whether we be transported in mind, it is for God (2 Cor. 5:13). But when he is transported in mind for God, we do not grasp his transport at all. That he may therefore gain us, he bows himself to us. Whence he there aptly subjoins: Whether we be sober, it is for you (Ibid.). For if holy men wished to preach to us those things which they grasp when they are inebriated in heavenly contemplation, and did not rather temper their knowledge with a certain moderation and sobri-

ety, who would yet grasp those streams of the heavenly fountain with the narrow bosom of the intelligence? But these bowed hinds are called heavens elsewhere, of which it is said: Lord, bow down Thy heavens, and descend (Ps. 143:5). For when the heavens are bowed down, the Lord descends, because when the holy doctors lower themselves in their preaching, they infuse the knowledge of the divinity into our hearts. For the Lord would by no means descend to us if His preachers remained inflexible in the rigor of contemplation. The heavens are therefore bowed down that the Lord may descend; the hinds are bowed down that we may be born in the new light of faith. These bowed hinds are called the breasts of the bride in the Song of Songs, as it is written: Better are thy breasts than wine (Cant. 1:1). For these are the breasts which, fixed in the chest of the breast, give us milk to drink, because they themselves, adhering to the secrets of supreme contemplation, nourish us with subtle preaching. That they may therefore withdraw us from eternal groaning and pain, the hinds now bow themselves, and emit roarings in birth. But because they themselves, who are born by the holy preaching of the Fathers, sometimes precede their doctors by suffering, so that while these are still lasting in this life, they are already consumed by martyrdom, there aptly follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. XI].

VERSE 4.---Their children are separated, and go to the pasture; they go forth, and do not return to them.

49. Their children go to the pasture of sacred Scripture. The Word illustrates them from the nature of the divinity. ---Sacred Scripture calls "pasture" that food of eternal greenness, where our refreshment will no longer wither by the aridity of any defect. Of which pasture it is said by the Psalmist: The Lord rules me, and nothing shall be wanting to me, in a place of pasture there He has placed me (Ps. 22:2). And again: But we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture (Ps. 94:7). Of which pastures surely the Truth says through Itself: If any man enter in by Me, he shall be saved; and he shall go in, and go out, and shall find pastures (John 10:9). They go therefore to the pasture, because going out of the bodies they find those foods of internal greenness. They go forth, and do not return to them, because having been received into that contemplation of joys, they no longer in any way need to hear the words of those who teach. Having gone forth, therefore, they no longer return to them, because escaping the straits of the present life, they do not further require to receive the preaching of life from doctors. For then is fulfilled what is written: A man shall no longer teach his neighbor, and a man his brother, saying: Know the Lord; for all shall know Me from the least of them even to the greatest, says the Lord (Jer. 31:34). Then is fulfilled what the Truth says in the Gospel: I will announce to you plainly of My Father (John 16:25). For the

Son announces plainly of the Father, because as we said above, by the fact that He is the Word, He illustrates us from the nature of the divinity. For they do not then seek the words of those who teach as certain streams of the human tongue, when they are already derived from the very fountain of truth.

Therefore, after by the figurative bowing of the hinds many things have been told of the virtue of the masters, now the words are turned to the life of those who seek the secrets of remote conversation: who, because they attain even those same leisure hours of ceasing by divine aid and not by their own strength, it is said of them by the Lord:

CHAPTER XV

[Vet. XXIII, Rec. XII].

VERSE 5.---Who has sent out the wild ass free, and who has loosed his bonds?

50. By the name of the free wild ass are understood those who, being freed from the service of secular things, give themselves up to solitude. ---Understand, unless I. For the wild ass, which dwells in solitude, not incongruously signifies the life of those who converse remote from popular crowds. Who is also aptly called free: because great is the service of secular business, by which the mind is vehemently worn down, although it sweats in them of its own accord. To be without the condition of this service is now to desire nothing in the world. For as if by a certain yoke of service, prosperous things press when they are

desired, and adverse things press when they are feared. But if anyone has once shaken off the neck of the mind from the dominion of temporal desires, he already enjoys a certain liberty even in this life, while he is affected by no desire for happiness, and is cooped up by no terror of adversity. This heavy yoke of service the Lord saw impressed on the necks of secular persons, when He said: Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek, and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light (Matt. 11:28). For it is a harsh yoke, and the weight of a hard service, as we have said, to be subject to temporal things, to ambit earth-born things, to retain things that are sliding away, to wish to stand in things that do not stand, to desire indeed things that pass away, but with the things that pass away not to wish to pass away. For while all things flee away against their wish, which had first afflicted the mind from the desire of obtaining them, afterwards they press it from the fear of losing them. He is therefore sent out free who, having trodden under foot earthly desires, is exonerated from the seeking of temporal things by security of mind. And his bonds, who has loosed? Understand, unless I.

51. By divine aid the stays of carnal desires are broken. ---The bonds of each one are indeed loosed when, by divine aid, the internal stays of carnal desires are burst asunder. For when a pious intention calls to conversion, but as yet the

infirmity of the flesh recalls from this intention, the soul is hindered as if bound by certain bonds. For we often see many indeed desire a life of holy conversation; but lest they should be able to attain it, they fear now irrupting cases, now future adverse things. Who, while as if cautious they look forward to certain evils, are held incautious in the bonds of their sins. For they put many things before their eyes which, if they should happen to them in conversation, they fear they cannot subsist. Of whom Solomon well says: The way of the slothful is as a hedge of thorns (Prov. 15:19). For when they desire the way of God, the opposite suspicions of their fears prick them like thorns of obstructing hedges. Which, because it does not usually hinder the elect, he well subjoins following there: The way of the just is without stumbling-block (Ibid.). For the just in their conversation, whatever of adversity has met them, they do not strike against it, because they transcend the obstacles of temporal adversity by the leap of eternal hope and internal contemplation. God therefore looses the bonds of the wild ass, when He breaks the knots of weak thoughts from the mind of each of the elect, and propitiously dissipates everything that bound the enticed mind. There follows:

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSE 6.---To whom I have given a house in the wilderness, and his tabernacles in the land of saltness.

52. Double solitude, of the heart and of the body. The latter without the other does not profit. ---In this place, should we understand the solitude of the body, or the solitude of the heart? But what does the solitude of the body profit, if the solitude of the heart be wanting? For he who lives remote in body, but inserts himself with the thoughts of earthly desires into the tumults of human conversation, is not in solitude. If indeed someone is pressed bodily by popular crowds, and yet suffers no tumults of secular cares in the heart, he is not in the city. Therefore, to those who converse well, solitude of mind is first granted, that they may suppress the noise of earthly desires arising from within, that they may restrain the bubbling cares of the heart from the lowest parts by the grace of heavenly love, and drive away all the movements of light thoughts importunately offering themselves, like certain flies flying around, from the eyes of the mind by the hand of gravity, and seek for themselves a certain secret within them with the Lord, where they may silently speak with Him through internal desires, the external noise ceasing.

[Vet. XXIV.] 53. The silence of contemplation cannot be perfect in this life. ---Of this secret of the heart it is said elsewhere: There was silence made in heaven, as it were for half an hour (Rev. 8:1). For heaven is called the church of the elect, which, while it intends toward eternal and sublime things through the elevation of contemplation, suppresses the tumults of thoughts arising from the lowest parts, and makes a certain

silence for God within itself. Which silence of contemplation, because it cannot be perfect in this life, is said to be made for half an hour. For while tumultuous noises of thoughts ingest themselves into the unwilling mind, even when it is intending toward sublime things, they again violently draw the eye of the heart to look back at earthly things. Whence it is written: The body which is corrupted, burdens the soul, and the earthly habitation depresses the sense thinking many things (Wisd. 9:15). Well, therefore, is this silence described as made not for a whole hour, but for half an hour, because here contemplation is by no means perfected, although it is ardently begun. Which is also congruously expressed by the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. 40:5), who for the measure of the city built on the mountain, testifies that he saw in the hand of a man a reed of six cubits and a span. For the church of the elect is situated on a mountain, because it is not founded on the lowest desires. But what is shown by the cubit, if not operation; what by the number six, if not the perfection of operation, because on the sixth day the Lord is remembered to have completed all works? What therefore does the span above the six cubits insinuate (Gen. 2:1), if not the force of contemplation, which already demonstrates the beginnings of eternal and seventh rest? For because the contemplation of eternal things is here minimally perfected, the measure of the seventh cubit is not fulfilled. The church of the elect, therefore, because it perfects all things that are to be operated, shows itself as a city

placed on a mountain in six cubits. But because here it still looks upon only the beginnings of contemplation, it does not touch of the seventh cubit except a span.

54. The summit of contemplation is not attained, unless we be freed from the oppression of exterior cares. ---But it must be known that we by no means attain the summit of contemplation, if we do not cease from the oppression of exterior care. We by no means look into ourselves, so as to know that one thing in us is the rational part which rules, and another the animal part which is ruled, unless recurring to the secret of this silence, we be put to sleep from all exterior perturbation. Which silence of ours Adam sleeping also well figured (Ibid.), from whose side soon the woman proceeded, because whoever is snatched away to understand interior things, closes his eyes to visible things; and then he distinguishes in himself either those things which ought to preside manfully, or those weak things which can be subject, so that one thing in him is that which can rule as a man, another as a woman that which is ruled. In this silence of the heart, therefore, while we watch interiorly through contemplation, exteriorly we as it were fall asleep. Because therefore remote men, that is, those alien to carnal desires, inhabit this silence of mind, the Lord has given a house in the wilderness to this wild ass, that he may not be pressed by the crowd of temporal desires.

[Vet. XXV.] 55. The saints, as long as they live, glow with the desire of the heavenly country.

There follows: And his tabernacles in the land of saltness. Saltness is wont to kindle thirst. And because holy men, as long as they dwell in the tabernacles of this life, are kindled toward the heavenly country by the daily glows of their desire, they are said to have tabernacles in the land of saltness. For they are incessantly kindled that they may thirst, they thirst that they may be filled; as it is written: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled (Matt. 5:6). There follows:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 7.---He despises the multitude of the city.

56. They disdain to follow the multitude of earthly men. ---To despise the multitude of the city is to avoid the depraved studies of human conversation, so that it may no longer please to imitate the lost manners of earthly men, who are many through the abundance of iniquity. For they desire to enter with few through the narrow gate, and do not desire to enter with many through the wide ways which lead to destruction (Matt. 7:13). For they skillfully behold by whom and for what they are created, and by the right consideration of the image received they disdain to follow the multitude of the common people. Whence also it is said to the bride by the voice of the bridegroom in the Song of Songs: If thou knowest not thyself, O thou fairest among women, go forth, and depart after the footsteps of the flocks, and feed thy kids (Cant. 1:7). For

she who is fair among women knows herself, when every elect soul placed even among sinners remembers that she was established after the image and likeness of her author (Gen. 1:26), and proceeds according to the order of the likeness perceived. Which if she knows not herself, she goes forth, because expelled from the secret of her heart, she is dissipated in exterior lusts. But having gone forth, she departs after the footsteps of the flocks, because deserting her internal things, she is led to the wide way forsooth, and follows the examples of the peoples. And she no longer feeds lambs, but kids, because she intends not to nourish innocent thoughts of the mind, but the depraved movements of the flesh. Because therefore every elect and continent person despises departing after the footsteps of the flocks, let it be rightly said: He despises the multitude of the city. Where also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. XIII].

IBID.---He hears not the cry of the exactor.

57. They close their ears to the more vehement temptations of the devil, and to the cries of the belly. ---Who else can be understood as the exactor, but the devil, who once in paradise conferred on man the coin of evil persuasion (Gen. 3:6, etc.), and daily seeks to exact from him the guilt of this debt? The speech of this exactor is the beginning of evil suggestion. The cry of this exactor is a temptation no longer gentle, but violent. This

exactor cries out, when he tempts strongly. To not hear the cry of the exactor, therefore, is by no means to consent to the violent movements of temptations. For he would hear him if he did what he suggests. But when he despises doing perverse things, it is rightly said: He hears not the cry of the exactor.

[Vet. XXVI.] 58. Some indeed wish the belly to be understood by the exactor in this place. For it exacts from us a certain debt, because it seeks that the daily fruit of human labor be spent upon it even by nature. Abstinent men therefore, who are figured in this place by the word "wild ass," while they violently repress the desires of gluttony, despise as it were the words of a crying exactor. But since many contests of virtues are at hand for the continent man against innumerable vices, why is it said here only of the belly that he restrains its impetus and impulse, under the despised cry of the exactor, unless because no one grasps the palm of spiritual contest, who has not first overcome in himself the incentives of the flesh through the afflicted lust of the belly? For one does not rise to the conflict of spiritual agony, if the enemy placed within ourselves, namely the appetite of gluttony, is not first tamed, because if we do not prostrate those things which are nearer to us, we surely pass over in vain to those which are further off to be attacked. For in vain is war waged in the field against exterior enemies, if an insidious citizen is held within the very walls of the city. The very mind of the combatant is also repelled from the meeting of the spiritual contest

under a heavy disgrace of confusion, when, weak in the battle of the flesh, it is overcome, pierced by the swords of gluttony. For when it beholds itself prostrated by small things, it blushes to conflict with greater.

59. Those who do not care to tame gluttony, incautiously rise to spiritual wars. ---But some, being ignorant of the order of the contest, neglect to tame gluttony, and already rise to spiritual wars. Who sometimes do many things also which are of great fortitude, but, the vice of gluttony ruling, they lose everything they have done strongly through the enticement of the flesh; and while the belly is not restrained, all virtues are together overwhelmed through the lust of the flesh. Whence also it is written of Nebuchadnezzar conquering: The chief of the cooks destroyed the walls of Jerusalem. For what does the Scripture express, signifying by the walls of Jerusalem, but the virtues of the soul, which tends to the vision of peace? Or who is accepted as the chief of the cooks, but the belly, which is served with the most diligent care by those who cook? The chief of the cooks therefore destroys the walls of Jerusalem, because he loses the virtues of the soul while the belly is not restrained. Hence it is that Paul took away strength from the chief of the cooks when he was fighting against the walls of Jerusalem, when he said: I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway (1 Cor. 9:27). Hence also he premised, saying: So I run, not as at an uncertainty; so

I fight, not as one beating the air (Ibid., 26). Because when we restrain the flesh, by those very blows of our abstinence we beat not the air, but unclean spirits; and when we subject that which is within us, we give blows to the adversaries placed without. Hence it is 983 that when the king of Babylon commands the furnace to be heated (Dan. 3), he commanded a heap of naphtha, tow, pitch, and small wood to be ministered; but yet he by no means consumes the abstinent boys with this fire, because the ancient enemy, although he opposes innumerable lusts of foods to our views, by which the fire of lust may grow, yet the grace of the heavenly Spirit breathes into good minds, that they may endure unhurt by the glows of carnal lust, so that even if the flame should burn as far as the temptation of the heart, yet the temptation may not burn as far as consent.

[Vet. XXVII.] 60. Gluttony tempts us in five ways. It is not the food, but the appetite that is in fault. ---It is further to be known that the vice of gluttony tempts us in five ways (De consecr., d. 5, c. Quinque modis). For sometimes it anticipates the times of need; but sometimes it does not anticipate the time, but seeks more refined foods; sometimes it requires that whatever things are to be taken be prepared more accurately, but sometimes it agrees both with the quality of foods and with the time, but in the very quantity of taking it exceeds the measure of moderate refreshment. But sometimes it is even a meaner thing which it desires, and yet by the very glow of immense

desire it sins more grievously. For Jonathan deserved the sentence of death from his father's mouth, because, in the tasting of honey, he anticipated the appointed time of eating (1 Sam. 14:27). And the people brought out of Egypt fell in the wilderness, because, having despised manna, they sought foods of flesh, which they thought more refined (Num. 21:5). And the first fault of the sons of Eli arose, because at their wish the priest's servant would not receive from the sacrifice meats boiled according to the ancient custom, but sought them raw, that he might present them more accurately (1 Sam. 2:12, etc.). And when it is said to Jerusalem: This was the iniquity of Sodom thy sister, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance (Ezek. 16:49), it is openly shown that she therefore lost salvation, because with the vice of pride she exceeded the measure of moderate refreshment. And Esau lost the glory of the first-born, because with a great glow of desire he lusted after a mean food, namely lentils (Gen. 25:33); which while he preferred even to the selling of his first-born, he indicated with what appetite he panted for that thing. For it is not the food, but the appetite that is in fault. Whence also we frequently take more refined foods without fault, and taste meaner ones not without guilt of conscience. For this one whom we have mentioned, Esau, lost his primacy through lentils, and Elijah in the wilderness preserved the strength of his body by eating flesh (1 Kings 17:6). Whence also the ancient enemy, because he understands that it is not the food, but the lust for food which is

the cause of damnation, subjected the first man to himself not with flesh, but with an apple (Gen. 3:6), and tempted the second not with flesh, but with bread (Matt. 4:3). Hence it is that the fault of Adam is frequently committed, even when mean and base things are taken. For Adam was not the only one who received a command of prohibition to keep himself from the forbidden apple. For when God indicates certain foods as contrary to our health, He forbids us from them as it were by sentence. And while lusting we touch harmful things, what else forsooth do we taste but forbidden things?

61. Things which necessity requires are to be eaten, not those which lust suggests. How great discretion is necessary for this. ---Those things are therefore to be taken which the necessity of nature requires, and not those which the lust for eating suggests. But it is a great labor of discretion both to pay something to this exactor, and to deny him something; and to restrain gluttony by not giving, and to nourish nature by giving. [Rec. XIV.] Which discretion is perhaps inferred, when it is said: He hears not the cry of the exactor. For the speech of this exactor is the necessary demand of nature. But his cry is the appetite of gluttony passing the measure of necessity. This wild ass therefore hears the speech of this exactor, he hears not the cry, because the discreet and continent man both refreshes the belly as far as to temper necessity, and restrains it from pleasure.

[Vet. XXVIII.] 62. Pleasure cloaks itself under the appearance of necessity. ---But it is to be

known that pleasure so cloaks itself under necessity, that scarcely can any perfect person discern it. For while necessity asks that a debt be paid, pleasure supplies that a desire be fulfilled; and it the more securely hurries gluttony to a precipice, the more it covers itself under the honest name of fulfilling necessity. But often in the very way of eating, pleasure follows joined on stealthily; sometimes indeed it even impudently endeavors to go before freely. But it is easy to catch it when its pleasure anticipates necessity, but it is very difficult to discern when it joins itself on secretly in the necessary eating itself. For because it follows the preceding appetite of nature, coming as it were from behind it is seen later. For at that time in which the debt is paid to necessity, because through eating pleasure is mixed with necessity, what necessity asks, and what, as has been said, pleasure supplies, is unknown. But often we even discern it; and because we know both to be joined together, in this that we are hurried beyond the bounds, it pleases us to be deceived knowingly; and while the mind flatters itself from necessity, it is deceived by pleasure. For it is written: Make not provision for the flesh in its lusts (Rom. 13:14). That, therefore, which is forbidden to be done in lust, is granted in necessity.

63. The desires of the flesh are to be slain, not the flesh. Care must be taken lest, while we pursue an enemy, we slay a citizen whom we love. ---But often while we incautiously condescend to necessity, we serve desires. Sometimes indeed

while we endeavor too immoderately to oppose desires, we increase the miseries of necessity. For it is thus necessary that everyone hold the citadel of continence, so far as to slay not the flesh, but the vices of the flesh. For frequently while the flesh is restrained more than is right, it is even enervated from the exercise of good work, so that it may not be sufficient for prayer also or preaching, while it hastens to suffocate the incentives of vices in itself from the foundation. For we have as a helper of the internal intention this man whom we carry exteriorly, and in him are movements of lasciviousness, in him also supply effects of good operation. But often while we pursue an enemy in him, we also slay a citizen whom we love; and often while we spare him as a fellow-citizen, we nourish an enemy for battle. For vices grow proud by the same foods by which nourished virtues live. And when virtue is nourished, strength is frequently increased to vices. But when immense continence extenuates the strength of vices, even failing virtue pants. Whence it is necessary that our interior man, as a certain equitable arbiter, preside between himself and him whom he carries exteriorly, so far that his exterior man may both always be sufficient to serve for the due ministry, and never proudly contradict with free neck; nor should it move him if he murmurs anything by suggesting, provided he always press him down with the heel of dominion placed upon him. And so it happens that while we suffer repressed vices indeed to resist us, and yet we prohibit these to engage with us on equal

terms, neither may vices prevail against virtue, nor again may virtue succumb with the total extinction of vices. In which thing alone pride is utterly extinguished, because although it serves for victory, yet for taming the pride of thoughts a continual fight is reserved for us. Whence well here, because every continent man both agrees with due necessity, and contradicts violent pleasure, it is said by the Lord's voice: He hears not the cry of the exactor. But because the discreet man raises himself to understand higher things by as much as he chastises in himself the incentives of the flesh, rightly after the contempt of the cry of the exactor it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. XV].

VERSE 8.---He beholds the mountains of his pasture.

64. He is able to ascend to understand sublime things, who has chastised the incentives of the flesh. ---The mountains of pasture are the high contemplations of internal refreshment. For holy men, the more they cast themselves down exteriorly by despising themselves, the more they are fed interiorly by the contemplation of revelations. Whence it is written: He has disposed ascensions in his heart in the valley of tears (Ps. 83:6, 7), because those whom the valley of humility contains exteriorly in weeping, the ascension of contemplation raises interiorly. [Vet. XXIX.] The mountains of pasture are also the sublime

virtues of the angels. Which therefore refresh us here by ministering and aiding, because there they grow fat with the internal dew of contemplation. Which, because by God's bounty they protect us in every contest, are rightly said to be beheld. For we behold them to be present to us on every side, by whose defense we are fortified against adversaries on every hand. The mountains of pasture may still be taken as the high sentences of sacred Scripture, of which it is said by the Psalmist: The high mountains for the hinds (Ps. 103:18), because those who have already learned to give the leaps of contemplation, ascend the high summits of divine sentences like the tops of mountains, to which summits because the weak are not able to reach, it is rightly subjoined there: The rock a refuge for the urchins (Ibid.), because forsooth intelligence does not exercise the invalid sublimely, but faith alone in Christ contains them humbly. There follows:

CHAPTER XX.

IBID.---He searches out every green thing.

65. Having despised transitory things, those that shall remain for ever are desired. ---For all things are parched which, being created temporally, are dried up by the coming end from the pleasantness of the present life as if by the summer sun. But those things are called green, which do not wither by any temporality. For this wild ass, therefore, to search out green things, is for every holy man, having despised transitory things, to desire those that shall remain for ever.

But all these things which have been said of the wild ass may be understood also in another way. Which we explain by repeating the former verse, so that we may leave to the judgment of the reader what he shall think ought to be chosen. Therefore, after the dispensation of preachers has been described under the pretext of hinds, in order that it might be shown by whom this same virtue of preaching is given, immediately the commemoration of the Lord's incarnation is subjoined, that it may be said:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 5.---Who has sent out the wild ass free?

ALLEGORICAL SENSE.---66. Christ is deservedly compared to the wild ass. ---Nor let anyone judge it unworthy that the incarnate Lord can be figured by such an animal, since it is evident to all that through a certain signification in sacred Scripture both the worm and the beetle are placed, as it is written: But I am a worm, and no man (Ps. 21:7). And as it is said by the prophet in the Seventy interpreters: The beetle has cried out from the wood (Habac. 2:2). When, therefore, He is figured by named things so abject and vile, what is said of Him contumeliously, of whom it is certain that nothing is said properly? For He is called a lamb, but on account of innocence. He is called a lion, but on account of power. Sometimes He is also compared to a serpent, but on account of death or wisdom. And therefore through all these things He can be said figuratively, because of all these things nothing can be believed essen-

tially. For if any one of these existed essentially, the other could no longer be said. For if He were properly called a lamb, He could no longer be called a lion. If He were properly called a lion, He could not be signified by the serpent. But we say all these things in Him the more widely in figure, the further they are from essence. The wild ass, therefore, can designate the incarnate Lord. For the wild ass is a rustic animal. And because the incarnate Lord profited the Gentiles more than Judea, assuming an animal body, He came as it were not into a house, but rather into a field. Of which field of the Gentiles it is said by the Psalmist: The beauty of the field is with me (Ps. 49:11). The incarnate Lord therefore, who in the form of God is equal to the Father, in the form of a servant is less than the Father, in which He is also less than Himself (Philip. 2). [Vet. XXX.] Let it be said, therefore, by the Father concerning the Son according to the form of a servant: Who has sent out the wild ass free, and who has loosed his bonds? For everyone who commits sin is the servant of sin (John 8:35). And because the incarnate Lord was made partaker of our nature, not of our fault, He is said to be sent out free, because He is not held under the dominion of sin. Of whom it is written elsewhere: Free among the dead (Ps. 37:5). He is said to be sent out free, because receiving our nature, He is in no way held by the yoke of iniquity. Whom although the stain of our fault did not touch, yet the passion of our mortality bound. Whence also after He is said to be sent out free, it is rightly added concerning Him:

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID.---And who has loosed his bonds?

67. The bonds of this wild ass were loosed, when the infirmities of the passion were changed into the glory of the resurrection. ---For his bonds were then loosed when the infirmities of his passion were changed into the glory of the resurrection. The Lord had as it were certain bonds, those infirmities of our mortality which we suffer by the merit of our iniquity, with which He willed to be bound of His own accord even unto death, and which He wonderfully loosed by the resurrection. For to hunger, to thirst, to be weary, to be held, to be scourged, to be crucified, was the bond of our mortality. But when, death being completed, the veil of the temple was rent, the rocks were cleft, the monuments were opened, the enclosures of hell were made patent; what else is shown by so many arguments of so great power, but that those bonds of our infirmity were being loosed, so that He who had come to receive the form of a servant, being in that same form of a servant absolved from the bonds of hell, might return free to heaven even with His members? Of which bonds of His Peter the apostle attests, saying: Whom God has raised up, having loosed the sorrows of hell, according as it was impossible for Him to be held by it (Acts 2:24). And because after His death and resurrection He deigned to call the Gentiles to the grace of faith, after His bonds were said to be loosed, it is fitly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII.

VERSE 6.---To whom I have given a house in the wilderness, and his tabernacle in the salt land.

68. To whom a place in the wilderness and in the salt land was given, when the Gentiles received Him. ---For in the Gentiles, in whom there was no patriarch, no prophet; for the understanding of God, who might use reason, there was almost no man. Concerning this wilderness it is said by Isaiah: The desert and the pathless land shall be glad, and the wilderness shall exult, and shall flower like the lily (Is. 35:1). And again it is said of the Church: He will set her desert like delights, and her wilderness like the garden of the Lord (Is. 51:3). But the salt land is this same wilderness repeated, which before it knew the true wisdom of God, had brought forth saltness, because bringing forth no greenness of good understanding, it savored of perverse things. He received therefore a house in the wilderness and a tabernacle in the salt land, because God incarnate for men, having left Judea, possessed the hearts of the Gentiles. Whence it is said to Him by the Father's voice through the prophet: Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession (Ps. 2:8). Who according to this that He is God, with the Father gives all things, but according to this that He is man, from the Father receives among all things, as it is written: He has given Him power also to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man (John 5:27). And again it is written: Knowing that the Father had

given all things into His hands (John 13:3). Or as He Himself says: All that the Father gives me shall come to me (John 6:37). Now if it be asked what is the difference between a house and a tabernacle, a house is in dwelling, a tabernacle in a journey. He had therefore the hearts of the Gentiles as it were certain tabernacles in coming, but confirming them by righteousness, He made them a house by dwelling. And because He despised to imitate the life of those to whom He had come, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV.

VERSE 7.---He despises the multitude of the city.

69. He followed not the examples of the multitude, but proposed His own to be followed. The present life is not to be loved for itself, but to be endured for the sake of the future.---That is, He despises the manners of human conversation. For being made man among men, He willed not to hold the use of men. For for this reason He was made man among us, that He might not only redeem us by the shedding of His blood, but also change us by the example He showed. In our conversation, therefore, He both found other things in coming, and taught other things in living. For all those begotten of the proud stock of Adam were eager to desire the prosperity of the present life, to avoid adversity, to flee reproaches, to follow glory. The incarnate Lord came among them desiring adversity, despising prosperity, embracing reproaches, fleeing glory. For when the Jews

would have made Him their king, He refused to be made king (John 6:15). But when they were striving to kill Him, He came of His own accord to the gibbet of the cross (Ibid., 18:4). He fled therefore what all desire, He desired what all flee. But since He fled what all desire, and desired what all flee, He did what all might wonder at, so that He Himself being dead might rise again, and by His death might raise others from death.

[Vet. XXXI.] There are forsooth two lives of man consisting in the body, one before death, the other after the resurrection: of which all knew the one by acting, they knew not the other; and the human race was intent on this one only which it knew. The Lord came through the flesh, and while He received the one; He demonstrated the other. While He received this one known to us, He showed that which is unknown to us. For by dying He exercised the life which we hold, by rising again He opened that which we should seek, teaching us by His example that this life which we lead before death is not to be loved for itself, but to be endured for the sake of the other. Because therefore He used a new conversation among men, and followed not the manners of Babylon, it is well written of Him: He despises the multitude of the city.

70. Christ deserted the multitude wandering through the spacious way.---Or certainly that He deserted many wandering through the spacious way, and chose a few walking through narrow ways. For to despise the multitude of the city is to reprobate from the lot of His kingdom that part

of the human race which enters the broad way (Matt. 7:13), which also on account of the abundance of iniquity is great. There follows:

CHAPTER XXV.

IBID.---He hears not the cry of the exactor.

71. He has not heard the cry of the exactor, namely, the devil.---As has been said above, who can be taken in this place as the exactor but the devil? Who by evilly persuading brought in the hope of immortality, but by deceiving exacts the tribute of death; who by persuading brought in the fault, and by raging exacts the punishment. The speech of this exactor is subtle persuasion before the death of man, but his cry is already violent rapine after death. For those whom he intercepts secretly before death, these he seizes violently after death for the fellowship of his punishment. But because the Lord, coming to death, did not fear the violent impulses of this exactor, as He Himself says: For the prince of this world comes, and in me he has nothing (John 14:30), it is well said: He hears not the cry of the exactor. For the exactor of the human race came to Him, because he saw that man. But Him whom he believed to be a man despised in infirmity, he felt to be God above man in power.

[Rec. XVI.] 72. Laban was the type of this exactor, Jacob of Christ, Rachel of the Church.---Laban forsooth held the type of this exactor, when coming with fury he sought his idols at the house of Jacob (Gen. 31:1, etc.). For Laban is interpreted "whitening." Now the devil is not inappro-

priately taken as whitening; who, though he be dark by merit, transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). Jacob served him, that is, the Jewish people on the part of the reprobates, from whose flesh the incarnate Lord came. This world also can be expressed by Laban, which with fury persecutes Jacob, because it strives to oppress by persecuting all the elect who are members of our Redeemer. Jacob took away his daughter, that is, of either the world or the devil, when Christ joined the Church to Himself from the Gentiles. Whom He also draws away from the house of her father, because He says to her by the Prophet: Forget thy people, and thy father's house (Ps. 44:11). But what is designated in the idols but avarice? Whence it is said by Paul: And avarice, which is the service of idols (Col. 3:5). Laban therefore coming found not the idols with Jacob, because the devil, when the treasures of the world were shown, found not the footsteps of earthly concupiscence in our Redeemer. But what Jacob had not, Rachel covered by sitting. For by Rachel, who is also called a sheep, the Church is figured. But to sit is to seek the humility of penance, as it is written: Rise up after you have sat (Ps. 126:2). Rachel therefore covered the idols by sitting, because the holy Church following Christ covered the vices of earthly concupiscence by repenting. Concerning this covering of vices it is said by the Psalmist: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Ps. 31:1). We therefore that Rachel signified, who press down the idols by sitting, if we condemn the faults of

avarice by repenting. Which avarice indeed is not wont to happen to those who run manfully in the way of the Lord, to whom it is said: Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened (Ps. 30:25), but to those especially who, walking as it were with an effeminate step, are relaxed by the flatteries of the world. Whence also there are these words of the same Rachel: It has happened to me according to the custom of women (Gen. 31:35). Laban therefore found not the idols with Jacob, because the crafty exactor found not what he might reprehend in our Redeemer. Concerning which exactor it is said to our Redeemer, delivering the Gentiles from his dominion, by the prophet: For the yoke of his burden, and the rod of his shoulder, and the sceptre of his exactor, thou hast overcome, as in the day of Midian (Is. 9:4). For the Lord, snatching away the Gentiles, overcame the yoke of his burden, when by His coming He delivered them from that servitude of demoniacal tyranny. He overcame the rod of his shoulder, when He restrained from the redeemed human race his smiting, which heavily depressed it from perverse work. He overcame the sceptre of his exactor, when He destroyed from the heart of the faithful the kingdom of the same devil, who on account of the pestiferous perpetration of vices had been accustomed to exact the due tributes of punishments.

[Vet. XXXII, Rec. XVII.] 73. Gideon's unusual battle against the Midianites prefigured the contest of Christ.---But let us hear how these things were done. It is immediately subjoined: As in the

day of Midian. I do not think it out of place if we discuss somewhat more at large this war of the Midianites, which was vigilantly brought in by the prophet in comparison with the Lord's advent. For in the book of Judges (Judges 7:1, etc.), Gideon is described as having fought against the Midianites. When he was leading forth a multitude of an army to the wars, he was commanded by divine admonition that coming to the river, he should remove from the conflict of wars all whom he should see drawing water with bent knees. And it came to pass that three hundred men only, who standing had drawn water with their hands, remained. With these he goes to the battle, and armed them not with arms, but with trumpets, lamps, and pitchers (Ibid., 19, etc.). For, as it is written there, they put burning lamps within the little pitchers, and held the trumpets in their right hand, but the pitchers in their left; and coming close to their enemies, they sounded with trumpets, they broke the little pitchers, the lamps appeared; and the enemies, terrified on one side by the sound of the trumpets, and on the other by the flashing of the lamps, were turned to flight.

What is this, that such a war is brought forward by the prophet, and the victory of that fight is compared to the advent of our Redeemer? Did the prophet study to indicate to us, that that victory of the fight under the leader Gideon designated the advent of our Redeemer against the devil? Such things were indeed done there, which the more they pass the use of fighting, the more they do not depart from the mystery of prophesy-

ing. For who ever came to battle with pitchers and lamps? Because coming against arms, he deserted arms? These things would indeed have been ridiculous to us, if they had not been terrible to the enemies. But by the testimony of the victory itself we have learned, that we should not weigh as small these things which were done. Gideon therefore coming to the battle, signifies the advent of our Redeemer, of whom it is written: Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, ye eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle (Ps. 23:7). He prophesied our Redeemer not only by work, but also by name. For Gideon is interpreted, "circling in the womb." For our Lord by the power of His majesty embraces all things, and yet by the grace of His dispensation He came taking humanity within the womb of the Virgin. Who therefore is "circling in the womb," but almighty God redeeming us by His dispensation, embracing all things by His divinity, and taking humanity within the womb? In which womb He was both incarnate, and was not enclosed, because He was both within the womb by the substance of infirmity, and outside the world by the power of majesty. But Midian is interpreted, "of judgment." For that his enemies were to be repelled and destroyed, was not from the fault of the repeller, but from the judgment of the One justly judging. And for this reason they are called "of judgment," because being aliens from the

grace of the Redeemer, they draw the merit of just damnation even in the vocabulary of their name.

[Vet. XXXIII.] 74. What the three hundred soldiers fighting with Gideon signify.---Against these Gideon goes to the battle with three hundred. The fullness of perfection is wont to be understood in the number of a hundred. What therefore is designated by the number of a hundred led thrice, but the perfect knowledge of the Trinity? For with these our Lord destroys the adversaries of the faith, with these He descends to the wars of preaching, who are able to know divine things, who know how to feel perfectly concerning the Trinity, which is God.

But it is to be noted that this number of three hundred is contained in the letter Tau, which holds the appearance of a cross. To which if that which projects on the cross were added above the transverse line, it would no longer be the appearance of a cross, but the cross itself. Because therefore this number of three hundred is contained in the letter Tau, and by the letter Tau, as we have said, the appearance of a cross is shown, not without merit in these three hundred following Gideon were designated those to whom it was said: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me (Luke 9:23). Who following the Lord take up the cross the more truly, the more sharply they both tame themselves, and are crucified by the compassion of charity toward their neighbors. Whence also it is said by the prophet Ezekiel: Mark Tau upon the foreheads of the men

that sigh and that mourn (Ezek. 9:4). Or certainly in these three hundred, who are contained in the letter Tau, this is expressed, that the iron of the enemies is overcome by the wood of the cross. And they were led to the river, that they might drink water, and whosoever drew water with bent knees, were removed from the warlike intention. For by the waters, the doctrine of wisdom; but by the standing knee, right operation is designated. Those therefore who while they drink water are said to have bent the knee, retired prohibited from the contest of wars, because Christ goes to the battle against the enemies of the faith with those who, while they draw the streams of doctrine, do not bend the rectitude of their works. For all were then related to have drunk water, but not all to have stood with a straight knee. And they were reprobated, who bent their knees while they drank the water; because, the Apostle attesting: Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified (Rom. 2:13). For because, as we have said, the dissolution of works is signified in the very incurvation of the knees, it is rightly said again by Paul: Lift up the relaxed hands and the dissolved knees, and make straight steps with your feet (Heb. 12:12). These therefore go forth to war with Christ as their leader, who show by work that which they announce with the mouth, who draw the streams of doctrine spiritually, and yet are not bent carnally in wicked works, because as it is written: Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner (Ecclus. 15:9).

75. What the trumpets, lamps, and pitchers, with which they went to the battle and overcame their enemies, signify.---They went therefore to the battle with trumpets, with lamps, with pitchers. This was, as we have said, an unusual order of fighting. They sounded with trumpets, and the pitchers were held in their left hands: but within the pitchers lamps were put; but when the pitchers were broken the lamps were shown, by the flashing light of which the enemies being terrified are turned to flight. There is designated therefore in the trumpets the cry of those preaching, in the lamps the brightness of miracles, in the pitchers the fragility of bodies. For such our leader led with Him to the battle of preaching, as should prostrate their enemies by dying, having despised the safety of their bodies, and should overcome their swords not with arms, not with swords, but by patience. For our martyrs came armed under their leader to the battle; but with trumpets, but with pitchers, but with lamps. Who sounded with trumpets while they preach; they broke the pitchers while they oppose their bodies to be dissolved in their passion to the hostile swords; they shone forth with lamps while after the dissolution of their bodies they flashed with miracles. And presently the enemies were turned to flight; because while they behold the bodies of the dead martyrs flash with miracles, being broken by the light of truth, they believed what they impugned. They sounded therefore with trumpets, that the pitchers might be broken; the pitchers were broken, that the lamps might

appear; the lamps appeared, that the enemies might be turned to flight; that is, the martyrs preached, until their bodies were dissolved in death; their bodies were dissolved in death, that they might flash with miracles; they flashed with miracles, that they might prostrate their enemies from the divine light, so that they should by no means resist God being erect, but should dread Him being subject.

76. The preachers of the faith profited more by their death than by their preaching.---And it is to be noted that the enemies stood before the pitchers, they fled before the lamps, because forsooth the persecutors of the holy Church resisted the preachers of the faith while still placed in the body; but after the dissolution of their bodies, the miracles appearing, they were turned to flight, because, being terrified with fear, they ceased from the persecution of the faithful. They feared forsooth the preaching of the trumpets, the broken pitchers of the bodies, the seen lamps of the miracles.

[Vet. XXXIV.] 77. To whom the care of the body is greater than of preaching, reprobation is to be feared.---We must also look at that which is written there, that they held the trumpets in their right hand, but the pitchers in their left. For we are said to have for the right whatever we weigh as great; but for the left what we account as nothing. Well therefore is it written there that they held the trumpets in their right hand, but the pitchers in their left, because the martyrs of Christ have for great the grace of preaching, but

for least the utility of their bodies. For whosoever makes more of the utility of the body than the grace of preaching, holds the trumpet in his left hand, and the pitcher in his right. For if in the first place the grace of preaching is attended to, and in the after place the utility of the body, it is certain that the trumpets are held in the right hands, and the pitchers in the left. Hence the Lord says in the Gospel: Neither do they light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick (Matt. 5:15). For in the bushel temporal advantage, but in the lamp the light of preaching is taken. To put the lamp under a bushel therefore is to hide the grace of preaching for the sake of temporal advantage, which no one indeed of the elect does. And well is it added there: But upon a candlestick. For in the candlestick the state of the body is designated, upon which the lamp is placed, while the care of preaching is preferred to the same body. Well therefore was it said by the Prophet: Thou hast overcome the sceptre of his exactor, as in the day of Midian (Is. 9:4). But because for the sake of explaining the prophetic testimony we have wandered far, let us return to the order of our work. Therefore after it was said: He has not heard the cry of the exactor, because forsooth the Lord manifested in the flesh despised the snares of the ancient enemy, what He also did concerning His elect He rightly subjoins, saying:

CHAPTER XXVI.

VERSE 8.---He beholds the mountains of his pasture.

78. Christ transformed even the proud into His members. He converts those whom He looks upon. ---By the mountains we understand all the elated of this world, who have swollen in their heart with earthly altitude. But because the Lord also incorporates such, being converted, into the body of His Church, and changing them from their former elation, transforms them into His members, these mountains are of His pasture, because forsooth He is satisfied with the conversion of the erring, and with the humility of the proud, as He Himself says: My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me (John 4:34). And as He commanded the apostles sent to preaching, saying: Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that which endures unto life eternal (John 6:27). Concerning these mountains it is said by the Prophet: The Lord will not repel His people, since in His hand are all the ends of the earth, and He beholds the heights of the mountains (Ps. 94:4). For the heights of the mountains are indeed the elations of the proud. Which the Lord is said to behold, that is, to change from their iniquity into better. For the Lord converts him whom He beholds. Whence it is written: The Lord being turned looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord as He had said: That before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me thrice; and having gone out he wept bitterly (Luke 22:61). And as Solomon says: A king that sits on the throne of judgment, dissipates all evil by his look (Prov. 20:8). Concerning this respect of the mountains it is said again by the prophet:

The mountains flowed like wax from the face of the Lord (Ps. 96:5), because after the hardness of their perversity, being liquefied by divine dread, they were laid low from that formerly rigid swelling.

79. He is fed by the good works of the converted. Matthew made a great feast for Christ, nay, he was one. ---It must also be observed that He does not say He inspects, but He beholds the mountains of His pasture. For the Lord was incarnate in Judea, which was placed in the midst of the nations. And therefore He beheld the mountains, because He gathered the elated of this world placed round about from the university of the Gentiles. In these mountains therefore He is fed, because He is satisfied by the good works of the converted as by green herbs. Hence it is that it is said to Him by the voice of the spouse in the Song of songs: Tell me where thou feedest, where thou liest in the midday (Cant. 1:6). For the Lord feeds, when He is delighted with our good acts. But He lies in the midday, when from the carnal desires of the reprobates with an ardent heart He finds refreshment of good thought in the breasts of His elect. For Matthew had been a certain mountain, when he was swelling in the gains of the tax-office; of whom also it is written that after he believed, the Lord being invited into his house, he made a great feast (Luke 5:29). This mountain therefore brought forth herbs of green pasture to this wild ass, because he fed Him both without by a feast, and within by the banquets of virtues.

Which is still most fully completed, when it is added:

CHAPTER XXVII

IBID. --- He searcheth after every green thing.

80. Christ deserts withered hearts; He seeks after those flourishing in faith and hope. For He deserts withered things, and searches after every green thing. For the withered hearts are of those men who, planted in the perishable hope of this world, have no confidence in eternity. But those things are green which cling to that inheritance of which the Apostle Peter says: To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away (1 Pet. 1:4). For each is more truly green as they fix the root of their thought in the lot of the unfading inheritance. Whosoever therefore fears to be withered within, let him fly from the withered desires of this world without. Whosoever desires to be sought by the Lord, let him flourish in the internal plantation of the heart, longing for the eternal country.

81. St. Gregory's modesty and humility. Let these things set forth concerning the wild ass suffice under a twofold understanding. It is to be left to the reader's judgment which he should prefer to choose. And if he should perhaps despise the understanding of both expositions, I will myself gladly follow my reader who feels more subtly and truly, as a disciple follows a master, because I believe what is properly given to me is whatever I recognize him to feel better than myself. For all of us who, full of faith, strive to sound forth

something concerning God, are organs of truth; and it is in the power of the same truth whether it should sound through me to another, or through another to me. For she herself in the midst of us is equal even when all are not living equally, and often touches one, that he may hear well what she has sounded through another; but often touches another, that he may sound well what may be heard by others.

82. Often the word is given to the teacher either for the merit of the hearer, or withdrawn for his fault. Often the word is given to the teacher for the sake of the hearer's grace, and often for the hearer's fault the speech is withdrawn from the teacher. In those things therefore which the teacher preaches abundantly, let him lift himself up with no elation, lest perhaps his tongue be filled not for his own sake, but for the hearer's grace; and in those things which the teacher speaks barrenly, let not the hearer be angry, lest perhaps the teacher's tongue grow numb not for his own sake, but for the hearer's reprobation. For for the sake of the hearer's grace, the word of the teacher is given even to the evil, as the words of preaching could be supplied to the Pharisees, of whom it is written: All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works do ye not (Matt. 23:3). But for the sake of the hearers' reprobation the word is withdrawn even from good teachers, as it is said to Ezekiel against Israel: I will make thy tongue to cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be as a man

that reproveth, for it is an exasperating house (Ezek. 3:26).

83. Sometimes for the merit or fault of both teacher and hearers, it is given or denied. Let no one be puffed up by what is received. Let fear accompany hope. But sometimes the word of preaching is given for the sake of both, sometimes it is withdrawn for the sake of both. For it is given for the sake of both, as it is said by the divine voice to Paul among the Corinthians: Fear not, but speak (Acts 18:9). And a little after: Because I have much people in this city (Ibid. 10). But it is withdrawn for the sake of both, as Eli the priest both knew the wicked action of his sons, and did not exercise a voice worthy of rebuke; when indeed it was to be that in the punishment of death he would punish both those for the guilt of their crime, and him with the penalty of silence (1 Sam. 3:12, seq.). Among these things therefore, since we know not either for whom the word is given, or for whose sake it is withdrawn, there is one healthful remedy: neither to exalt ourselves for those things which we have received more than others, nor to mock another for that which he has received less; but with the foot of humility fixed, to walk weightily and constantly, because in this life we are so much more truly taught, as we recognize that doctrine cannot be supplied to us from ourselves. Why then should anyone be proud of doctrine, who knows not by a hidden judgment either to whom it is given when, or when it is withdrawn from whom? For although fear always seems to be far away from security,

yet for us nothing is more secure than always to fear under hope, lest the unwary mind either by despairing cast itself down into vices, or by exalting itself fall from gifts. For before the eyes of the strict and pious Judge, as much as it trembles more humbly concerning itself under hope, so much more robustly it stands in Him.

Book thirty

ONE

The ninth verse is explained with the rest of chapter XXXIX, omitting only the last three; and the efficacy of divine grace, in the preaching of the Gospel and the conversion of sinners, is especially demonstrated.

CHAPTER I

995 1. The wound inflicted on man by the proud devil, healed by the humility of God. --- In paradise, the devil, envying healthy man, inflicted the wound of pride, so that he who had not received death when created, might merit it when elated (Gen. 3). But because it belongs to divine power, not only to make good things from nothing, but also to reform those things even from the evils which the devil had perpetrated, against this inflicted wound of the proud devil the medicine of the humility of God appeared among men, so that by the example of the Author those might rise humbled, who by the imitation of the enemy had fallen elated. Against the proud devil therefore, God made man appeared humble among men. Him the powerful of this world, that is, the members of the proud devil, believed

despicable as much as they beheld Him humble. For the more the wound of their heart swelled, the more it despised the mild medicament. Our medicine therefore, repulsed from the wound of the proud, reached the wound of the humble: For God chose the weak things of the world, that He might confound the strong (1 Cor. 1:27); and it was done with the poor what even the rich would afterwards wonder at. For while they behold new virtues in them, they afterwards stood amazed at the miracles of those whose life they had previously despised. Whence soon returning fearful to their own hearts, they dreaded the holiness in miracles, which they had despised in precepts. Through the weak things therefore the strong were confounded, because while the life of the humble rises into veneration, the elation of the proud has fallen. Therefore, because blessed Job holds the type of the holy Church, and almighty God foresaw that in the beginnings of the nascent Church, the powerful of this world would refuse to receive His light yoke with the thick neck of the heart, let him say:

CHAPTER IX

JOB 39, verse 9. --- Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee?

2. By the rhinoceros are to be understood the elated and powerful tamed by Christ, and compelled to serve the Church. Their pride He broke by miracles. --- For the rhinoceros is of an altogether untamed nature; so that if ever it should be captured, it can in no way be held. For, being

impatient, it is said to die immediately. But its name interpreted in the Latin tongue sounds as, a horn in the nose. And what else is designated in the nose but foolishness, what in the horn but elation? For because foolishness is accustomed to be understood in the nose, we have learned by the testimony of Solomon, who says: A golden ring in her nostrils, a beautiful and foolish woman (Prov. 11:22). For he saw heretical doctrine resplendent with the brightness of eloquence, yet not agreeing with a fit understanding of wisdom, and he said: A golden ring in her nostrils, that is, a beautiful and circumflexed speech in the senses of a foolish mind, from whose eloquence gold hangs, but yet from the weight of earthly intention, like a pig, it looks not to higher things. Which he followed and explained, saying: A beautiful and foolish woman; that is, heretical doctrine: beautiful through the word, foolish through the understanding. But in the horn, because elation is frequently received, 996 we have learned by the testimony of the Prophet, who says: I said to the wicked, act not wickedly, and to the sinners, lift not up the horn (Ps. 75:4). What then is designated in this rhinoceros but the powerful of this world, or the very supreme powers of principalities themselves, who elated by the pride of foolish boasting, while they are puffed up outwardly by false honors, within they become empty in true miseries? To whom it is well said: Why art thou proud, earth and ashes (Ecclus. 10:9)? But in the very beginnings of the nascent Church, while the power of the rich exalted itself against

her, and panted for her death with the immensity of such great cruelty, while she, anxious with so many torments, pressed with so many persecutions, might succumb, who then could believe that she would subject to herself those straight and rough necks of the proud, and bound with the mild thongs of faith, tame them with the yoke of holy fear? For a long time indeed in her beginnings she was tossed by the horn of this rhinoceros, and struck as if to be utterly destroyed. But by divine grace dispensing, both she being vivified by dying recovered, and this rhinoceros, weary from striking, inclined his horn; and that which was impossible to men, was not difficult to God, who broke the rigid powers of this world not by words, but by miracles. For behold daily we recognize rhinocerotes to serve, while we see now subject to God the powerful of this world, who had long since been confident in the foolish elation of their own strengths. The Lord spoke as if concerning a certain untamed rhinoceros, when He said: A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:23). To whom when it was answered: And who then can be saved? He immediately added: With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible (Ibid. 26). As if He were to say: This rhinoceros cannot be tamed by human strengths, but yet he can be subjected by divine miracles. Whence here also it is aptly said to blessed Job holding the type of the holy Church: Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee? [Rec. II.] You understand: As Me, who indeed suffered him to resist

long the predicaments of men, but yet suddenly, when I willed, I prostrated him by miracles. As if He should say more openly: Will these who are proud with foolish elation be subjected to thy preaching without My aids? Consider therefore through whom thou prevailest, and in all that thou prevailest incline the sense of elation. Or certainly it is brought to the knowledge of blessed Job for the humbling of his virtue, how wonderful things are sometimes done through the Apostles, who subject the world to God, and bend to Him the tamed pride of the powerful of this world, so that blessed Job may esteem less of himself, as much as he sees such difficult souls joined to God through others. Let him say therefore: Will the rhinoceros be willing to thee? You understand: As through those whom I shall send he shall serve Me. It follows:

CHAPTER III

997 IBID. --- Or will he abide at thy crib?

3. Christ feeds these rhinocerotes with the food of Holy Scripture. --- In this place the crib is not inconveniently taken for Holy Scripture itself, in which the holy animals are satiated with the food of the word, of whom it is said by the Prophet: Thy animals shall dwell therein (Ps. 68:10). Hence also the newborn Lord is found by the shepherds in a crib (Luke 2:16), because His incarnation is recognized in that scripture of the Prophets which refreshes us. This rhinoceros therefore, namely every elated one in the beginnings of the nascent Church, when he heard the

sayings of the patriarchs, the mysteries of the prophets, the secrets of the Gospel, he mocked them, because he had despised to be shut up and satiated in the crib of the preachers as much as, let loose in his own pleasures, he held the field of his own despair. Which field of the proud Paul well hints at, saying: Who despairing, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, unto the working of all uncleanness, unto avarice (Eph. 4:19). For each one relaxes himself more widely in present evils, as much as he despairs of attaining eternal goods after this life. But almighty God indeed suffered this rhinoceros wandering for a long time through the field of perverse pleasure, and yet when He willed, He suddenly bound him to His crib, that being well shut in he might receive the food of life, lest being evilly free he should utterly lose life. For behold now we see that the powerful of this world, and its princes, gladly hear the Lord's predicaments, constantly read them, and everywhere do not go out from the crib, because the precepts of God, which they know either by reading or by hearing, they in no way transcend in living; but as if shut up they tolerate with equanimity to stand at the food of the word, that by eating and remaining they may grow fat. When we behold this with God acting, what else do we see than this rhinoceros abiding at the crib? But because after having received the food of preaching this rhinoceros ought to show the fruit of work, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER IV

VERSE 10. --- Wilt thou bind the rhinoceros with thy thong to plow?

4. The princes of the world preach and take care to preserve the divine precepts by which they are bound. --- The thongs are the precepts of the Church's discipline. But to plow is to break the earth of the human breast through the study of preaching with the plowshare of the tongue. This rhinoceros therefore, once proud and rigid, is even now held bound with the thongs of faith; and from the crib is led to plowing, because he endeavors to make known also to others that preaching by which he himself was refreshed. For we know how great cruelty this rhinoceros, namely an earthly prince, formerly raged with against the Lord, and now with the Lord acting we see with how great humility he prostrates himself to Him. This rhinoceros is not only bound, but even bound to plow, because namely being bound by the thongs of discipline, he not only restrains himself from perverse works, but even exercises himself in the preachings of the holy faith. For behold, as has been said above, while we see the very rulers and princes of human affairs fear God in their actions, what else do we see than them bound with thongs? But when they do not cease to preach that faith, which they had long since attacked by persecuting, now by the laws set forth, what else do they do, but sweat in the labors of the plow?

5. The wonderful consensus of secular power and Christian humility. --- It is pleasing to see this rhinoceros, that is, a prince of the earth

bound with the thongs of faith, how 998 he both carries a horn through the power of the world, and sustains the yoke of faith through the love of God. This rhinoceros could be greatly feared, unless he were bound. For indeed he has a horn, but he is bound. They have therefore in his thongs what the humble may love, they have in his horn what the elated may dread. For being tightened with thongs, he preserves the piety of gentleness, but being supported by the horn of earthly glory he exercises the dominion of power. But for the most part when he is snatched away to strike by the exigency of wrath, he is recalled by divine fear. And indeed through exasperated power he raises himself into fury; but because he remembers the eternal Judge, being bound in his horn he bows himself. Often I remember to have seen myself, that when this rhinoceros kindled himself heavily to strike, and as if with raised horn intended deaths, exiles, and condemnations with immense terrors to the smallest beasts among his subjects, suddenly with the sign of the cross impressed on his forehead, he extinguished every fire of fury in himself, being converted he laid down his threats; and because he could not proceed to those things deliberated, being bound he recognized it. And he not only tames wraths in himself, but even in the senses of his subjects he hastens to insert everything that is right, so that as all venerate the holy Church from their inmost thought, he may demonstrate it by the example of his own humility. Let it be said therefore to blessed Job: Wilt thou bind the rhinoceros with

thy thong to plow? As if He should say openly: Dost thou direct the powerful of this world, trusting in their own foolish elation, to the labor of preaching, and restrain them under the bonds of discipline? You understand: As I, who did it when I willed, who made my persecutors, whom I previously suffered as enemies, themselves afterwards defenders of the right faith. It follows:

CHAPTER V

IBID. --- Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee?

6. Those who were previously persecutors of the faith, afterwards became preachers and assertors. --- The clods lying upon cultivated earth are accustomed to press down the cast seeds, and to suffocate the growing things. By which clods in this place are designated those who, through their own hardness and pestiferous life, neither themselves receive the seeds of the word, nor permit others to bear the fruits of the seeds received. For every holy preacher coming into the world, by evangelizing to the poor, had plowed as it were the soft lands of the valleys; but the Church, not being able to break the hardness of certain elated ones, tolerated them being oppressed as clods cast upon her labor. For many of a perverse mind, trusting in the very infidelity of earthly princes, pressed down the rising Church with the weight of evil living, while for a long time they destroyed whom they could, now by damnable examples, now by threats, now by flatteries, lest the earth of the hearers' heart, being cultivated, should

reach the fruit of the spiritual seed. But when almighty God subjected this rhinoceros to His thongs, through him He immediately broke the hardness of the clods. For soon He subjugated the earthly principality to His faith, and crushed the hard hearts of the persecutors, so that like broken clods they should no longer press down being hardened, but being loosened should germinate to the received seeds of the word. Whence He now rightly says: Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee? As if He should say: As after Me, who after I enter the mind of any elated power, not only render it subject to Me, but even exercise it for crushing the enemies of the faith, so that the powerful of this world, bound with the thongs of My dread, may not only remain believing in Me, but also for My sake 999 may break the hardness of another's heart, being zealous.

7. The Church has many enemies in her own bosom, against whom she seeks the aid of earthly princes. --- But this which we have said concerning infidels, we see in many even who are counted by the name of faith. For many, placed in the midst of humble brethren, hold the faith as far as the word, but while they do not desert the pride of elation, while they press down whom they can by violence brought upon them, while others are bearing fruit they themselves in no way receive the seeds of the word, but turn away the ear of the heart from the voice of the exhorter, what else do these do than lie as hardened clods in the plowed valleys? Who are so much the more wicked, as they neither themselves bring forth the fruit of

humility, and what is worse, they press down the humble who are bringing it forth. To dissolve the hardness of these, sometimes holy Church, because she does not suffice by her own virtue, seeks the assistance of this rhinoceros, that is, of an earthly prince, that he himself may crush the clods lying upon her, which the humility of the Churches carries like the plains of the valleys. These clods therefore the rhinoceros presses and breaks with his foot, because the principal religion dissolves out of power the hardness of the perverse and powerful, which ecclesiastical humility is not able to resist. Which because it is acted by divine virtue alone, that the summits of the earthly kingdom may be inclined to the advancement of the heavenly kingdom, it is now rightly said: Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee? But that blessed Job may feel humble things concerning his own virtues, and yet may know sublime things concerning the powers of this world under the name of the rhinoceros, it follows:

CHAPTER VI

VERSE 11. --- Wilt thou have confidence in his great strength, and wilt thou leave thy labors to him?

8. Christ compels the power of the temporal prince to serve Him, and to him He has entrusted and commended His Church. --- The Lord asserts that He has confidence in the strength of the rhinoceros, because the strengths which He temporally conferred on the earthly prince, He inclined

to the worship of His veneration, so that from the received power, through which he had long since swollen against God, he now pays religious obedience to God. For as much as he is more powerful in the world, so much more he prevails for the Author of the world. For because he is feared by his subjects, he persuades so much more easily, as he also points out with power Him who is truly to be feared. Let it be said therefore: Wilt thou have confidence in his great strength? As if it were said: As I, who behold the strengths of earthly princes about to serve My worship. For I esteem those things which thou now doest as so much less, as much as I already foresee, that I will incline even greater powers of this world to Me. But it is well added: And wilt thou leave thy labors to him? For the Lord left His labors to this rhinoceros, because to the converted earthly prince He entrusted the Church which He purchased by His death: because namely He committed into his hand with how great solicitude the peace of the faith is to be guarded. It follows:

CHAPTER VII

VERSE 12. --- Wilt thou believe him that he will render thee thy seed, and gather thy threshing-floor?

9. He promulgates laws for the Church, who long since raged against her. --- What else is received as seed but the word of preaching? as in the Gospel the Truth says: He went out that soweth, to sow (Matt. 13:3); and as the prophet says: Blessed are ye that sow upon all waters (Isa.

32:20). What else ought to be understood as the threshing-floor but the Church? of which it is said by the voice of the Forerunner: And he will thoroughly cleanse his floor (Matt. 3:12). Who then in the beginning of the nascent Church would believe, while that untamed principality of the earth raged against her with so many threats and torments, that this rhinoceros would render seed to God, that is, would repay with works the received word of preaching? Who of the weak could then 1000 believe that he would gather His floor? For behold now he promulgates laws for the Church, who long since raged against her through various torments. Behold whatever nations he could capture, he leads them to the grace of faith by persuading; and to them he points out eternal life, whom having been captured he preserves in the present. Why this? Because namely he now gathers the floor, which he once tossed by dispersing it with a proud horn. Let blessed Job therefore hear what the princes of Gentility do, and let him by no means extol himself within himself for the glory of his so great virtue. Let also the powerful king hear how great devotion the more powerful kings of this world serve God with, and let him not draw his virtue into the vice of elation as if for singularity, who has an example in others, because although the Lord then saw not one like him, yet He foresaw many through whom He might blunt his glory.

10. Those who, from fear of earthly princes, do not dare to vex the Church with open force, turn themselves to various arguments of

fraud. The Church cannot be without an enemy. --- Therefore, because earthly princes prostrate themselves to God with great humility, wicked men who had long since raged against the Church in open adversity, being placed in infidelity, now turn themselves to other arguments of fraud. For because they behold them venerating religion, they themselves assume the worship of religion, and press down the life of the good under despised garments with iniquitous morals. For they are lovers of the world, and they show this in themselves which men may venerate, and to those who truly despise themselves, they are coupled not in mind, but in garment. For because, loving present glory, they cannot attain it, they follow as if despicing it. Who would show what they feel against the good, if they found a fit time for their wickedness. But even these arguments of the wicked profit for the purgations of the elect. For holy Church cannot pass through the times of her pilgrimage without the labor of temptation, who although she has no open enemies without, yet within she tolerates feigned brethren. For she is always in battle line against vices, and has even in time of peace her own war; and perhaps she is more heavily afflicted when she is impugned not by the strokes of strangers, but by the morals of her own. Whether therefore in that or in this time, she is yet always in labor. For both in the persecution of princes she fears lest the good lose what they are, and in the conversion of princes she tolerates, because the evil feign themselves to be good, which they are

not. Whence almighty God, because He said this rhinoceros was bound with thongs, immediately added the hypocrisy of the wicked, saying:

VERSE 13. --- The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron, and of the hawk.

11. The ostrich a type of hypocrites. --- The ostrich indeed is decorated with a wing like the heron or the hawk, but yet it is not raised from the earth by its wings. But the heron and the hawk are adorned with feathers, and exercise those same feathers for volatile journeys. For the heron is heavy in wing, but flies from on high. But the hawk is small indeed in wings, but is very swift. For the heron, who flies from on high, for the most part clings to the water, and there seeks food. But the hawk, who is small in wings but swift, flies not through the waters, but through the air, and there captures birds. In the ostrich therefore hypocrites are designated, who imitate the virtue of the heron and the hawk, that is, of the holy elect and of preachers, with the feathers of simulation. For the wing of hypocrites is like the wings of the heron, because the heron flies from on high, but clings to the water. He therefore uses the wing of the heron, whosoever feigns indeed that he tends to heavenly things, but clings to earthly cupidities. For the heron, that it may capture food, stands in the waters; but the hypocrite, that he may attain worldly praise, inclines himself to earthly things. The wing of hypocrites is also like the wings of the hawk, because the hawk is small in wing, but swift. For the hypocrite uses the hawk's feathers, while he appears small

in humility, but is swift in elation. He uses the hawk's wing, whosoever indeed seems small in wings, but is swift to rapine. For he uses the hawk's wing, who hastens to the rapine of earthly glory. But the ostrich indeed is decorated with a wing like the heron or the hawk, but is not raised from the earth by its wings. But the heron, that is, any elect one, is indeed heavy in wing, but flies from on high, while he who in this world is pressed by the weight of his own fragility, yet flies through heavenly things in thought. And he clings to the water, because while he lives here, he uses earthly things, which are designated by waters, and there seeks the necessaries of life. But the hawk, that is, any preacher, is indeed small in wings, but is very swift, while he who seems small to himself, yet hastens to heavenly things by desire. But the hawk, that is, any preacher, flies not through the waters, but through the air, and there captures birds, while he who lives here, inclines himself not to earthly business, but flies through in spiritual contemplation, and there captures the minds of hearers, which are designated by birds. The ostrich therefore is the hypocrite, who imitates the virtue of the heron and the hawk, that is, of the holy elect and of preachers, by simulation, but is not raised from the earth by its wings, because the hypocrite does not tend to heavenly things, but always clings to earthly desires. For the hypocrite uses the wings of an ostrich, while he has indeed holiness adorned with feathers, but flies not to heavenly desires. But it is well added:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. V].

VERSE 13.---The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron and the hawk.

11. Hypocrites are like the ostrich, which has feathers but not flight. Who does not know how much the heron and the hawk surpass other birds in the swiftness of their flight? But the ostrich has a likeness to their feathers, yet it does not have the speed of their flight. For it is not able to be raised from the earth, and it lifts its wings as if for flight, in appearance only, but nevertheless it never suspends itself from the earth by flying. So, indeed, are all hypocrites, who, while they simulate the life of the good, have an imitation of holy vision, but do not have the truth of holy action. They have, indeed, wings for flying in appearance, but they crawl upon the earth in action, because they extend their wings through the figure of holiness, but, weighed down by the burden of secular cares, they are in no way raised from the earth. For the Lord, reproving the appearance of the Pharisees, rebuked, as it were, the feather of the ostrich, which practiced one thing in work and showed another in color, saying: Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you are like whitened sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful to men on the outside, but within are full of the bones of the dead; so you also appear righteous to men on the outside, but within you are full of avarice and iniquity (Matth. XXIII, 27). As if He were to say: The appearance of

the feather seems to lift you up, but the weight of your life depresses you to the lowest things. Of this weight it is said by the Prophet: O sons of men, how long will you be heavy of heart? (Psal. IV, 3). The Lord promises that He will convert the hypocrisy of this ostrich, when He says through the prophet: The beasts of the field shall glorify me, the dragons and the ostriches (Isai. XLIII, 20). For what is expressed by the name of dragons but openly malicious minds, which always crawl upon the earth in the lowest thoughts? And what by the word ostriches but those who simulate themselves to be good, who retain the life of holiness as if it were a feather for flight in appearance, but do not exercise it in works? Therefore, the Lord asserts that He is glorified by the dragon or the ostrich, because He often converts both the openly evil and the falsely good to His service from their innermost thought. Or certainly the beasts of the field, that is, the dragons and the ostriches, glorify the Lord, when the Gentiles, who had long been a member of the devil in this world, exalt the faith which is in Him. He reproaches them by the name of dragons because of their malice, and marks them by the name of ostriches because of their hypocrisy. For the Gentiles, as it were, received wings, but could not fly, since they both had the nature of reason and were ignorant of the action of reason.

12. The elect have few things here which depress them, and many which lift them up; the reprobate are the opposite. We still have what we should more attentively consider in the case of

this ostrich concerning the hawk and the heron. For the bodies of the hawk and the heron are small, but supported by thicker feathers, and therefore they fly across with speed, because there is little in them that weighs them down, and much that lifts them up. But on the contrary, the ostrich is clothed with sparse feathers and is weighed down by a huge body, so that even if it desires to fly, that very fewness of feathers does not suspend the mass of so great a body in the air. Well, therefore, in the heron and the hawk is signified the person of the elect, who, as long as they are in this life, cannot be without at least some contagion of fault. But while there is some small thing in them that depresses, much virtue of good action is available which sustains them in heavenly things. But on the contrary, the hypocrite, even if he does a few things that lift him up, perpetrates many that weigh him down. For the hypocrite does not do no good things, but he commits many perverse things by which he depresses those very goods. Therefore, the few feathers do not lift the body of the ostrich, because the multitude of depraved action weighs down the small good of the hypocrite. This very feather of the ostrich also has a similarity of color to the feathers of the heron and the hawk, but it does not have a similarity of virtue. For theirs are closed and firmer, and they are able to press the air in flight by the strength of their solidity. But on the contrary, the feathers of the ostrich are loose, and they cannot take flight because they are surpassed by the very air which they ought to

have pressed. What, then, do we behold in these things but that the solid virtues of the elect fly out, so that they may press the winds of human favor? But the action of hypocrites, however right it may seem, does not suffice to fly, because indeed the breeze of human praise passes through the wing of loose virtue.

1002 [Vet. VII.] 13. True Christians are to be discerned from the false by their fruits. But behold, when we see one and the same habit of both good and evil men, when we see the same appearance of profession in the elect and the reprobate, whence does our intelligence have the means to discern the elect from the reprobate, by comprehending the true from the false? This, however, we recognize more quickly if we mark the words committed to memory from our Teacher, who says: By their fruits you shall know them (Matth. VII, 20). For we are not to weigh the things which they show in image, but those which they preserve in action. Whence here, after he introduced the appearance of this ostrich, he immediately adds its deeds, saying:

CHAPTER IX.

VERSE 14.---Which leaveth her eggs in the earth.

14. Hypocrites neglect to cherish and nourish those whom they beget by good examples. For what is expressed by eggs but the offspring still tender, which must be cherished for a long time so that it may be led to a living bird? For eggs are insensible in themselves, but nevertheless, when

warmed, they are turned into living birds. So, indeed, it is certain that young hearers and sons remain cold and insensible unless they are warmed by the solicitous exhortation of their teacher. Therefore, lest they be left to grow torpid in their insensibility, they are to be cherished by the constant voice of teachers, until they are able both to live through intelligence and to fly through contemplation. But because hypocrites, although they always work perversely, nevertheless do not cease to speak right things; and by speaking well they beget sons in faith or conversation, but they cannot nourish them by living well, it is rightly said of this ostrich: Which leaveth her eggs in the earth. For the hypocrite neglects the care of his sons, because out of innermost love he subjects himself to external things, in which the more he is extolled, the less he is pained by the defect of his offspring. To have left eggs in the earth, therefore, is in no way to suspend the sons born through conversion from earthly acts by the interposed nest of exhortation. To have left eggs in the earth is to provide no example of heavenly life to the sons. For because hypocrites do not glow through the bowels of charity, they in no way grieve over the torpor of the offspring produced, that is, over the coldness of their eggs; and the more willingly they insert themselves into earthly acts, the more negligently they permit those whom they beget to perform earthly things. But because heavenly care does not desert the deserted sons of hypocrites, for it warms some even from such, fore-

known by innermost election, with the respect of bestowed grace, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER X

[Rec. VI].

IBID.---Wilt thou perhaps warm them in the dust?

15. The grace of God warms the sons of both evil and good teachers. As if He were to say: As I, who warm them in the dust, because indeed I enkindle the souls of the little ones, even placed in the midst of those who sin, with the fire of my love. What is understood by dust but a sinner? Whence also that enemy is satiated by the perdition of this sinner, of whom it is said by the prophet: Dust shall be the serpent's bread (Isai. LXV, 25). What is demonstrated by dust but the very instability of the iniquitous? Of which David says: Not so the impious, not so, but like the dust which the wind casts away from the face of the earth (Psal. I, 4). Therefore, the Lord warms the eggs left in the dust, because He enkindles the souls of the little ones, destitute of the solicitude of their preachers, even placed in the midst of sinners, with the fire of His love. Hence it is that we see many both living in the midst of the people and yet not holding the life of a torpid people. Hence it is that we see many not fleeing the crowds of the evil and yet glowing with heavenly ardor. Hence it is that we see many, if I may say so, 1003 warming in the cold. For whence do some, placed in the torpor of earthly men, burn

with the desires of heavenly hope, whence also are they enkindled among cold hearts, unless because Almighty God knows how to warm even the eggs left in the dust, and, the insensibility of the former cold being shaken off, to animate them through the sense of the vital spirit, so that in no way lying in the lowest things they may grow torpid; but, turned into living birds, they may suspend themselves to heavenly things by contemplating, that is, by flying? But it is to be noted that in these words not only is the perverse action of hypocrites reproved, but also the elation of good masters, if any should perhaps creep in, is suppressed. For when the Lord says of Himself that He Himself warms the eggs left in the dust, He surely clearly indicates that He Himself works internally through the words of the teacher, who also without the words of any man warms whom He has willed in the cold of the dust. As if He were to say openly to teachers: That you may know that I am He who works through you as you speak, behold, when I have willed, I speak to the hearts of men even without you. [Vet. VIII.] The thought of the teachers being humbled, therefore, the speech is turned to expressing the hypocrite, and with what fatuity he grows torpid is still more fully indicated under the deed of the ostrich. For there follows:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. VII].

VERSE 15.---She forgetteth that the foot may trample them, or that the beast of the field may crush them.

16. Evil teachers are not solicitous for their offspring, unlike the good. What is understood by the foot but the transition of operation? What is signified by the field but this world? Of which the Lord says in the Gospel: But the field is the world (Matth. XIII, 38). What is expressed by the beast but the ancient enemy, who, lying in wait for the spoils of this world, is daily satiated with human death? Of which it is said through the Prophet, with the Lord promising: And the evil beast shall not pass through it (Isai. XXXV, 9). Therefore, the ostrich, deserting her eggs, forgetteth that the foot may trample them, because indeed hypocrites desert those whom they beget as sons in conversation, and they do not care at all lest, destitute either of the solicitude of exhortation or the custody of discipline, the examples of perverse works should pervert them. For if they loved the eggs which they beget, they would surely fear lest anyone should trample them by demonstrating perverse works. Paul feared this foot for his weak disciples, as for the eggs which he had laid, when he said: Many walk, whom I often told you, but now I tell you even weeping, the enemies of the cross of Christ (Phil. III, 18). And again: See the dogs, see the evil workers (Ibid., 2). And again: We denounce to you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother walking inordinately, and not according to the tradition which they received

from us (II Thess. III, 6). John feared this foot for Gaius, who, when he had premised many evils of Diotrephes, added: Dearest, do not imitate the evil, but that which is good (III Joan. 11). The leader of the Synagogue himself feared this for his weak flock, saying: When thou shalt have entered the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee, beware lest thou shouldst wish to imitate the abominations of those nations (Deut. XVIII, 9). She also forgetteth that the beast of the field may crush them, because indeed if the devil, raging in this world, should seize the sons produced in good conversation, the hypocrite does not care at all. But Paul feared this beast of the field for the eggs which he had laid, saying: I fear lest, as the serpent seduced Eve by his astuteness, so your senses should be corrupted from the charity which is 1004 in Christ Jesus (II Cor. XI, 3). Peter feared this beast of the field for his disciples, when he said: Your adversary the devil, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, strong in faith (I Pet. V, 8). Therefore, true teachers have the bowels of fear for their disciples from the virtue of charity; but hypocrites fear so much less for those committed to them as they do not even discern what they ought to fear for themselves. And because they live with hardened hearts, they do not recognize even the very sons whom they beget with any piety of due love. Whence it is still added under the species of the ostrich:

CHAPTER XII.

VERSE 16.---She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers.

17. These glow with charity towards their children, but not those. For whom the grace of charity does not infuse, he regards his neighbor, even if he himself begot him for God, as a stranger; as surely are all hypocrites, whose minds indeed, while they always desire external things, become insensible within; and in all things that they do, while they always seek their own, they in no way soften with any compassion of charity towards the affection of their neighbor. Oh, what soft bowels Paul bore, when he panted with such heat of love for his sons, saying: We live, if you stand in the Lord (I Thess. III, 8). And, God is my witness, how I long for you all in the bowels of Christ Jesus (Phil. I, 8). To the Romans also he says: God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, that without intermission I always make memory of you in my prayers, beseeching if by any means at length at some time I may have a prosperous journey in the will of God to come to you; for I desire to see you (Rom. I, 9, seq.). To Timothy also he says: I give thanks to my God, whom I serve from my progenitors in a pure conscience, because without intermission I have memory of thee in my prayers, night and day desiring to see thee (II Tim. I, 3). To the Thessalonians also, indicating his love, he says: But we, brethren, being desolated from you for a short time, in sight, not in heart, have hastened more abundantly to see your face with great desire (I Thess. II, 17). Who, pressed by hard persecutions

and yet solicitous for the salvation of his sons, added: We sent Timothy our brother, and minister of God in the Gospel of Christ, to comfort you and to exhort you for your faith, that no one should be moved in these tribulations. For you yourselves know that we are appointed to this (I Thess. III, 2). To the Ephesians also he says: I beseech that you faint not in my tribulations for you, which is your glory (Ephes. III, 13). Behold, placed in tribulation he exhorts others, and in that which he himself sustains he strengthens others. For he had not been, after the manner of the ostrich, forgetful of his sons, but he feared too much lest his disciples, seeing so many reproaches of persecutions in their preacher, should despise the faith in him, against which innumerable insults of passions should prevail. And therefore he grieved less in torments, but feared more for his sons concerning the temptation of his torments. He undervalued in himself the blows of the body, while he feared in his sons the blows of the heart. He himself by suffering received the wounds of torments, but by consoling his sons, he cured the wounds of hearts. Let us consider, therefore, of what charity it was to have feared for others among his own pains; let us consider of what charity it was to seek the salvation of his sons among his own detriments, and to keep the state of mind in his neighbors even from his own dejection.

1005 [Vet. IX.] 18. Because through concupiscence they are carried into external goods. The mind which is not entirely with itself cannot

think of itself. But hypocrites do not know these bowels of charity, because their mind, the more it is dissolved into external things through the concupiscence of the world, the more it is hardened within through its own inaffection; and it grows cold within with insensible torpor, because it softens without with damnable love; and it is not able to consider itself, because it in no way studies to think of itself. For the mind cannot think of itself, which is not entirely with itself. But it does not suffice to be entirely with itself, because it is dissipated from itself into as many species as the concupiscences by which it is seized; and, scattered, it lies in the lowest things, which, if it willed, being collected, would rise to the highest.

19. The wonderful perspicacity of the just collected within themselves. Whence the mind of the just, because it is constrained from the flux of appetite for all visible things by the custody of discipline, being collected within itself, is integrated within; and it fully beholds what sort it ought to be towards God or neighbor, because it deserts nothing of its own externally; and the more it is compressed, being abstracted from external things, the more it is enkindled, increased in its innermost parts; and by how much more it burns, by so much more it shines to detect vices. For hence it is that holy men, while they collect themselves within themselves, detect even the hidden faults of others with a wonderful and penetrating edge. Whence it is well said through the prophet Ezekiel: A likeness of a hand sent forth took hold of me by a lock of the hair of

my head, and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the vision of God into Jerusalem, by the inner door that looked towards the North, where was set the idol of jealousy to provoke emulation (Ezech. VIII, 3). For what is the lock of the hair of the head but the collected thoughts of the mind, so that they may not flow away scattered, but may subsist constrained through discipline? Therefore, a hand is sent from above, and the prophet is lifted up by the lock of the hair of the head, because when our mind collects itself through custody, a supernal power draws us upward from the lowest things. Well does he assert himself to be lifted up between the earth and the heaven, because anyone holy placed in mortal flesh has not yet fully arrived at heavenly things, but yet already deserts the lowest things. In the vision of God he is led into Jerusalem, because indeed each one progressing through the zeal of charity contemplates what sort the Church ought to be. Well also is it added: By the inner door that looked towards the North, because indeed holy men, while they look through the entrance of internal contemplation, detect more perverse things being done within the Church than right ones; and they turn their eyes as if to the part of the North, that is, to the left of the sun, because they enkindle themselves by the stings of charity against the cold of vices. Where also it is rightly added: Because there was set the idol of jealousy to provoke emulation. For while they consider rapine and vices to be perpetrated within the holy Church

by some faithful in appearance only, what else do they see in Jerusalem but an idol? Which is called an idol of jealousy, because through this supernal emulation is provoked against us: and it strikes the delinquents so much more strictly as the Redeemer loves us more dearly.

[Vet. X.] 20. The torpor of hypocrites for heavenly things, their ardor for earthly things. Therefore, hypocrites, because they do not collect the thoughts of the mind, are in no way held by the lock of the hair of the head. And since they do not know their own things, when do they detect the faults of those committed to them? 1006 These, therefore, are torpid for heavenly things, for which they ought to have glowed; and they burn anxiously for earthly things, for which they would have been laudably torpid. For, the care of their sons having been postponed, you may often see them accoutre themselves against the dangers of immense labor, cross the seas, go to judgments, knock at princedoms, burst into palaces, be present at the contending throngs of people, and defend earthly patrimonies with laborious observation. To whom if it should perhaps be said: Why do you do these things, you who have left the world? they immediately answer that they fear God, and for that reason they labor with such study in defending patrimonies. Whence well is it still added concerning the foolish labor of this ostrich:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. VIII].

VERSE 16.---She hath labored in vain, no fear constraining her.

21. Neglecting the custody of her sons, she repels temporal losses or even lighter ones with litigations. With what mind we possess the things we have, we do not know unless when they are lost. For there they have trembled with fear, where there was no fear (Psal. XIII, 5). For behold, it is commanded by the divine voice: If anyone shall take thy tunic from thee, and will contend with thee in judgment, let him have thy cloak also (Matth. V, 40). And again: If anyone shall take that which is thine, do not ask it back (Luc. VI, 30). Paul the apostle also, desiring his disciples to despise external things so that they might be able to preserve internal things, admonishes, saying: Now indeed it is altogether a fault in you, that you have judgments among yourselves; why do you not rather receive injury, why do you not rather suffer fraud? (I Cor. VI, 7)? And yet the hypocrite, having assumed the habit of holy conversation, deserts the custody of his sons, and seeks to defend even with litigations whatever temporal things. He does not tremble to lose their hearts by his example, and he fears, as if through negligence, to lose earthly patrimonies. The disciple falls into error, and yet the heart of the hypocrite is wounded by no pain. He beholds those committed to him going into the abyss of iniquity, and he passes these things as if unheard; but if he has perceived some temporal loss to be lightly inflicted upon him, he is suddenly enkindled from his innermost parts into

the anger of vengeance. Soon patience is broken, soon the pain of the heart is unbridled in voices, because while he tolerates the losses of souls with equanimity, but hastens to repel the loss of temporal things even with the commotion of the spirit, he truly indicates to all by the perturbation of the mind what he loves. For there is great study of defense where there is also a weightier force of love. For the more he loves earthly things, the more vehemently he fears to be deprived of them. For with what mind we possess anything in this world, we are not taught unless when we lose it. For without pain that is lost which is possessed without love. But the things which we ardently love when had, we gravely sigh for when taken away. But who does not know that the Lord created earthly things for our uses, but created the souls of men for Himself? Therefore, he is convinced to love himself more than God, who, having neglected these things which are His, protects his own. For hypocrites do not fear to lose those things which are God's, that is, the souls of men, and they fear to lose those which are theirs, namely, things passing away with the world, as if they were to render accounts to a strict judge, as if they should find Him placated to whom, the desired things, that is, the rational ones, being lost, they preserve the insensible and unasked ones. We wish to possess something in this world, and behold Truth cries out: Unless anyone shall have renounced all things which he possesses, he cannot be my disciple (Luc. XIV, 33).

22. With what mind one should litigate, when necessity and charity constrain. Therefore, how ought a perfect Christian to defend earthly things by litigating, which he is not commanded 1007 to possess? And so when we lose our own things, if we perfectly follow God, we are lightened from a great burden in the journey of this life. But when the necessity of the same journey imposes on us the care of things, some, while they seize them, are only to be tolerated; but some, while charity is preserved, are to be prohibited, yet not with the sole care lest they should subtract ours, but lest the ones seizing not theirs should lose themselves. For we ought to fear more for those very robbers than to pant for defending irrational things. For these things, even if not seized, we lose when dying, but with those we are one both now by the order of condition, and, if they study to be corrected, after the perception of the gift. But who does not know that we ought to love less those things which we use, and more what we are? If, therefore, we speak even for their utility to the robbers, we do not now vindicate to ourselves only the things which are temporal, but to them also those which are eternal.

23. With what moderation one should litigate. In which matter this is to be skillfully looked into, lest through the fear of necessity the cupidity of things should creep in, and the prohibition enkindled by zeal, extended by the impetus of immoderation, should break forth even to the turpitude of odious contention. For while peace is severed from the heart with a neighbor for an

earthly thing, it clearly appears that the thing is loved more than the neighbor. For if we do not have the bowels of charity even towards a robber neighbor, we persecute ourselves worse than that robber, and we devastate ourselves more gravely than another could, because, spontaneously deserting the good of love, it is within us that we lose what we had lost of external things from him. But the hypocrite is ignorant of this form of charity, because loving earthly things more than heavenly ones, he enkindles himself with immense hatred in his innermost parts against him who plunders temporal things.

[Vet. XI.] 24. Who differ from hypocrites, some protecting temporal goods more sharply. With what caution they are to be reproved. It is to be known, however, that there are some whom Mother Church, nourishing them in the bosom of charity, tolerates until she may lead them to the increments of spiritual age, who sometimes both hold the habit of holiness and are not able to execute the merit of perfection. For they do not rise at all to spiritual gifts, and for that reason they serve those joined to themselves in protecting those things which are earthly, and sometimes they exceed in the irascibility of that same defense. These are by no means to be believed to incur the number of hypocrites, because it is one thing to sin from infirmity, another from malice. This, therefore, differs between these and hypocrites, that these, conscious of their infirmity, prefer to be rebuked by all for their fault than to be praised for feigned holiness; but those

are certain both that they act iniquitously and yet they swell at human judgments concerning the name of holiness. These do not fear to displease depraved men even for a good action, as long as they may please supernal judges only; but those never consider what they do, but how they may be able to please men for any action whatever. These, according to the measure of their intelligence, even in the things of the world militate for the causes of God; but those, through the causes of God, serve the intention of the world, because among those very holy works which they show themselves to perform, they do not seek the conversion 1008 of men, but the breezes of favors.

Therefore, while we behold certain men of no despised conversation defend earthly things irascibly or excessively, we ought to reprove this in them through charity, and yet not to despair of them in reproving them, because for the most part in one and the same man there are both certain judicable things which appear, and great things which lie hidden. But in us great things often go forth in the face, and sometimes those which are to be reproved are concealed. Hence, therefore, the elation of our mind is to be humbled, that both their infirm things are public and ours secret; and again their strong things are secret and ours are divulged in public. Those, therefore, whom we reprove for open infirmity, it remains that we venerate for the estimation of hidden fortitude; and if our mind elevates itself for open infirmity, considering its own hidden infirm things, let it press itself in humility. For often

many obey many precepts and pass over a certain few, and we pass over many while we preserve a few. Whence it happens for the most part that because we know how to preserve what we see others pass over, immediately our mind elevates itself in elation, forgetting how many it passes over, although the things which it preserves are very few. It is necessary, therefore, that in those things in which we reprove others, we incline the elation of our solicitous thought, because if our soul beholds itself more sublime than others, as if led into the precipices of singularity, it falls so much worse. But why the hypocrite, deserting heavenly gains, should labor for earthly ones, he adds still under the name of the ostrich, saying:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. IX].

VERSE 17. God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he given her understanding.

26. God hardens the heart, not because He confers hardness, but because, on account of the requirements of sins, He does not soften it. Although it is one thing to deprive, another not to give, nevertheless he repeated this by subjoining, He hath not given, that which he premised, He hath deprived. As if he were to say: That which I said, He hath deprived, He did not take away wisdom unjustly, but justly He did not give it. Whence also the heart of Pharaoh is described as having been hardened by the Lord, not that He Himself conferred hardness, but that, on account

of the requirements of his merits, He softened it with no sensibility of infused fear from above. But now the hypocrite (Exod. VII, 3), because he simulates himself holy, because he conceals himself under the image of a good work, is pressed by the peace of the holy Church, and therefore before our eyes he is clothed with the vision of religion. But if any temptation of faith should break out, immediately the rabid mind of the wolf despoils itself of the habit of the sheep's skin; and how much it rages against the good, it demonstrates by persecuting. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XV.

VERSE 18.---When the time shall be, she setteth up her wings on high; she scorneth the horseman and his rider.

27. The hypocrite not only derides the saints, but God Himself.---For what do we understand by the wings of this ostrich, but the thoughts of the hypocrite, pressed at this time and as it were folded up? Which when the time shall be, he raises on high? because having found an opportunity, he manifests them in his pride. To raise the wings on high is to open the thoughts through unbridled pride. But now because he simulates himself holy, because he restrains in himself what he thinks, he folds his wings as it were in his body through humility. [Vet. XII.] But it is to be noted that he does not say: He derides the horse and the rider, but the horseman and his rider. For the horse is for each holy soul its

own body, which it knows how to restrain from unlawful things by the bridle of continence, and again to relax by the impulse of charity in the exercise of a good work. By the name of horseman, therefore, the soul of the holy man is expressed, which rules the well-subjected beast of the body. Whence also the apostle John, beholding the Lord in the Apocalypse, says: And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses (Apoc. XIX, 14). For he rightly calls the multitude of the saints who had toiled in this war of martyrdom an army: who for that reason are related to sit on white horses, because forsooth their bodies shone both with the light of justice and the brightness of chastity. The hypocrite, therefore, derides the horseman, because when he himself has broken out into open iniquity, he despises the holiness of the elect, and in his pride calls those fools whom, when pressed by the peace of faith, he used to simulate with cunning art. But who else is the rider of this horseman, but Almighty God, Who both created those things which were not by His foresight, and rules those things which are by His possession? For He ascends the horseman, because He possesses the mind of every just man, who possesses well his own members. To this hypocrite, therefore, to deride the horseman is to despise the saints; but to deride the rider of the horseman is to leap forward even to the injury of the Creator.

28. In falls one always begins from the smallest things, and through increasing defects reaches more serious ones. The Church tolerates

many hidden bad men. Why the bad are mixed with the good in the Church. By the name of the rhinoceros or unicorn the Jewish people is to be understood. By what art the rhinoceros is mitigated.---For because in every fall one always begins from the smallest things, and through increasing defects reaches more serious ones, rightly the iniquity of this hypocrite is distinguished by supposed losses, so that it is said that he first shows himself to be good when he is not, afterwards openly despises the good, and at the last leaps out even to the injury of the Creator. For the soul never lies there where it has fallen, because having once fallen voluntarily, it is impelled to worse things by the weight of its own iniquity, so that falling into the deep, it is always still more deeply overwhelmed. Let the hypocrite go, then, and now seek his own praises; afterwards let him oppress the life of his neighbors, and at some time exercise himself in the derision of his Creator, that the more lofty things he always devises, the more atrocious punishments he may plunge himself into. Oh, how many such the holy Church now tolerates, whom when the time breaks out, open temptation manifests. Who, because they do not now exercise their wills against her, keep pressed down for the time as it were the folded wings of their thoughts. For because this life is led in common by the good and the bad, now the Church is visibly gathered from the number of both, but is discerned by God judging invisibly, and at its departure is separated from the society of the reprobate. But now

neither can the good be in her without the bad, nor the bad without the good. For at this time each part joined together necessarily agrees with the other, so that both the bad may be changed by the examples of the good, and the good may be purged by the temptations of the bad. And therefore the Lord, after He brought in many things concerning the reprobation of hypocrites under the species of the ostrich, soon turned His words to the lot of the elect, so that they who had heard in those that they tolerate them as they flee, may hear in these that they love them as they imitate. It follows [Rec. X]. Wilt thou give strength to the horse, or wilt thou clothe his neck with neighing?

29. But perhaps before we discuss the strength and neighing of this horse, it is asked by some that even setting aside morality, the virtue of the rhinoceros and the fatuity of this ostrich might be explained in another way. For the word of God is manna, and whatever the will of the receiver rightly desires, this surely tastes in the mouth of the eater. (Exod. XVI). The word of God is earth, which the more the labor of the inquirer demands, the more largely it returns fruit. The understanding of the sacred eloquence ought, therefore, to be fanned by manifold inquiry, because even the earth, which is more often turned by plowing, is better adapted for fruit. What therefore we feel otherwise concerning the rhinoceros and the ostrich, we touch upon briefly, because we hasten to unfold those things which are more obligatory. [Vet. XIII.] This rhinoceros, which is also called monoceros in Greek copies,

is said to be of such great strength that it is captured by no virtue of hunters; but as they assert, who have toiled with laborious investigation in describing the natures of animals, a virgin girl is proposed to him, who opens her bosom to him coming to her, in which he, having set aside all ferocity, lays down his head, and thus by those by whom it is sought to be captured, is suddenly found as it were unarmed [Al., nerveless]. It is also described as being of a boxwood color, which also when it enters into conflict with elephants, is reported to strike the belly of its adversaries with that horn which it carries singularly on its nose, so that when it wounds those parts which are softer, it easily overthrows those who attack it. Therefore, by this rhinoceros, or surely monoceros, that is, the unicorn, that people can be understood who, while from the law received they took not works, but only elation among all men, carried as it were a singular horn among the other beasts. Whence the Lord, pronouncing His passion through the singing of the Prophet, says: Save me from the lion's mouth, and my humility from the horns of the unicorns (Psal. XXI, 22). For so many unicorns, or surely rhinoceroses, existed in that nation, because they trusted with a singular and fatuous elation against the predicaments of truth concerning the works of the law. To the Blessed Job, therefore, who holds the type of the holy Church, it is said:

CHAPTER XVI.

CHAP. XXXIX, VERSE 9.---Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee?

30. Fierce among the Jews, Saul tamed by Christ.---As if it were more plainly said: Dost thou incline under the law of thy preaching that people, whom thou considerest to be proud in the slaughter of the faithful by their foolish elation? it is understood, as I, who behold him also to be extolled against Me with a singular horn, and yet I subject him to Me immediately when I will. But this we show better if we pass from the genus to the species. Let Paul, therefore, from this people, both first in pride and afterwards a chief witness in humility, be brought forward to the midst, who while he raised himself up ignorantly against God as if from the keeping of the law, carried a horn on his nose. Whence also, afterwards inclining this very horn of the nose through humility, he says: Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly (I Tim. I, 13). He carried a horn on his nose, who trusted that he would please God by his cruelty, as he himself says afterwards, reproving himself: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers (Galat. I, 14). But every hunter feared the strength of this rhinoceros, because every preacher dreaded the fierceness of Saul. For it is written: Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the syna-

gogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem (Act. IX, 1). When the breath to be returned through the nose is drawn in, it is called breathing, and we often detect that by the smell of the nose which we do not see with our eyes. This rhinoceros, therefore, carried a horn on his nose wherewith to strike, because breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, after he had killed those present, he sought those absent. But behold, every hunter is hidden before him, that is, every man of wise reason is put to flight by the reputation of his fear. In order therefore to catch this rhinoceros, let the virgin, that is, the Wisdom of God, itself inviolate in the flesh, expand its bosom, that is, its secret. For it is written that as he journeyed to Damascus, suddenly there shined round about him at midday a light from heaven, and there was a voice saying: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Who postrate on the ground answered: Who art thou, Lord? To whom it is immediately said: I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest (Act. IX, 4, 5, seq.). Doubtless the virgin opened her bosom to the rhinoceros, when the incorrupt Wisdom of God disclosed the mystery of His incarnation by speaking from heaven; and the rhinoceros lost his strength, because prostrate on the ground, he lost everything that used to swell with pride. Who, while the light of his eyes being taken away, is led by the hand to Ananias, it is now evident by what thongs of God this rhinoceros is bound, because forsooth at one time he

is bound by blindness, preaching, and baptism. Who also stayed at the manger of God, because he did not disdain to ruminate on the words of the Gospel. For he says: I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel (Galat. II, 1, 2). And he who before, while fasting, had heard: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks (Act. IX, 9, 5): being afterwards pressed by the wonderful virtue of Him Who presides, obtained strength from the food of the word, and lost the heel of pride.

31. This rhinoceros bound for plowing the Lord's field.---By the thongs of God he is not only restrained from fierceness, but, what is more wonderful, he is bound for plowing, so that he not only does not attack men with the horn of cruelty, but serving also for their refreshment, he draws the plow of preaching. For he himself says of those who evangelize as of those who plow: For he that ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope (I Cor. IX, 10). He, therefore, who before had inflicted torments on the faithful, and afterwards willingly bears scourges for the faith, who even in written epistles preaches humble and despised that which not long before he attacked terrible; surely well bound under the plow he toils for the harvest, who lived in the field badly free from fear. Of whom it is rightly said:

CHAPTER XVII

[Vet. XIV].

VERSE 10.---Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee?

32. He broke the clods, that is, the hardness of minds.---Already forsooth the Lord had entered the minds of some, who believed Him truly to be the Redeemer of the human race. Who nevertheless, since they by no means withdrew from their former observation, since they kept the hard predicaments of the letter, to them the eminent preacher says: If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing (Gal. V, 2). He therefore who, by reproving, bruised the hardness of the law in the humble mind of the faithful, what else did he but break the clods in the valley after the Lord? lest forsooth the grains of the seeds which the furrow of the heart cut out by the plow of faith should receive, might perish being pressed by the keeping of the letter. Of which it is well subjoined as yet:

CHAPTER XVIII.

VERSE 11. Wilt thou have confidence in his great strength, and wilt thou leave thy labors to him?

33. What confidence God had in his strength.---In the strength of this rhinoceros God had confidence, because the more cruelly He bore with him as he inflicted hard things upon Him, the more He foreknew him as one who would constantly tolerate adversities for Him. To whom He also left the labors which He Himself had endured in the flesh, because He drew him when converted even to the imitation of His

own passion. Whence also it is said by the same rhinoceros: I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh (Coloss. I, 24). Of which it is still subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERSE 12.---Wilt thou believe him, that he will return thy seed to thee, and gather into thy barn?

34. He first winnowed the threshing-floor of God, afterwards he gathered it.---Let us consider who Saul was, when from his very youth he was an assistant of those who stoned, when he laid waste other places of the Church, and having received letters sought others to be laid waste, when no death of the faithful was sufficient for him, but he always panted for the destruction of others after others had been extinguished (Act. VII); and surely we know that none of the faithful then believed that God would incline the power of such great elation to the yoke of His fear. Whence also Ananias, when he heard that he was converted by the voice of the Lord, was afraid, saying: Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem (Act. IX, 13). Who nevertheless, being suddenly changed, is made a preacher from an enemy, and in all parts of the world he insinuates the name of his Redeemer, he tolerates punishments for the truth, he exults that he suffers what he had inflicted; he calls some by flatteries, he recalls others to the faith by terrors. To these he promises the kingdom of the heavenly country, to

those he threatens the fire of Gehenna. These he corrects through authority, those he draws to the way of rectitude through humility, and on every side he inclines himself to the hand of his ruler, and with as much skill he gathers the threshing-floor of God, as with so much elation he before winnowed it.

[Vet. XV] 35. Paul, chastising his body with abstinence, strikes those given to the belly.--- But neither does this disagree with Paul, that the rhinoceros is said to be of a boxwood color, and is reported to strike the bellies of elephants with its horn. For because he was accustomed to live under the rigor of the law, the keeping of every virtue took root in him more closely than in others. For what is expressed by the boxwood color, but the paleness of abstinence? To which he himself testifies that he tenaciously adheres, saying: I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (I Cor. IX, 27). Who, being endowed with the learning of the divine law, while he reproves the gluttony of others, strikes the elephants in the belly with his horn. For he had struck the elephants in the belly, when he said: For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame (Philip. III, 18). And again: For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly (Rom. XVI, 18). Therefore by his horn this rhinoceros strikes not

now men, but beasts, when Paul by that strength of his doctrine by no means attacks the humble who are not to be destroyed, but slays the proud worshippers of the belly. What therefore we have known written in Paul, it remains that we should believe done also in others. For many were converted to the grace of humility from the elation of that people, whose fierceness the Lord while He tamed it under the yoke of inspired fear, doubtless He subjected the strength of the rhinoceros to Himself. But because we have heard what the wonderful power of God has done concerning the elect, now let us hear what His wonderful patience has tolerated in those whom He reprobates:

CHAPTER XX.

VERSE 13.---The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron and the hawk.

36. The Synagogue like the ostrich, having wings creeps on the ground.---What is signified by the name of the ostrich, but the synagogue? which had the wings of the Law, but creeping with its heart in the lowest things, never raised itself from the earth. But what are expressed by the heron and the hawk, but the ancient fathers, who to those things which they were able to perceive by understanding, were able also to fly by living? The wing therefore of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron and the hawk, because the voice of the Synagogue held the doctrine of the former by speaking, but knew it not by living. Whence also the Truth admonishes the peoples

of the same Synagogue concerning the Pharisees and Scribes, saying: The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works (Matth. XXIII, 2). But we might have said many things concerning the life of the heron; but because its wing only is brought to memory, we are forbidden to speak of its life.

CHAPTER XXI

[Vet. XVI].

VERSE 14.--- When she leaveth her eggs in the earth, wilt thou perhaps warm them in the dust?

37. She left the apostles whom she begat, who were afterwards quickened by the grace of Christ.---In eggs one thing is seen, another is hoped for; and hope cannot be seen, Paul testifying, who says: For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (Rom. VIII, 24). What therefore are designated by the eggs of the ostrich but the apostles born of the flesh of the Synagogue, who while they show themselves despised and humble in the world, teach to hope for glory on high? For being cast off and held as of no account among the proud, they lay in the earth like eggs; but within them was hidden that from which they might live, and being raised by the wings of hope, they might fly to heavenly things. Which eggs the ostrich leaves in the earth, because the Synagogue, contemning to hear the apostles whom she had begotten in the flesh, abandoned them to the calling of the Gentiles. But with

wonderful power the Lord warms these same eggs in the dust, because He raised the living offspring of the apostles in that Gentile world just now cast off; and those whom the Synagogue had despised as witless and unquickened, they themselves now fly living in the veneration of the nations through the mastery of doctrine. The ostrich leaves her eggs in the dust, because she by no means suspended from earthly desires all whom the Synagogue begat by preaching. Which desires, because the ancient enemy finds them conceived in the heart, he snatches away the obsessed minds even into crimes. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSE 15.---She forgetteth that the foot may crush them, and that the beast of the field may break them.

38. Human hearts, while they think and desire earthly things, prostrate themselves to be crushed by the devil.---Then the foot treads on the eggs, and the beast of the field breaks them, when they are abandoned in the earth, because forsooth human hearts, while they desire always to think of earthly things, and always to do what is lowest, prostrate themselves to be crushed by the beast of the field, that is, the devil. so that when they have been cast off for a long time in the lowest thought, they may at some time even be broken by the perpetration of greater crimes. The Synagogue, therefore, neglected to suspend from the earth, by living well, the eggs which she be-

gat. But Almighty God, although He found many of her children dead and cold in earthly desires, nevertheless quickened them with the warmth of His love. But the life which the Synagogue did not give to her children, she afterwards envied them, while she endeavored by persecuting to extinguish those whom she did not remember she had begotten by fostering them for good works. Whence also it is aptly subjoined concerning this ostrich:

VERSE 16.---She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers.

39. Cruelty of the Synagogue towards her children.---She despises as though not hers those whom she finds living otherwise than she taught, and with hardening cruelty she brings terrors upon them, and exercises herself in their torments, and inflamed with the torches of envy, she labors that those in whom she did not labor that they might live, should perish; and when she persecutes the members of the Lord, she suspects that she pleases the Lord by this. Whence also the Truth says to the same eggs of the ostrich: Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service (John XVI, 2). Because, therefore, while the Synagogue is driven by cruelty to persecute, she thinks she does this by the impulse of divine fear, it is rightly subjoined:

IBID.---She hath labored in vain, no fear compelling her.

40. Thus raging, she believes she does God service.---For in the labor of panted-after persecu-

tion, it was not fear, but cruelty, that compelled her. But because for the most part vices, tinged with the color of virtues, are so much the more wicked as they are the less known to be vices, therefore in persecution the Synagogue was the more hardened, the more religious she estimated herself to become by the deaths of the faithful; and for that reason she could by no means discern what she was doing, because she closed the light of understanding for herself by the obstacle of pride. Whence also it is well subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Vet. XVII].

VERSE 18.---When the time shall be, she setteth up her wings on high; she scorneth the horseman and his rider.

42. The Synagogue first secretly against God, afterwards openly erect.---The ostrich sets up its wings on high, when the Synagogue contradicts its Creator, not as before by fearing, but now by openly repugning. For passing into the members of the devil, and believing the man of a lie to be God, she is so much the more extolled on high against the faithful, as she glories that she is the body of God. Who, because she despises not only the humanity of the Lord, but also His very divinity, derides not only the horseman, but also the rider of the horseman. For while the unity of the person is preserved, it can be understood that the Word of God then ascended the horseman when He created for Himself the animate flesh

within the womb of the Virgin. He then ascended the horseman, when by creating Himself He subjected to divine worship the human soul presiding over its own flesh. For the divinity received the flesh through the medium of the soul, and through this it held the whole horseman at once, because in itself it restrained not only that which was ruled, but also that which ruled. Judea, therefore, caught in the snare of seduction by the coming of the proud Antichrist, because she despises that our Redeemer was humble among men, derides the horseman; but because she contradicts His divinity in all things, she nevertheless derides the rider also. But our Redeemer is one and the same both the horseman and the rider of the horseman; and when He came into the world, He exhibited strong preachers against the world; and when at the end of the world He tolerates the fallacy of Antichrist, He supplies strength to those who strive for Him; so that when the ancient enemy is loosed in that his liberty which is soon to be finished, our faithful may receive so much greater strength, as they fight against a loosed adversary. Whence here, when the ostrich is described as raising its wings, and deriding the rider and the horseman, immediately the memory of strong preachers is substituted, and it is said:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Vet XVIII].

VERSE 19.---Wilt thou give the horse strength, or wilt thou encompass his neck with neighing?

43. Many things are signified by the name of a horse in sacred Scripture: the slippery; temporal dignity; the present world, whose extremities the serpent Antichrist presses. Preparation of right intention; holy preachers.---In sacred Scripture, by the name of a horse is sometimes expressed the slippery life of the wicked, sometimes temporal dignity, sometimes this very present world, sometimes the preparation of right intention, sometimes a holy preacher.

For by the name of a horse is signified the slippery life of the wicked, as it is written: Be not as the horse and the mule (Psal. XXXII, 9). And as is said by another prophet: They were made amorous horses and stallions; every one neighed after his neighbor's wife (Jerem. V, 8).

By the name of a horse is understood temporal dignity, Solomon attesting, who says: I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth (Eccles. X, 7). For every one who sins is the servant of sin, and servants are upon horses when the sinners of the present life are lifted up by dignities. But princes walk as servants when no honor raises many who are full of the dignity of virtues, but extreme adversity here presses them down as if unworthy. Hence again it is said: They have slumbered who ascended horses (Psal. LXXVI, 6); that is, they closed the eyes of their mind from the light of truth in the death of the soul, who trusted in the honor of the present life.

By the name of a horse this very present world is designated, as is said by the voice of Jacob: Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a cerastes in the path, biting the horse's heels, that his rider may fall backward (Gen. XLIX, 17). In which testimony we better show what the horse signifies, if we also explain those things which surround it a little more subtly. For some say that Antichrist is to come from the tribe of Dan, because in this place Dan is asserted to be both a serpent and biting. Whence also not undeservedly, while the Israelitish people received lands in the partition of the camps, Dan first encamped to the North (Num. II, 25); signifying him, forsooth, who had said in his heart: I will sit in the mountain of the testament, in the sides of the North; I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High (Isai. XIV, 13). Of whom also it is said by the prophet: From Dan was heard the snorting of his horses (Jerem. VIII, 16). Who is called not only a serpent, but also a cerastes. For Kerata in Greek are called horns in Latin, and this serpent is said to be horned, through whom the coming of Antichrist is worthily asserted, because he is armed against the life of the faithful with the bite of pestiferous preaching, and also with the horns of power. But who does not know that a path is narrower than a way? Dan, therefore, becomes a serpent in the way, because in the breadth of the present life he provokes those to walk whom he flatters as if by sparing; but he bites in the way, because those to whom he gives liberty, he consumes with the poison of his error. He becomes

a cerastes in the path, because those whom he finds faithful, and constricting themselves to the narrow journeys of the heavenly precept, he not only attacks with the wickedness of crafty persuasion, but also presses with the terror of power, and in the anguish of persecution, after the benefits of feigned sweetness, he exercises the horns of power. In which place the horse insinuates this world, which through its elation foams in the course of gliding times. And because Antichrist strives to apprehend the extremities of the world, this cerastes is said to bite the horse's heels. For to bite the horse's heels is to reach the extremities of the world by striking. That his rider may fall backward (Gen. XLIX, 17). The rider of the horse is whosoever is extolled in the dignities of the world. Who is said to fall backward, and not on his face, as Saul is remembered to have fallen (Acts IX, 4). For to fall on the face is for each one to acknowledge his faults in this life, and to bewail them by repenting. But to fall backward, where it is not seen, is to depart suddenly from this life, and to be ignorant to what punishments he is led. And because Judea, caught in the snares of her error, expects Antichrist instead of Christ, well was Jacob in the same place suddenly converted in the voice of the elect, saying: I will wait for thy salvation, O Lord (Gen. XLIX, 18); that is, not as the infidels expect Antichrist, but Him who is to come for our redemption, I faithfully believe to be the true Christ.

By the name of a horse is accepted the preparation of right intention, as it is written: The

horse is prepared against the day of battle, but the Lord giveth safety (Prov. XXI, 31), because the mind indeed prepares itself against temptation, but unless it be helped, it does not fight healthfully.

By the name of a horse every holy preacher is accepted, the prophet attesting, who says: Thou didst send thy horses into the sea, troubling many waters (Habac. III, 15). For the waters lay quiet, because human minds were long lulled in the torpor of their vices. But by the horses of God the sea was troubled, because holy preachers being sent, every heart that was torpid with pestiferous security, was terrified by the impulse of salutary fear. In this place, therefore, by the name of a horse is accepted a holy preacher, when it is said to blessed Job: [Vet. XIX, Rec. XI.] Wilt thou give the horse strength, or wilt thou encompass his neck with neighing?

44. Let a preacher like a horse have strength from God, that he may act rightly; and neighing, that he may teach excellently.---But why is it that the Lord asserts that He first gives strength to this horse, and afterwards encompasses his neck with neighing? For by neighing the voice of preaching is expressed. But every true preacher receives strength before, and afterwards neighing, because when he has first extinguished vices in himself, then he comes to the voice of preaching for the instruction of others. This horse has strength, because he constantly endures adversities. He has neighing, because he flatteringly calls to heavenly things. To this horse the Lord

testifies that He gives both strength and neighing, because unless both life and word agree in His preacher, the virtue of perfection will by no means appear. For it profits not much if he be supported by the operation of a sublime life, if yet by speaking he is not able to excite others to that which he feels. Or what does it profit to inflame others by speaking well, if he indicates that he himself has been torpid by living ill? Because, therefore, it is necessary that both should meet in a preacher for perfection, the Lord ministers to His horse both the neighing of the voice with the strength of action, and the strength of action with the neighing of the voice. And it is to be noted why neighing, which is doubtless drawn internally through the throat, is said to be encompassed around the horse's neck, that is, as it were, to be drawn around externally in a circle, because, namely, the voice of preaching emanates from internal things, but encompasses without. For in that he rouses others to living well, therein he also binds the works of the preacher to acting well, lest action should pass outside the sermon, lest life should contradict the voice. With the neck of the horse, therefore, neighing is encompassed, because the life of the preacher is besieged by his own words, lest he should go forth to perverse works. For hence it is that to those fighting powerfully a collar is given as a gift, so that because they bear the signs of virtues, they may always exercise greater things, and fear to incur the crime of weakness, while there is already in themselves the reward of

strength which they show. Whence rightly in the praise of wisdom it is said to any hearer through Solomon: Thou shalt receive a crown of graces for thy head, and a golden collar for thy neck (Prov. I, 9). It follows:

CHAPTER XXV

[Rec. XII].

VERSE 20.---Wilt thou raise him as locusts?

45. What ought to be understood by locusts. The Jewish people. They gave certain leaps, and immediately fell to the earth.---By the name of locusts is sometimes signified the Jewish people, sometimes the converted Gentiles, sometimes the tongue of flatterers, but sometimes by comparison the Lord's resurrection, or the life of preachers.

For that locusts express the people of the Jews, the life of John signifies, of whom it is written: He ate locusts and wild honey (Matth. III, 4). For John, whom he announces with the authority of prophecy, he also cries out with the appearance of food. For in himself he designated the Lord, whom he preceded. Who, namely, coming for our redemption, because He took the sweetness of the unfruitful Gentiles, ate wild honey. But because He converted the Jewish people in His body in part, He received locusts in food. For locusts signify them giving sudden leaps, but straightway falling to the earth. For they gave leaps when they promised that they would fulfill the commands of the Lord; but they fell more

quickly to the earth, when by perverse works they denied that they had heard these things. Let us see in them, as it were, a certain leap of locusts: All the words which the Lord hath spoken, we will both do and hear (Exod. XXIV, 3). But let us see how more quickly they rush to the earth: Would that we had died in Egypt, and not in this vast solitude. Would that we might perish, and that the Lord might not lead us into that land (Num. XIV, 2, 3). Locusts, therefore, they were, because they had a leap by the voice, and a fall by action.

[Vet. XX.] 46. Gentiles signified by locusts, and the tongue of flatterers which devastate the fruits of good works.---By the name of locusts is also designated the Gentiles, Solomon attesting, who says: The almond tree shall flourish, the locust shall be made fat, the caper-berry shall be scattered (Eccles. XII, 5). For the almond tree shows its flower before all trees. And what is designated in the flower of the almond tree but the beginnings of the holy Church? which in its preachers opened the primitive flowers of virtues, and as to the bringing in of the fruits of good works, preceded the coming saints as following groves. In which soon the locust was made fat, because the dry sterility of the Gentiles was infused with the fatness of heavenly grace. The caper-berry is scattered, because when the called Gentiles reached the grace of faith, Judea, remaining in its sterility, lost the order of living well. Hence again it is said by the same Solomon: The locust hath no king, and all goeth forth by their troops (Prov. XXX, 27), because namely the abandoned Gen-

tiles were formerly alien to divine government, but yet being ordered afterwards against opposing spirits, they proceeded to the war of faith.

47. By the word of locust the tongue of a flatterer is expressed: which the Egyptian plagues exhibited from heaven testify, which were once brought on corporally as merits required; but what evils strike perverse minds daily, they signified spiritually. For it is written: A burning wind lifted up the locusts, which ascended over the whole land of Egypt, and covered the whole face of the land, wasting all things. Therefore the grass of the earth was devoured, and whatever of fruits was on the trees (Exod. X, 13, 15). For Egypt was affected by these plagues, in which, being moved and grieving by the exterior stroke, it should consider what losses of devastation it tolerated interiorly while neglecting, so that while it saw the least things perish without, but more loved, it might feel by their appearance the weightier things it had endured within. But what do locusts portend by signification, which more than other least animals hurt human fruits, but the tongues of flatterers, which corrupt the minds of earthly men, if ever they see them bring forth any good things, by praising these things too immoderately? For the fruit of the Egyptians is the operation of the vainglorious; which locusts exterminate, while flattering tongues incline the heart of the worker to seek transitory praises. For the locusts eat the grass, when any flatterers extol the words of speakers with favors. They also devour the fruits of trees, when with

vain praises they enervate even the works of some now as if strong.

48. Locust also signifies the resurrection of Christ, and the preachers, who now leap to the contemplative life, now leap back.---By the name of locust the resurrection of our Redeemer is designated by comparison. [Vet. XXI.] Whence also it is said by His voice through the Prophet: I am shaken off as a locust (Psal. CIX, 23). For He endured that He should be held by persecutors even unto death; but He was shaken off as a locust, because He flew away from their hands by the leap of a sudden resurrection.

49. Which can also be referred to the number of preachers. For in them He was shaken off as a locust, because while the Jews were raging in their persecution, while they fled through different places, they gave, as it were, certain leaps of their recession. But because that preacher is raised to the summit of perfection, who is solidified not only by the active, but also by the contemplative life, rightly the very perfection of preachers is expressed by locusts, which as often as they try to raise themselves into the air, first propelling themselves with their legs they lift themselves up, and afterwards they fly with wings. So namely are holy men, who while they seek heavenly things, first indeed rest upon the good works of the active life, and then at length they suspend themselves to sublime things by the leap of contemplation. They fix their legs, and exert their wings, because by acting rightly they establish themselves, and by living they are

raised to high things. Who, being placed in this life, cannot remain long in divine contemplation, but, after the manner of locusts, they receive themselves on their feet from the leap which they had given, while after the sublimities of contemplations they return to the necessary works of the active life, yet they are not content to remain in the same active life. But while they leap out desirously to contemplation, they seek the air as if flying again; and they lead their life as if locusts ascending and descending, while without cessation they always both strive to see the highest things, and are revolved to themselves by the weight of corruptible nature.

50. In the peace of the Church humble, in persecution strong and erect.---There is yet another thing which locusts bear similar to holy preachers. For in the morning hours, that is, in the time of coolness, they hardly lift themselves from the earth; but when the heat has grown hot, they fly so much higher as they fly more alacrously. But every holy preacher while he sees the quiet times of faith, is seen humble and despised, and like a locust is hardly lifted from the earth. But if the heat of persecution grows hot, adhering to heavenly things with his heart, he soon shows of how great sublimity he is; and being beaten with wings he is snatched on high, who when quiet seemed to have been torpid in the lowest things. Of this horse, therefore, that is, of His preacher, the Lord says to blessed Job: Wilt thou raise him as locusts? Understand as I, who lift him up by exciting him to higher things, the more I permit

him to be tortured by the heavier heat of persecution, so that then a more robust virtue may awake in him, when a more burning cruelty of infidels dashes itself against him.

But when the holy preacher suffers many things externally, when he is tortured by the dire vexation of persecutors, who can behold what it is that he perceives within, who does not feel so many of his losses externally? For unless there were wonderful things which fed him healthfully within, those torments which are moved externally would doubtless reach even to the heart. But the mind raises itself in the citadel of hope, and therefore fears very little the darts of the opposed siege. Whence also in this place the Lord, that He may show how sweet things this horse already scents from internal things, when he suffers so many adversities in exterior things, rightly subjoins:

CHAPTER XXVI.

IBID.---The glory of his nostrils is terror.

51. When they suffer so many things externally, they scent wonderful things internally concerning eternal blessedness. In Holy Scripture, by the word "nostrils," sometimes folly, sometimes the instigation of the ancient enemy, but sometimes prescience, is wont to be understood. For by the nostrils folly is designated, as we have already shown above on the testimony of Solomon, who says: As a golden ring in the nostrils of a beautiful and foolish woman (Prov. 11:22). By the name of nostrils are understood the exhaling

snares and instigation of the ancient enemy, because the Lord testifies concerning him in this same book, saying: Out of his nostrils proceedeth smoke (Job 41:11). As if He should say: From his perverse instigation there arises in human hearts the darkness of most wicked thought, through which the eyes of those who see are darkened. By the nostrils also prescience is designated, as is said by the prophet: Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, because he himself is reputed on high (Isai. 2:22). For often that which we do not see we comprehend by scent, so that some things, even when they lie far off, become known to us by the fragrance of their quality; and while we draw breath through the nostrils, we frequently foreknow some things even unseen. The Spirit of our Redeemer, therefore, is said to be in His nostrils, that His knowledge, forsooth, may be designated to be in prescience; because whatever He made known that He knew in the nature of humanity, this doubtless He foreknew before the worlds from His divinity. And whence He had the spirit in His nostrils, He soon subjoined by the prophet, saying: Because he himself is reputed on high (Isai. 2:22). As if He were saying: In lower things He foreknew from above things to come, because He came to the lowest from heavenly things. Holy men also, because they have believed the things heard from Him, themselves also already foreknow things to come; and while they faithfully serve His precepts, they await His coming with certain hope. Whence also in this place, by the nostrils of this horse, the prescience

and expectation of the holy preacher are designated. For while he desires the last judgment to come, the heavenly country to be shown, and the rewards to be paid to the just, he draws, as it were through the nostrils, breath concerning future things.

52. Whence the just man glories, the sinner is terrified.---But "the glory of his nostrils is terror," because the vision of the strict Judge, which the just man vehemently expects, the unjust man fears to come. For the former, considering his labors, seeks the reward of retribution; and knowing the merit of his cause, expects the presence of the Judge, and desires with the greatest ardor that He should come in a flame of fire, giving vengeance to the impious, and bestowing the appearance of His contemplation for a retribution to the pious. But the latter, who remembers his injustice, greatly dreads to come into judgment, and fears that his acts should be examined, because he knows that if they are examined, he will be damned. The glory of his nostrils, therefore, is terror, because the just man glories therein, whence the sinner is condemned. Let us see how the horse already draws breath through his nostrils concerning those things which he does not yet see; let us see with what great glory he is raised up when he already awaits things to come. Behold, looking upon his labors, the eminent preacher says: I am already being offered, and the time of my resolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there

is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to me in that day (2 Tim. 4:6, 7, 8). Where also he aptly subjoins: And not only to me, but also to those who love his coming (Ibid., 8). As if he should say: But also to all who are conscious to themselves of good operation. For they do not love the coming of the Judge, except those who know that in their cause they have the merit of justice. Because, therefore, whence the just man glories, thence the unjust man is terrified, let it be rightly said: The glory of his nostrils is terror. But let us hear what this holy preacher does, while he awaits future glory, while he strives to come before the face of the Judge, and while he is still deferred from the reward of his labor, being placed meanwhile in this life. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVII.

VERSE 21.---He paweth the earth with his hoof.

53. The office of the preacher is, to dig out earthly thoughts in his hearers and in himself. The strength of labor is wont to be known in the hoof of the horse. What, then, is designated by the hoof, but the perfection of virtues in the holy preacher? With which hoof, forsooth, he paweth the earth, when he ejects earthly thoughts from the heart of his hearers by the example of his own works. He paweth the earth with his hoof, because he empties the hearts of his hearers from secular cares, when the good teacher shows by his work that the world is to be contemned. Let

us see how Paul paweth the earth of the heart of his hearers with the hoof of his shown virtue. For he says to his disciples: Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you (Philip. 4:8, 9, 10). And again: Be ye followers of me, brethren, even as I also am of Christ (Ibid. 3:17). He, therefore, who corrects others by the example of his own work, doubtless paweth the earth with his hoof. We have another thing which we may treat of even more subtly concerning the digging of this hoof. For holy men, although they wakefully keep the eye of the mind intent upon things above, and although they tread with the foot of rigid contempt upon all things which flow by below; yet, from the corruption of the earthly flesh, to which they are still bound, they frequently suffer the dust of thoughts in their heart. And while they persuade others without to desire heavenly things, they always discuss themselves within by subtle inquisition, lest they should be polluted by any lowest thought dwelling long in them. The horse, therefore, paweth the earth with his hoof when every preacher discusses earthly thoughts in himself by strong inquisition. The horse paweth the earth with his hoof when he over whom the Lord already presides considers what mass is heaped up for him from ancient thought, and does not cease to empty himself from it by weeping. Whence Isaac is well described as having digged wells among a foreign nation (Gen. 26). By which example, forsooth, we learn that, being

placed in this distress of pilgrimage, we should penetrate the depths of our thoughts; and until the water of true understanding answers to us, the hand of our inquisition should by no means grow torpid from exhausting the earth of the heart. Which wells, however, the Philistines (allophyli) lying in wait fill up, because, doubtless, unclean spirits, when they see us studiously digging the heart, cast upon us heaped-up thoughts of temptations. Whence the mind is always to be emptied, and incessantly to be digged: lest if it be left undiscussed, the earth of thoughts be piled up over us, even to the swelling of perverse works. Hence it is said to Ezekiel: Son of man, dig the wall (Ezek. 8:8); that is, break the hardness of the heart by frequent blows of searches. Hence the Lord says to Isaiah: Enter into the rock, hide thee in the digged ground, from the face of the fear of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty (Isai. 2:10). We enter, indeed, into the rock, when we penetrate the hardness of our heart; and we are hidden in the digged ground from the face of the fear of the Lord, if, casting out earthly thoughts, we are concealed in the humility of our mind from the wrath of the strict Judge. For by how much more the earth is cast out by digging, by so much the pavement is always shown lower. Whence also we, if we more studiously eject earthly thoughts from us, find a lowlier place where we may be hidden within ourselves.

54. Concerning the imminent day of judgment, the opinion of St. Gregory. For behold, because the day of divine judgment is imminent,

as it were already the very face of His fear appears; and by so much the more is it necessary that each one should fear it more terribly, as the glory of His majesty already approaches. What, then, is to be done, or whither is one to flee? For whither can any one lie hid from Him who is everywhere? But behold, we are commanded to enter into the rock, to be hidden in the digged ground, that, forsooth, breaking the hardness of our heart, we may decline invisible wrath by that much as we are withdrawn from the love of visible things within ourselves in the heart, so that when the earth of perverse thought is cast out, the mind may be hidden within itself by so much more safely as it is also more humbly (Deut. 23:12). Hence it is commanded to the Israelitish people by the Lord through Moses, that when he goes out to the requirements of nature, he should put a paddle in his belt, and hide in the digged ground those things which have been cast out. For being weighed down by the weight of corruptible nature, certain superfluities of thoughts, as it were burdens of the belly, break forth from the womb of our mind. But we ought to carry a paddle under the belt, that, forsooth, being always girt for the purpose of reproving ourselves, we may have the sharp sting of compunction about us, which may incessantly dig the earth of our mind with the pain of penance, and hide this which breaks forth fetid from us. For the ejection of the belly is covered in the digged ground by the paddle, when the superfluity of our mind, discussed by subtle redargution, is hidden before the eyes of God,

through the sting of its own compunction. Because, therefore, holy men do not cease to reprove and judge whatever useless things they think, let the Lord say concerning His horse: He paweth the earth with his hoof, that is, whatever earthly thing he perceives to be turned in his mind, this doubtless he breaks with the hard strokes of superadded penance. But when they judge themselves within with strict subtlety, there is now nothing which they should greatly fear without. For by so much the less do they tremble at present evils, as they more fully prepare themselves for future goods. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IBID.---He rejoiceth boldly, he goeth on to meet the armed men.

55. Adverse things do not cast down a holy man, nor do prosperous things corrupt him. The rejoicing of the Apostles amidst scourgings, especially of Paul. Heretics court the patronage of secular powers. It is a part of unbroken virtue to despise earthly things. "He rejoiceth boldly," because he is so not broken by adverse things, as he is also not lifted up by prosperous things. For adverse things do not cast down him whom no prosperous things corrupt. This horse, therefore, is both strong and under the bridle. Lest, therefore, he should be pressed down by adverse things, he has the force of fortitude; lest he should be lifted up by prosperous things, he has the weight of Him who sits above. Times, indeed, run on, but they are not able to draw the just

man for this reason, that they cannot lift him up. For they doubtless draw those whom they lift up; and being angry, they cast down those whom they sustain when fawning. But a man well subjected to God knows how to stand among passing things, knows how to fix the step of the mind among the lapses of running times, knows neither to raise himself up to things subjected to him, nor to tremble at things opposed. But for the most part, because he knows that he is more usefully exercised by the labors of his own contrition, he is cheerful in adverse things, which while he constantly suffers for the truth, he rejoices that the merit of his virtue is increased. Hence it is that we read that the Apostles then rejoiced, when it happened that they tolerated scourgings for Christ, as it is written: They went rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41). Hence Paul, when he had been pressed by hard persecutions in Macedonia, in that wherein he insinuates that he was afflicted, shows also that he was gladdened, saying: For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest (2 Cor. 7:5). As if he should say openly, that the spirit had rest while the flesh tolerated the punishments of persecutions through the profit of the soul. Against this horse, therefore, swords are prepared by the adversaries of the holy Church from the pain of punishments, and arms are prepared from the patronages of secular powers. For heretics are wont to protect themselves with the defenses of the powerful of

the world, as with certain arms; all infidels are wont to impugn the preaching of the faith even by excited powers of the world. But the horse of God rejoices boldly, and does not fear external torments, because he seeks internal delight; he does not fear the wrath of the powers of the world, because he treads under foot the desire of this present life itself through the excess of the mind. Hence it is said by Solomon: Whatever shall happen to the just man, it shall not make him sad (Prov. 12:21). Hence in the same it is written again: The just man shall be as a confident lion without terror (Prov. 28:1). In the meeting of beasts, a lion does not tremble for this reason, because he is not ignorant that he prevails over all. Whence the security of the just man is rightly compared to a lion, because when he sees any persons whatsoever rise up against him, he returns to the confidence of his own mind; and he knows that he overcomes all opponents, because he loves Him alone, whom he may by no means lose against his will. For whosoever desires external things, which are withdrawn even from him who is unwilling, subjects himself of his own accord to a foreign fear. But the contempt of earthly concupiscence is an unbroken virtue, because the mind is placed on high, when it is raised up by the judgment of its own hope from lowest things, and is by so much the less touched by all opponents, as it is more safely fortified being situated in heavenly things.

56. The just man meets his opponents undaunted.---This horse, therefore, not only fears

very little those coming against him, but he even goeth on to meet them. Whence it is well added here: He goeth on to meet the armed men. For for the most part we are left quiet and unattacked, if we do not care to meet the wicked for justice. But if the mind has been inflamed to the desire of eternal life, if it already respects the true light within, if it has kindled in itself the flame of holy fervor, so far as place admits, so far as the cause requires, we ought to oppose ourselves for the defense of justice, and to meet the perverse breaking forth to unjust things, even when we are not sought by them. For when they strike justice, which we love, in others, they nonetheless pierce us by their stroke, even if they should seem to venerate us. Because, therefore, a holy man opposes himself to the wicked and those doing evil even when he is not sought, it is rightly said concerning the horse of God: He goeth on to meet the armed men.

57. The example of St. Paul. It is pleasant to behold him, excited by the spurs of his Rider, against the armed hosts, with what great fervor Paul was kindled, when the flame of zeal hurried him away at Ephesus to break into the throngs of the theatre. For it is written: They were filled with wrath, and cried out, saying: Great is Diana of the Ephesians; and the city was filled with confusion, and they made an onset with one mind into the theatre, having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's companions (Acts 19:28, 29). And it is soon subjoined: And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disci-

ples suffered him not. And certain also of the chiefs of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre (Ibid., 30, 31). In which words, truly, we recognize with what impetus he would have rushed against the opposing bands, unless the bridles of charity had held him back through his friends and disciples.

58. Danger is sometimes to be prudently declined, if only moderate fruit is expected from that danger. This Paul taught by his example. But if we ought to meet enemies, if of our own accord to seek the fight, if always to leave ourselves in the course of our fervor, what is it that the same eminent preacher confesses concerning himself, saying: In Damascus the governor of the nation of king Aretas kept the city of the Damascenes, that he might apprehend me, and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so I escaped his hands (2 Cor. 11:32, 33)? What is it that this horse now of his own accord attacks the bands of armed men, and now hides himself from armed enemies as if trembling, except this, which it is necessary that we should learn in his skillful virtue, both to seek the fight of adversaries constantly sometimes, and to decline it prudently sometimes? For it is necessary that through everything which we do, being placed in the balance of the mind, we should weigh on one side the weight, on the other the fruit of our labor; and when the weight exceeds the fruit, let each one innocently decline the labor, provided he exercises himself in other things, in which the

weight of labors may be overcome by the lucre of fruits. But when with the following quantity of fruits the measure of labor is either equalled or overcome, labor is not declined without grave fault. Whence the holy preacher, when he saw the very obstinate minds of the persecutors at Damascus, would not conflict with their adversity, because he saw that both he himself, whom he knew would be profitable to many, might fail, and that he would profit none or few there. He sought, therefore, a withdrawal from the contest, and reserved himself to other wars to fight more happily. For virtue did not fail the place, but place failed virtue; and therefore the most brave soldier sought the field of contest from the strait of the siege. But where he saw many necks of adversaries to be subjected to his own King, he did not fear to undergo the war even with death; as he himself, when he was going to Jerusalem, and the disciples, the passion of him being foreknown through prophecy, would have prohibited him, testifies to himself, saying: I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 21:13). Neither do I make my life more precious than myself (Ibid. 20:24). He, therefore, who here undaunted sought the hostile bands, even his passion being foreknown, taught there that it was of dispensation, not of fear, that he fled.

59. We must be careful lest we flee out of fear rather than out of cautious dispensation. In this matter it must be considered that he laudably declines certain labors through the judgment of

dispensation, who bravely endures other greater ones for God's sake. For often a weak fear is called cautious dispensation by men; and they assert that they have prudently declined an attack, when, fleeing shamefully, they are struck in the back. Hence it is necessary that in the cause of God, when a matter of dispensation is at hand, the fear of the heart be weighed with the most subtle balance, lest fear creep in through infirmity and devise a reason for itself under the image of dispensation, lest a fault call itself prudence; and the mind no longer returns to penance, when it calls that which it iniquitously commits a virtue. It remains, therefore, that each one caught in doubts, when any adversity threatens him, should first fight within himself against dread and precipitancy, so that he may neither fearfully withdraw himself nor precipitately oppose himself. For he is very headlong who always exposes himself to adversities, and very fearful who always hides himself.

60. A skilled leader neither always advances his army against the enemy nor always withdraws it. But we learn these things better in spiritual wars if we draw the form of the exercise from corporal wars. For that leader is not wise who always headlong advances his army against the hostile bands; nor is that leader brave who always withdraws it by taking precautions from the face of the enemy. For a leader ought to know how at one time to cautiously withdraw the army from the hostile attack, and at another time to hem in the enemy with surrounding wings. This

indeed perfect preachers carefully exhibit, when at one time declining the rage of persecution, they know how to yield wisely but not weakly; and at another time contemning the attack of persecution, they know how to meet it bravely but not precipitately. Because, then, the holy man, when he sees it fitting, opposes his breast to strokes, and even dying blunts the coming darts, it is rightly said: He goeth on to meet armed men. Concerning which it is further well added:

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERSE 22.---He despiseth fear, and yieldeth not to the sword.

1025 61. Paul despised all fear, all hostile attack. Let us see how he despiseth fear, who, enumerating the very swords of his adversaries, trampleth them under foot. For he saith: Who shall separate us from the love of God? shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or persecution (Rom. VIII, 35)? Now in fear a coming punishment is dreaded, but in the sword pain is already felt from a present stroke. Because, therefore, the holy man dreadeth not coming adversities, he despiseth fear; but because he is not overcome even by an ensuing stroke, he by no means yieldeth to swords. Against this horse, therefore, there are as many swords of enemies as there are kinds of persecutions; all which he meeteth and overcometh, because for the love of life he prepareth himself for death. But because we have heard how so robust a breast opposeth itself to darts,

let us now hear what is done by his adversaries. It followeth:

CHAPTER XXX.

VERSE 23.---The quiver shall rattle over him.

62. Defeated enemies fly to deceits, but in vain. In holy Scripture by the name of a quiver sometimes the just and hidden counsel of God, but sometimes the secret machination of the wicked is designated. By a quiver the just and hidden counsel of God is expressed, as the same blessed Job testifieth in a former part, saying: For He hath opened His quiver, and afflicted me (Job XXX, 11). That is, He hath disclosed His hidden counsel, and wounded me with a public stroke. For as arrows are in a quiver, so are judgments hidden in the secret counsel of God; and an arrow is as it were drawn from the quiver, when God hurleth an open judgment from His hidden counsel. By the name of a quiver also the machination of the wicked is designated, as is said by the Prophet: They have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may shoot in the dark at the upright in heart (Psal. XI, 2). For the iniquitous, when they hide the deceits which they devise against the good with secret machinations, prepare as it were arrows in a quiver, and in this darkness of the present life, as if in the dark, they strike the upright in heart, because their malicious darts can both be felt through the wound, and yet cannot be detected as they come. Since, therefore, the horse of God is terrified by no adversity, and the more he is opposed, the more he is led by the

force of his intention with greater fervor over the armed enemies, his persecutors, who feel themselves defeated even while they strike, return in confusion to counsel, prepare deceits, and as if from afar hurl hidden wounds. Whence it is now rightly said: The quiver shall rattle over him; that they may strike him from a hidden machination from afar, whom they in vain approach in open encounters. This quiver had then rattled over the horse of God, when the forty men who had conspired for his death sought that Paul should be brought out of prison (Acts XXIII, 12-21), that they might slay him by the strokes of their counsels, as it were by the stealthy deceit of arrows, whom they could by no means overcome in an encounter of public persecution. The quiver therefore rattled, because the cause of the secret machination reached Paul.

63. They sometimes hide their arts, sometimes, to inspire terror, they display them. Although if we search vigilantly, we find yet something more subtle in the rattling of the quiver. For often adversaries enter into counsels against the good, rely on wicked inventions, betake themselves to devising deceits, but yet they themselves appoint those who should betray these same deceits to the good, they themselves transmit them secretly, so that the preparation of punishments, while it is made known as if by stealth, may be the more feared by the credulous, and suspected wounds may disturb the mind of the hearer more than those received. For arrows in a quiver 1026 while they are hidden

and rattle, denounce death even though not seen. The quiver therefore giveth a sound against the horse, when against the holy preacher the secret machination of the wicked maketh known its counsel, which it fraudulently covereth, even more fraudulently, so that by premises of threats it may terrify as if by the sound of the quiver, while the preacher of God dreadeth not open contumelies like darts striking from near at hand. But when he is not at all terrified by these same threats, presently the cruelty of the persecutors is brought to manifest punishments. Whence well after it was said: The quiver shall rattle over him, there is immediately added:

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN THE SAME PLACE.---The spear shall brandish.

64. From threats they break forth into open punishments. Against the preacher of God, after the rattling of the quiver, the spear is brandished, when after the terrors exhibited, an open punishment already striking from near at hand is produced. But holy preachers, when they undergo punishments for the defense of the faith, do not cease to draw to that same faith whom they can even amidst stripes; and while they patiently receive wounds, they prudently return arrows of preaching against the hearts of infidels. Whence it sometimes happens that they who rage in persecution do not so much grieve that they do not soften the heart of the preacher as that through his words they lose even others. Because, there-

fore, they do not overcome him by striking him, lest perhaps others also who hear him should leave them, they presently prepare against the words of the speaker the shield of a reply. Whence when he said: The spear shall brandish, he rightly subjoineth:

IN THE SAME PLACE.---And the shield.

65. They also seek for reasons which they may oppose. For the raging persecutor, after he hath struck the body of the preacher with punishment, fenceth the heart of the hearers as if with a shield by the words of his disputation. The holy man therefore is struck that he may be smitten, the spear is brandished; but lest he should be heard, the shield is opposed. For the defenders of God have in battle their arrows, which they hurl the more quickly into the hearts of the hearers, the more they discharge them from the spiritual bow, that is, from the inward tension of the heart. With these indeed Paul had armed himself in the war of faith, when he said: I labor even unto bonds, as an evil-doer; but the word of God is not bound (2 Tim. II, 9). As if he said: I am indeed smitten by the spear of punishments, but yet I cease not to send forth the arrows of words. I receive the wounds of cruelty, but I transfix the heart of infidels by speaking the truth. Let it be said therefore: The quiver shall rattle over him, the spear and the shield shall brandish. For against the horse of God, because the counsels of the wicked make a noise, the quiver rattleth; because open punishment is sought, the spear is brandished; but because he is also resisted by disputation,

the shield is held before him. But is he restrained from his fervor by these things? For the holy man, the more he is pressed by persecution, the more sharply is he instigated to preach the truth; and while he patiently endureth his persecutors, he ardently hasteneth to draw hearers to himself. Whence also it is well further added concerning the horse of God:

CHAPTER XXXII.

VERSE 24.---Fervent and snorting he swalloweth the earth, and he reputeth not that the clangor of the trumpet soundeth.

66. Having despised their efforts, the pious preacher always labors for the conversion of sinners. For it was said to the first man when he sinned: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Gen. III, 19). Now the trumpets clang when the powers of this world terribly forbid the saints to speak. Because, therefore, the preacher, inflamed with the zeal of the Holy Spirit, even when placed amidst punishments, ceaseth not to draw any sinners to himself, fervent 1027 beyond doubt he swalloweth the earth; but because he dreadeth not at all the threats of persecutors, he reputeth not that the clangor of the trumpet soundeth. For what else is the trumpet, which denounceth the danger of war, but the voice of secular powers, which, being contemned, prepareth the conflict of death for those who resist?

67. The example of the Apostles, especially of St. Paul. This trumpet had sounded from the chief priests when they forbade the scourged Apostles

to speak of God, as it is written: And when they had beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus (Acts V, 40). But let us see how the clangor of the trumpet terrifieth not the horse of God. Peter saith: We ought to obey God rather than men (Ibid. 29). Who saith also to others who were persecuting them: For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard (Acts IV, 20). The horse of God, therefore, feareth not the clangor of the trumpet, because the excellent preacher, having despised the powers of the world, dreadeth no sounds of threats.

68. Let us see another horse of God, how he swalloweth the earth, how no terror of the trumpet reacheth him (Acts XIV, 18-21). It is written: And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city; and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples. Let us consider, therefore, what threats could restrain this horse, when death itself cannot prohibit him from his intention. Behold, he is overwhelmed with stones, and yet he is not removed from the word of truth. He can be slain, he cannot be overcome; he is cast out of the city as if dead, but on another day the preacher

is found unhurt within the city. Oh, how strong an infirmity is in this man! oh, how victorious a punishment! oh, how domineering a patience! He is provoked to action by repulse, he is raised up to preach salvation by stripes, he is refreshed for the repelling of the weariness of labor by punishment. What adversity then should overcome him, whom punishment refresheth? But this horse of God both despiseth the arrows of the quiver, because he contemneth the counsels of malice; he overcometh the brandished spear, because he strengtheneth his breast even against the wounds of open persecution; he breaketh the opposed shield, because by reasoning he subdueth the disputation of those who resist; he swalloweth the earth, because by exhorting he converteth sinners into his own body; he reputeth not that the clangor of the trumpet soundeth, because he trampleth upon any voice of terrible prohibition. But it is a small thing that is said, that being brave he persevereth in labors, for yet, what is greater, he exulteth in adversities. Whence it followeth:

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VERSE 25.---When he shall hear the trumpet, he saith, Aha.

69. The saints, when a conflict is imminent, though they may be shaken by the fear of death, yet rejoice for the future reward. By which words indeed it is also shown, that in this place nothing is said by the Lord concerning an irrational horse. For a brute animal cannot say 'Aha'; but while

it is asserted that he saith what he is altogether unable to say, it is hinted whom he designates. For 'Aha' is a word of exultation. The horse, therefore, when he hath heard the trumpet, saith 'Aha,' because every brave preacher, when he considers that the conflict of his passion is approaching him, exulteth in the exercise of virtue; nor is he terrified by the danger of the fight, because he rejoices in the triumph of victory. 1028 For the horse to say 'Aha,' is therefore for the holy preacher to rejoice in his coming passion. But if the brave preacher desires the glory of passion, if he seeks with joy to undergo the danger of death for the Lord, what is it that the Truth said to the same most brave preacher, who from his robust heart drew his name of strength, to Peter: When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldest not (John XXI, 18). How doth he rejoice in his passion, who, being girded by another, will not go whither he is led? But if we consider how the mind is affected on the approach of passion and by the fear of death, and yet rejoices in the coming reward of the kingdom, we understand how he may at the same time be willing and unwilling to undergo the danger of the glorious conflict, because both in death he considers what he dreads in enduring, and in the fruit of death he beholds what he seeks in desiring.

70. Paul loves what he avoids, he seems to avoid what he loves. Let us see Paul, how he loves what he avoids, how he avoids what he loves.

For he saith: Having a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ (Philip. I, 23). And: To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Ibid. 21). And yet he saith: We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life (2 Cor. V, 4). Behold, he both desires to die, and yet dreads to be unclothed of the flesh. Why is this? Because although victory gladdens for ever, the punishment itself nevertheless disturbs for the present; and although the love of the following reward overcomes, yet the stroke of pain touches the mind not without sorrow. For as a brave man, when on the near approach of the conflict of war he is girded with arms, both palpitates and hastens, trembles and rages, he is seen as it were to fear by his paleness, but is vehemently urged on by his anger; so the holy man, when he perceives that he is approaching his passion, is both shaken by the infirmity of his nature, and is strengthened by the solidity of his hope; and he trembles at his approaching death, and yet exulteth that by dying he lives more truly. For he cannot pass to the kingdom unless death be interposed; and therefore by trusting he as it were doubts, and by as it were doubting he trusts; and rejoicing he fears, and fearing he rejoices, because he knows that he cannot reach the prize of rest unless he pass with labor over that which lies between. So we, when we desire to repel diseases from the body, take indeed sadly the bitter cup of purgation, but rejoice being certain of the following health.

For because the body cannot otherwise reach health, that even which is loathsome is pleasing in the draught. And when the mind perceives that life is in the bitterness, though disturbed with sorrow, it becomes cheerful. Let it be said therefore: When he shall hear the trumpet, he saith, Aha, because the brave preacher, having known the announcement of the conflict, although as a man he trembles at the force of persecution, yet through the certainty of hope he exulteth for the reward of remuneration. But he would by no means remain unshaken for this war of passion, unless by meditating with intent thought he should anticipate this same passion. For an evil which is anticipated by counsel, is subjected by reason to the mind contending against it, because each one is the less overcome by adversity, as he is found prepared against it by prescience. For often a heavy weight of fear is lightened by use, often death itself as it disturbs if unexpected, so it gladdens if anticipated by deliberation. Whence also it is rightly added concerning this horse: IN THE SAME PLACE.---1029 He smelleth the battle afar off.

71. That victory may be reported, let the conflict be foreseen. As if it were said more openly: For this reason he overcomes every conflict, because he prepares his mind for the conflict before the conflict. For to smell the battle from afar is to foreknow any adversities while yet far off by thinking of them, lest perhaps being unexpected they may be able to overcome. Paul admonished his disciples to smell this battle from afar, when

he said: Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves (2 Cor. XIII, 5). As if he openly commanded, saying: Bring back to your mind the conflicts of persecutions, and weighing the inmost and secret things of your heart, find out of what sort ye may be able to be amidst punishments. Holy men smell this battle from afar, when even placed in the peace of the universal Church, they behold either the wars of heretics, or the torments of persecutions threatening from infidels. Who while they live rightly, often receive evil for good, they bear the contumelies of slanders with equanimity, so that if an occasion of persecution should be at hand, the open enemies may find them so much the stronger, as even within the Church the darts of false brethren do not overcome them. For he who falls from the state of patience before the wounds of tongues, is a witness to himself that he will not stand against the swords of manifest persecution. Because, therefore, the man of God, being exercised in present things against those to come, and exercised in small things against greater, strives, it is rightly said of the horse of God, that he smelleth the battle from afar. It followeth:

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN THE SAME PLACE.---The exhortation of the leaders, and the howling of the army.

72. We must sub-scent what the authors of errors, and what the crowd subject to them, may be able to rage. The leaders of the adverse party are the authors of error, concerning whom it

is said by the Psalmist: Contempt was poured upon their princes, and their vanities seduced them, and He caused them to wander in the pathless place, and not in the way (Psal. CVII, 40). Concerning whom the Truth saith by Itself: If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch (Matth. XV, 14). Now the army followeth these leaders, namely, the crowd of the wicked, which serveth their iniquitous precepts. It is to be noted also that he saith that the leaders exhort, but that the army howleth, because forsooth they who are set over infidels or heretics persuade as if by reason the wicked things which they command to be held. But the crowd subject to them, because it followeth their voices without judgment, while it maketh a noise through the madness of confusion, is said to howl with a bestial mind. For howling properly belongeth to wolves. And because the herds of the reprobate gape against the life and manners of the faithful with rapacity alone, they cry as it were by howling. The horse of God, therefore, smelleth from afar the exhortation of the leaders and the howling of the army, while every holy preacher considereth long before either what the authors of errors may be able to command against the elect, or how the crowd subject to them may be able to rage immoderately. Paul was smelling this exhortation of the leaders, when he said: By sweet words and fair speeches they seduce the hearts of the innocent (Rom. XVI, 18). He was smelling this howling of the army, saying: After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you (Acts XX,

29). Peter smelled the exhortation of the leaders, when he admonished his disciples concerning certain men, saying: Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you (2 Pet. II, 3). He smelled also the howling of the army, when he premised, saying: 1030 And many shall follow their luxuriousnesses, by whom the way of truth is blasphemed (Ibid. 2).

73. Those things which were said of preachers and teachers are adapted to the faithful. Therefore, because we have narrated what kind of person every holy preacher and leader of the faith in the war of persecution can exhibit himself, let us now under the species of this horse describe every soldier of Christ, so that even he who considers that he hath not yet reached the summit of preaching, may yet by this divine voice, if he hath already begun to live well, know himself to be expressed, so that he may gather from hence how much he is known to God, if he shall have reached greater things, whom God signally omitteth not to speak of even in the smallest. Repeating therefore each thing which was said of the horse, let us make known how the soldier of God profiteth from his earliest conversation, how he groweth up from the smallest to the greatest things, or by what steps he reacheth from the lowest to the heavenly. Let it be said therefore:

CHAPTER XXXV.

VERSE 19.---Wilt thou give strength to the horse, or wilt thou encompass his neck with neighing?

74. Faith should first arm the soldier of God. To every soul, over which the Lord mercifully presides, He gives before all things the strength of faith, concerning which Peter saith: Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith (1 Pet. V, 8, 9). Now to this strength neighing is joined, when that which is written is fulfilled: With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. X, 10). It followeth:

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VERSE 20.---Wilt thou raise him up as the locusts?

75. The indulgence of God toward those who are beginning. Each one who follows God, is in his very beginning raised up as a locust, because although in certain actions after the manner of locusts he cleaves to the earth with bent knees, yet in certain others with expanded wings he suspends himself in the air. For the beginnings of conversions are mixed with good and evil manners, while both a new life is already led by intention, and the old is still retained by use. But we are so much the less injured by the evil things mixed with them for a time, as we fight against them daily without ceasing. Nor doth a fault any longer claim us for its own, against whose wicked use our mind carefully resisteth. Terrene works therefore less hinder us when we are beginning, because they are prohibited from

remaining longer in us. Wherefore since in the very beginning of our conversion the Lord piously tolerateth certain weak things in us, that He may at some time lead us to heavenly things from perfection, He raiseth us up in the beginning as locusts, because although He uplifteth us in the flight of virtue, yet He despaireth not of our fall into terrene work. It followeth:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IBID.---The glory of his nostrils is terror.

76. Those who are beginning are placed between hope and fear, because of the conflicts of the flesh, which they therefore strongly subdue. Because a thing that is not seen is perceived by smell, the thoughts of our hope are not undeservedly expressed by the name of nostrils, by which we foresee the coming judgment, which, although we do not yet discern with our eyes, we already foresee by hoping. Moreover, everyone who begins to live well, hearing that by the final judgment the just are called to the kingdom, rejoices; but because he considers that certain evils still remain in him from his past, he dreads the approach of this very judgment, at which he begins to exult. For he beholds his life mixed with good and evil, and in some way confounds his thoughts with hope and fear. For when he hears what the joys of the kingdom are, soon he uplifts his mind with gladness; and again when he looks back at what the torments of Gehenna are, soon dread disturbs his mind. Rightly, therefore, is the glory of his nostrils called terror, because, being

placed between hope and fear, while he beholds the future judgment in his mind, he fears this very thing in which he glories. His very glory is a terror to him, because, having already begun good things, he is glad with hope of the judgment; and because all evils are not yet finished, he is not perfectly secure. But among these things he returns carefully to his mind, and rejecting the storms of such great dread, and disposing himself in the tranquility of peace alone, he endeavors with all his strength to be found free by the strict Judge. For he deems it a servile thing to dread the Lord's presence; and lest he should fear the sight of his father, he does those things by which he may recognize himself as a son. He learns, therefore, to love the Judge with his whole expectation, and, as I might say, by fearing he refuses to fear. Moreover, he considers that dread arises in the heart for carnal action, and therefore before all things he chastises the flesh with strong subdual. Whence after it has been said: The glory of his nostrils is terror, it is rightly added:

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

VERSE 21.---He diggeth the earth with his hoof.

77. For to dig the earth with the hoof is to subdue the flesh by strict abstinence. But the more the flesh is pressed down, the more securely the mind rejoices in heavenly hope. Whence after the dug earth it is aptly subjoined: He exulteth boldly. For because he valiently represses that which assails him, he boldly exults in those things which

he desires in eternal peace; and the mind is so much the better composed for seeking heavenly things, as the body is more closely subdued from unlawful things. Whence it is rightly said by Solomon: Diligently till thy field, that afterwards thou mayest build thy house (Prov. XXIV, 27). For he well builds the house of his mind, who first purges the field of his body from the thorns of vices, lest if the briars of desires should grow in the field of the flesh, the whole fabric of virtues within should be destroyed as the hunger for good work increases. Moreover, anyone placed in the very conflict of war, so much the more subtly beholds the fraud of the enemies, as he more strictly presses his own body as it were a certain helper of the enemies. Whence also after the contrition of the body, and after the gladness of the heart, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IBID.---He goeth to meet the armed men.

78. Those who are beginning explore the snares and deceits of the enemy, and prevent them even in the hearts of others. The armed enemies are the unclean spirits, equipped with innumerable frauds against us. Who, when they cannot persuade us of iniquitous things, oppose them to our sight under the appearance of virtues, and cover themselves as it were under certain arms, lest they should be seen naked by us in their malice. To which armed enemies we go to meet, when we foresee their snares from afar. To go to meet the armed enemies, the

earth being dug, is, the pride of the flesh being subdued, to explore wonderfully the deceits of the unclean spirits. To go to meet the armed enemies, the earth being dug, is, carnal wickedness being overcome, to undergo the conflict against spiritual vices. For he who still fights feebly with himself, in vain raises up wars placed without against himself. For he who subjects himself to carnal things, how does he resist spiritual vices? Or how does he desire to triumph from the labor of an external conflict, who still succumbs at home to the domestic war of lust.

79. Or certainly we go to meet the armed enemies, when by the study of exhortation we prevent their snares even in the heart of another. For as it were from the place in which we were we come to another place to meet the enemies, when, our own care being orderly postponed, we prohibit the access of the unclean spirits from the mind of our neighbor. Whence it often happens that the crafty enemies tempt the soldier of God, already a victor in the internal war, so much more terribly concerning himself, as they see him strongly prevail against them even in the heart of another; that while they recall him to defend himself, they may more freely invade the hearts of others which were protected by his exhortation. And when they cannot overcome him, at least they endeavor to occupy him; so that while the soldier of God is shaken concerning himself, not he, but he whom he had been accustomed to defend may perish. But the mind fixed immovably in God despises the darts of temptations, nor

dreads the arrows of any terror. Relying on the aid of heavenly grace, he so cures the wounds of his own infirmity, that he does not desert those of others. Whence also it is well subjoined concerning this horse:

CHAPTER XL.

VERSE 22.---He despiseth fear, and yieldeth not to the sword.

80. Those who are beginning despise the threats of the enemy. He despiseth fear, because he is not terrified by the dread of any temptation so far as to be silent. Nor doth he yield to the sword, because although a violent temptation strikes him, it does not repel him from the care of his neighbor. Whence also Paul, suggesting to us an example of an invincible conversation, both tells what swords he receives from the enemy, and shows how he does not yield to those same swords. For every conflict of carnal work being already overcome, he had received the sword of carnal temptation from the enemy, who said: I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members (Rom. VII, 23). But he did not yield to the same sword which he had overcome in himself even in others, since he certainly said to his neighbors: Let not sin reign in your mortal body to obey the desires thereof (Rom. VI, 12). And again: Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence (Coloss. III, 5). The heavy sword of temptations

struck him, of which he himself says: In labors more abundant, in prisons more frequent, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep of the sea (II Cor. XI, 23), and the rest, which he himself could tolerate, and we are weary to enumerate. But how he does not yield to the same sword in the love of his neighbor, after many things he himself subjoins: Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the solicitude for all the Churches (Ibid., 28). The horse of God, therefore, is struck by the sword, yet he is not prohibited from his course by that same stroke, while the strong soldier of the spiritual conflict both receives wounds from the enemy, and yet binds up others for salvation. But against such a hard breast of the heavenly soldier, the ancient enemy seeks out so much sharper darts, as he sees himself more robustly despised. Whence also it followeth:

CHAPTER XLI.

VERSE 23.---The quiver shall rattle against him, the spear and the shield shall shake.

81. Often those who are set over others to rule them are exercised by the devil with heavier temptations: sometimes by open force, sometimes by fraud and deceit, sometimes by both force and deceit. For because he sees that the study of the holy mind is profitable against

him even to others, he busies himself to pierce it with multiplied temptation. Whence it often happens that those who are set over others to rule them suffer stronger conflicts of temptations, to the end that, after the manner of bodily wars, while the leader himself is turned to flight, the crowded unanimity of the resisting army may be dissipated without labor. The crafty enemy, therefore, seeking out diverse wounds of strokes against the heavenly soldier, now wounds him from the quiver by snares with an arrow, now shakes the spear before his face, because forsooth he both covers some vices under the appearance of virtues, and opposes others as they are open to his eyes. For where he beholds the soldier of God to be weakened, there he does not seek the veils of fraud. But where he considers him strong to resist him, there without doubt he prepares deceits against his strengths. For when he sees someone weak in the allurements of the flesh, he openly objects to his sight the appearance of the body which may be able to be lusted after. But if perhaps he discerns him valiant against avarice, he importunately suggests to his thoughts the poverty of his household, that while the mind is bent as it were piously to the care of provision, being stealthily seduced, it may be iniquitously snatched away in the ambition of things. The arrow, therefore, assails the horse of God by snares, when the crafty enemy hides a vice for him under a virtue. But the spear wounds from near at hand, when he tempts even one who knows with manifest wickedness.

82. But often both are objected to the heavenly soldier by the enemy at one and the same time, that he may be destroyed in any one stroke. For the deceitful adversary strives to strike at the same time, both openly raging and lying hidden in snares, that while the arrow is feared from concealment, the spear may be less feared before the face; or while the spear is resisted before the face, the arrow coming from concealment may by no means be seen. For often he proposes a temptation of lust, and suddenly more fraudulently ceasing, suggests elation concerning the preserved chastity. And there are some who while they behold many to have fallen from the citadel of chastity into the pit of elation, neglecting the guardianship of their own life, are submerged in the uncleanness of lust. But on the contrary there are some who while they flee the uncleanness of lust, fall through the summit of chastity into the whirlpool of elation. As it were, therefore, the spear striking openly is a fault from a vice, and the arrow wounding from the quiver as if from concealment is a fault from a virtue. But the horse of God both overcomes the spear before his face when he treads down lust, and looks around at the arrow from the side when in the purity of chastity he guards himself from elation. Whence also it is well said by Solomon to one struggling between both: The Lord shall be on thy side, and shall keep thy foot that thou be not taken (Prov. III, 26). For the foot tends toward the things that are before. But he does not see the things that are before, who beholds those things which are

at the side. And again he who, foreseeing the guardianship of the foot, discerns the things that are before, deserts the circumspection of the side. While indeed we do something for the sake of a virtue placed before our face, we foresee as it were where the foot ought to be placed; but while from that same virtue a fault stealthily arises, as it were while we look back at the things that are before, the side is bared to the arrow. But often while we fear the fault arising, we decline the virtue which is to be done; and as it were while the side is looked around at, the foot is by no means discerned how it may be placed in the things that are before. Well, therefore, is it said: The Lord shall be on thy side, and shall keep thy foot that thou be not taken, because the soldier of God, protected by the shield of divine grace, both considers by looking around those things which may be able to come forth from the side, and does not cease from profiting by bearing his step before his face. Against whom the fraudulent enemy envying, because he beholds that he by no means prevails by the quiver and the spear, opposes a shield, that if he does not pierce the breast of him who resists by striking, at least he may shut out the way of him who profits by certain objections. For he objects certain difficulties to his very endeavors; and when he is not able to overcome, he even resists. But let us hear what the horse of God may do against so many arguments of wars:

CHAPTER XLII.

VERSE 24.---Fervent and trembling he swalloweth the ground, neither doth he make account of the sounding of the trumpet.

83. Each is resisted through holy fervor and the care of profiting. The sound of the trumpet ringeth against the horse, when some fault placed nearby terribly tempteth the mind of the elect in that which he acteth bravely. But fervent and trembling he swalloweth the ground, because with excessive ardor he discusseth himself; and whatever earthly thing he findeth in himself, he consumeth daily by profiting. And he maketh no account of the sounding of the trumpet, because with strong consideration he solicitously declineth every vice which is born from the glory of virtue. For he would make account of the sounding of the trumpet, if perhaps on account of something else which ariseth wickedly he should fear to do other right things. Because therefore he doth not tremble at doing brave things before sounding temptations, being placed in his fervor he dreadeth the sound of the trumpet not at all. But often while he beholdeth himself to prosper in virtues, lest that same prosperity of virtues should elevate him, he rejoiceth to be beaten by temptations. Whence also it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XLIII.

VERSE 25.---When he hath heard the trumpet, he saith Vah.

84. Because long peace maketh many slothful, the saints rejoice to be tempted. For their own happiness hath prostrated many more miserably,

long peace hath rendered many slothful; and for this reason an unexpected enemy hath struck them more heavily, because he found them negligent through long use of quiet. Whence holy men, when they consider themselves to profit much by the prosperity of virtues, by a certain moderation of the heavenly dispensation exult to be exercised also by temptations, because they keep the received glory of virtues so much more robustly, as being shaken by the impulse of temptation they more humbly acknowledge their own weakness. The horse therefore, having heard the trumpet, saith Vah, because forsooth the warrior of God, when he beholdeth the force of temptation to lie upon him, considering the utility of the heavenly dispensation, trusteth more strongly from that same adversity. The conflicts of which adversity therefore do not overcome him, because they never tempt him unawares. For he marketh beforehand from afar from each thing, the battle of which vice may grow up. Whence also it followeth:

CHAPTER XLIV.

IBID.---He smelleth the battle from afar.

85. Nothing tempteth them unawares; whence neither do they overcome. For to smell the battle from afar is to acknowledge from preceding causes what battles of vices may follow. For because, as has already often been said, by the smell a thing not seen is known, to smell the battle from afar is, as by the breath of the nostrils, so by the foresight of thoughts, to track out hid-

den wickednesses. Concerning which smelling the Lord rightly saith in the praises of His Church: Thy nose is as the tower which is in Libanus (Cant. VII, 4). By the nose also we discern odors and stenches. And what is designated by the nose, but the provident discretion of the saints? But a tower of observation is placed on high, that the enemy coming may be seen from afar. Rightly therefore is the nose of the Church said to be like the tower in Libanus, because the provident discretion of the saints, while it solicitously beholdeth everywhere, being placed on high, deprehendeth the fault before it cometh, and by how much more vigilantly it marketh it beforehand, by so much more bravely it declineth it. Hence Habakkuk saith: I will stand upon my watch (Hab. II, 1). Hence Jeremiah, admonishing the soul of each of the elect, saith: Set thee up a watchtower, place for thyself bitterness (Jer. XXXI, 21). For to set up a watchtower for oneself is to foreknow from high consideration the coming conflicts of vices. And the mind of the elect placeth bitterness for itself, when even being constituted in the peace of virtues, while it beholdeth lurking evils, it consenteth not to rest secure.

86. First it must be cared for that we do not any evils, secondly that we do not good things incautiously. For the most part evils are born from good things. First indeed he considereth lest he do any evils, but in the second place lest he do good things incautiously; and after he has subdued wicked things, he contendeth even to subject the

right things themselves to himself, lest if they should pass over the dominion of the mind, they should be turned into the fault of elation. For because, as has been said above, for the most part evils are born from good things through the vice of carelessness, he contemplateth with vigilant study how from doctrine arrogance, from justice cruelty, from piety remission, from zeal anger, from gentleness sloth may arise. And when he doeth these good things, he beholdeth that these enemies may be able to rise up against him through them. For when he laboreth in acquiring the studies of doctrine, he solicitously prepareth his mind against the conflict of arrogance. When he desireth justly to avenge the faults of offenders, he most sagaciously avoideth lest the cruelty of vengeance should transcend the measure of justice. When he striveth to refrain himself with piety, he skillfully foreseeth lest he should be overcome by any dissolution of discipline. When he exciteth himself with the stings of right zeal, he provideth with the greatest care lest the flame of anger should kindle him more than is necessary. When he tempereth himself with great tranquility of gentleness, he vigilantly observeth lest he should grow cold with sloth. Because therefore every vice is beheld by the thought of the spiritual soldier before it may be able to creep in, it is rightly said of the horse of God: He smelleth the battle from afar. He also considereth what a crowd of iniquities may break forth, if he should permit even a few evils to enter into him. Whence also it followeth:

CHAPTER XLV.

IBID.---The exhortation of the leaders, and the howling of the army.

87. The leader of the devil's army is pride, whose offspring are the seven principal vices. For the tempting vices, which in the invisible battle against us fight for pride reigning over them, some go before after the manner of leaders, others follow after the manner of an army. For not all faults occupy the heart with equal access. But while the greater and few go before the neglected mind, the smaller and innumerable pour themselves upon it in crowds. For pride herself, the queen of vices, when she hath fully taken the vanquished heart, soon delivereth it to the seven principal vices, as it were to certain leaders of hers, to be devastated. Which leaders forsooth an army followeth, because from them without doubt importunate multitudes of vices arise. Which we show better, if we set forth those leaders and the army specially, as we are able, by enumerating them. For the root of all evil is pride, of which, Scripture attesting, it is said: Pride is the beginning of all sin (Ecclus. X, 15). But its first offspring, to wit the seven principal vices, are brought forth from this poisonous root, namely, vainglory, envy, anger, sadness, avarice, gluttony, lust. For because He grieved that we were taken by these seven vices of pride, therefore our Redeemer came to the spiritual battle of liberation full of the spirit of sevenfold grace.

88. Each capital vice hath its own army. But these each have their own army against us. For from vainglory arise disobedience, boasting, hypocrisy, contentions, obstinacies, discords, and presumptions of novelties. From envy are born hatred, whispering, detraction, exultation in the adversities of a neighbor, but affliction in his prosperity. From anger are brought forth strifes, swelling of the mind, insults, clamor, indignation, blasphemies. From sadness are born malice, rancor, pusillanimity, despair, sloth about the commandments, wandering of the mind toward unlawful things. From avarice arise treachery, fraud, fallacy, perjuries, restlessness, violences, and hardenings of the heart against mercy. From gluttony are propagated unseemly mirth, scurrility, uncleanness, loquacity, dullness of sense about the understanding. From lust are generated blindness of mind, inconsiderateness, inconstancy, precipitation, self-love, hatred of God, affection for the present world, but horror or despair of the future one. Because therefore the seven principal vices bring forth so great a multitude of vices from themselves, when they come to the heart, they draw as it were the crowds of a following army. Of which seven forsooth five are spiritual, and two are carnal.

89. Each vice ariseth from another. But each of them is joined to itself with so great kinship, that one is not brought forth but from another. For the first offspring of pride is vainglory, which when it hath corrupted the oppressed mind, soon begetteth envy, because forsooth while it appetiteth

the power of a vain name, it pineth away lest anyone else should be able to acquire this. Envy also begetteth anger, because by how much more the mind is wounded in the inner wound of spite, by so much more also is the gentleness of tranquility lost; and because it is touched as it were like a painful member, therefore the hand of an opposite action is felt as if more heavily pressed. From anger also sadness ariseth, because the troubled mind by how much more it shaketh itself inordinately, by so much more it confoundeth itself by sentencing: and when it hath lost the sweetness of tranquility, nothing feedeth it but the sorrow following from perturbation. Sadness also is derived to avarice, because while the confounded heart hath lost the good of joy within itself, it seeketh from without whence it ought to be comforted; and by so much more it desireth to acquire exterior goods, as it hath not joy to which it may recur within. But after these the two carnal vices, that is gluttony and lust, remain. But it is clear to all that from gluttony lust is born, while in the very distribution of the members the genitals are seen subjoined to the belly. Whence while one is refected inordinately, the other without doubt is excited to insults.

90. Fallacious arguments, with which the capital vices strive to deceive the mind. But well are the leaders said to exhort, the army to howl, because the first vices insert themselves into the deceived mind as if under a certain reason, but the innumerable ones which follow, while they draw this away to every madness, confound it as

if with a beastly clamor. For vainglory is wont to exhort the vanquished heart as if from reason, when she saith: Thou oughtest to appetite greater things, that by how much more thou shalt prevail in power to exceed many, by so much also thou mayest be able to profit many. Envy also is wont to exhort the vanquished heart as if from reason, when she saith: In what art thou less than that one or that one? why therefore art thou not either equal to them, or superior? How great things canst thou do which they cannot? Therefore they ought not either to be superior to thee, or even equal. Anger also is wont to exhort the vanquished heart as if from reason, when she saith: Those things which are done toward thee cannot be borne with equanimity, nay to tolerate these things patiently is a sin, because even if they are not resisted with great exasperation, they are henceforth heaped up against thee without measure. Sadness also is wont to exhort the vanquished heart as if from reason, when she saith: What hast thou whence thou mayest rejoice, when thou bearest so great evils from thy neighbors? Consider with what sorrow all are to be looked upon who are turned against thee in so great gall of bitterness. Avarice also is wont to exhort the vanquished mind as if from reason, when she saith: It is greatly without fault, that thou desirest certain things to be had, because thou appetitest not to be multiplied but fearest to want; and what another retaineth badly, thou thyself expendest better. Gluttony also is wont to exhort the vanquished heart as if from reason,

when she saith: God created all things clean for food, and he who refuseth to be satiated with food, what else doth he but contradict the gift granted? Lust also is wont to exhort the vanquished heart as if from reason, when she saith: Why dost thou not now dilate thyself in thy pleasure, when thou art ignorant what may follow thee? Thou oughtest not to lose the accepted time in desires, because thou knowest not how much more quickly it may pass by. For if God did not will man to be mixed in the pleasure of coition, in the very beginning of the human race He would not have made male and female (Gen. I, 27). This is the exhortation of the leaders, which while it is incautiously admitted to the secret of the heart, persuadeth iniquitous things more familiarly. Which forsooth a howling army followeth, because the unhappy soul once taken by the principal vices, while it is turned into madness by multiplied iniquities, is now devastated by beastly cruelty.

91. What is to be done, lest vices should hurt. But the soldier of God, because he striveth skillfully to foresee the conflicts of vices, smelleth the battle from afar, because while he beholdeth with solicitous thought what the preceding evils may be able to persuade to the mind, he deprehendeth the exhortation of the leaders by the sagacity of his nose. And because by foreknowing from afar he beholdeth the confusion of the following iniquities, he knoweth as it were the howling of the army by smelling.

Therefore because we have known either the preacher of God, or any soldier of the spiritual conflict, described by the narration of the horse, now let us see the same again in the signification of a bird, that we who by the horse have learned his fortitude, may also by the bird learn his contemplation. For because through the described greatness of the horse we have heard how much against the conflicts of vices the holy man by patience endureth, now through the species of birds let us know how much he flieth by contemplation. It followeth:

CHAPTER XLVI.

VERSE 26.---Doth the hawk get feathers by thy wisdom, spreading her wings toward the South?

92. By the grace of God let us strip off the old man. Some things worthy of note concerning the hawk. That every year the hawk casteth off the old feather while a new one is born, and getteth feathers without intermission, almost no one is ignorant. But that time of feathers is not here spoken of, in which he is clothed in the nest, because then forsooth the chick is not yet able to expand his wings to the South, but that annual feather is described, which is renewed when the old feather is loosened. And indeed for domestic hawks, that they may get feathers better, moist and warm places are required. But for the wild ones it is the custom that they expand their wings when the South wind bloweth, to the end that their limbs may grow warm with the heat of the

wind to loosen the old feather. But when the wind is wanting, their wings being extended and beaten against the rays of the sun, they make for themselves a warm breeze, and thus the pores being opened either the old feathers leap out, or the new ones grow up. What is it therefore for the hawk to get feathers in the South, but that each one of the saints being touched by the breath of the Holy Spirit groweth warm, and, casting away the use of the old conversation, taketh the form of the new man? Which Paul admonisheth, saying: Stripping off the old man with his acts, and putting on the new (Coloss. III, 9). And again: Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. IV, 16). But to cast off the old feather is to lose the inveterate studies of deceitful action, and to take the new feather is to hold a mild and simple sense by living well. For the feather of the old conversation weigheth down, and the feather of the new change lifteth up, that it may render one for flight so much lighter as he is newer.

93. For this renovation confession is necessary. And he saith well: She spreadeth her wings toward the South. For to expand our wings toward the South is by the coming of the Holy Spirit to open our thoughts by confessing them, so that it may no longer please us to cover ourselves by defending, but to make them public by accusing. Then therefore the hawk getteth feathers, when he shall have expanded his wings to the South, because then each one clotheth himself with the feathers of virtues, when he

submitteth his thoughts to the Holy Spirit by confessing. For he who by confessing old things doth not detect them, by no means produceth the works of the new life; he who knoweth not how to mourn that which weigheth down, is not able to bring forth that which lifteth up. For the very force of compunction openeth the pores of the heart, and poureth out the feathers of virtues; and when the mind studiously reproveth itself concerning its slothful old state, it groweth young with eager novelty. Let it be said therefore to blessed Job: Doth the hawk get feathers by thy wisdom, spreading her wings toward the South? that is, Hast thou conferred intelligence upon any of the elect, that the Holy Spirit blowing, he may expand the wings of his thoughts, to the end that he may cast away the weights of the old conversation, and take the feathers of virtues for the use of a new flight? That hence forsooth he may gather that he hath not in himself the vigilance of sense from himself, who is by no means able to confer this from himself upon others. The renovated Gentility also may be designated by this hawk, as if it were openly said to blessed Job: Behold the future feathers of virtues in Gentility, and lose the old feathers of pride. It followeth:

CHAPTER XLVII.

VERSE 27.---Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest in high places?

94. What the name of the eagle signifieth in Holy Scripture. Lurking spirits, earthly power, the subtle intelligence of the saints, or the ascen-

sion of Christ. In Holy Scripture by the word eagle sometimes the malignant spirits, the ravishers of souls, sometimes the powers of the present world, but sometimes either the most subtle intelligence of the saints, or the incarnate Lord quickly flying over the lowest things, and soon repeating the highest, is designated. By the name of eagles lurking spirits are expressed, Jeremiah attesting, who saith: Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven (Lam. IV, 19). For our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven, when malignant men do so great things against us, that they seem to go before even the aerial powers themselves in the inventions of malice. By the word eagle also earthly power is figured. Whence it is said by the prophet Ezekiel: A great eagle, with great wings, long-winged, full of feathers and variety, came to Libanus, and took the marrow of the cedar, and plucked off the top of its twigs (Ezek. XVII, 3). By which eagle who else but Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is designated? Who is described as having great wings on account of the immensity of his army, as long-winged on account of the long duration of times, full of feathers on account of many riches, but full of variety on account of the innumerable composition of earthly glory. Who came to Libanus, and took the marrow of the cedar, and plucked off the top of its twigs, because seeking the loftiness of Judea, he took away the nobility of its kingdom, as if the marrow of the cedar; and while he took away the most tender offspring of kings from the

summit of their kingdom by lead into captivity, he as it were plucked off the top of its twigs.

The subtle intelligence of the saints, or the ascension of Christ. The eagle beholdeth the sun with fixed eyes. By the word eagle either the subtle intelligence of the saints, or the flight of the Lord's ascension is expressed. Whence the same prophet, while he described himself to have seen the four evangelists under the species of animals (Ezek. X, 1), testifieth that the face of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle appeared to him in them, designating John without doubt as the fourth animal by the eagle, who in flying left the earth, because by subtle intelligence he penetrated the internal mysteries by seeing the Word. With which prophetic sentence John also himself in his revelation doth not disagree concerning himself, saying: The first animal was like a lion, and the second animal like a calf, and the third animal having a face as a man, and the fourth animal like a flying eagle (Rev. IV, 7). And although the several things rightly agree to each evangelist, while one insinuateth the order of the human nativity, another through the sacrifice of a pure victim, as it were the death of a calf, another the fortitude of power as it were the cry of a lion, another beholding the nativity of the Word, as an eagle beholdeth the rising sun, yet these four animals may signify their Head Himself, whose members they are. For He is both man, because He truly took our nature, and a calf, because He patiently died for us; and a lion, because by the fortitude of His divinity He

burst the bond of the death He had taken; and at the last an eagle, because He returned to heaven, from whence He had come. He was called therefore man in being born, a calf in dying, a lion in rising again, an eagle in ascending to the heavens. But in this place by the name of the eagle the subtle intelligence of the saints and their sublime contemplation is figured. For the sharpness of the eagle surpasseth the sight of all birds, so that the ray of the sun doth not close its eyes fixed upon it by any flashing of its light reverberating them. At the command of God therefore the eagle mounteth up, while the life of the faithful, obeying the divine commands, is suspended in high things. Which is said also to make its nest in high places, because despising earthly desires, it is now nourished by hope of heavenly things. It placeth its nest in high places, because it doth not build the habitation of its mind in abject and lowest conversation. Hence it is that it is said to the Kenite by the prophecy of Balaam: Thy dwelling place is strong, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock (Num. XXIV, 21). For Kenite is interpreted 'possessor.' And who are they that possess present things, but they who are skillful in the genius of worldly wisdom? Who in this truly build for themselves a strong habitation, if being made little ones among themselves through humility, they be nourished in the sublimity of Christ; if they feel themselves weak, and place the confidence of their mind to be cherished in the exalted humility of their acknowledged Redeemer; if they appetite

not the lowest things, if they transcend by the flight of the heart all that passeth away.

95. Paul like to an eagle. Let us see the eagle building for himself a nest of hope in high places. He saith: Our conversation is in heaven (Phil. III, 20). And again: Who hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places (Eph. II, 6). He hath his nest in high places, because surely he fixeth his counsel in high things. He will not cast down his mind into lowest things, he will not dwell in the lowest things through the abjection of human conversation. At that time Paul was perhaps kept in prison, when he testified that he sat together with Christ in heavenly places. But he was there, where he had already fixed his burning mind, not there where his slothful flesh as yet of necessity retained him.

96. The elect despise all earthly things. For this is wont to be the special specimen of the elect, that they so know how to pluck the journey of the present life, that through the certitude of hope they know themselves to have already arrived at high things, to the end that they may see all things which pass by to be beneath them, and may tread down all that is eminent in this world by the love of eternity. For hence it is that the Lord saith by the prophet to the soul that followeth Him: I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth (Is. LVIII, 14). For as it were certain lower things of the earth are losses, insults, poverty, abjection, which the lovers of the world also themselves, while they walk through the plain of the broad way, do not cease to tread

down by avoiding them. But the high places of the earth are gains of things, flatteries of subjects, abundance of riches, honor, and sublimity of dignities; which whosoever as yet walketh through lowest desires, esteemeth high for this very reason, that he thinketh them great. But if once the heart is fixed in heavenly things, soon it is discerned how abject those things are which seemed high. For as he who ascendeth a mountain despiseth the other things lying beneath for a little while, by how much more he tendeth his step toward higher things, so he who striveth to fix his intention in the highest things, while by that very effort he deprehendeth that there is no glory of the present life, is elevated above the high places of the earth; and that which before, being placed in lowest desires, he believed to be above him, he afterwards, profiting by ascending, acknowledgeth to be beneath him. Those things therefore which the Lord there promiseth that He will do, saying: I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth (Ibid.), these He testifieth to blessed Job that He alone is able to do, saying: Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest in high places? As if He should say: As at Mine, who what I command outwardly, this I inspire inwardly by the grace of hidden largess. It followeth:

CHAPTER XLVIII.

VERSE 28.---She abideth in the rocks.

97. In the rocks, that is, in the loftiness and constancy of the holy fathers they place

their nest. In sacred eloquence, when the rock is named in the singular number, who else is understood but Christ? Paul attesting, who saith: But the rock was Christ (1 Cor. X, 4). But when rocks are called in the plural, His members, to wit holy men, who are solidified by His strength, are expressed. Whom forsooth Peter the apostle calleth stones, saying: Ye as living stones, are built up spiritual houses (1 Pet. II, 5). This eagle therefore, which hath raised the eyes of the heart to the rays of the true sun, is said to abide in the rocks, because it is placed in the station of the mind in the sayings of the ancient and brave fathers. For it bringeth back to memory the life of those whom it beholdeth to have gone before in the way of God, and by studying in the loftiness of their fortitude buildeth for itself a nest of holy meditation. And when it silently thinketh on their acts and sayings, when it considereth how abject the glory of the present life is in comparison of eternal excellence, residing in the rocks it observeth as it were the lowest things of the earth to be beneath it.

98. By the name of rocks the powers of heaven are designated. The rocks may also be understood as the sublime powers of the heavenly virtues, which the wind of our mutability no longer inclineth hither and thither as it were after the manner of trees, because being situated in high places like rocks they are alien from every motion of mutability, and have grown hard unto the solidity of fixed loftiness by that same eternity to which they inhere. The holy man therefore, when

he despiseth earthly things, suspendeth himself from higher things after the manner of an eagle, and being lifted up by the spirit of contemplation waiteth for the perennial glory of the angels, and being a guest in this world, by appetiting those things which he beholdeth, he is already fixed in sublime things. Rightly therefore is it said: She abideth in the rocks, that is, she resideth by the intention of the heart among those heavenly virtues, which even through the fortitude of their eternity are now fixed with so great solidity, that they are bent by no variety of mutability in any side of a fault. Whence also it aptly followeth:

CHAPTER XLIX.

IBID.---And she abideth in the steep flints, and in inaccessible rocks.

99. In Christ all things are restored, both those in heaven and those on earth.---For who else are the steep flints, but those most brave choirs of angels, who, although not whole, yet remained fixed in their own state when the devil fell with his angels? For they are steep (broken off), because a part of them fell, and a part remained. They who indeed stand whole through the quality of their merit, but are steep through the quantity of their number. To restore this steepness (breach) the Mediator came, that by the redemption of the human race He might repair those angelic losses, and perhaps more richly fill up the measure of the heavenly country. On account of this steepness it is said of the Father: He purposed in Him, in the dispensation of the fullness of

times, to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are on earth in Him (Ephes. I, 9, 10). For in Him those things which are on earth are restored, while sinners are converted to righteousness. In Him those things which are in heaven are restored, while thither humbled men return from whence the apostate angels by pride fell. But as to what he saith: In inaccessible rocks, doubtless those who are the steep flints, the same are the inaccessible rocks. For the brightness of the angels is very inaccessible to the heart of sinful men, because in so far as it has fallen to beautiful corporeal things, so far has it closed its eyes to spiritual appearance. But whosoever is so snatched away by contemplation, that being lifted up by divine grace, he now interweaveth his intention with the choirs of angels, and being fixed in sublime things, suspendeth himself from every lowest action, it sufficeth him not to behold the glory of angelic brightness, unless he also be able to see Him who is above the angels. For His vision alone is the true refreshment of our mind. Whence when he had said that this eagle abideth in the rocks, and dwelleth in the steep flints and inaccessible rocks, he immediately added:

CAPUT L

[Rec. XX].

VERS. 29.---From thence she seeketh her meat.

100. The vision of God is the food of our mind.---That is, from those angelic choirs she

stretcheth the eye of the mind to contemplate the glory of the heavenly majesty, which not having yet seen she hungereth for, and which having at length seen she is satisfied. For it is written: For that His soul hath labored, He shall see and be satisfied (Isai. 53, 11). And again: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied (Matth. V, 6). But what is the food of our mind, is openly indicated when it is said: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Ibid., 8). And because, being weighed down by the interposition of corruptible flesh, we cannot see God as He is, it is rightly added:

CAPUT LI.

IBID.---Her eyes behold afar off.

101. We behold God here, but from afar off.---For however much anyone placed in this life may have profited, he does not yet see God by sight, but through a glass in a dark manner. But when we look from near, we discern more truly; but when we stretch our sight further, we are in darkness under an uncertain vision. Because therefore holy men raise themselves to high contemplation, and yet cannot see God as He is, it is well said of this eagle: Her eyes behold afar off. As if he said: They stretch the sight of their intention strongly, but do not yet behold Him near, the magnitude of whose brightness they can by no means penetrate. For from the incorruptible light the darkness of our corruption obscures us; and since it can be seen in some measure, and yet the light itself, as it is, cannot be seen, it indicates

how far off it is. Which if the mind did not in some way discern, it would not see that it was far off. But if it already discerned it perfectly, it would surely not see it as it were through darkness. Therefore because He is neither entirely discerned, nor again entirely not discerned, it is rightly said, that from afar off God is seen.

102. The testimony of Isaiah on this matter. By the steps of the active life one ascends to the summit of contemplation.---I would like to bring forward the words of Isaiah, and show how these and those are uttered by one spirit. Who when he was expressing the virtues of the active life, saying: He that walketh in righteousnesses, and speaketh the truth, he that casteth away avarice from calumny, and shaketh his hands from every gift, he that stoppeth his ears lest he hear blood, and shutteth his eyes lest he see evil (Isai. XXXIII, 15), he immediately added from the same steps of the active life to what summits of contemplation one is ascended, saying: He shall dwell on high, the fortresses of rocks shall be his loftiness, bread is given to him, his waters are faithful. His eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land afar off (Ibid., 16). For to dwell on high is to place the heart in heavenly things. And the fortresses of rocks are our loftiness, when we look back to the precepts and examples of the strong fathers and are separated from the lowest thought. The fortresses of rocks are our loftiness, when in mind we are joined to the heavenly choirs and camps, and being stationed in the citadel of the heart we overcome the lying

in wait of malignant spirits as if placed beneath us. Then also bread is given to us, because the intention raised in high things, is refreshed by the contemplation of eternity. For our waters are faithful, because the doctrine of God what it promises here through hope, that it exhibits there in gift. For the wisdom of this world is unfaithful, because it is not to remain after death. Our waters are faithful, because the words of life what they insinuate before death, that also they demonstrate after death. Our eyes behold the King in His beauty, because our Redeemer in judgment shall be seen by the reprobate as man, but only they who are elect are raised up to behold the loftiness of His divinity. For to see as it were a certain foulness of the King is to behold only the servile form in which He was despised by the iniquitous. But by the elect the King is seen in His beauty, because being snatched beyond themselves, they fix the eyes of the heart in that same brightness of divinity. And because as long as they are in this life, they cannot see that country of the living as it is, it is rightly added: They shall behold the land afar off (Ibid., 17). What therefore is said here: The eagle shall be lifted up, and shall set her nest in high places, that there is said: He shall dwell on high. What is said here: She abideth in the rocks, and dwelleth in the steep flints, and in inaccessible rocks, that there is subjoined: The fortresses of rocks shall be his loftiness. What again is here subjoined: From thence she seeketh her meat, that there also is added: Bread is given to him, his waters are faithful, his eyes shall see the King

in His beauty. And what is here added: Her eyes behold afar off, that there is aptly added: They shall behold the land afar off.

[Vet. XXXVI.] 103. How sublime an eagle Paul was.---Let us consider how sublime an eagle Paul was, who flew even to the third heaven (II Cor. XII, 2), but yet being placed in this life he still beholdeth God from afar off, who saith: We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face (I Cor. XIII, 12). And again: I count not myself to have apprehended (Philip. III, 13). But although he himself beholdeth eternal things much less than they are, although he knoweth that he cannot know them perfectly, yet he cannot pour into weak hearers by preaching those very things which he can at least see through a glass and an image. For he speaketh of himself as of another, saying: He heard arcane words, which it is not lawful for a man to speak (II Cor. XII, 4). Internal things therefore, although they may seem very small and extreme, yet to strong preachers they are highest, but to weak hearers incapable of being understood. Whence also holy preachers, when they perceive that their hearers cannot receive the word of divinity, descend to the words of the Lord's incarnation alone. Whence well here, while the eagle raised in high places is said to see far off, it is immediately subjoined:

CAPUT LII

[Rec. XXI].

VERS. 30.---Her young ones also suck up blood.

104. We ought to be fed by the meditation of the Passion of Christ.---As if it were openly said: She indeed is fed by the contemplation of divinity, but because her hearers can by no means perceive the secrets of divinity, they are satisfied with the known blood of the crucified Lord. For to suck up blood is to venerate the weak things of the Lord's Passion. Hence it is that the same Paul, who, as we said a little before, had flown to the secrets of the third heaven, said to his disciples: For I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (I Cor. II, 2). As if this eagle openly said: I indeed behold afar off my meat, the power of His divinity, but to you yet little ones I deliver only the blood to be sucked of His incarnation. For he who through his preaching, the loftiness of divinity being kept silent, teacheth his weak hearers only of the blood of the cross, what else does he but offer blood to the young ones? But because the soul of every holy preacher, being stripped of the corruption of the flesh, is soon led to Him who for us of His own accord fell into death, and rose from death, it is aptly subjoined of this eagle:

CHAPTER LIII.

IBID.---And wheresoever the carcass is, immediately she is present.

105. Christ reigning in heaven gathers the elect to Himself. For a carcass (cadaver) is so called from falling (a casu). And not without

reason is the body of the Lord called a carcass because of the fall of death. But that which is here said of this eagle: Wheresoever the carcass is, immediately she is present (Matth. 24:28), the Truth promised that this would happen concerning departing souls, saying: Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together. As if He were to say openly: I, your Redeemer, who preside incarnate over the heavenly seat, when I shall have released the souls of the elect from the flesh, will raise them up to heavenly things.

106. Every sinner is a carcass; to which the eagles fly, namely, pious preachers hungering for the salvation of sinners. This was the cause of Paul's flight traversing the world. But this which is said of this eagle: Wheresoever the carcass shall be, immediately she is present, can be understood also in another way. For everyone who has fallen into the death of sin can not inaptly be called a carcass. For he lies as if breathless, who has not the vivifying spirit of righteousness. Because therefore every holy preacher, when he considers where there are sinners, flies thither anxiously, that he may show the light of vivification to those lying in the death of sin, it is well said of this eagle: Wheresoever the carcass is, immediately she is present. That is, she tends thither, where she foresees the utility of preaching, that from that which she already lives spiritually, she may profit others lying in their death; whom by reproving she as it were eats, but by changing them from iniquity to innocence,

she converts them as if by eating into her own members. Behold he himself, whom we have already often brought forward for testimony, Paul, when he sought now Judea, now Corinth, now Ephesus, now Rome, now the Spains, that he might announce the grace of eternal life to those lying in the death of sin, what else did he show himself to be but an eagle; which swiftly flying over all things, sought everywhere a lying carcass, so that while he did the will of God in gained sinners, he might find as it were his meat in the carcass? For the meat of the righteous is the conversion of the perverse, of which it is said: Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life (John 6:27). Having heard, therefore, of the virtues of so many saints, blessed Job is understood to have been astounded, and to have been silent under the terror of admiration. For there follows:

CHAPTER LIV.

VERS. 31, 32.---Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said: Shall he that contendeth with God so easily be quieted? He that reproveth God, ought also to answer Him.

107. The pious and moderate rebuke of God to Job. The holy man did not think that by so great a strictness of the scourge merits were increased to him, but that vices were cut off. Because he knew none of these in himself, he believed himself to be unjustly struck, and to reprove the striker at all is to murmur at the stroke. But the Lord, considering that the things which he brought forward did

not spring from the tumor of pride, but from the quality of his life, piously rebukes him, saying: Shall he that contendeth with God so easily be quieted? He that reproveth God, ought also to answer Him. As if He said more plainly: Why hast thou, who hast spoken so great things of thine own action, been silent when the life of the saints was heard? For to reprove Me was to doubt of My stroke, whether it were just. And thou hast indeed truly brought forward thy good things, but thou knewest not whither these scourges tended, because though thou hast not now what thou mayest correct, thou hast yet still whereby thou mayest grow. Into how great a citadel of virtue I raise up very many, thou hast now learned from My narration. Thou didst consider thine own loftiness, but knewest not that of others. Having heard, therefore, the virtues of others, if thou art able, answer concerning thine own. But we know that he extinguishes the eye of his heart through the darkness of elation, who, when he does right things, neglects to consider the merits of better men. But on the contrary, he illustrates his own works with a great ray of humility, who subtly weighs the goods of others, because while he beholds those things which he himself has done, done also abroad and by others, he presses down the tumor of pride which strives to break out within from singularity. Hence it is that it is said by the voice of God to Elijah, who thought himself to have remained alone: I have left Me seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knees before Baal (1 Kings 19:18), that while he should

know that he had not remained alone, he might be able to avoid the glory of elation, which could rise to him from singularity. Blessed Job, therefore, is not reprehended as having done anything perversely, but is taught also concerning the well-doing of others, that while he considers that he has equals and others, he may humbly submit himself to Him who is singularly supreme.

THE THIRTY-SECOND BOOK.

The two last verses of the thirty-ninth chapter having been explained, the fourteen first verses of the fortieth chapter are expounded; and many things are taught, both concerning the infinite power of God, and concerning the hurtful counsels of Satan against men.

CHAPTER I.

1. The saints, whence they are made more worthy, thence they seem to themselves more unworthy. Holy men, by how much higher they profit at the hand of God in the dignity of virtues, by so much more subtly do they discover themselves to be unworthy, because while they become near to the light, they find whatever was hidden in themselves; and by so much more do they appear deformed to themselves without, as that which they see within is very beautiful. For everyone is shown to himself, while he is illustrated by the touch of the true light; and whence he recognizes what is justice, thence he is instructed, that he may see what is fault. Hence it is that often our mind, although cold, grows torpid in the action of human conversation, although in some things it fails and knows it not, although it weighs some sins as if none; yet when it raises it-

self by the compunction of prayer to seek sublime things, being excited by the very eye of its compunction, it returns more vigilant to circumspect itself after weeping. For when it deserts itself neglected, and grows torpid in noxious tepidity, it believes either idle words or useless thoughts to be altogether of less guilt. But if, glowing with the fire of compunction, it awakes from its tepidity, touched by the sudden breath of contemplation, those things which it believed light a little before, it soon abhors as grave and deadly. For it flies all things, even in the least noxious, as if most atrocious, because being forsooth pregnant by the conception of the spirit, it now permits no vain things to enter into itself. For from that which it beholds within, it feels how horrendous are these things which make a noise without; and by how much more it shall have profited being raised up, by so much more it flies the lowest things, in which lying prostrate it failed. For nothing feeds it except that which it had seen within; and it tolerates with so much more heaviness whatever suggests itself to it from without, by how much that is not what it saw within, but from these internal things which it could see rapidly, it takes the rule of judging for the external things which it tolerates. For it is snatched above itself while it contemplates sublime things; and now more freely beholding itself exceeding itself, whatever remains to it of itself under itself, it more subtly comprehends. From which thing it is wrought in a wonderful manner, that, as has been said above, whence it is made more worthy, thence it seems

to itself unworthy, and then it feels itself to be far from rectitude, when it approaches. Whence Solomon says: I have tried all things in wisdom, and I said: I will become wise, and it departed further from me (Eccles. 7:24). For wisdom being sought is said to depart far off, because to one approaching it seems higher. But they who by no means seek this, think themselves near to it by so much as they are ignorant of the rule of its rectitude, because being placed in darkness they know not how to wonder at the brightness of the light, which they have never seen; and since they are not stretched into the form of its beauty, they willingly become daily more deformed in themselves. For whosoever is touched by its rays, his own crookedness is more manifestly shown to him; and he discovers so much more truly how much he is bent in vice, as, more sagaciously considering the summit, he beholds how much he is distant from the right. Whence blessed Job, passing over the human race in virtues, surpassed his friends in speaking; but God speaking, being more sublimely instructed, he was silent in knowing himself. For those speaking unjustly he subdued, but at the words of internal locution he justly recognized himself a culprit. And indeed why he was scourged he knows not, but yet why he did not venerate the scourges, he redargued by being silent. For divine judgments, when they are not known, are not to be discussed with audacious speech, but to be venerated with fearful silence, because even when the Creator of things does not open the causes in the scourge, He

indicates them to be just by this, that He who is supremely just demonstrates that He does them. The holy man, therefore, reproved both first for his speaking and afterwards for his silence, let it be made known what he feels concerning himself. For he says:

CHAPTER II.

CHAP. XXXIX, VERS. 34.---Who have spoken lightly, what can I answer?

2. From an idle word not even the saints can be excused. But they care to cover the faults of the tongue with the merits of life. As if he said: I would defend my speech, if I had brought it forth with the weight of reason. But after the tongue is convicted of having used lightness, what remains but that it should be restrained by being silent? It follows:

IBID.---I will lay my hand upon my mouth.

In the use of sacred eloquence operation is wont to be understood in the hand, locution in the mouth. To lay the hand upon the mouth, therefore, is to cover the faults of incautious locution by the virtue of good work. But who can be found who, however perfect he be, does not yet sin of an idle word? James attesting, who says: Be not many masters, for in many things we all offend (James 3:1). And again: The tongue no man can tame (Ibid. 8). Whose faults the Truth redarguing through itself, says: But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment (Matth. 12:36). But holy men study

to cover the faults of the tongue before the eyes of God with the merits of life, they study to press down immoderate words with the weight of good works. Whence in the holy Church the hand is laid upon the mouth, while in its elect daily the vice of idle locution is covered by the virtue of good action. For it is written: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered (Psalm 31:1). But again since it is written: All things are naked and open to His eyes (Hebr. 4:13), how can those things be covered which by no means can be hidden from His eyes to whom all things are naked? But because that which we cover, we place below, and that wherewith we cover we surely bring over, that we may cover what is placed under, we are said to cover sins which we as it were place under while we abdicate them, and we bring another thing over them, while we afterwards choose the work of good action to this end that we may prefer it. He, therefore, who deserts prior evils, and afterwards does good things, by that which he adds, covers the past wickedness, over which he brings the merits of good work. Blessed Job, therefore, holding the type of the holy Church, and in his own words alleging his own things, designating ours, let him say from himself, let him say from us: I will lay my hand upon my mouth; that is, that which I consider to have displeased the strict Judge in me concerning my speech, I hide before His eyes under the veil of right work. It follows:

CHAPTER III.

VERS. 35.---One thing I have spoken, which I would that I had not said; and another, to which I will add no more.

3. Job humbly confesses to God rebuking him that he had sinned. If we discuss the past words of blessed Job, we find that he said nothing wickedly. But if we bend his words, which were brought forth with truth and liberty, into some vice of pride, they will not now be only two, because they will be many. But because our speaking to men is to open a hidden sense by words, but our speaking to the divine ears is to show the motion of the mind even by the expression of action, blessed Job, weighing himself in the balance of a most subtle examination, confesses that he had failed twice in his locution. For to speak one thing illicitly is to do things worthy of the scourge; to speak another is even to murmur concerning the scourge. He, therefore, who before the divine rebuke was preferred to men in every work, profiting in height by that same rebuke, recognized both that he was less right before in work, and less patient afterwards in the stripe. Whence he redargues himself, saying: One thing I have spoken, which I would that I had not said; and another, to which I will add no more. As if he said: I believed myself indeed right among men: but, Thou speaking, I have found myself both crooked before the scourges, and rigid after the scourges. To which I will add no more, because now by how much more subtly I understand Thee speaking, by so much more humbly do I investigate myself.

4. The object of penance is good things neglected, and evils committed. The active life is of many, the contemplative of few. And because blessed Job holds the type of the holy Church, these his words can agree with all the elect, who recognizing the Lord, feel that they have failed in one thing and another, because they understand that they have sinned either in thought and work, or in the neglected love of God and neighbor. To which they promise to add nothing more, because through the grace of conversion they care by repenting daily to purge even past things. Through this nevertheless, that blessed Job redargues himself by repenting of two things, he clearly shows that every sinner in penance ought to have a double groaning, surely because both he did not do the good which he ought, and he did the evil which he ought not. Hence it is forsooth that it is said through Moses concerning him who has brought forth an oath, to do either some evil or good, and has transcended this very thing by oblivion: He shall offer a female lamb from the flocks or a goat, and the priest shall pray for him, and for his sin. But if he shall not be able to offer a beast, let him offer two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, one for sin, and the other for a burnt offering (Levit. 5:6, 7, 8). For to bring forth an oath is to bind ourselves by a vow of divine servitude. And when we promise good works, we pledge to do well. But when we vow abstinence and the torture of our flesh, we swear at present to do ill to ourselves. But because no one in this life is so perfect, that however much he

be devoted to God, he does not sin among those very vows however small and pious, a female lamb is commanded to be offered from the flocks or a goat for sin. For what is signified by the lamb except the innocence of the active life, what by the goat, which often feeds hanging on the highest and furthest rocks, except the contemplative life? He, therefore, who beholds himself not to have fulfilled the promised and proposed things, ought to gird himself to the sacrifice of God more studiously either by the innocence of good work, or by the sublime pasture of contemplation. And it is well that a lamb from the flocks, but a goat is not commanded to be offered from the flocks, because the active life is of many, the contemplative of few. And when we do these things which we behold many to do and to have done, we give as it were a lamb from the flocks. But when the virtue of the offerer does not suffice for the lamb and the goat, it is added for the remedy of the penitent, that two young pigeons, or two turtledoves be offered. We know that young pigeons or turtledoves have a groaning for their song. What therefore is designated by the two young pigeons, or the two turtledoves, except the double groaning of our penance, that when we do not rise up to offer good works, we may bewail ourselves doubly, because both we have not done right things, and we have wrought crooked things? Whence also one turtledove is commanded to be offered for sin, but the other for a burnt offering. For a burnt offering (holocaustum) is said to be entirely burnt. One turtledove therefore we offer

for sin, when we give a groaning for fault; of the other indeed we make a burnt offering, when for that which we have neglected good things, we burning ourselves fundamentally, are on fire with the fire of sorrow. Because therefore a double groaning is due in penance, blessed Job profiting by the rebuke of the divine voice, and increasing in his own reprehension, confesses himself repenting to have said one thing and another, as if he said openly: I both grew torpid toward good things through negligence, and I broke forth to evils through audacity:

CHAP. XL, VERS. 1, 2.---And the Lord answering Job from the whirlwind, said: Gird up thy loins like a man, I will question thee, and do thou indicate to me.

What it is for the Lord to answer from the whirlwind, what for blessed Job to gird up his loins, what the questioning of God, what the indicating of man, has been treated of in the first sermon of the Lord. Because therefore we spare the tedium of the reader, we take great care lest we replicate the things said. It follows:

CHAPTER IV.

VERS. 3.---Wilt thou make void my judgment, and condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?

5. Job justly corrected, that he might be subjected to the hidden judgments of God even unknowingly. Whosoever strives to defend himself against the scourges of the Lord, endeavors to evacuate the judgment of him who scourges. For when he denies that he is struck for his fault,

what else does he but accuse the injustice of the striker? Blessed Job, therefore, the heavenly scourges did not strike for this end, that they might extinguish faults in him, but rather that they might increase merits, so that he who in the time of tranquility had shone in so great holiness, might also from the stroke make manifest what virtue of patience was hidden in him. Who indeed not finding his fault among the scourges, nor yet apprehending those same scourges to be a cause for him of increasing merit, believed himself to be struck unjustly, since he found not what in himself ought to have been corrected. But lest innocence itself be inflated into the tumor of elation, he is corrected by the divine voice, and his mind, free from iniquity, but pressed by stripes, is recalled to hidden judgments, so that the heavenly sentence, even if it is not known, be not yet believed unjust; but at least he may believe every thing he suffers to be just, from this forsooth that it is manifest that it is done by God as the author. For a great satisfaction of the stroke is the just will of the Creator. Which since it is wont to do nothing unjust, is recognized as just even if it is hidden. For when we are struck for the sin of injustice, if in our stroke we are joined to the divine will, we are soon liberated from our injustice by that same conjunction. For whosoever already tolerates the stroke, but yet is ignorant of the causes of the stroke, if believing this to be just he embraces the judgment itself against himself, by this very thing he is already corrected from his injustice, whereby he congratulates himself

to be justly struck. For joining himself to God in his vindication, he raises himself against himself; and it is already a great justice, that he accords with the will of the judge in the punishment, from whom he disagreed in the fault. The holy man, therefore, because he had disagreed with God in no fault, as if with difficulty accorded with Him among his punishments. For neither did he believe that the scourges which are wont to extinguish vices, only increased merits in him. Whence he is now justly corrected, that he might be subjected to the hidden judgments even unknowingly, and it is said to him: Wilt thou make void my judgment, and condemn me, that thou mayest be justified? As if it were said openly: Thy well-done things indeed thou considerest, but My hidden judgments thou art ignorant of. If therefore from thy merits thou disputest against My scourges, what else dost thou but hasten to condemn Me of injustice by justifying thyself? It follows:

CHAPTER V.

VERS. 4.---If thou hast an arm like God, and if thou thunderest with a like voice.

6. Even the holier are provoked to humility by the contemplation of God's holiness. Because blessed Job transcended the human race in merits, the pious Creator and teacher provokes him to consider the similitude of His magnitude, so that having recognized so great a dissimilitude, he may press himself down in humility.

7. God, although without a body, is compared with corporeal things. The heresy of the Anthropomorphites. Why eyes and shoulders are attributed to God. To remember in what sense it is said. What are the wings of God. But when voice and arm are said in God, it is to be guarded against with the greatest care, lest the mind suspect anything corporeal in Him. For to fall into the heresy of the Anthropomorphites is to conclude Him who uncircumscribedly fills and encompasses all things within corporeal lineaments. But almighty God, drawing us to His own things, humbles Himself even to ours, and so as to insinuate high things, He condescends to the humble, so that the mind of little ones, being nourished by things known, may rise up to inquire into the unknown, and hearing from Him who is far above it certain things near to itself, it may be moved as if by certain steps toward Him. Whence it comes to pass that through His Scripture He sometimes draws certain far dissimilar similitudes to Himself from the bodies of men, sometimes from minds, sometimes indeed from birds, sometimes even from insensate things. For often He draws a similitude to Himself from the bodies of men, as the prophet says of Him to the Israelites: He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye (Zech. 2:8). And as it is said again of Him to a hoping man through the Prophet: He shall overshadow thee with His shoulders (Psalm 90:4). It is surely manifest that in His nature God has neither eye nor shoulders, but because we discern through the eye, but sustain burdens on the

shoulders. God, because He sees all things, is held to have an eye; but because He tolerates us, and by that very thing that He tolerates He preserves, He is said to overshadow us on His shoulders. For he says: In His shoulders He hath overshadowed thee. As if he said to a sinning man, and after sin deprecating pardon: With that piety the Lord protects thee, with which piety He tolerated thee. For He overshadows in His shoulders, because while He carries, He defends. Sometimes indeed He draws a similitude to Himself from minds, as he says through the prophet to Israel: I have remembered thee, pitying thy youth (Jerem. 2:2). And again speaking by the comparison of a bride he says: And if she shall have forgotten, yet will I not forget thee (Isaiah 49:15). For who knows not that the memory of God is neither broken by oblivion, nor repaired by recordation? But while deserting some things He passes them by, He is said after the manner of minds to forget; and when after a long time He visits what things He has willed, He is called having remembered by the custom of our mutability. For by what pact does oblivion dissipate the power of His divinity, to which that same laudable memory does not essentially accord? For none are remembered except either past or absent things. How therefore does God remember past things, when those very things which in themselves pass away assist always present to His beck? Or how does He remember absent things, while every thing that is, is by this present to Him, that it is in Him? But if it were not present to Him, it would by no means

be; for He creates non-existent things by seeing, He contains existent things by seeing. Whatever therefore the Creator does not see, lacks the essence of subsisting. But sometimes a similitude is drawn to Him from birds, as is said through Moses: He spread out His wings, and took them up (Deut. 32:11). And the prophet says: Protect me under the shadow of Thy wings (Psalm 16:9). For because while He protects He nourishes us little ones, and He refreshes us not with a grave and onerous, but with a light and bland protection, while He exerts His mercies on us, He spreads as it were after the manner of birds His wings over us. Sometimes also He compares Himself by a high condescension to insensate things because of our infirmity, as He says through the prophet: Behold I will creak over you, as a wagon laden with hay creaks (Amos 2:13). For because hay is the life of the carnal, as it is written: All flesh is hay (Isaiah 40:6), in that the Lord suffers the life of the carnal, He testifies that He carries hay after the manner of a wagon. To which to creak under the load of hay is to tolerate with complaint the burdens and iniquities of sinners. When therefore He draws far dissimilar similitudes to Himself, it is to be solertly intuited that certain such things are sometimes said in God because of the effect of the work, but sometimes to indicate the substance of His majesty. For when in God eye, shoulders, foot and wings are named, the effect indeed of operation is shown. But when hand, arm, right hand or voice is said in God, through these words the Son consubstantial with Him is demonstrated.

For He Himself is both hand and right hand, of whose ascension the Father speaks through Moses, saying: I will lift up My hand to heaven, and I will swear by My right hand (Deut. 32:40). He Himself is the arm, of whom the prophet says: And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? (Isaiah 53:1). He Himself is the voice, because the Father by begetting said to Him: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee (Psalm 2:7). And of whom it is written: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1). Through this Word David asserts the Father to have made all things, saying: He spake, and they were made (Psalm 32:9). To have an arm, therefore, for God is to beget the operating Son; to thunder with the voice is terribly to demonstrate the Son consubstantial with Himself to the world. When therefore the Lord says to blessed Job: If thou hast an arm like God, and if thou thunderest with a like voice, by a wonderful dispensation of piety He exalts him while He rebukes him, because He demonstrates him whom He surpasses by His own comparison to be superior to all. To whom in this proposition He subjoins:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. VII].

VERS. 5.---Deck thyself now with beauty, and lift up thyself on high, and be glorious, and put on beautiful garments.

8. Angels and the Church are the beauty and ornament of God.---Understand, "as I do." For He decks Himself with beauty, of whom it is written: The Lord hath reigned, He hath put on beauty (Psal. 92:1). He is lifted up on high among us, when He is shown to our minds to be impenetrable in His own nature. But He is glorious, who while He enjoys Himself, is not in need of added praise. He is clothed with beautiful garments, because He has taken the choirs of holy angels, whom He created, for the use of His own beauty, and He exhibits the Church to Himself as a kind of glorious garment not having wrinkle or spot (Ephes. 5:27). Whence it is said to Him by the Prophet: Thou hast put on confession and beauty, clothed with light as with a garment (Psal. 103:2). Here indeed He puts on confession, there beauty, because those whom here He has made confessing through penitence, there He will show shining through the beauty of justice. He is clothed therefore with light as with a garment, because with all the saints, to whom it was said: Ye are the light of the world (Matth. 5:14), He will be clothed in that eternal glory. Whence also it is said in the Gospel, that when the Lord was transfigured on the mount, His garments became white as snow (Matth. 17:2). In which transfiguration what else is announced than the glory of the final resurrection? For on the mount His garments became like snow, because in the summit of heavenly brightness all the saints will adhere to Him, shining with the light of justice. [Vet. VI.] But because under the name of beautiful garments He suggests

how He joins the just to Himself, He also shows how He separates the unjust from Himself. It follows:

CHAPTER VII.

VERS. 6.---Scatter the proud in Thy wrath.

9. God is angry tranquilly.---Understand, "as I do," who both tolerate them when they are united against Me in the time of tranquility, and coming at some time as the Strict One, I scatter them in My wrath. But among these things it is to be carefully considered that a heavy error of perfidy is admitted, if perchance any one should estimate that in that substance of the Divinity wrath and tranquility are varied. For the Creator of all is in this way supremely immortal, in that He is not mutable after the manner of a creature. Hence it is said of Him by James: With whom there is no transmutation, nor shadow of change (James 1:17). Hence again it is written: But Thou, O Lord, judgest with tranquility (Wisd. 12:18). Hence the Prophet says: The land is made desolate from the face of the wrath of the dove, from the face of the wrath of the Lord (Jerem. 25:38). For what he had foretold as the wrath of the dove, this he subjoined as the wrath of the Lord. For the dove is a very simple animal; and because no inequality of wrath creeps into God, he called the wrath of the Lord the wrath of the dove. For that he might show the imperturbable force of the divine strictness, he said both "wrath" and "of the dove," as if he were saying more plainly: He exerts a strict judgment unshaken, who remain-

ing gentle punishes the unjust. Whence also in the last judgment, remaining incommutable in Himself, He is varied by no change or mutability, but yet He is by no means shown to the elect and the reprobate under the appearance of the same incommutability, because He will appear both tranquil to the just, and angry to the unjust. For by the witness of conscience they carry within themselves that from which their minds may look upon one and the same thing, but not be modified equally, because both to the former their past justice shows Him benign, and to the latter their fault shows Him terrible. Whose fear who may explain, when it shall happen to the wretched both to discern their faults within themselves, and to see the just Judge before them? This truly is done daily in the use of the present life, that the hearts of mortals may be taught concerning the quality of the future Judge. For when two go to judgment, the one conscious to himself of innocence, the other of fault, before the sentence is brought forth they both behold the judge as yet silent, and yet the debtor of the fault suspects a heavy wrath against himself from this very silence of the judge. Which wrath the perturbation of the judge does not announce to him, but the recollection of wickedness, because although as yet the sentence does not cry out the guilty one without, yet within the conscience heavily accuses him. But on the contrary the friend of justice beholds the face of the one discerning, but within he is cheered by the testimony of good recollection, and in that he has

nothing at home that he may fear, in that he sees everything that is towards himself to be mild. In this place, therefore, the wrath of the Lord is called not a perturbation of the divine substance, but the examination of just vindication upon sinners ill-conscious to themselves. For although they see Him tranquil in judgment, yet because they do not doubt that they are to be struck by Him, they think Him perturbed in His motions. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII.

IBID.---And beholding every arrogant one, humble him.

10. Every arrogant one either by repenting knows his fault, or by perishing perceives his punishment.---As if He should say, "as I do." But aptly to the order of vindication the fault of the proud is set before the arrogant, because truly pride is not from arrogance, but arrogance is generated from pride. But in two ways every sinner is beheld by the Lord, when he is either converted from sin, or punished for sin. For of the respect of conversion it is said: Because the Lord looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of Jesus, and wept bitterly (Luke 22:61). Of the respect of vengeance again it is said: But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil, that He may destroy the memory of them from the earth (Psal. 33:17). But in both ways the arrogant one is laid low in humility, because either by repenting he knows his fault, or by perishing he perceives his punishment:

CHAPTER IX

[Vet. VII].

VERS. 7.---Behold all the proud, and confound them, and crush the impious in their place.

11. The dejection of the proud while they are lifted up.---Understand, "as I do." For the proud are confounded from the respect of the Lord, either here by knowing and condemning their crimes through piety, or there by feeling the punishments through justice. But the place of the impious is pride itself, because since it is written: The beginning of all sin is pride (Ecclus. 10:15), where impiety arises, there it is contained, although neither does impiety differ at all from pride. For it is to be very proud to feel impious things concerning the Author. The impious, therefore, is crushed in his own place, because by the very pride by which he is lifted up he is oppressed; and when, by carrying himself high, he raises himself in his thoughts, he hides from himself the light of justice which he ought to have found. But often while false glory profits outwardly against God, true misery within becomes empty. Whence the Prophet says: Thou hast cast them down while they were being lifted up (Psal. 72:18). For he does not say: Thou hast cast them down after they were lifted up, but while they were being lifted up, because this very thing is for the proud to be cast down within, that it happens to them to be lifted up by false glory without. For by the ordering of the divine judgment, there is not to them one thing here as fault and another

as punishment, but their own fault is turned into punishment for them, so that to those elated by the pride of arrogance this very thing is truly to fall within which is shown to have profited without. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

VERS. 8.---Hide them in the dust, and at the same time plunge their faces into the pit.

12. God permits the hearts of the proud to be oppressed by earthly business and desires.---As if He should say, "as I do." For by a just judgment the Lord hides the proud and the impious in the dust, because He permits their hearts to be oppressed by those very earthly businesses which they choose, having despised the love of the Creator. Whence also when He discusses their life in the last judgment, He does not acknowledge it as if hidden from Himself, saying: I know not who ye are (Luke 13:27). The life of the wicked is hidden under the dust, because it is weighed down by abject and lowest desires. For whoever as yet lusts after those things which are of the world, does not appear, as it were, before the face of the true light, because truly he lurks under the dust of earthly thought. This dust of wicked thoughts the oppressed mind endures, which the wind of most wicked temptation brings. [Vet. VIII.] For hence it is that of every soul weighed down by earthly desires it is said under the species of Ephraim by the Prophet: Ephraim is become a cake baked under the ashes, which is not turned (Hosea 7:8). Truly from nature well-

founded there is in us an intention which should rise unto God; but from conversation wickedly accustomed there is in us a pleasure which may press us down for the present into the world. But a cake baked under the ashes is cleaner on that part which it hides below, and more sordid on that part on which it endures the ashes above. Whoever, therefore, neglects the intention by which he ought to have sought God, as it were after the manner of a cake baked under the ashes, presses down the cleaner part below, and when he willingly endures the cares of the world, he carries as it were a heap of ashes above. But the cake baked under the ashes would be turned, if it repelled the ashes of carnal desires, and showed above the good intention which it had lately oppressed by despicing it in itself. But it refuses to be turned, when the mind, pressed by the love of the cares of the world, neglects to cast off the mass of the ashes placed above, and while it does not desire to rise into a good intention, it presses down as it were its cleaner face beneath.

13. While by being proud they seek higher things, they are thrust back to lower things.--- But aptly it is subjoined: At the same time plunge their faces into the pit. As if He should say, "as I do." For by a just judgment the Lord merges the faces of the proud into the pit, because He casts down lower the intention of their heart raising itself above men. For he looks upon lowest things, whose face attends to the pit. And well it is said of the proud that their faces are plunged into the pit, because they seek the lowest things, while

by being proud they lust after higher things; and by how much more they raise themselves by extolling themselves, by so much more they tend lower by falling. Truly they seek earthly glory, and they are lowest things which they look forward to, while by being proud they follow high things. Whence in a wonderful and diverse manner the business is carried on, so that the humble seek heaven while they cast themselves lower; the proud seek the lowest things, while by despising others they are extolled as if in higher things. The former, while they despise themselves, are joined to heavenly things; the latter, while they raise themselves, are divided from superior things, and, so to speak, the former by elevating themselves depress themselves, the latter by depressing themselves elevate themselves. And well is it said of those being proud by the Psalmist: But He humbleth the sinners even to the ground (Psal. 146:6), because coveting those things which are below, while by extolling themselves they raise themselves, having lost heaven what else do they seek but the earth? To whom this very thing is already to have fallen into the lowest things: to have sought the lowest things having left the superior. Rightly therefore are their faces said to be plunged into the pit, because following the lowest things, they tend to the barathrum of hell. For by a just judgment it is done, that those whom a voluntary aversion here blinds, there a worthy pit of punishment may hide from the intuition of the true light. Therefore, because the holy man was so shaken

by the terror of the divine power that it was said to him: If thou hast an arm like God, and if thou thunderest with a like voice, scatter the proud in thy wrath, and beholding every arrogant one humble him, and other things which God indeed can do, but man can scarcely suffice to hear, all these things with what intention the Lord set them before, He shows at the end of the subjoined conclusion, saying:

CHAPTER XI

[Vet. IX, Rec. VIII].

VERS. 9.---And I will confess that thy own right hand can save thee.

14. The error of the Pelagians, trusting that they can be saved by their own strength.---As if He should say plainly: If thou canst do these terrible things, which I have brought forward, I myself ascribe to thee, and not to Me, all the good things which thou have done. But if thou canst not destroy others when they sin, by looking upon them, it is clear that thou art not able to free thyself from the guilt of thy own wickedness by thy own power. Behold, it is said by the divine voice to blessed Job that he is not saved by his own right hand; and yet some men, who are far from the strength of this man, having despised the help of God, trust that they can be saved by their own fortitude. For whom what else ought we to pray, but that if they have already received the gifts of good works, they may also receive this gift, that they may learn from whom they

have received these? But because in the words set before Him the Lord brought in the power of His majesty, now in the things that follow He shows the wickedness of the ancient enemy, so that the good servant, having first heard the virtues of the Lord, might know how much he should love, and, having afterwards known the craftiness of the devil, might learn how much he should fear. Whence it is well said by the prophet: The lion shall roar, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who will not prophesy (Amos 3:8)? For after the power of his Creator became known to him, by no means ought the strengths of the adversary to have been hidden from him, so that he might the more humbly subject himself to his Defender, by how much more subtly he had recognized the wickednesses of his enemy, and might seek his Protector so much the more ardently, as he recognized the more terrible enemy whom he should avoid. For it is certain that he loves his Deliverer less who understands less the danger which he has escaped, and he accounts the consolation of a defender a vile thing who thinks the power of the adversary to be weak. Whence the prophet, well attributing his deliverance to the Lord, said: I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength (Psal. 17:1), saying plainly, namely: I love Thee the more, by how much more, feeling my own infirmity, I know that Thou art my strength. Hence again he says: Show forth Thy wonderful mercies, Thou that savest them that trust in Thee (Psal. 16:7), because then truly the mercies of the Lord become wonderful among ourselves who

are delivered, when through the same mercies it is recognized how heavy were the dangers which we have escaped.

15. The strengths and frauds of our enemy are described.---And because in the preceding discourse the Lord laid open to blessed Job the wonderful works of the saints that should follow, so that having heard these he might learn from the height of his own virtues how humble things he ought to feel, now it is shown to him with what enemy he carries on the war, and the strengths and frauds of that one are more subtly indicated, so that he who has been led to the colloquy of his Author, may openly know the arguments of the adversary. For by the following words the Lord insinuates to His faithful servant all the machinations of the crafty enemy: all that he seizes by oppressing, all that he flies around by lying in wait, all that he terrifies by threatening, all that he flatters by persuading, all that he breaks by despairing, all that he deceives by promising. He begins, therefore, all the contests of his tergiversation, saying:

CHAPTER XII

[Vet. X, Rec. IX].

VERS. 10.---Behold Behemoth, whom I made with thee.

16. All things were created together according to substance, not according to species.---Whom does He insinuate under the name of Behemoth but the ancient enemy, who, interpreted from

the Hebrew voice, in the Latin tongue sounds as "animal" (beast)? Whose person is plainly shown below, while his malice is subjoined. But since it is written of God that He made all things together (Eccli. 18:1), why does He indicate that He made this animal with man, while it is certain that He made all things together? Again it is to be asked, how God created all things together, while Moses describes them created distinctly by the change of six days (Gen. 1:32). Which, however, we more quickly recognize, if we subtly investigate the very causes of their origins. Truly the substance of things was created together, but the species was not formed together, and that which existed together through the substance of matter did not appear together through the species of form. For when it is described that heaven and earth were made together, there is indicated that spiritual and corporal things were made together, whatever arises from heaven together, whatever is produced from the earth together. For the sun, the moon, and the stars are said to have been made in heaven on the fourth day, but that which proceeded in species on the fourth day existed in the substance of heaven on the first day through the condition of creation. On the first day the earth is said to have been created, and on the third the shrubs were founded, and all the green things of the earth are described; but this which brought itself forth in species on the third day, was truly created on the first day in the substance of the earth itself from which it arose. Hence it is that Moses related all things created

distinctly through individual days, and yet subjoined all things created together, saying: These are the generations of the heaven and the earth, when they were created in the day in which the Lord made the heaven and the earth, and every shrub of the field, before it arose in the earth, and every herb of the region (Gen. 2:4, 5). For he who had narrated the heaven and the earth, the shrub, and the herb created on different days, now manifests them made in one day, so that he might clearly show that every creature existed together through substance, although it did not proceed together through species. Hence there also it is written: God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He made them (Gen. 1:27). For Eve is not yet described as made, and already the man is said to be male and female. But because from Adam's side the woman was without doubt to proceed, she is already accounted in him through substance, from whom she was to be produced through form. We can, however, consider these things even in the smallest, that from the smallest we may weigh the greater. For when the herb is created, not yet is the fruit shown in it, not yet the seed of its fruit. But there is in it also when the fruit and seed do not appear, because truly those things are together in the substance of the root which do not come forth together through the increments of time.

17. In what sense the angel and man were created together. The deserting angel by sinning lost the gifts of grace, not of nature. Two principles

of the Manichaeans are rejected.---But because we say that these things were created together through substance, which we find to come forth some from others, in what way is Behemoth asserted to have been created with blessed Job, since there is neither one substance of angel and man, nor is man brought forth from an angel, nor an angel from a man? But if on this account Behemoth is said to have been made with blessed Job, because it is not doubted that every creature was created together by the Author, who in His action is by no means extended by the protraction of time, why is it specifically said of Behemoth what is generally held in common with all creatures? But if we weigh the causes of things by subtle discussion, we know the angel and man were made together, namely together not by unity of time, but by knowledge of reason; together through the received image of wisdom, and not together through the joined substance of form. For it is written of man: Let us make man in our image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). And it is said to Satan through Ezekiel: Thou wast the seal of likeness, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty in the delights of the paradise of God (Ezek. 28:12). In every creature, therefore, man and angel existed as founded together because they proceeded distinct from every irrational creature. Because therefore in the whole condition of things there is no rational animal except the angel and man, whatever cannot use reason was not made with man. Let it be said therefore to man, let it be said of the angel, who even if he

lost the power of sublimity, yet did not lose the subtlety of a rational nature: Behold Behemoth, whom I made with thee. So that while man considers him who was made in reason with himself to have perished, he may fear the neighbor fall of pride from that very perdition of his neighbor. In these words, however, it is to be cleverly intuited that the nefarious dogma of the Manichee is openly reproved by the divine voice, who while he speaks of two principles, endeavors to assert that the nation of darkness was not made. For how is that most wicked nation said not to be made, while the Lord testifies that He made this very Behemoth, namely the author of wickedness well-founded by nature? But because we have heard with whom this Behemoth was made, let us hear what he does being lost. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII

[Rec. X].

IBID.---He shall eat hay as an ox.

18. The devil desires especially to undermine the clean life of spiritual ones.---If we diligently discuss the words of the prophets, we find these and those brought forth by one spirit. For Isaiah, when he saw the life of sinners being devoured by the ancient and insatiable enemy, said: The lion shall eat chaff as an ox (Isai. 11:7). But what is signified by the name of hay and chaff, but the life of the carnal? Of which it is said by the prophet: All flesh is hay (Isai. 40:6). He, therefore, who is here Behemoth, is there a lion; he who is here hay,

is there chaff. But the mind strives to search out why this one is compared to an ox in the eating of hay or chaff, both here by the divine voice as Behemoth, and there by Isaiah as a lion, and not to a horse. Which, however, we more quickly recognize, if we weigh what is the difference of nutriment in both animals. For horses eat hay however sordid it may be, but they do not drink water except what is clean. But oxen drink water however sordid, but they do not feed except on clean hay. What is it therefore that this Behemoth is compared to an ox, which is fed with clean food, unless this which is said of that ancient enemy through another prophet: His meat is choice (Habac. 1:16)? For he does not rejoice to seize those whom he sees lying voluntarily in the lowest things, entangled in depraved and sordid actions. He desires, therefore, to eat hay as an ox, because he seeks to crush with the tooth of his suggestion the clean life of the spiritual.

19. Many seem elect, and are not.---But I see it is to be asked how this Behemoth, eating hay as an ox, is said to consume the life of the spiritual, since, as was said above, by the name of hay the life of the carnal is designated. His meat also will no longer be choice, if eating hay he seizes the carnal. But to these things it more quickly occurs, because some men are both hay before God, and are accounted by the name of sanctity before men, since life shows one thing before human eyes, and conscience intends another before divine judgments. These, therefore, are elect before human judgments, but hay before the subtle ex-

amination of the Lord. Or before the divine eyes was Saul not hay, of whom Samuel the prophet said to the people: Surely ye see whom the Lord hath chosen (1 Sam. 10:24); and of whom a little above it is said: Chosen and good? For whom the sinning people deserved, he existed as reprobate before God, and yet by the order of causes he was chosen and good.

[Vet. XI.] Because many are hay, and suspect themselves to be elect from human estimation, it is well said by Solomon: I saw the wicked buried, who even while they yet lived, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city as if of just works (Eccl. 8:10). Because many are hay, but yet are hedged in by the favor of sanctity, well does a certain wise man indicate, saying: Pass on, guest, and adorn the table (Ecclus. 29:33). For by passing on a guest is said to adorn the table, because if anyone placed at the altar of God, seeks his own glory through good works, and from the ostentation of his sanctity the praise of the altar is extended, and yet he himself is not held in the number of citizens before God. His opinion profits others, and yet he himself as a stranger to God passes on. He therefore decorated the table by passing on, because he did not wish to stand at the sacred things, who through everything he studied to do, ran in mind to human praises. Because therefore some lead indeed a clean life through study, but from it they do not desire to please within, rightly both his meat is said to be choice, and yet this Behemoth is said to eat hay as an ox. For as if before the mouth of this

Behemoth clean hay lies on the earth and in the lowest things, when both life is led as if innocent through the keeping of the commandments, and yet among the action which is shown good the heart is not elevated to seeking sublime things. What utility therefore does he act who keeps in himself the cleanness of life, if through a lowest intention he leaves himself to be found in the earth in the mouth of this Behemoth? Because therefore the almighty God insinuates what our enemy does, now let it become known how he prevails, so that the wickedness of his craftiness by how much it is more openly known, by so much it may be more easily overcome. It follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. XI].

VERS. 11.---His strength is in his loins, and his virtue is in the navel of his belly.

20. The devil mostly rules over both sexes of men through lust.---The seed-plots of coition are said to be for men in the loins, but for women to be in the navel. Hence it is that the Truth says to the disciples: Let your loins be girded (Luke 12:35). Hence Peter, when he would restrain lust from the heart, admonished, saying: Girded in the loins of your mind (1 Pet. 1:13). Hence Paul, when through the sacrifice of Abraham he said that the priesthood of Levi was tithed in the time of Melchisedech, showing where Levi then lurked in the body of Abraham, says: For he was yet in the loins of his father (Heb. 7:10). But that

the seed-plot of lust for women is contained in the navel the prophet testifies, who, under the species of a prostituted woman, rebuking the petulance of Judea, says: In the day of thy birth thy navel was not cut (Ezek. 16:4). For in the day of birth to cut the navel is to cut away the lust of the flesh at the time of conversion. Because it is difficult to correct things evilly begun, and to reform into better things what has been once shaped deformedly, Judea is rebuked concerning her birth, who while she was born in God, retained her uncut navel, because she did not cut away the flux of lust. Because therefore by the power of the devil the sex of either kind is greatly subjected from the infirmity of lust, both his strength is said to be in his loins against males, and his virtue against females in the navel.

[Vet. XII.] 21. Corruption of the flesh is wont to follow pride of the spirit.---But why when He brought in that this Behemoth eats hay, did He subjoin the losses of lust as the first arguments of his deception, unless because it is clearly manifest to all that after once pride has taken the spirit of man, it soon extends itself to the corruption of the flesh? Which we also recognize in those very first men, who, while after the pride they had perpetrated they cover their shameful members, patently indicated that after they had attempted to snatch at high things within themselves, soon they endured things to be ashamed of in the flesh without (Gen. 3:7). This Behemoth therefore insatiably raging, and seeking to devour the whole man at once, now raises the mind into pride,

now corrupts the flesh with the pleasure of lust. But well his strength is by no means said to be in the loins or navel of those who are prostrated, but, his strength is in his loins, and his virtue is in the navel of his belly. As if it were openly said: His strength is in his own loins, and his virtue is in the navel of his own belly, because truly they properly become his body, who, deceived by the flatteries of shameful suggestions, succumb to him through the flux of lust. It follows:

CHAPTER XV

[Rec. XII].

VERS. 12.---He strains his tail as a cedar.

22. The devil bound by divine power, will hereafter be loosed, and through Antichrist will do many signs.---Many things are at hand in these, which may be brought forth for the instruction of morals; but first we discuss the violent things of this Behemoth, that afterwards we may more subtly detect his crafty ones. In sacred Scripture by the name of cedar sometimes the high excellence of heavenly glory is expressed, sometimes however the rigid elation of the wicked is designated. By the name of cedar the loftiness of heavenly glory is expressed, as the Psalmist testifies: The just shall flourish as the palm tree, he shall be multiplied as the cedar of Libanus (Psal. 91:13). Again by the name of cedar the proud power of the wicked is designated, as it is said by the same Prophet: The voice of the Lord breaking the cedars (Psal. 28:5). But

what is called the tail of this Behemoth, but that extremity of the ancient enemy; when truly he enters into that lost man, his own vessel, who is specifically called Antichrist? Who because he is permitted to be raised into the tumor of power now by the honors of the world, now by the signs and prodigies of feigned sanctity, rightly by the divine voice his tail is compared to a cedar. For as the cedar deserts the other shrubs by growing on high, so then Antichrist, obtaining the glory of the world temporally, will transcend the measures of men both by the height of honor, and by the power of signs. Truly the spirit is in him who, created in high places, did not lose the power of his nature even when cast down. Whose virtue is therefore now shown least, because it is bound by the dispensation of divine fortitude. Whence it is said by John: I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand; and he apprehended the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and sent him into the abyss, and closed and sealed over him (Apoc. 20:1, 2, 3). For he is said to be sent bound into the abyss, because thrust back into the hearts of the wicked, he is constrained by the power of the divine dispensation, lest he be unbridled as much as he is able to hurt, so that although he may rage through them secretly, yet he may not break forth to the violent rapines of pride. But there it is intimated how he is to be loosed in the end of the world, when it is said: And after the thousand years shall be finished,

Satan shall be loosed from his prison, and shall go out, and shall seduce the nations (Ibid., 7). For by the number of a thousand the whole time of holy Church, however much it may be, is expressed for its perfection. Which being finished, the ancient enemy given over to his own strengths, is let loose for indeed a little time, but in much virtue against us.

23. He will rage, but for a short time.---Whom although his savageness dilates unto cruelty, yet heavenly mercy narrows him by the shortness of days. For hence the Truth says through itself: There shall be then great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, nor shall be (Matth. 24:21). Hence again He says: Except those days had been shortened, there should no flesh be saved (Ibid., 22). For because the Lord beholds us both proud and weak, He says that the days which He brought in as singularly evil are mercifully shortened, surely both so that He may terrify pride concerning the adversity of the time, and may refresh infirmity concerning the shortness of the days.

[Vet. XIII.] 24. To be more feared from the signs which he will do, than from the punishments which he brought upon the martyrs.---But it is very much to be considered, when this Behemoth raises his tail as a cedar, in what then more atrocious than now he rises exertedly. For what kinds of punishments do we know, which we do not already rejoice to have exercised the strengths of the martyrs? For some the sword plunged in the throat with an unforeseen blow laid low, others

the gibbet of the cross affixed, in which both death provoked is repelled, and repulsed is provoked. Others the saw with hirsute teeth wore away, others the hoof armed with iron furrowing plucked, others belluine madness by truncating with bites crushed, others the force of stripes pressed through the skin from the innermost of the bowels broke, others the earth being dug out covered alive, others plunged into the deep a precision into death broke, others projected into itself water by filling absorbed, others the edacious flame even unto ashes being fed consumed. When therefore this Behemoth dilates his tail more wickedly in the end of the world, what is it that then grows more atrociously in these torments, unless this which the Truth says through itself in the Gospel: There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall give great signs and wonders; so that if it were possible, even the elect should be sent into error (Matth. 24:24)? For now our faithful do wonderful things, when they suffer perverse things; but then the satellites of this Behemoth, even when they bring in perverse things, are to do wonderful things. Let us weigh therefore what will be that temptation of the human mind, when the pious martyr both subjects his body to torments, and yet before his eyes the torturer does miracles. Whose virtue then would not be shaken from the very bottom of thoughts, when he who tortures with scourges coruscates with signs? Let it be said therefore rightly: He strains his tail as a cedar, because truly both high

then will he be by the veneration of a prodigy, and hard by the cruelty of torment.

[Vet. XIV.] 25. Antichristus alios mentitis virtutibus decipiet, alios vi superabit.---For not by power alone then is he raised, but he is also supported by the ostentation of signs. Whence also it is said by David: He lies in wait in secret, as a lion in his den (Psal. 9:30, or Psal. 10:9). For unto open power it would have sufficed that he were a lion, even if he had not been lying in wait; and again unto secret crafts it would have sufficed that lying in wait he should steal upon, even if he were not a lion. But because this ancient enemy is unbridled in all his strengths, he is permitted to rage through both, so that against the elect in the contest he may be let loose both by fraud and by virtue, virtue through power, fraud through signs. Rightly therefore is he said to be both a lion and one lying in wait: lying in wait through the species of miracles, a lion through secular fortitude. For so that he may draw along those who are openly wicked, he ostentates secular power; but so that he may deceive even the just, he simulates sanctity with signs. To those he persuades the elation of magnitude, these he deceives by the ostentation of sanctity. Concerning this tail of this Behemoth under the species of a dragon it is said by John: And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and sent them into the earth (Apoc. 12:4). For heaven is the Church which in this night of the present life, while it contains in itself the innumerable virtues of the saints, shines with stars radiant from above. But the tail

of the dragon casts down stars into the earth, because that extremity of Satan, raised by the audacity of the assumed man, shows as reprobate by obtaining some whom it found in the Church as if elect of God. For stars to fall from heaven into the earth is for some having left the hope of heavenly things, under that leader, to gape after the ambit of secular glory.

26. He was prefigured by Antiochus.---Hence Daniel speaks under the species of Antiochus against this tail of the dragon, saying: It cast down of the strength, and of the stars, and trod upon them, and was magnified even to the prince of strength, and from him it took away the continual sacrifice, and cast down the place of his sanctification. But strength was given to it against the continual sacrifice, on account of sins; and truth shall be cast down in the earth, and it shall do, and shall prosper (Dan. 8:10-12). For it casts down from the strength and from the stars, when it breaks some both resplendent with the light of justice, and robust in the virtue of work. Which is magnified even to the prince of strength, because it is extolled against the very Author of virtue. It takes away the continual sacrifice, because it interrupts the study of the conversation of the Church in those whom it shall have taken. But strength is given to it on account of sins against the continual sacrifice, because unless the merits of those perishing required it, the adversary would by no means be able to obtain those who were believed upright. Truth is cast down in the earth, because then

the faith of heavenly things is inclined to the desire of temporal life. And it shall do, and shall prosper, because then not only in the minds of the reprobate, but also in the bodies of the elect, it shall range with inestimable cruelty, without any objection. Hence again it is said through Daniel: There shall rise up a king impudent of face, and understanding propositions, and his strength shall be strengthened, but not in his own strengths (Dan. 8:23). For the strength of that man is not strengthened in his own strengths, because it is raised by the virtue of Satan into the glory of perdition. Hence again he says: He shall kill the robust and the people of the saints according to his own will, and deceit shall be directed in his hand (Ibid., 24, 25). For he kills the robust, when he overcomes corporally those who are unconquered in mind. Or surely he kills the robust and the people of the saints according to his own will, when he draws those who were believed robust and holy to the nod of his own will. In whose hand deceit is directed, because in him fraud is helped by work. For what he says by deceiving, this he asserts by doing wonderful things; for whatever the lying tongue simulates, this the hand of work shows as if it were true.

CHAPTER XVII

[Vet. XVI, Rec. XIV].

VERS. 18.---His bones are like pipes of brass.

29. Who are the bones of Antichrist. — In the body, there are bones which contain the mem-

bers, and which are contained. Therefore, this beast has flesh and it has bones, because some are wicked who are nevertheless held in error by others, and others are more wicked who also hold others in error. What, then, do we understand by the bones of Antichrist but any who are more powerful in his body? In whose heart, while iniquity has vehemently hardened, the whole frame of his body subsists through them. For many in this world seem rich, who, while supported by things and wealth, are as it were solidified by strength; but by bestowing these very things by which they are supported, they draw others to their own error. At one time they entice some with gifts so that they become perverse, at another they bind some with rewards so that they remain perverse. What, then, are these but the bones of Antichrist, who, while they multiply the wicked by containing them, carry the flesh in his body? These sometimes exhibit a sweetness of tongue in deceiving their hearers, because thorns also put forth flowers; and indeed that which smells sweet appears in them, but that which pricks is hidden. They mix sweet things with bitter, smooth things with hurtful, and indeed they desire to be seen with a power of being admired, but by the art of deceiving they are as it were humbly laid low through relaxed conversations, and through their speech they insinuate about themselves what they deny by their display.

30. Why they are compared to pipes of brass. — Whence also the bones of this Behemoth are rightly compared to pipes of brass, because

surely, after the manner of insensible metal, they have the sound of speaking well, but they have not the sense of living well. For they assert this as if speaking humbly, which they despise by living elately. Whence it is well said by Paul: *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal* (1 Cor. 13:1). For one speaking good things, but not following those same good things through love, returns a sound like brass or a cymbal, because he himself does not feel the words which he himself makes. [Vet. XVII.] There are indeed some in the body of this beast who are not weighted with honors, not supported by riches, not decorated with the appearance of virtues, not skilled in the science of craftiness, but yet they aim to be seen as what they are not, and therefore they become more wicked against the life of the good, concerning whom it also follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. XV]

IBID. — His cartilage is as it were plates of iron.

31. Those who are weaker in the body of Antichrist exist as more wicked for the perpetration of evils. — For cartilage has indeed the appearance of bone, but it has not the strength of bone. What is it, then, that his cartilage is compared to plates of iron, but that those who are weaker in him exist as more wicked for the perpetration of evils? For by iron other metals are cut, and

his cartilage is said to be like iron, because those who in his body do not suffice for the showing of virtues are more sharply kindled against the death of the faithful. For because they consider that they cannot do signs and prodigies with him, they prove themselves to him through cruelty; and for the fact that they cannot persuade the hearts of the innocent to be corrupted, they glory more manifoldly than the rest in extinguishing the bodies of the good. Well therefore is it said: 1064 His cartilage is as plates of iron, because in his body whatever each one shall believe to be weaker, this is what falls in more wickedly. Who are rightly compared not to iron only, but to plates of iron, because while they aim to dilate themselves everywhere in cruelty, they extend themselves as it were into plates of iron.

[Rec. XVI.] 32. It is pleasing to distinguish with a hand of narrower inquisition these same words of the Creator, which already seem discussed, and to bring back more abundant fruits of understanding for the instruction of morals. For because we have heard what the ancient enemy does against men through the assumed man, it remains that we now explore what he also works in men through himself without man. Behold, for it is said:

CHAPTER XIX.

VERS. 17 (Vulg. 12). — He draweth up his tail like a cedar.

33. The first suggestion of the devil is tender and easily crushed. But afterwards its strength

becomes intolerable. Sin is admitted in three ways. — The first suggestion of the serpent is indeed soft and tender, and easily to be crushed by the foot of virtue; but if this is negligently admitted to grow strong, and an entrance to the heart is freely provided for it, it exaggerates itself with such power that, depressing the captured mind, it grows to an intolerable strength. He is said, therefore, to draw up his tail like a cedar, because a temptation once received into the heart dominates as if by right in all things which it shall subsequently bring in. Therefore the head of this Behemoth is grass, his tail a cedar, because from the first suggestion it is laid low in flattery, but by use vehemently growing strong, at the increasing end of the temptation, it is strengthened. For everything which he suggests at the beginning is conquerable, but from that follows what can scarcely be overcome. For first he speaks soft things to the mind as if advising; but when once he has fixed the tooth of delight, he is bound almost insolubly by subsequent violent custom. Whence also he is well said to draw up his tail. For he wounds with the tooth, he binds with the tail, because he strikes by the first suggestion, but he binds the stricken mind, lest it should be able to escape, by the increasing end of the temptation. For because sin is admitted in three ways, namely, when it is perpetrated by the suggestion of the serpent, by the delight of the flesh, and by the consent of the spirit, this Behemoth, first suggesting unlawful things, puts forth his tongue; afterwards, drawing to delight, he fixes his tooth;

but at the last, possessing by consent, he draws up his tail. For hence it is that some themselves reprove in themselves sins perpetrated by long use, and flee from these by judgment, but are not able to avoid them by work even when struggling, because while they do not crush the head of this Behemoth, they are mostly bound by the tail even against their will. Which has hardened against them like a cedar, because it has grown from the soft pleasure of the beginning even to the violence of retention. Let it be said therefore: *He draweth up his tail like a cedar*, that each one ought to flee the beginnings of temptation so much the more, as he understands that its end cannot be quickly loosed.

[Vet. XVIII.] 34. The devil, when the end of life is imminent, then suggests more grievous temptations. — It must also be known that he mostly inflicts more grievous faults upon those whom he has taken, when he knows them to be approaching the end of the present life; and by how much he considers that he is about to complete the temptation, by so much he heaps up more grievous weights of iniquities upon them. Therefore Behemoth draweth up his tail like a cedar, because those whom he has taken through perverse beginnings, he renders worse at the end, so that his temptations, by how much more quickly they are about to cease, by so much they may be more powerfully fulfilled. For because he is busy in equaling their punishment with his own pains, he strives more ardently to exaggerate every sin in them before death.

For mostly this Behemoth already possesses an evilly subjected heart, but nevertheless divine grace repels him, and the hand of mercy casts him out, whom a captive will introduced to itself. And when he is expelled from the heart, he endeavors to fix more sharp stings of iniquities, so that the mind attacked by him may feel those waves of temptations which, even when possessed, it knew not. Which is well expressed in the Gospel, when the unclean spirit is narrated to go out from the man at the command of the Lord. For when the demoniac boy had been offered, it is written: *Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, saying: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him, and enter no more into him. And crying out, and greatly tearing him, he went out of him* (Mark 9:25-26). Behold, he had not torn him when he held him, but in going out he tore him, because surely he then more evilly dilacerates the thoughts of the mind, when he now approaches his egress, compelled by divine power. And him whom he had possessed as dumb, he deserted with cries, because mostly when he possesses, he inflicts smaller temptations; but when he is driven from the heart, he disturbs with a more sharp infestation. Well therefore is it said: *He draweth up his tail like a cedar*, because both in possessing the heart he always grows in malice from the later parts, and in deserting the heart he strikes with more vehement stings of thoughts. [Rec. XVII.] But still the more astute arguments of this Behemoth are opened by the wonderful piety of the Creator, when it is added:

CHAPTER XX.

IBID. — The nerves of his testicles are perplexed.

35. Sins are so entangled that while one is avoided, we almost always slip into another. The Church consists of three orders. — The nerves of his testicles are the pestiferous arguments of his machinations. For by these he raises the strengths of his craftiness, and corrupts the flux hearts of mortals. His testicles are the perverse suggestions with which he grows hot in the corruption of the mind, and begets the offspring of an iniquitous work in the defiled soul. But the nerves of these testicles are perplexed, because the arguments of his suggestions are bound by entangled inventions, so as to make many sin in such a way that if perhaps they desire to flee a sin, they may not escape it without another snare of sin; and they commit a fault while they avoid one, and are by no means able to loose themselves from one, unless they consent to be bound in another. [Vet. XIX.] Which we show better if we bring forth some examples of this entanglement from the conversation of men. But because the holy Church consists of three orders, namely, of the married, of the continent, and of the rulers; whence also Ezekiel saw three men delivered, namely, Noah, Daniel, and Job (Ezek. 14:14, etc.); and in the Gospel the Lord, while he asserts that some are in the field, some in bed, and others are at the mill (Luke 17:34, 35), without doubt shows

three orders in the Church; we satisfy clearly if we seek individual examples from each.

36. Temptations of those serving the world. — For behold, a certain one, while he desires the friendships of this world, binds himself by an oath to any other leading a life similar to himself, that he will conceal his secrets in all silence; but he to whom he has sworn is found to commit adultery, so that he even endeavors to kill the husband of the adulteress. But he who gave the oath returns to his mind, and is attacked by various thoughts on this side and that, and he fears to keep silence, lest by silencing he become a partaker of adultery and homicide at the same time; and he trembles to betray, lest he bind himself with the guilt of perjury. Therefore he is bound by the perplexed nerves of the testicles, because whichever way he may turn, he fears lest he be not free from the contagion of transgression.

37. Serving God through the obedience of those aiming for it, of prelates. — Another, deserting all things which are of the world, and seeking to break his own wills through all things, desires to subject himself to the governance of another, but he discerns less cautiously by inquisition who ought to be over him before God. To whom perhaps he who is chosen without judgment, when he has already begun to be over him, prohibits those things which are of God to be done, and commands those things which are of the world. Thinking therefore, the subject, either what may be the fault of disobedience, or what the contagion of a secular life, both trembles to

obey and fears not to obey, lest either obeying he desert God in His precepts, or again not obeying he despise God in the chosen prior; and either, complying with unlawful things, he exercise against God this which he desires for God, or again, not complying, he subject him whom he had sought as his judge to his own judgment. Openly therefore is this man bound through the vice of his indiscretion by the perplexed nerves of the testicles, because either complying, or certainly not complying, he is bound in the fault of transgression. He was studying to break his own wills, and he cares to solidify them even by contempt of the prior. He decreed to leave the world fundamentally, and he is compelled to return to the cares of the world even from the will of another. Perplexed therefore are the nerves, when the arguments of the enemy so bind us, that the knots of faults are more tightly bound by how much they are sought to be loosed.

38. Another, neglecting to weigh the weight of ecclesiastical honor, ascends to the place of governance by rewards. But because everything which is eminent here is more affected by sorrows than it rejoices in honors, while the heart is pressed by tribulations, the fault is recalled to memory, and he grieves that he has arrived at labor with fault, and he acknowledges how iniquitous is that which he admitted, broken by the difficulty itself. Acknowledging himself therefore as guilty with the rewards paid, he wants to desert the place of the acquired sublimity, but he fears lest it be a more grievous offence to

have left the custody of the undertaken flock; he wants to bear the care of the undertaken flock, but he fears lest it be a worse fault to possess the bought regimes of pastoral grace. Therefore through the ambition for honor he sees himself bound by fault on this side and that. For he sees that neither is without the guilt of crime, if either the flock once undertaken be relinquished, or again the sacred action bought in a worldly manner be held. Everywhere he fears, and being suspect he dreads every side, lest either standing in the bought regime he does not worthily mourn what he does not also emend by deserting; or certainly deserting the regime, while he strives to bewail one thing, he again commits another from the very destitution of the flock. Because therefore this Behemoth so binds with inexplicable knots, that mostly the mind brought into doubt, whence it strives to loose itself from fault, thence it is more tightly bound in fault, it is rightly said: *The nerves of his testicles are perplexed.* For the arguments of his machinations, as it were, by how much they are loosened that they may let go, by so much the more they are entangled that they may hold.

[Vet. XX.] 39. Where no access of escaping without sin lies open, what is to be done. The intercourse of the married for the fulfillment of lust is not free from fault. — There is nevertheless that which may be usefully done for destroying his craftiness, that while the mind is constrained between smaller and greatest sins, if absolutely no access of escaping without sin lies open, the

smaller things should always be chosen, because he also who is closed in by a circuit of walls everywhere lest he flee, there precipitates himself into flight, where the shorter wall is found. And Paul while he beheld certain ones in the Church incontinent, conceded minimal things, that they might decline greater, saying: *But for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife* (1 Cor. 7:2). And because then only spouses are without fault in admixture when they are mixed not for the fulfillment of lust, but for the receiving of offspring, that he might also show that this which he had conceded was not without fault, although minimal, he immediately added: *But I speak this by indulgence, not by commandment* (Ibid., 6). For that is not without vice which is pardoned, and not commanded. Surely he saw sin, which he foresaw he could indulge. But when we are constrained in doubts, we are usefully subjected to minimal things, lest we sin in great things without pardon. Thus mostly the perplexity of the nerves of this Behemoth is loosed while one passes to the greatest virtues through smaller things committed. It follows:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 18 (Vulg. 13). — His bones are as pipes of brass.

40. How much danger is imminent from the astute counsels of the devil. — What are designated by the bones of this Behemoth, but counsels? For as the position and strength of the body subsists in the bones, so in his fraudulent

counsels all his malice raises itself. For he does not press anyone by force, but he kills by the craftiness of a pestiferous persuasion. And again, as the bones which the irrigating marrows comfort, so the infused subtlety of genius through the power of a spiritual nature strengthens his counsels. But his testicles differ from his bones, that is, suggestions from counsels, in this: that through those he openly inserts harmful things, but through these he draws to fault as if advising from good; through those he overcomes by fighting, through these he supplants as if by advising. Whence also his bones, that is, these same counsels, are well compared to pipes of brass. For pipes of brass are wont to be adapted to sonorous songs, which, moved to the ears while they subtly sound a soft song, draw the interior things of the mind into the exterior things of delight; and while that which they sound to the ears is sweet, they debilitate the virility of the heart in the flux of pleasure. And when the hearing is drawn to delight, the sense is enervated from the state of its strength. So also his astute counsels, while they advise as if by a soft provision, invert the heart from a strong intention; and while they resound sweet things, they incline to harmful things. They are as it were pipes of brass, therefore, which while they are willingly heard, cast down the mind from an internal intention into the delight of an external life. For this Behemoth busy himself greatly to execute deception, that while he shows the counsel of his perversity as if useful, he may be able sweetly to sound what he says, so

that he may both soothe the mind by the shown utility, and corrupt it by the hidden iniquity.

[Vet. XXI.] 41. It becomes plain by examples. By what art he persuades to sweat in acquiring riches. — Which we show more openly in all things, if we briefly open a few arguments of his counsels. For behold, a certain one content with his own things, decreed to be entangled in no occupations of this world, greatly fearing to lose the advantages of his quiet, and greatly despising to accumulate gains with sins. To him the crafty enemy coming, that he may subvert the intention of a good devotion, ministers as it were a counsel of utility, saying: Those things which thou hast, indeed, suffice for the present, but what art thou to do when these fail? For if after these nothing is provided for, those things are present which are to be spent on children for the present, but yet those things are to be prepared which may be kept. Even what is present can fail more quickly, if a provident solicitude ceases to prepare what is lacking. Can not both an earthly action be carried out, and yet fault be declined in the action, so that it may both provide exterior stipends, and yet not bend internal rectitude? These things meanwhile he insinuates by flattering, and apart he already hides the snares of sin in the earthly business which he provides. Therefore his bones are as pipes of brass, because his pernicious counsels flatter their hearer with the sweetness of an advising voice.

42. And he may avert one meditating to send a message to the world. — Another also has not

only decreed not to seek earthly advantages, but even to renounce all things which he possesses, that he may exercise himself so much the more freely in the discipleship of the heavenly mastery, as having been rendered more unencumbered, deserting those things which could press upon the possessor, he treads them underfoot. The enemy lying in wait addresses the heart of this man with a hidden suggestion, saying: Whence has arisen such audacity of temerity, that thou darest to believe that thou canst subsist by relinquishing all things? Otherwise did the Creator form thee, and otherwise dost thou dispose thyself; He would make thee more powerful and robust, if He had willed that thou shouldst follow His footsteps with the necessity of want. Do not many indeed never desert their earthly patrimonies, and yet from these through works of mercy they purchase the eternal goods of the heavenly lot? These things he suggests by flattering, but apart in those same things which he admonishes to retain, he deceivingly sets before the eyes of the one retaining pestiferous delights, so that he may draw the seduced heart to exterior flatteries, and pervert it in the intimate vows of perfection. Therefore his bones are as pipes of brass, because his deceitful counsels while they return a soft sound from exterior things, inflict a pernicious loss from interior things.

43. Especially if he tends to the summit of monastic perfection. — Another, having left all things which he possessed exteriorly, that he may apprehend the order of a loftier discipleship,

prepares also to break his intimate wills, so that subjecting himself to the more upright wills of another, he may renounce himself not only in perverse desires, but for the accumulation of perfection even in good vows, and observe all things which are to be done by him from the will of another. The crafty enemy addresses him so much the more softly, by how much he more ardently endeavors to cast him down from a loftier place, and soon flattering with a virulent suggestion, he says: Oh, how many wonderful things wilt thou be able to do through thyself, if thou by no means subjectest thyself to the judgment of another! Why dost thou diminish thy progress under the study of improvement? Why dost thou break the good of thy intention, while thou strivest to extend it further than is necessary? For what perverse things didst thou perpetrate while thou usedst thy own will? Since therefore thou sufficest fully for thyself for living well, why dost thou seek the judgment of another over thee? These things he intimates by flattering, but apart in his own wills he prepares causes for exercising pride; and while he praises the heart for its inward rectitude, he craftily investigates where he may subvert it in depravity. Therefore his bones are as pipes of brass, because his clandestine counsels whence they as it were softly delight the mind, thence they perniciously dissipate it from a right intention.

44. How they study to call away from the offices of charity. — Another, his wills having been fully broken, has already corrected many

vices of the old man both by a change of life and by the lamentation of penance; and he is kindled with so much the greater zeal against the sins of others, by how much, having fundamentally died to himself, he is not held by his own iniquities. The crafty enemy, because he knows that by the zeal of justice he also profits others, attacks him as if with words advising prosperous things, saying: Why dost thou dilate thyself for caring for the things of others? Would that thou mightest grow strong to consider thy own. Dost thou not weigh that when thou art extended to the things of others, thou art found smaller for caring for those things which are thy own? And what does it profit to wipe the blood from the wound of another, and by neglecting to enlarge the rottenness of thy own? While he says these things as if advising, he takes away the zeal of charity, and every good which could proceed from charity, he extinguishes with the sword of a sub-introduced torpor. For if we are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matt. 19:19; 22:39), it is worthy that we should so burn with zeal for them against vices, as also for our own. Because therefore while he advises sweetly, he renders the mind alien from its own intention, it is rightly said: *His bones are as pipes of brass.* For when through fraudulent counsels he sounds soft to the mind of the hearer, he sings as if with a pipe of brass, that whence he soothes, thence he may deceive [Vet. XXII]. But this Behemoth moves a much softer contest when he exercises himself in ambushes under the pretext of infirmity. But

then he excites harder temptations, when before the eyes of the one tempted he hides the snares of iniquity under the appearance of virtue. Whence also it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXII.

VERS. 18 (Vulg. 13). — His cartilage is as it were plates of iron.

45. He excites harder temptations when he hides the snares of iniquity under the appearance of virtue. — For what is understood by cartilage but his simulation? For cartilage shows the appearance of bone, but has not the firmness of bone. And there are some vices which show in themselves the appearance of rectitude, but proceed from the infirmity of depravity. For the malice of our enemy cloaks itself with such art, that mostly before the eyes of the deceived mind he feigns faults to be virtues, so that each one may as it were expect rewards from that whence he is worthy to find eternal torments. For mostly in avenging vices cruelty is carried out, and it is thought to be justice, and immoderate wrath is believed to be the merit of a just zeal; and when sinning ones ought to be cautiously directed from distorted morals, they are broken by a violent inflection. Mostly a dissolved remission is held as it were for meekness and piety; and while more than is becoming is spared to delinquents temporally, they are cruelly reserved for eternal punishments. Sometimes profusion is believed to be mercy, and while it is a fault evilly to keep, it is not feared worse to scatter what has been

received. Sometimes tenacity is thought to be parsimony, and when it is a grievous vice not to bestow, it is believed to be a virtue to retain what has been received. Often the pertinacity of the evil is called constancy, and while the mind does not suffer itself to be bent from its own depravity, it glories as if from the defense of the right. Often inconstancy is held as it were for tractability, and by how much each one keeps whole faith to none, by so much he esteems himself a friend to men. Sometimes incompetent fear is believed to be humility, and when pressed by temporal dread each one is silent from the defense of the truth, he thinks that according to the order of God he exhibits himself humble to superiors. Sometimes the pride of the voice is esteemed the liberty of the truth, and when through elation the truth is contradicted, the procacity of speaking is thought the defense of the truth. Mostly sloth is attended to as if it were the continence of quiet, and when it is of a grievous fault not to do right things studiously, it is believed to be the merit of a great virtue to cease only from perverse action. Mostly inquietude of spirit is named vigilant solicitude; and when each one does not tolerate quiet, by doing those things which he desires, he thinks he fulfills the exercise of due virtue. Often in those things which are to be done incautious precipitation is believed to be the fervor of a study to be praised; and when a desired good is corrupted by untimely action, it is esteemed that it is done so much the better by how much the more quickly. Often the tardiness of accelerating

a good is thought to be counsel; and when it is expected that it may profit from retractation, this a lying-in-wait delay supplants [Vet. XXIII]. Therefore when fault is beheld as if virtue, it is necessarily to be weighed that the mind deserts its own vice so much the more slowly, as it does not blush for this which it perpetrates; and the mind deserts vice so much the more slowly, as, deceived by the appearance of virtue, it also seeks the retribution of rewards for it. But fault is easily corrected which is both blushed for because it is felt to be fault. Because therefore error is more difficultly emended when it is believed to be virtue, it is rightly said: *His cartilage is as plates of iron.* For this Behemoth, who more fraudulently exhibits his craftiness under the pretext of good, by so much more hardly holds the mind in fault.

46. Those who desire the way of holiness, sometimes having slipped into error, are emended more slowly. They become colder than cold minds. — Hence it is that sometimes those who desire the way of holiness, having slipped into error, are emended more slowly. For they esteem that what they do is right, and as to the cultivation of virtue, so to vice they join perseverance. They think that what they do is right, and therefore they serve their own judgment more strenuously. Whence well did Jeremiah say: *Her Nazirites were whiter than snow, purer than milk, ruddier than old ivory, more beautiful than sapphire; their face is blackened above coals, and they are not known in the streets*, and he

immediately added: *Their skin has cleaved to their bones, it is withered, and it is become like wood* (Lam. 4:7-8). For what is signified by the name of Nazirites but the life of the abstinent and continent, which is said to be purer than snow and milk? For snow congeals from water which comes from above, but milk is pressed from the flesh which is nourished in the lower parts. What then is demonstrated by snow but the whiteness of a heavenly life, what by milk but the administration of temporal dispensation? And because mostly continent men in the Church do such wonderful works, that by them many who have held a heavenly life, many who have well dispensed earthly things, seem to be surpassed, they are reported as both whiter than snow and purer than milk. Who also, because through the fervor of the spirit they sometimes seem to overcome the life of the ancient and strong fathers, it is rightly subjoined: *Ruddier than old ivory.* For while the name of redness is impressed, the flame of holy desire is signified. But we are not ignorant that ivory is the bone of great animals. Therefore they are ruddier than old ivory, because often before human eyes they exist of a more fervent study than some preceding fathers. Concerning whom, that the whole may be shown at once, it is added: *More beautiful than sapphire.* For sapphire is of an ethereal color. And because they seem to overcome many preceding ones and those tending to supernal things through a heavenly conversation, they are narrated to have existed more beautiful than sapphire. But mostly

while the abundance of virtues prospers even more than is expedient, the mind is led into a certain confidence in itself, and deceived by its own presumption, it is suddenly darkened by sin creeping in; whence it is rightly subjoined: *Their face is blackened above coals.* For they become black after whiteness, because, having lost the justice of God, when they presume about themselves, they slip into those sins also which they do not understand; and because after the fire of love they come to the cold of torpor, they are preferred by comparison to extinguished coals. For sometimes while they desert the fear of God through self-confidence, they become colder even than cold minds. Concerning whom it is rightly subjoined: *They are not known in the streets.* For a street (*platea*) is so called in the reasoning of the Greek speech for its latitude. But what is narrower to the human mind than to break its own wills? Concerning which breaking the Truth says: *Enter ye in at the narrow gate* (Matt. 7:13). But what is broader than to resist no own wills, and whichever way the impulse of the judgment has led, to diffuse oneself without retractation? Those, therefore, who through the confidence of holiness, the judgment of better ones having been postponed, follow themselves, walk as it were through the streets. But they are not known in the streets, because they had shown something else concerning their life when by breaking their own wills they held themselves in a narrow path. And it is well added: *Their skin has cleaved to their bones.* What is expressed in

the bone but the hardness of strength, what in the skin but the softness of infirmity? Therefore their skin is said to cleave to their bones, because by them feeling perverse things the infirmity of vice is thought the hardness of virtue. For those things which they do are infirm, but, deceived by the confidence of elation, they join them to strong suspicions, and by how much they feel great things about themselves, by so much they despise to be emended of their wickedness. Whence also it is rightly added: *It is withered and it is become like wood.* For their fault is rendered so much the more insensible, as it is also held as laudable among them. Which he rightly asserts to be withered, because it grows green with no thought of itself. What, therefore, is said in Jeremiah through the infirmity of the skin, this in blessed Job is said through the fragility of the cartilage; and what there the bones through hardness, here the plates of iron are remembered to be.

[Vet. XXIV.] But this Behemoth, who through his members in the extreme time exercises himself with such art of iniquity against the elect of God, who also through himself exhibits himself for deceiving minds in such a tergiversation of snares, let us hear of what nature, of what condition he may be. For he would not be able to do such wonderful things even in a malignant operation, if he did not subsist from a great condition. Whence also soon the Lord with wonderful piety, as if he were giving the causes of such great astuteness and such great strength, added, saying:

CHAPTER XXIII

[Rec. XVIII].

VERSE 14.---He is the beginning of the ways of God.

47. The first and more noble creature was the angel who fell.---As if He were openly saying: Therefore he suffices strongly for so many things, because in the nature of things, by creating him through substance, the Creator made him first. For what do we understand by the ways of God, but His actions? Concerning which He says through the Prophet: For My ways are not as your ways (Isai. LV, 8). And Behemoth is called the beginning of the ways of God, because doubtless, when He was acting by creating all things, He formed him first, whom He made more eminent than the rest of the angels. The Prophet beholds the eminence of this primacy when he says: The cedars were not higher than he in the paradise of God; the fir trees did not equal his top; the plane trees were not equal to his branches; no tree of the paradise of God was like to him and to his beauty, because He made him beautiful in many and thick branches (Ezech. XXXI, 8, 9). For who can be understood by the cedars, fir trees, and plane trees, but those hosts of the heavenly virtues of lofty height planted in the greenness of eternal joy? Which, although they were created high, were yet neither preferred to him, nor equaled. He who is said to have been made beautiful in many and thick branches, because being preferred to the other legions, so much

did his appearance render him more beautiful, as the subject multitude of angels decorated him. This tree in the paradise of God had, as it were, as many thick branches as it beheld legions of heavenly spirits placed under it. Who, therefore, sinning was damned without pardon, because he had been created great without comparison. Hence it is said to him again through the same Prophet: Thou wast the seal of the likeness of God, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty, thou wast in the delights of the paradise of God (Ezech. XXVIII, 12, 13). For being about to speak many things concerning his greatness, he comprised all in the first word. For what good did he not have, if he was the seal of the likeness of God? For from the seal of a ring such a likeness is expressed in image, as is essentially held in the seal itself. And although man was created to the likeness of God (Gen. I, 27), yet as if attributing something greater to the angel, He does not say that he was formed to the likeness of God, but that he was the very seal of the likeness of God, so that the more subtle he is in nature, the more fully the likeness of God may be believed to be expressed in him.

[Vet. XXV]. 48. His primacy in nine orders of angels. What Cherub signifies.---Hence it is that the same Prophet, still insinuating the power of his primacy, subjoins: Every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the jasper, the chrysolite, the onyx, and the beryl, the sapphire, the carbuncle, and the emerald (Ezech. XXVIII, 13). He named nine kinds of stones, because doubtless there are nine orders of angels.

For when through the sacred oracles themselves, angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, virtues, principalities, powers, cherubim, and seraphim, are mentioned in open narration, it is shown how great are the distinctions of the heavenly citizens. With which, however, this Behemoth is described to have been covered, because he had them as it were for a garment for his ornament; while he transcended their brightness, he was brighter by comparison with them. Concerning whose description there he still subjoins: Gold was the work of thy beauty, and thy holes were prepared in the day that thou wast created (Ibid., 13). Gold was the work of his beauty, because he shone with the brightness of wisdom, which being well created he received. For holes are therefore made in stones, that being bound with gold they may be joined in the composition of an ornament, and by no means disagree among themselves, whom the gold poured between binds together by filling the holes. The holes of this stone, therefore, were prepared in the day of its creation, because obviously he was created capable of charity. In which if he had willed to be filled, he might have been able to cleave to the standing angels, as stones placed in the ornament of a king. For if he had offered himself penetrable by the gold of charity, being associated with the holy angels, he would have remained a stone fixed in the royal ornament, as we have said. This stone, therefore, had holes, but through the vice of pride they were not filled with the gold of charity. For because they are

therefore bound with gold lest they fall, therefore this one fell, because even being perforated by the hand of the Artificer, he contemned to be bound by the chains of love. But now the other stones, which had been similarly perforated as this one, are bound by charity penetrating each other, and in this gift, while this one fell, they merited that they should by no means now be loosed by falling from the royal ornament. The same Prophet, still beholding the height of this primacy, adds: Thou art a Cherub stretched out and protecting in the holy mountain of God, thou hast walked perfect in the midst of the fiery stones (Ezech. XXVIII, 14). For Cherub is interpreted fullness of knowledge; and therefore he is called a Cherub, because it is not doubted that he transcended all in knowledge. Who walked perfect in the midst of the fiery stones, because among the hearts of the angels inflamed with the fire of charity, he shone bright with the glory of his condition. Whom he rightly calls stretched out and protecting. For everything which being stretched out we protect, we overshadow. And because by the comparison of his brightness he is believed to have overshadowed the brightness of the others, he himself is said to have been stretched out and protecting. For he covered the rest as it were by overshadowing them, who transcended their greatness by a greater excellence. What therefore is there said as beautiful in many branches, what there as the seal of likeness, what there as a cherub, what there as protecting, this here by the Divine voice

this Behemoth is called the beginning of the ways of God.

[Vet. XXVI.] 49. From the angel's fall let man learn not to be proud.---Concerning whom He therefore insinuates such wonderful things in which he was and which he lost, that He may show to terrified man what he himself, if he should be proud, is to suffer from the guilt of his elation, if He willed not to spare him in smiting, whom in creating He elevated into the glory of such great brightness. Let man therefore consider what he, being elated on earth, deserves, if the angel, being preferred even to angels, is cast down in heaven. Whence also it is well said through the Prophet: My sword is inebriated in heaven (Isai. XXXIV, 5). As if He were openly saying: Consider with what wrath I shall smite the proud of the earth, if I did not spare to strike even those whom I created in heaven near Me, on account of the vice of elation? Having heard so many virtues of the ancient enemy, and having known such great magnitude of his condition, who would not fall down with immense dread? who would not succumb to the stroke of despair? But because the shown power of our enemy represses our elation, the Lord also fosters our infirmity by the opened dispensation of His grace. Whence, when He called him the beginning of His ways, He immediately added:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Rec. XIX].

IBID.---He who made him, applied his sword.

50. God coerces the power of the apostate angel.---The sword of this Behemoth is indeed his malice of doing harm. But his sword is applied by Him by whom he was made good by nature, because his malice is restrained by Divine dispensation, lest he be permitted to strike the minds of men as much as he desires. Because therefore our enemy both can do much, and strikes less, the piety of the Creator binds his sword, so that being turned back it may lie hidden within his conscience, and his malice may not extend itself into the deaths of men beyond what is justly disposed from above. That therefore he strongly prevails for many things, this he can from the beginning of a great condition; but that he is overcome by some, his sword is doubtless turned back by the Author. For this Behemoth, who is the beginning of the ways of God, when he received the license of temptation against the holy man, moved the nations, took away the flocks, brought down fire from heaven, excited the winds with a troubled air, subverted the house by shaking it, extinguished the children as they were feasting, exercised the mind of the wife in the deceit of wicked persuasion, and pierced the flesh of the husband with inflicted wounds (Job I, 13, seq.); but his sword is turned back by the Creator, when it is said: Save his life (Ibid. II, 6). How great is his infirmity with his sword turned back, is described by the Evangelist witnessing, because he could neither remain in the possessed man, nor again did he presume to invade the brute

animals unless commanded, saying: If Thou cast us out, send us into the herd of swine (Matth. VIII, 31). How much his sword of malice is turned back is shown, as he would not be able to rage against the herd of swine, if the Supreme Power did not grant license. When therefore would he dare of his own accord to harm men made after the image of God, of whom it is doubtless certain that he presumes not to touch even swine unless commanded?

51. The heresy of Arius is confuted.---It is also to be noted that while Behemoth is called the beginning of the ways of God, the insane dogma of Arius is dissipated by open reason. For he confesses the Son to be a creature of God, and behold, Behemoth is shown to have been created first in the creation of things. It remains therefore that Arius either preach that the Son is not created, or as a fool think him to have been formed after Behemoth. But because everything which is applied is reduced into itself, the sword of Behemoth is rightly said to be applied. For his malice consumes itself into itself, when it does not exercise itself against the life of the elect according to its wish, being prohibited. But he is permitted to strike many according to their deserving merits, so that when they desert God, they may serve the damned enemy. But he is overcome the more valiantly by the elect, as they are more humbly subject to the Author of all alone. Because therefore by this that he is called the beginning of the ways of God, by this that he is demonstrated very intolerable by the Lord's permission, we openly

know with what an enemy we fight. It remains therefore that each one of us subject himself the more fully to the Author, as he more truly weighs against himself the violent strengths of the adversary. For what are we but dust? But what is he, but one of the heavenly spirits, and, what is yet greater, the highest? What therefore would he dare of his own virtue, when dust fights against the prince of angels? But because the Creator of the heavenly spirits assumed an earthly body, humble dust rightly now overcomes the proud angel. For by cleaving to true fortitude he receives strengths, which the runaway spirit lost when he followed himself. And it is worthy that he be overcome by dust, who believed himself strong having deserted the Creator; that being overcome he may find, that being elated he failed. But he greatly pants, raging, because while the lowest things torture him, man ascends to the highest; because in that height the assumed flesh remains, from which so great a spirit himself lies projected without end. But the order of merits has changed the places of minds. So, so pride merited to be cast down, so humility to be exalted, so that both the heavenly spirit by elevating himself should endure hell, and humble earth should reign without end above the heavens.

Book thirty

THREE.

Presents the exposition of the fifteenth verse and the rest of chapter XL, as well as the twelve first verses of chapter XLI, where various arts of the demon are detected, and gratuitous predestination is taught, and reconciled with free will.

1075 [Vet. et Rec. I.] 1. The proud serve the devil more familiarly.---To the ancient enemy, who under the name of Behemoth is described by the Lord's voice, all the proud serve more familiarly, as they swell more highly within themselves with the successes of this life. For to these, as glory is increased, elation grows; with elation, care is added, the mind is stretched hither and thither, because desires grow with possessions. And when they bring forth innumerable thoughts like the grass of the field, with those same thoughts, as with a desired pasture, they feed the hunger of this Behemoth. Whence it is now rightly said:

CHAPTER I.

VERSE 15.---To him the mountains bring forth grass.

2. What a mountain, or what mountains signify in sacred Scripture.---In sacred Scripture,

when a mountain is placed in the singular number, sometimes the incarnate Lord, sometimes the Holy Church, sometimes the Testament of God, sometimes the apostate angel, sometimes any heretic is designated. But when mountains are named in the plural number, sometimes the loftiness of the Apostles and Prophets, and sometimes the swelling of secular powers is expressed. For a mountain designates the Lord, as it is written: And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of the mountains (Isai. II, 2). For the incarnate Lord is the mountain in the top of the mountains, transcending the loftiness of the Prophets. Again, by a mountain the holy Church is designated, as it is written: They who trust in the Lord, as the mountain of Sion (Psal. CXXIV, 1). For Sion is interpreted speculation, by which speculation the Church, contemplating God, is figured. Again, by a mountain the Testament of God is expressed, as Habakkuk says: God shall come from Libanus, and the Holy One from the shady and thick mountain (Habak. III, 3). For He who promised that He would come through the pages of His Testament, as it were comes from thence, whence He held Himself as if under promise. Which Testament is well called a shady and thick mountain, because it is obscured by thick obscurities of allegories. Again, by a mountain the apostate angel is designated, as it is said through the species of the king of Babylon concerning the ancient enemy to preachers: Lift up a sign upon the dark mountain (Isai. XIII, 2). For the holy preachers lift up a

sign upon the dark mountain, when they exalt the virtue of the cross against the pride of Satan, who is often hidden under the mist of simulation. Again, by a mountain any heretic is expressed, as from the voice of the Church the Psalmist says: In the Lord I trust, how do ye say to my soul, Pass over to the mountain as a sparrow (Psal. X, 1)? For when heretics, having left the unity of the faithful soul, are told to trust in the swelling doctrine of a heretical preacher, it is persuaded to pass over as if to a mountain, having deserted the Lord. Again, by mountains the loftiness of the Apostles and Prophets is designated, as it is written: Thy justice is as the mountains of God (Psal. XXXV, 7). And by the voice of Paul it is said: That we might be made the justice of God in Him (II Cor. V, 21). Or as again by the voice of the hoping Church the Psalmist says: I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me (Psal. CXX, 1). Again, by mountains the swelling of secular powers is expressed, concerning which the Psalmist says: The mountains flowed as wax from the face of the Lord (Psal. XCVI, 5), because many who before had swelled with high rigidity. When God appeared in the flesh, were liquefied with great fear through penance. Or as the same Prophet says again: The mountains ascend, and the plains descend (Psal. CIII, 8). For many persecutors of the Lord come proud against Him, but return from Him humble. Who ascend as mountains by the swelling of power, but descend as plains, being made level obviously by the knowledge of guilt.

[Vet. II.] 3. The elated, by working evil, feed the demons.---But because some remain in the height of their elation, and humbly disdain to be bent to Divine obediences, because they do not cease to think and perpetrate wicked things according to the desire of the ancient enemy, it is rightly said in this place concerning Behemoth: To him the mountains bring forth grass. For the elated of the world bring forth grass to this Behemoth, because they refresh him from that which they work wickedly. To this Behemoth they bring forth grass, because they offer to him their fleeting and slippery pleasures. For they shall be, says the Apostle, men lovers of themselves (II Tim. III, 2). Whose description he comprised, saying: Lovers of pleasures more than of God (Ibid., 4). What therefore is the grass of the mountains, but the fleeting pleasure which is produced from the heart of the proud? Who, unless they contemned God by being proud, would by no means perpetrate so many slippery things by being lascivious. With which grass this Behemoth is doubtless fed, because hungering for the punishment of eternal death in them, he is satiated with their lost morals. For the proud of this world, even if sometimes, being hindered by the order of heavenly dispensation, they cease from the fulfillment of wicked works, yet they multiply wicked things in thought; now that they may show themselves more powerful than others in possessions and honors; now that they may exercise that same power of theirs in the study of another's injury; now that, being led by slippery motions, they

may dissolve themselves through light deeds and pleasures. Who while they think to work by no means right, but always wicked things with the possessions received from God, what else do they do but fight against God with His own gifts? Because therefore this Behemoth always recognizes his own desires in the minds of the proud, he finds as it were grass in the mountains, with which he distends the belly of his malice, being refreshed. But it is well added:

CHAPTER II

[Rec. II].

IBID.---All the beasts of the field shall play there.

4. The play of demons is to rotate human minds from vice to vice.---What is designated by the beasts but unclean spirits, and what by the field but the present world? Whence concerning the very prince of the malignant spirits it is said against Ephraim: The beast of the field shall tear them (Hos. XIII, 8). Or as Isaiah says: And no evil beast shall go up by it (Isai. XXXV, 9). But that the world is understood by the name of the field, the Lord's word through the Gospel witnesses, which says: But the field is the world (Matth. XIII, 38). The beasts of the field therefore play in the grass of the mountains, because the demons, being cast out from the higher parts, are delighted in this world with the wicked works of the proud. The beasts play in the grass when the reprobate spirits draw away human hearts

into illicit thoughts. Or is it not play for unclean spirits to deceive the minds of men created after the image of God, now by a false promise, now to mock them by empty terrors, now to impress transitory joys on them as if remaining, now to lighten remaining punishments as if transitory? He had greatly feared the illusion of these beasts, who said: O my God, in Thee I trust, let me not be ashamed; neither let my enemies mock me (Psal. XXIV, 2). Because therefore the heart of the proud is laid open to every vice, so that it may be prepared with wicked thought for any malignant spirit rushing in, it is rightly said concerning the grass of the mountains: All the beasts of the field shall play there. For since the proud pass over no evil in their thinking, there is no beast of the field which is not satiated with the grass of these mountains. For even if sometimes they flee the luxury of the flesh, they commit the vice of interior luxury by glorying in that same chastity. If sometimes they snatch nothing greedily outwardly, they are by no means pure from the allure of avarice, because although they long for no things, yet they endeavor to snatch the praise of continence by the favor of men. To this Behemoth, therefore, the mountains bring forth grass, and all the beasts of the field play there, because in the heart of the proud any malignant spirit is fed the more widely, as also every vice is generated from pride. [Vet. III.] But because we have heard what this Behemoth eats, now we must hear where he meanwhile rests through his wicked desire. It follows:

CHAPTER III

[Rec. III].

VERSE 16.---He sleeps under the shadow in the secret of the reed, in moist places.

5. What the Scripture understands by shadow.---Overshadowing in the sacred oracle is sometimes placed for the Incarnation of the Lord, or the refreshment of the mind from the fervor of carnal thoughts, whence by the appellation of shadow from heavenly protection this same refreshment of the heart is wont to be insinuated. But sometimes shadow is taken for the torpor of a cold mind, charity receding. For that the Lord's Incarnation, the truth of history being preserved, is signified by the appellation of overshadowing, the angelic word witnesses, which says to Mary: The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee (Luke I, 35). For because a shadow is not expressed otherwise than by light and a body, the power of the Highest overshadowed her, because in her womb the incorporeal light assumed a body. From which overshadowing she received all refreshment of the mind in herself. Again, by shadow the refreshment of the heart from heavenly protection is expressed, as the Psalmist says: Under the shadow of Thy wings protect me (Psal. XVI, 9). Or as the bride in the Song of Songs, having awaited the coming of the bridegroom, announces, saying: Under the shadow of him whom I had desired I sat (Cant. II, 3). As if she should say: From the heat of carnal desires under the protection of his coming I have rested.

Again, by shadow the torpor of a cold mind is expressed, charity receding, as it is written concerning the sinning man, that he followed the shadow (Gen. III). For fleeing the heat of charity, man deserted the Sun of truth, and hid himself under the shadow of internal cold. Whence also by the voice of the same Truth it is said: Iniquity shall abound, and the charity of many shall grow cold (Matth. XXIV, 12). Whence the first man after the fault is found hidden among the trees of paradise at the breeze after midday (Gen. III, 8). For because he had lost the midday heat of charity, he already grew torpid under the shadow of sin as if under the cold of the breeze.

6. Satan rests easily as if under a shadow in those whom he makes cold. He lies secure in them.---This Behemoth, therefore, because he finds a certain rest in those whom, by withdrawing them from the glow of the true Sun, he makes cold, is said to sleep under the shadow. But sometimes by shadow, if however it be placed with the addition of death, either the death of the flesh is expressed, or any reprobate, who imitate the darkness of the ancient enemy by the study of wicked operation. Whence by the voice of the martyrs through the Psalmist it is said: Thou hast humbled us in the place of affliction, and the shadow of death has covered us (Psal. XLIII, 20). For the shadow of death covers the elect of God, when the death of the flesh, which is the image of eternal death, disjoins them from this life, because as the former separates the soul from God, so the latter separates the body from the soul.

Or certainly the shadow of death covers them, because concerning the ancient enemy it is written: His name is Death (Rev. VI, 8). The shadow of death, therefore, are all the reprobate, because they imitate his wickedness of elation; and they express his image as it were a shadow, while they draw into themselves the likeness of his malice. Who cover the elect of God, while they prevail temporally against them in the atrocity of persecution. But in this place the torpor of wickedness is understood by shadow, in which this Behemoth sleeps, because he watches solicitously against hearts glowing with charity, but in cold minds he lies secure. For he cannot sleep in the minds of the saints, because even if sometimes he places himself in them for a short moment, the very heat of heavenly desires fatigues him, and he is pricked as it were as many times that he should recede, as it is sighed for eternal things by them with intimate love. So many voices excite him, as many holy thoughts cry out to heaven from their minds. Whence it happens that, terrified by the arms of good actions, and struck by the darts of sighs, he flees, and returning to the cold hearts of the reprobate, he seeks that shadow of malice which he may possess secure. Where that may be found by him is shown, when it is immediately subjoined: In the secret of the reed.

[Vet. IV.] 7. Various significations of the reed and the bulrush in sacred Scripture.---In the sacred oracle, by the appellation of reed or bulrush, sometimes the Word remaining, sometimes the skill of doctors, sometimes mobility of mind,

sometimes the brightness of temporal glory is understood. For by the reed the eternity of the Word is designated, when by the voice of the Father through the Psalmist it is said: My tongue is the reed of a scribe writing swiftly (Psal. XLIV, 2). For because what we speak passes away, and what we write remains, the tongue of the Father is called the reed of a scribe, because from Him is the Word co-eternal with Him, and generated without passing away. Again, by the reed the doctrine of writers is expressed, as the Prophet promises concerning the holy Church, saying: In the lairs in which dragons dwelt before, shall rise up the greenness of the reed and the rush (Isai. XXXV, 7). By which sentence, as we said long above in this work (Sup. lib. XXIX, n. 51), by the reed is expressed the doctrine of those writing, by the rush the greenness of the hearers. Again, by the reed, or certainly the bulrush, the mobility of the mind is designated, as it is said by the Lord to the crowds of the Jews in the praise of John: What went ye out into the desert to see? a reed shaken by the wind (Matth. XI, 7)? so that obviously it should be sub-understood, no. For John was not a reed shaken by the wind, because no blast of tongues inclined his mind, solid by the Holy Spirit, through diverse parts. Again, by the reed or bulrush the brightness of temporal glory is expressed, as it is said of the just through Wisdom: The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro as sparks in a reed-bed (Wisd. III, 7). For He calls the life of secular persons a reed-bed, who after the manner of reeds proceed through temporal glory

outwardly as if to high things, but inwardly they become empty from the solidity of truth. Whence also the kingdom of the Jews is compared to a reed, when by the Prophet, the Lord appearing in the truth of the flesh, it is said: A bruised reed He shall not break, and smoking flax He shall not extinguish (Isai. XLII, 3). For what does he denounce by the name of the reed, but the temporal kingdom of the Jewish people, shining indeed outwardly, but empty within? And because in the same people the royal race had already failed, and a foreigner possessed its kingdom, he aptly calls this same kingdom a bruised reed. But what by the flax, but its priesthood is expressed, which indeed used linen garments? Which because at the coming of the Lord it lost the fervor of charity, as if with the fire of faith already lost, it was not burning, but smoking. But the incarnate Lord did not break the bruised reed, and did not extinguish the smoking flax, because the kingdom of Judea, which had already been almost destroyed, and its priesthood which did not hold the fire of faith, He did not strike with the power of judgment, but tolerated with the long-suffering of patience.

8. The minds of secular persons devoted to temporal glory are like a reed.---In this place, therefore, what else is designated by the appellation of a reed, but the minds of secular persons devoted to temporal glory? Who become inwardly empty within themselves to the same degree as they are shown to be high and shining outwardly, because while they flow down to out-

ward glory through the surface, they are solidified by no firmness within. For after the manner of a reed they are indeed empty within through folly, but beautiful without through appearance and ostentation; but the more studiously outward glory is sought by them, the more their hearts are agitated by the more grievous stings of thoughts. Whence rightly now that Behemoth is said to sleep in the secret of the reed, because he holds in silence the hearts of those whose studies he moves to the appetite for temporal brightness and height; and as if he himself sleeps there quiet, where he does not permit those whom he possesses to rest. For while they ambit to exceed others in the height of goods, while after the manner of a reed they surpass by the brightness of outward cleanness the appearance of the just, as it were the bark of solid trees, in this that they themselves remain inwardly empty, they provide a place for that Behemoth where he ought to rest with himself. [Vet. V.] Whence also in the Gospel the Lord says that the spirit going out, which found no rest in dry and waterless places, because it found the house which it had left empty and swept with brooms, entered it more manifoldly (Matth. XII, 43, seq.). For because the earth which is poured in becomes fluid, the parched and waterless places are the hearts of the just, which by the fortitude of discipline are dried from all moisture of carnal concupiscence. Whence here also it is still shown where that Behemoth sleeps, when it is immediately added: In moist places.

1080 9. Carnal men are like moist places. The devil rules over men through elation or through luxury.---For the moist places are the minds of earthly men, which the moisture of carnal concupiscence, because it fills them, makes fluid. In which that Behemoth impresses the footsteps of his iniquity so much the more deeply, as his passage in the same minds descends as if into fluid earth. Indeed, the moist places are voluptuous works. For the foot does not slip on dry earth, but is scarcely held fixed on slippery ground. In moist places, therefore, they make the journey of this present life, who cannot stand upright in this towards justice. In these moist places, then, Behemoth sleeps, because he rests in the slippery operation of reprobate men. But some suspect the genital members to be the moist places. Which if it be so, what else is openly designated by moist places but luxury, so that both by the reed the glory of pride, and by the moist places the luxury of the body may be expressed? For these are two vices which rule immoderately over the human race, one namely of the spirit, and the other of the flesh. For elation raises the spirit, luxury corrupts the flesh. The ancient enemy, therefore, pressing the human race either chiefly through elation or through luxury, sleeps in the secret of the reed and in the moist places, because he holds the condemned man under the power of his dominion either through elation of spirit or through corruption of the flesh. But some he possesses in both, because when the spirit of pride elevates them, not even the shame of corruption

inclines them from the tumor of their height. But do not the masters of virtues watch incessantly every day within holy Church against these? Do they cease to rebuke the lowest pleasures, and to persuade to the joys of the heavenly country? But the minds of the perverse do not hear the highest things so much the more obstinately, as they have cleaved more closely to the lowest. For whom even this is not sufficient, that they themselves perish, but still, which is worse, when they behold any to be rebuked and amended, they oppose the rebukes of the just, lest at least others should be corrected. Whence also it is well added:

CHAPTER IV

[Rec. IV].

VERS. 17.---The shadows protect his shadow.

10. The shadows are the sinners of the devil who protect each other. A crime is increased while it is defended.---Indeed, the shadows of the devil are all the iniquitous: who, while they serve the imitation of his iniquity, draw as it were the appearance of an image from his body. But as his shadows are the reprobate in the plural, so his shadow is each individual sinner in the singular. But while the evil contradict the doctrine of the just, while they do not permit any iniquitous person to be corrected by them, the shadows of this Behemoth protect his shadow, because all sinners in what they are badly conscious to themselves, in that they also defend another sinning. The shadows protect his shadow while

the more wicked defend the deeds of the most wicked by perverse patronages. Which indeed they do with this study, lest while the fault in which they themselves are also bound is corrected in others, it should at some time come to themselves. They cover themselves, therefore, while they protect others, because they foresee their life to be attacked from there, from whence they consider others to be confounded by free correction. And so it happens that the sum of crimes is increased while it is defended, and the iniquity of each one is so much the easier to perpetrate as it is difficult to punish. Indeed, the crimes of sinners perceive so much the greater increases as through the defense of the powerful they are tolerated for a long time unpunished. But such as these, whether they seem to be outside or inside holy Church, show themselves so much the more open enemies of God as they are greater patrons of vices. For with their defenses they fight against Him to whom those things are displeasing, which by defending they multiply. Which deed the Lord rightly rebukes through the Prophet under the figure of Babylon, saying: Thorns and nettles shall rise up in its houses, and the paliurus in its fortifications (Isai. XXXIV, 13). For what do we understand by nettles but the itchings of thoughts, but what by thorns but the pricks of vices? In the houses of Babylon, therefore, nettles and thorns sprout, because in the confusion of the reprobate mind there arise both desires of thoughts which exasperate, and sins of works which prick. But those doing these things

have also other more wicked defenders of theirs. Whence he aptly added there immediately: And the paliurus in its fortifications. For the paliurus thickens with such a surrounding of thorns that it can scarcely be touched for sharpness. Within, therefore, the nettle and the thorn are born, but both these are fortified outwardly by the paliurus, because namely the lesser iniquitous do any evil things, but the more wicked greater ones protect them. Whence also here it is well said: The shadows protect his shadow. For while the worse person vindicates the evil, as it were a shadow obscures a shadow, lest it be irradiated by the light of truth. It follows:

CHAPTER V

[Vet. VI, Rec. V].

IBID.---The willows of the torrent shall surround him.

11. The evil are like willows: they are indeed green, but they do not bear fruit.---Indeed, willows are unfruitful trees; but nevertheless they are of such greenness that they can scarcely wither even when cut off at the root and cast away. Whence in the sacred oracle by the name of willows sometimes the greenness of the good, sometimes the sterility of the reprobate is designated. For unless they expressed the life of the elect through the constancy of their greenness, by no means would the Prophet have said concerning the sons of holy Church: They shall spring up among the grass, as willows by the passing

waters (Isai. XLIV, 4). For the sons of holy Church spring up among the grass like willows, while they endure among the withering life of carnal men both in manifold number and by perpetual greenness of mind. Who are well said to spring up by the passing waters, because each one of them perceives fatness for fruit from the doctrine of the sacred oracle, which runs through temporally. And again, unless the life of sinners were signified by the sterility of willows, by no means would the Psalmist have said from the voice of those preaching against Babylon: In the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments (Psal. CXXXVI, 2). For the willows are described to be in the midst of Babylon, because indeed all the unfruitful, and those alien from the love of the heavenly country, are rooted with all the bowels of the heart in this confusion of the world. Whence also holy preachers do not exercise their instruments in those willows, but hang them up, because when they behold unfruitful and reprobate minds, they do not exhibit the power of their preaching, but rather grieving they are silent. What also by the torrent, but the course of this mortal life is expressed? Concerning which again it is said through the Prophet: He shall drink of the torrent in the way, therefore shall He lift up the head (Psal. CIX, 7), because namely our Redeemer touched the penalty of mortal life in a certain passing, and therefore He did not cleave for a long time to that same death to which He spontaneously succumbed. Whence on the third day He lifted up the head by rising again, which

He had laid down by dying. 1082 What is it, therefore, that is said concerning this Behemoth: The willows of the torrent shall surround him, but that the lovers of mortal life, alien from good deeds as if from fruits, cleave to him so much the more closely as the delight of transitory pleasure pours into them more largely? For the torrent waters these as if in the roots, while the love of carnal life inebriates them in their thoughts. Who indeed after the manner of willows do not bear fruit, but grow green in leaves, because they sometimes bring forth words of honesty which are not heavy to be said, but they show no weight of life from good works. Well, therefore, is it said: The willows of the torrent shall surround him, because all the unfruitful, while they serve the love of temporal life, obey the ancient enemy more familiarly by perverse manners. [Vet. VII.] But because we have heard what is bestowed upon him by his clients, now also let us hear what he himself does in them. It follows:

CHAPTER VI

[Rec. VI].

VERS. 18. He shall absorb a river, and shall not wonder, and has confidence that the Jordan may flow into his mouth.

12. Satan absorbed almost all men before the Redeemer; and after, not a few he swallowed.--- For what is designated in this place by the name of a river, but the decursion of the human race, which as if from the origin of its fount rises by

being born, but as if flowing to the lowest parts passes away by dying? But who are signified by the appellation of the Jordan, but those who are already imbued with the sacrament of baptism? For because our Redeemer deigned to be baptized in this river, by its name all the baptized ought to be expressed, in whom it happened that this same sacrament of baptism was begun. Because, therefore, this Behemoth, from the origin of the world, human race flowing to the lowest parts even to the times of redemption, with scarcely a few elect escaping, drew as it were a certain river into himself, it is well said now: He shall absorb a river, and shall not wonder. But because also after the coming of the Mediator he snatches even some of the faithful who neglect to live rightly, it is rightly subjoined: And he has confidence that the Jordan may flow into his mouth. As if it were openly said: Before the Redeemer of the world he absorbed the world without wondering, but, what is more grievous, even after the coming of the Redeemer he confides that he can swallow some who are marked with the sacrament of baptism. For others placed under the name of Christianity he devours, because in the same he supplants them by error of faith. Others he by no means deviates from the rectitude of faith, but inclines them to the use of perverse operation. Others he is not able to bend as much as he wishes in the operation of uncleanness, but he twists them inwardly within themselves in the study of intention, so that while they divide the mind from charity, whatever they work out-

wardly may not be right. And they hold the faith, but they do not hold the life of faith, because they either do openly illicit things, or from a perverse heart what they do are evil, even if they seem holy. Because indeed some are faithful by confessing, not by living, hence is it that it is said by the voice of Truth: Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matth. VII, 21). Hence again He says: But why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say (Luke VI, 46)? Hence Paul says: They confess that they know God, but in deeds they deny him (Tit. I, 16). Hence John says: He that saith that he knoweth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar (I John II, 4). Hence is it that the Lord complains of his own first people, saying: This people honoreth me with their lips, 1083 but their heart is far from me (Mark VII, 6, from Isai. XXIX, 13). Hence also the Psalmist says: They loved him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongue (Psal. LXXVII, 36). But it was by no means a wonder that this Behemoth before the wave of the laver, before the heavenly sacraments, before the bodily presence of the Redeemer, absorbed the river of the human race by the hiatus of profound persuasion; but this is very wonderful, this is very terrible, because with open mouth even after the knowledge of the Redeemer he receives many, after the wave of the laver he pollutes them, after the heavenly sacraments he snatches them to the depth of hell. Let it be said, therefore, let it be said terribly by the voice of Truth: He shall absorb a river, and shall

not wonder, and has confidence that the Jordan may flow into his mouth. For the devil did not hold it for a great thing that he took the infidels; but with all his effort now he raises himself into the death of those whom he wastes away being regenerated against him. Let no one, therefore, confide that faith without works can suffice for him, when we know what is written: Faith without works is dead (James II, 20). Let no one think that he has fully escaped the bite of Behemoth from the sole confession of faith, because he has indeed already absorbed the river, but he still thirsts for the Jordan; and so many times the Jordan flows into his mouth, as many times as any Christian flows down to iniquity. His mouth indeed we already flee by faith raising us up, but with great study it is to be cared for, lest in this we slide down by slippery operation. If the caution of walking is neglected, in vain is the right journey held by believing, because the way of faith indeed profits towards the heavenly country, but by no means leads those who stumble.

[Vet. VIII.] 13. He lies in wait especially for those who excel in holiness. Who, unless they employ the greatest vigilance, fall more miserably from on high.---We have still something to weigh more subtly in this matter. For these whom we said are expressed by the Jordan, can be designated by a river. For those who have already acknowledged the faith of truth, but neglect to live faithfully, can rightly be called a river, because indeed they flow downwards. But Jordan in the Hebrew word is called their descent. And

there are some who, seeking the way of truth, cast themselves away, and descend from the elation of the old life; and when they desire eternal things, they render themselves very much alien from this world, while they not only do not seek the things of others, but even leave their own, and not only do not seek glory in it, but even contemn it when it offers itself. For hence is it that it is said by the voice of Truth: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself (Luke IX, 23). For he denies himself who, having trodden down the pride of elation, shows himself before the eyes of God to be alien from himself. Hence the Psalmist says: I will be mindful of thee from the land of Jordan and of Hermoniim (Psal. XLI, 7). For Jordan, as I said, is interpreted descent, but Hermoniim anathema, that is, alienation. From the land of Jordan and of Hermoniim, therefore, he is mindful of God, who in that he casts himself down, and exists alien from himself, is recalled to the memory of his Creator. But the ancient enemy does not hold this for a great thing, that he holds those seeking earthly things under the law of his tyranny. For by the attestation of the Prophet we have known that his meat is choice (Habac. I, 16). 1084 Nor does he account it a wonder if he should absorb those whom pride erects, avarice wastes away, pleasure dilates, malice narrows, wrath inflames, discord separates, envy ulcerates, luxury polluting kills. He shall absorb, therefore, a river, and shall not wonder, because he does not esteem it for a great thing when he devours those who through the very studies of their life run

downwards; but he strives greatly to snatch those whom, earthly studies having been despised, he now contemplates joined to heavenly things.

[Vet. IX.] Whence, the river having been absorbed, it is rightly subjoined: And he has confidence that the Jordan may flow into his mouth, because by lying in wait he desires to snatch those whom, for the love of the heavenly country, he recognizes to cast themselves down from the glory of the present life. For some indeed desert the world, leave the vain things of passing honors, and, seeking the depths of humility, transcend the manner of human conversation by living well; and they profit in such a citadel of studies that they already work the virtues of signs; but because by looking around they neglect to cover themselves, being struck by the weapon of vain glory, they fall more miserably from on high. For hence is it that the eternal Judge, who examines the secrets of the heart, foretelling the fall of the same ruin, threatens, when He says: Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many virtues? And then will I confess to them that I never knew you, depart from me ye who work iniquity, I know not who ye are (Matth. VII, 22, 23). Hence also it is said through the Prophet: The Lord called judgment to the fire and it devoured a great abyss, and it shall eat a part of the house of the Lord (Amos VII, 4). For judgment is called to the fire when the sentence of justice is shown to the punishment of eternal burning.

And it devours a great abyss, because it burns the iniquitous and incomprehensible minds of men, which now hide themselves from men even under the miracles of signs. But a part of the house of the Lord is eaten, because Gehenna also devours those who now, as if in holy deeds, glory that they are of the number of the elect. Those, therefore, who are here the Jordan, are there called a part of the house of the Lord. The ancient enemy, therefore, has confidence that the Jordan may also flow into his mouth, because sometimes by the snares of his craftiness he kills even those who are already thought to be elect. [Vet. X.] But whose heart's hardness would not those words of the Lord perturb? The constancy of whose mind would not be shaken from the innermost roots of thoughts, when our enemy is shown to be of such great fortitude against us? Will there be no help of consolation? There will be certainly, for it is subjoined:

CHAPTER VII

[Rec. VII].

VERSE 19.---In his eyes as with a hook he shall take him. 14. The devil, desiring to swallow up Christ, was caught as with a hook.---It is greatly to be noted that God, mercifully tempering the words of His Scripture, now terrifies us with harsh incitements, now refreshes us with gentle consolations, and mixes terror with comforts, and comforts with terror, so that while both are tempered around us by a wonderful

art of mastery, we may neither be found desperately terrified nor incautiously secure. For when He had indicated the crafty snares and unbridled strengths of Behemoth in manifold sentences, He immediately commends the coming of His only-begotten Son, our Redeemer, and insinuates by what order that Behemoth is to be destroyed, so that because He had smitten our heart with the narration of his power, He might the more quickly relieve our sorrow by indicating his perdition. Therefore after He said: He shall absorb a river, and shall not wonder, and he has confidence that the Jordan may flow into his mouth, He there at once announces the advent of the Lord's incarnation, saying: In his eyes as with a hook he shall take him. Who knows not that in a hook the bait is shown, the barb is hidden? For the bait provokes, that the barb may prick. Our Lord, therefore, coming for the redemption of the human race, made as it were a kind of hook of Himself for the death of the devil. For He assumed a body, that in it this Behemoth might seek the death of the flesh as his bait. While he unjustly seeks that death in Him, he lost us whom he held as if justly. He was caught, therefore, in the hook of His incarnation, because while he seeks in Him the bait of the body, he was transfixed by the barb of the divinity. For there was present humanity which might lead the devourer to itself, there divinity which might pierce him, there open infirmity which might provoke him, there hidden power which might transfix the jaw of the robber. In the hook, therefore, was he caught, because

he perished from that whence he devoured. And indeed this Behemoth had known the incarnate Son of God, but he did not know the order of our redemption. For he knew that the Son of God had been incarnate for our redemption, but he was entirely ignorant that this same Redeemer of ours would transfix him by dying. Whence also it is well said: In his eyes as with a hook he shall take him. For we say we have in our eyes what we see placed before us. But the ancient enemy saw the Redeemer of the human race placed before him, whom, acknowledging he confessed, and confessing he feared, saying: What have we to do with thee, Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? (Matt. VIII, 29). In his eyes, therefore, he was caught with a hook, because he both knew and bit; and he first knew Him whom he should fear, and yet afterwards he did not fear, when he hungered in Him for the death of the flesh as for his own bait. [Vet. XI.] Therefore because we have heard what our Head did through Himself, let us now hear what He does through His members. It follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. VIII].

IBID.---And in stakes he shall pierce his nostrils. 15. By detecting his most sagacious snares, the saints as it were with a stake pierce his nostrils.---What else do we take for stakes, that is, pales, which indeed are sharpened that they may be fixed, but the sharp counsels of the saints?

Which pierce the nostrils of this Behemoth, while they both look around at his most sagacious snares by watching, and transfix them by overcoming. But through the nostrils scent is drawn, and by drawing in the breath it is brought about that even a thing which is placed far off may be known. By the nostrils of Behemoth, therefore, his crafty snares are designated, through which he most sagaciously strives both to know the hidden goods of our heart and to dissipate them by his most wicked persuasion. In stakes, therefore, the Lord pierces his nostrils, because He enervates his crafty snares by penetrating them with the sharp senses of the saints. But often, lying in wait, he flies around the ways of the good with such great art, that through those things which he has known to be well done by them, he may seek an entrance to malice. For whence he beholds one to bestow anything, thence he kindles another in the flame of discord; and when he regards this one to have pity, he persuades that one to be angry, so that while he insinuates a good as if not commonly done, he may cut off concordant minds from the good of common grace. For because he is not able to break the minds of the just by persuading them to evil, he busies himself to sow evils among them in their good deeds. But holy men overcome these his snares the more quickly, as they also more subtly detect them. Which we show better if we call Paul as a witness from among many assertors of the truth, under whom a certain Corinthian when he had perpetrated the crime of incest, the egregious

teacher delivered him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh to the satisfaction of penance, and reserved his spirit safe for the day of the Lord (I Cor. V, 5). By a great art of mastery indeed he was delivered to him, being forced to the punishment to whom he was voluntarily subjected in the fault, so that he who had been the author to the vice of wickedness, should himself become the scourge of discipline. But that penance having been well performed, when he had known the Corinthians to be already mercifully moved over him, he says: To whom ye have forgiven anything, I forgive also; for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ (II Cor. II, 10). For thinking of the grace of communion he says: To whom ye have forgiven anything, I forgive also. As if he were to say: I do not dissent from your good, let whatever ye yourselves have done be mine. And he soon subjoined: And I, if I forgave anything, for your sakes. As if he were to say: I added a good to your acts, whatever I did mercifully for your sakes. Your utility, therefore, is my goodness, my utility is your goodness. Who soon adding that same joining of hearts, in which he is thus held, subjoined: In the person of Christ. To whom as if we should presume to say: Why dost thou so cautiously couple thyself to the disciples? why dost thou with such a solicitous mind conform either thyself to their actions, or them to thine? he there at once subjoined: Lest Satan should get an advantage of us (Ibid., 11). He insinuates with how sharp a sense he transfixes his sagacious snares, adding: For we are not igno-

rant of his devices. As if he were to say in other words: By the Lord's authorship we are sharp stakes, and we penetrate the nostrils of that Behemoth by subtly looking around, lest he himself should turn into an end of malice that which the mind well begins.

[Vet. XII.] 16. Exploring the divinity of Christ, he was transfixed in the nose by His words and caught.---By stakes can be signified the sharp words of His wisdom manifested through the flesh, so that because scent is drawn through the nostrils, by the nostrils of Behemoth may be figured that exploration of the ancient enemy. Who when he doubted that God was incarnate, wished to know this by tempting with sought-for miracles, saying: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread (Matt. IV, 3). Because, therefore, he desired to know the scent of His divinity by the indications of signs, he drew as it were a breath through his nostrils. But when it is immediately answered to him: Man does not live by bread alone. And: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (Ibid., 4, 7), because Truth smote the investigation of the ancient enemy by the sharpnesses of its sentences, it as it were pierced his nostrils with stakes. But because this Behemoth is stretched out through various arguments of frauds, he is still noted by another added name: for it is subjoined:

CHAPTER IX

[Rec. IX].

VERSE 20.---Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook? 17. For Leviathan is said to be their addition. Of whom indeed, but of men? upon whom he once brought the fault of prevarication, and daily extends it even to eternal death by his most wicked suggestions. To whom while he multiplies their guilt by the interest of sin, he without doubt heaps up punishments without cessation. Leviathan can also be called so even by derision. For to the first man he held out by crafty persuasion that he would add divinity, but he took away immortality (Gen. III, 5). It can be called, therefore, the addition of men by derision, to whom while he promised to add that which they were not, he by deceiving also subtracted that which they were. But this Leviathan was caught with a hook, because in our Redeemer, while he bit the bait of the body through his satellites, the barb of the divinity pierced him. For as it were a hook held the jaws of him swallowing, while in Him both the bait of the flesh lay open, which the devourer might seek, and the divinity lay hid at the time of the passion, which might slay him. For in this abyss of waters, that is, in this immensity of the human race, gasping for the death of all, devouring the life of almost all, that whale was carried hither and thither with open mouth, but for the death of that whale a hook has been suspended in this dark depth of waters by a wonderful disposition. The line of this hook is that lineage of the ancient fathers recorded through the Gospel. For when it is said: Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob (Matt.

I, 2); and when the rest of the successors, the name of Joseph being interposed, are described even to Mary the espoused virgin, as it were a kind of line is twisted, at the end of which the incarnate Lord, that is, this hook, should be bound, which this whale should seek with open mouth as it hung in these waters of the human race, but it being bitten through the cruelty of his satellites, he should no longer have the power of biting. Lest, therefore, this whale lying in wait for human deaths should further devour whom he would, this hook held the jaws of the robber, and bit him that was biting itself. God, therefore, indicating the incarnation of the only-begotten Son to His faithful servant, says: Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook? Understand, as I, who send my incarnate only-begotten Son for the death of the robber, in whom while mortal flesh is beheld, and the power of immortality is not seen, as it were a kind of hook he kills him devouring from that whence he hides the point of power by which he may transfix. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

IBID.---And with a rope thou shalt bind his tongue. 18. The Lord bound his tongue, while He compelled his errors to be silent.---Understand, as I. For sacred Scripture has been accustomed sometimes to designate by a rope the lots of dimensions, sometimes sins, sometimes faith. For on account of the hereditary lots of dimensions it is said: The lines are fallen unto me in goodly places; yea, I have a goodly heritage (Psal. XV,

6). For the lines fall in goodly places, while through the humility of life the lots of a better country receive us. Again, because sins are signified by a rope, it is said through the Prophet: Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity (Isai. V, 18). For iniquity is drawn in the cords of vanity, while the fault is prolonged by increase. Whence also it is said by the Psalmist: The cords of the wicked have encompassed me (Psal. CXVIII, 61). For because a rope is twisted by adding that it may grow, not undeservedly is sin figured in a rope, which in a perverse heart often, while it is defended, is multiplied. Again, faith is expressed by a rope, Solomon attesting, who says: A threefold cord is not quickly broken (Eccl. IV, 12), because indeed faith, which is woven from the knowledge of the Trinity by the mouth of those preaching, remaining strong in the elect, is dissipated only in the heart of the reprobate. In this place, therefore, there is no obstacle to either sin or faith being understood by the name of rope. [Vet. XIII.] For our incarnate Lord bound the tongue of Leviathan with a rope, because He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned all the predicaments of his errors (Rom. VIII, 3). Whence, Paul attesting, it is said: And for sin, condemned sin (Ibid.). He bound his tongue with a rope, because through the likeness of sinful flesh He destroyed all the arguments of his fallacy from the hearts of His elect. For behold, the Lord appearing in the flesh, the tongue of Leviathan has been bound, because, his truth

having been known, those doctrines of falsehood have become silent.

19. The Academics and Mathematicians are refuted.---For where is now the error of the Academics, who indeed endeavor to construct that nothing is certain, who with impudent front exact faith for their assertions from their auditors, when they testify that no things are true? Where is the superstition of the Mathematicians who, while they look up at the courses of the signs, suspend the lives of men upon the moments of the stars? Whose doctrine the birth of twins often openly dissipates, who, though they come forth at one and the same moment of an hour, do not endure in one quality of conversation. Where are so many predicaments of falsehood, which we fly from enumerating, lest we should recede far from the order of expounding? But all the doctrine of error has now become silent, because the Lord has constrained the tongue of Leviathan by the rope of His incarnation. Whence also it is well said through the Prophet: And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea (Isai. XI, 15). For the tongue of the sea is the science of secular doctrine. But it is well called the Egyptian sea, because it is darkened with the obscurity of sin. The Lord, therefore, has desolated the tongue of the Egyptian sea, because He destroyed the false wisdom of this world by showing Himself through the flesh. By a rope, therefore, the tongue of Leviathan is constrained, because through the likeness of sinful flesh the preaching of the old sinner has been bound.

20. The faith of the most holy Trinity being disseminated, secular science became silent.--- But if faith is signified by a rope, the same understanding is again hinted to us, because while through holy preachers the faith of the Trinity became known in the world, the doctrine of the world ceased to break out against the minds of the elect. Whence it is well said to the Lord through the Prophet: Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers (Psal. LXXIII, 15). For Ethan is interpreted strong. And who is this strong one, but he of whom the Lord says through the Gospel: No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man (Mark III, 27)? The Lord, therefore, cleaved the fountains and the floods, when He opened the streams of truth in the hearts of His apostles. Of whom again it is said through another Prophet: With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation (Isai. XII, 3). For to their doctrine we go thirsting, that we may bring back our little pitchers of hearts full of truth. But by His fountains flowing forth He dried up the rivers of Ethan, while He parched the doctrine of the strong and malignant spirit by the shown ray of His truth. The tongue of Leviathan, therefore, is bound with a rope, because, the faith of the Trinity being extended, the predicaments of errors became silent. But because he is not now able to extol himself openly, going hither and thither he bites by snares. [Vet. XIV.] But with wonderful mercy the Lord watches against

him for us, and expels him even in that which he works by frauds. Whence it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XI

[Rec. X].

VERS. 21.---Wilt thou put a ring in his nostrils? 21. The ring in the nostrils of the devil is the omnipotence of divine virtue.---As by the nostrils snares are signified, so by the ring the omnipotence of divine virtue is designated. Which, when it prohibits us from being apprehended by temptations, holds the snares of the ancient enemy, encompassing them in wonderful orders. A ring, therefore, is put in his nostrils, while, the fortitude of supernal protection being drawn around him, his sagacity is restrained, lest he should prevail as much against the infirmity of men as he secretly explores the arguments of perdition. The aid of secret judgment can also be designated by the name of a ring, which is put in the nostrils of this Behemoth, when he is refrained from his crafty cruelty. Whence it is well said by the prophet to the king of Babylon, when he is prohibited from harming the Israelites: I will put a ring in thy nostrils (Isai. XXXVII, 29). As if it were openly said: Thou sighest in thinking of snares; but, not being able to fulfill what thou desirest, thou bearest the ring of my omnipotence in thy nostrils, so that, while thou pantest more ardently for the death of the good, thou mayest return empty of their life. What in this place is called a ring, this also holy Scripture by John in

the Apocalypse calls a sickle. For he says: I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle (Apoc. XIV, 14). For the power of divine judgment, because it binds on every side, is called a ring; and because it embraces all things within itself by cutting, it is designated by the appellation of a sickle. For in a sickle whatever is cut, toward whichever part it is bent, it yields inward. And because the power of supernal judgment is by no means avoided, for we are indeed within it whithersoever we may attempt to flee, rightly when the judge who is to come is shown, he is held to hold a sickle, because when he powerfully meets all things, he encompasses them by cutting. The Prophet saw that he was within the sickle of judgment, when he said: If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me (Psal. CXXXVIII, 8, 9, 10). He saw himself within a certain sickle, because he knew that he could by no means escape the straits of divine judgment.

CHAPTER XII.

IBID.---Or wilt thou bore his jaw through with a ring? [armilla]

22. This extracts from his jaws many whom he has devoured.---From the understanding of the ring the armilla (bracelet or ring) does not

differ, because it also constrains that where it is placed by surrounding it. But because the armilla is more widely extended, by the armilla a more abundant protection of His hidden judgment towards us is designated. With an armilla, therefore, the Lord bores through the jaw of this Leviathan, because by the ineffable power of His mercy He so meets the malice of the ancient enemy, that He sometimes loses even those whom he has already taken; and they fall, as it were, from his mouth, who after perpetrated faults return to innocence. For who, being once snatched by his mouth, would escape his jaw, if it were not bored through? Did he not hold Peter in his mouth, when he denied? (Matth. XXVI, 71). Did he not hold David in his mouth, when he merged himself into such a whirlpool of luxury? (II Sam. XI, 4). But when both returned to life through penance, this Leviathan lost them in some way, as if through the holes of his jaw. Through the hole of the jaw, therefore, were subtracted from his mouth those who after the perpetration of such great wickedness returned by repenting. But what man would escape the mouth of this Leviathan, so as to commit nothing unlawful? But from this we know how much we are debtors to the Redeemer of the human race, who not only prohibited us from going into the mouth of Leviathan, but also granted us to return from his mouth; who did not take away hope from the sinner, because He bored through his jaw, that He might provide a way of escape, so that at least after the bite he may flee, who before,

being incautious, by no means feared to be bitten. Everywhere, therefore, heavenly medicine meets us, because He both gave to man precepts lest he should sin, and yet gave remedies for sinning, lest he should despair. Whence it is to be especially guarded against lest any one by the delight of sin should be snatched by the mouth of this Leviathan, and yet, if he should be snatched, let him not despair, because if he perfectly laments his sin, he still finds a hole in his jaw, through which he may escape. Now he is being bruised by the teeth, but still if a way of escape is sought, a hole is found in his jaw. Even he that is caught has a place to go out, who would not foresee lest he should be caught. Whoever, therefore, is not yet caught, let him flee his jaw; but whoever is already caught, let him seek the hole in the jaw. For pious and just is our Creator.

[Vet. XV.] 23. Before guilt, the justice of God is to be feared; after guilt, mercy is to be hoped for. The ruin of the greater should be the caution of the lesser.---But let no one say: Because He is pious, I sin venially. And let no one who has sinned say: Because He is just, I despair of the remission of sin. For God relaxes the crime that is bewailed, but let each one fear to perpetrate what he knows not if he can worthily bewail. Before guilt, therefore, let him fear justice, yet after guilt let him presume on piety; nor let him so fear justice as to recover with no consolation of hope; nor let him so trust in mercy as to neglect applying the medicine of worthy penance to his wounds; but let him whom he presumes to spare

him piously, always also think of Him as judging strictly. Under His piety, therefore, let the hope of the sinner rejoice, but under His strictness let the correction of the penitent tremble. Let the hope of our presumption, therefore, also have the bite of fear, so that for the correction of sins the justice of the Judge may terrify him, whom the grace of the Sparing One invites to the confidence of pardon. For hence it is said by a certain wise man: Say not, The mercies of the Lord are many, he will not remember my sins (Ecclus. V, 6). For he presently subjoins His piety and justice, saying: For mercy and wrath are from Him (Ibid., 7). Divine clemency, therefore, boring through the jaw of this Behemoth, everywhere meets the human race both mercifully and powerfully, because it neither kept silent the admonition of precaution to the free, nor withdrew the remedy of flight from the captive. For to this end indeed in Holy Scripture the sins of such men, that is David and Peter, are inserted, that the ruin of the greater may be the caution of the lesser. But to this end also both the penance and the pardon of both are there suggested, that the recovery of the lost may be the hope of those perishing. Over his own state, therefore, when David falls, let no one be proud. Over his own fall also, when David rises, let no one despair. See how wonderfully Holy Scripture by the same word presses down the proud, by which it lifts up the humble. For it related one thing done, and in a different way recalled the proud indeed to the dread of humility, but the humble to the confidence of hope. O ines-

timable medicine of a new kind, which, placed in one and the same order, both by pressing down dries up swellings, and by lifting up pours in what is parched! By the fall of the greater He terrified us, but by their reparation He strengthened us.

24. In vain he hopes for mercy, who fears not justice.---For so indeed always, so the mercy of divine dispensation both represses us when proud, and supports us lest we fall to despair. [Vet. XVI, Rec. XI.] Whence also He admonishes through Moses, saying: Thou shalt not take the upper or the lower millstone as a pledge (Deut. XXIV, 6). For to take we sometimes say is to carry away. Whence also those birds which are greedy for snatching birds are called hawks [accipitres]. Whence Paul the Apostle says: For ye suffer, if any man devour you, if any man take [accipit] of you (II Cor. XI, 20). As if he said, If any man snatches. But the pledge of the debtor is the confession of the sinner. For from a debtor a pledge is taken, when from a sinner the confession of sin is already held. But the upper and lower millstone are hope and fear. For hope carries up to high things, but fear presses the heart down below. But the upper and lower millstone are so necessarily joined to each other, that one without the other is held inutility. In the breast of the sinner, therefore, hope and dread ought incessantly to be joined, because in vain he hopes for mercy, if he does not also fear justice; in vain he dreads justice, if he does not also trust in mercy. In the place of a pledge, therefore, the upper or the lower millstone is prohibited from being taken

away, because he who preaches to a sinner ought to compose his preaching with such dispensation, that he neither withdraws fear while hope is left, nor leaves him in fear alone when hope is withdrawn. For the upper or the lower millstone is taken away, if through the preacher's tongue in the breast of the sinner either fear is divided from hope, or hope from fear.

25. Why God does not keep the elect unharmed from carnal vices. Pride is a greater sin than lust. Man makes a wound out of medicine, God makes a medicine out of a wound.---But because, the cause requiring it, having brought David into the midst, we have made memory of so great a crime, perhaps the mind of the reader is moved, why Almighty God does not keep those whom He has chosen forever, whom He has also assumed to the summit of spiritual gifts, unharmed from corporal vices. Whence, because we believe that satisfaction is sooner given, we answer briefly. For some, through the received gifts of virtues, through the bestowed grace of good works, fall into the vice of pride, but yet they do not know whither they have fallen. Therefore, against them the ancient enemy, because he already dominates interiorly, is permitted to rage also exteriorly, so that those who are puffed up in thought, may be prostrated through the lust of the flesh. But we know that sometimes it is less to fall into the corruption of the body than to sin by silent thought from deliberate elation; but since pride is believed to be less foul, it is less avoided. But men are so much the more ashamed of lust,

as they all at once know it to be foul. Whence it frequently happens that some, falling into lust after pride, are ashamed of the evil of latent guilt from the open fall; and then they correct even greater things, when being prostrated in the least they are more heavily confounded. For they behold themselves guilty among the lesser things, who believed themselves free among the more weighty. By a pious dispensation of the Lord, therefore, this Behemoth, being sometimes let loose, draws from guilt to guilt, and while he smites more, he loses thereby him whom he had captured, and where he is seen to have conquered, there he is overcome. It is pleasing to consider within the fortified bosom of grace with how great favor of mercy God contains us. Behold, he who extols himself from virtue returns to humility through vice. [Vet. XVI.] But he who is extolled by received virtues is not wounded with a sword, but, as I may say, with medicine. For what is virtue, but a medicine? and what is vice, but a wound? Because, therefore, we make a wound out of medicine, He makes a medicine out of a wound, so that we who are smitten by virtue, may be healed by vice. For we are wounded by virtue, when being puffed up by it through pride we are divided from God; but we are healed by vice, when being reduced to humility through a fall, we are again joined to God.

26. Temptation is sometimes the guardian of merits. The devil by tempting the saints keeps them for the kingdom against his will.---Yet the jaw of this Behemoth being bored through can

be understood in another way, so that he may be said to hold in his mouth not those whom he has already perfectly implicated in sin, but those whom he still tempts with persuasions of sin, in so far as for him to chew anyone is to tempt him concerning the delight of sin. He had received Paul to be chewed indeed, but not to be swallowed, when after so many sublime revelations he agitated him with stings of the flesh (II Cor. XII, 7). Then therefore when he received license of temptation against him, he held him in his jaw, but one bored through. But he who being elated might have perished, was tempted lest he should perish. That temptation therefore was not a whirlpool of vices, but a guardian of merits, because this Leviathan by wearying him wore him down in affliction, but did not devour him by taking him in guilt. But he would not lose men elated in holiness, unless he tempted them. For they would not be saints, who should be proud of the glory of holiness, and would fall under his right as much as they raised themselves in their virtues. But by a wonderful order of dispensation while they are tempted they are humbled, and while they are humbled they now cease to be his. Well therefore is the jaw of this Behemoth said to be bored through, because from whence he wears down the elect of God, from thence he loses them; from whence he tempts that he may destroy, he acts from thence lest they perish. The ancient enemy therefore, serving the hidden dispensations of God, tempts the souls of the saints for destruction willingly, but by tempting keeps

them for the kingdom against his will. His jaw therefore is bored through, because those whom by tempting, that is by chewing, he wears down, he loses as it were when he swallows them. Which because it is done not by human but by divine providence, so that the very astuteness of the old adversary may support the utility of the just, in so far as when he tempts the elect, he may the more by tempting guard them, it is well said to blessed Job: Or wilt thou bore his jaw through with a ring? Understand, as I, who providingly disposing all things, more robustly guard my elect in integrity from thence, from whence I permit them to be in some way shaken from integrity through the jaw of this Leviathan. It follows:

CHAPTER XIII

[Old XVIII, Rec. XII].

VERS. 22.---Will he multiply prayers to thee, or will he speak soft words to thee?

27. Satan, either by himself or through his members, namely the reprobate, has offered prayers to Christ.---Understand, as to Me. For if these words are referred to the person of the Son, when He was incarnate he spoke soft words to Him when he said: I know who Thou art, the Holy One of God (Luke 4:34). To whom this Leviathan multiplied prayers, when through the legion subject to him he said: If Thou cast us out, send us into the herd of swine (Matth. 8:31). Although it can be understood more clearly, that he multiplies prayers to the Lord, when the

wicked who are his body at the judgment of the last day pray that they may be spared, when his members, namely the reprobate, crying late say: Lord, Lord, open to us (Luke 13:25). To whom it is immediately said: I know you not whence you are. Then also he will speak soft words to the Lord through his members, when many from his body are about to say: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works (Matth. 7:22)? They say soft words indeed in praying, when they repeat in His name what they have done, but they snatched those things to their own praise with a hard heart when they did them. Whence they soon hear: I know not who you are (Ibid., 23). It follows:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. XIII].

VERS. 23.---Will he make a covenant with thee? Understand, as with Me: And wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

28. By tempting the saints he serves their utility and the will of God.---Understand, as I. But it is to be observed very skillfully what covenant this Leviathan makes with the Lord, that he should be held by Him as a servant for ever. For in a covenant the will of disagreeing parties is fulfilled, so that each may arrive at its own wish, and conclude quarrels with a desired end. The ancient enemy therefore, kindled by the torch of his own malice, disagrees with the sincerity

of divine innocence, but even in disagreeing he does not depart from His judgment; for he always malevolently desires to tempt just men, but yet the Lord either mercifully permits this to be done, or justly. This very license of temptation therefore is called a covenant, in which both the desire of the tempter is acted out, and yet through it the will of the just Disposer is fulfilled in a wonderful way. For the Lord often subjects His elect to the tempter to be instructed, as we said lately, as after the enclosures of paradise, after the secrets of the third heaven, lest Paul should have been able to be extolled by the greatness of revelations, there was given to him an angel of Satan (II Cor. 12:7). But, as we have prefaced, it is disposed by this very temptation, that they who being elated might have perished, being humbled should be kept from perdition. By a secret order of dispensation therefore, from whence the iniquity of the devil is permitted to rage, from thence the benignity of God is piously perfected. And well from this covenant which he is said to make with the Lord, is he said to be taken as a servant, because he obeys the nods of heavenly grace from thence, from whence he exercises the wrath of his most wicked will. [Old XIX.] He is therefore a servant from covenant, who while he is permitted to fulfill his own will, is bound by the will of the heavenly counsel, so that he may tempt the elect of God willingly, as has been said, and by tempting may unknowingly prove them.

29. The punishment of the reprobate serves the glory of God and of the elect. But because he

serves the uses of the elect in this life as long as he could exercise the wickedness of his malice by temptations, but in this place he is said to be taken by the Lord not only as a servant from covenant, but as a servant for ever, we are compelled to investigate how we may show him to serve the Lord in perpetuity even after the term of the present life. For neither is he then permitted still to tempt the just who are powerful in heavenly happiness, when he is delivered before their eyes to the eternal fires of Gehenna, because they are by no means to be instructed by temptations in that heavenly country, in which they are now rewarded for the labors of temptations. But then this Leviathan with his body, namely all the reprobate, is delivered to the avenging flames, by which he may be tortured without end. Which tortures indeed while the just behold, they grow in the praises of God, because they both discern in themselves the good with which they are rewarded, and behold in those the punishment which they have escaped. For so then will the universe be beautiful, while both Gehenna justly tortures the impious, and eternal happiness justly rewards the pious. For as a black color is laid under in a picture, that the white or red laid over may be shown more beautiful, so then also God ordering the evil well, exhibits the more happy joys of the blessed, the punishments of the reprobate being shown before their eyes. And although that joy of theirs from the divine vision be not such as to increase, yet they feel themselves to be the more debtors to their

Author, when they both discern the good which they perceive being justly rewarded, and the evil which being mercifully helped they overcame. [Rec. XIV] Therefore if both here the temptation of this Leviathan, and there his damnation profits the utility of the just, he is a servant for ever while he unknowingly serves the praises of God, both there in his just punishment, and here in his unjust will. It follows:

CHAPTER XV

[Old XX].

VERS. 24.---Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?

30. The devil is a four-footed animal through the fatuity of unclean action; a dragon through the malice of harming; a bird through elation.---What is it that our adversary is first called Behemoth, afterwards Leviathan, but now is compared to a bird in the mockery of his perdition? Behemoth, indeed, as we said, is interpreted a beast, which is shown as four-footed, while like an ox it is said to eat hay. But Leviathan, because he is taken with a hook, is without doubt known as a serpent in the waters. But now he is brought to the likeness of a bird, when it is said: Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Why therefore he should be called a beast, or a brute animal, why a dragon, why a bird, let us investigate. For we more quickly recognize his names, if we subtly explore the astuteness of his tergiversation. For he came from heaven to earth, and now raises

himself with no respiration to the hope of heavenly things. He is therefore an irrational and fourfooted animal through the fatuity of unclean action, a dragon through the malice of harming, a bird through the lightness of a subtle nature. For because he is ignorant of this which he acts against himself, he is a beast by brute sense; because he malevolently desires to harm us, he is a dragon; but because he is proudly extolled concerning the subtlety of his nature, he is a bird. Again, because in that which he acts iniquitously he is possessed by divine power for our utility, he is a brute animal; but because he bites secretly, he is a serpent; but because he sometimes also through untamed pride simulates an angel of light, he is a bird. For although he provokes the human race with inexplicable art of iniquity, yet he greatly tempts with three vices, that namely he may subject others to himself through luxury, others through malice, others through pride.

31. According to those various forms, he tempts variously. Christ showed the bait to Satan, and hid the snare.---Therefore not undeservedly in that which he strives to act is he called by the very name of his actions, when he is called a brute animal, a dragon, or a bird. For in those whom he excites to the folly of luxury, he is a brute animal; in those whom he inflames to the malice of harming, he is a dragon; but in those whom he raises into the pride of haughtiness as if wise in high things, he is a bird; but in those whom he equally pollutes in luxury and pride and malice, he exists as a brute animal, a dragon, and

at the same time a bird. For he introduced himself into the heart of the deceived through as many species as the iniquities in which he implicated them. He is therefore called by the name of many things, because before the minds of the deceived he is turned into various species of forms. For when he tempts this one through the luxury of the flesh, and yet by no means overcomes him, with changed suggestion he inflames his heart into malice. Because therefore the beast was not able to come to him, the dragon came. He is not able to corrupt him with the poison of malice, but yet he opposes his goods to his eyes, and raises his heart into pride. Therefore he was not able to creep up to him as a dragon, but yet a phantasm of vain glory being brought in, he flew like a bird before the gaze of his thought. Which bird indeed is extolled the more immensely against us, the more it is hindered by no infirmity of its nature. For because he is not pressed down by the death of the flesh, and saw our Redeemer mortal in the flesh, he swelled with a higher pride of elation; but where he raised himself with the wing of pride against his Author, there he found the snare of his own death. For he was prostrated by that death of His flesh, which being elated he sought; and from thence he endured the snare, from whence he desired the death of the Just One as it were the bait of his own malice. [Old XXI.] Let it be said therefore: Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? For the Lord played with him as with a bird, while in the passion of His only-begotten Son He showed him the bait, but hid the

snare. For he saw what he might take with his mouth, but he did not see what he might hold in his throat. For although he himself had confessed Him the Son of God, yet he believed Him to die as if a pure man, to whose death he excited the minds of the persecuting Jews (Matth. 8:29). But in the very time of His delivery he is understood to have known late now, that he himself would be punished by that death of His. Whence also he terrified the wife of Pilate with dreams, that her husband might cease from the persecution of the Just One (Matth. 27:19). But the thing being disposed by internal dispensation, could be resisted by no machination. For it was expedient that the death of the Just One dying unjustly should loose the death of sinners dying justly. Which because this Leviathan was ignorant of until the time of His passion, being mocked as if in the manner of a bird, he endured the snare of His divinity, while he bit the bait of His humanity. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. XV].

IBID.---Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

32. Christ choosing the weak things of the world, overcame the strength of the devil. The house of wisdom is the body of Christ, and the Church. For the preaching of the Gospel those alone were assumed who through themselves would not be fit.---Understand, as I. In servants, although the condition is despised, manliness

flourishes; but in maidens, the sex lies together with the condition. Well therefore does the Lord assert that he binds this Leviathan not for His servants, but for His maidens, because coming for our redemption, and sending His preachers against the pride of the world, He chose the foolish, leaving the wise; the weak, leaving the strong; the poor, leaving the rich. Therefore the Lord bound the strength of this Leviathan for His maidens, because Paul attesting: God hath chosen the weak things of the world, that He may confound the strong (1 Cor. 1:27). Whence it is well said through Solomon: Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars, she hath killed her victims, she hath mingled her wine, she hath set her table, she hath sent forth her maidens that they might call to the citadel and the walls of the city (Prov. 9:1, 2, 3). For Wisdom built a house for herself, when the only-begotten Son of God created for Himself a human body within the womb of the Virgin, the soul mediating in Himself. For so the body of the Only-begotten is called the house of God, as it is also called a temple; so indeed, that the same one and the self-same is the Son of God and of man who inhabits, and He who is inhabited. Which however is rightly and otherwise taken, if the Church be called the house of Wisdom. Which hewed out for itself seven pillars, because it raised up the minds of those preaching, disjoined from the love of the present world, to bear the fabric of the same Church. Which for the reason that they are supported by

the virtue of perfection, are designated by the number seven. She killed victims, because she permitted the life of those preaching to be slain in persecution. She mingled wine, because she preached to us equally the secrets of His divinity and humanity. She also set a table, because she prepared for us the foods of Sacred Scripture by opening them. She also sent forth her maidens, who might call us to the citadel and the walls of the city, because she studied to have weak and abject preachers, who might gather the faithful peoples to the heavenly buildings of the spiritual country. Whence in the Gospel the Lord praises Nathanael (John 1:47), and yet does not number him in the lot of those preaching, because such men ought to have come to Him for preaching who had nothing of their own praise, that it might be the more solidly known that what they acted was of the truth, as it might also be openly discerned because they would not have been fit of themselves for acting this. That therefore wonderful power might be clear through the tongues of the preachers, it was first acted more wonderfully that the merit of the same preachers should be none. Therefore the Lord sent maidens, and bound the strength of this Leviathan, because He exhibited weak preachers to the world, and restrained all the powerful, who had been his body, under the bond of His terror. And in himself this Leviathan is bound for the maidens, when the ancient enemy is not permitted to rage against the minds of the elect as much as he wills, while the light of truth clears by the weak preaching;

but lest he should hold all whom he desires under the captivity of infidelity, he is coarcted by signs and virtues. He therefore of Himself acts this strongly, who gives strength to the not strong against him. But because He hints whom the Lord sends against him, He now also adds what they themselves do who are sent. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII

[Old XXII, Rec. XVI].

VERS. 25.---Friends shall cut him in pieces, merchants shall divide him.

33. The members of the devil are cut in pieces, when sinners are separated from his body to be associated with Christ. Preachers are merchants.---This Leviathan is cut in pieces as often as his members are separated from him by the sword of the divine word. For when the wicked hear the word of truth, and, struck with holy fear, suspend themselves from the imitation of the ancient enemy, he himself is divided in his body, from which those who had wickedly cleaved to him are withdrawn. But He names the same ones friends, whom above He calls maidens; He also calls the same ones merchants, whom He had called friends. For the holy preachers are first maidens through fear, afterwards friends through faith, at the last also merchants through action. For to the same ones being weak it is said: Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32). To the same ones again growing strong it is said:

But I have called you friends, for all things whatsoever I have heard from My Father, I have made known to you (John 15:15). To the same ones at the last going into the operation of business it is commanded: Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). For in the preaching of the faith a certain business as it were is carried on, while the word is given, and faith is taken from the hearers. They do as it were a certain business, who bestow preaching, and report faith from the peoples. They impart faith, and immediately take their holy life. For if the preaching of the just had not been a business, surely the Psalmist would not say: Take the psalm, and give the timbrel (Psal. 80:2). For in a timbrel the skin is dried that it may sound. What is it therefore to say: Take the psalm, and give the timbrel, but receive the spiritual song of the heart, and give back the temporal maceration of the body? If the heavenly preaching had not been a business, by no means would Solomon say of the holy Church under the type of a strong woman: She made fine linen and sold it, and delivered a girdle to the Chanaanite (Prov. 31:24). For what is signified by the cloth of fine linen, but the subtle weaving of holy preaching? In which one rests softly, because the mind of the faithful is cherished in it by heavenly hope. Whence also animals are shown to Peter in a linen cloth (Acts 10:11), because the souls of sinners mercifully gathered, are contained in the gentle quiet of faith. This fine linen therefore the Church made, and sold, because she gave by speaking the faith

which she had woven by believing, and received from the infidels the life of right conversation. Which also delivered a girdle to the Chanaanite, because through the vigor of demonstrated justice, she bound the flowing works of gentility, so that this which is commanded may be held by living: Let your loins be girt (Luke 12:35). The Lord therefore by seeking finds His preachers maidens, by changing makes them friends, by enriching exhibits them merchants. For they who first being weak feared the threats of the world, afterwards ascend to knowing the divine counsels. But enriched with virtues, they are led even to exercising the business of faith, so that by rebuking and persuading they may cut the members of this Leviathan the more severely, as they being made friends also join themselves more truly to the love of truth, and withdraw the souls of sinners from him the more quickly, as having been made fit merchants they show in themselves the largest storehouses of virtues. For because by the preachers of God a thing possessed is very laudably divided from this Leviathan, the voice of truth promises through the prophet, saying: And if thou shalt separate the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth (Jerem. 15:19). For he separates the precious from the vile, who disjoins human minds from the reprobate imitation of the ancient enemy. Rightly is he called the mouth of God, because through him without doubt the divine eloquences are formed. It follows:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Rec. XVII].

VERS. 26. Wilt thou fill nets with his skin, or the cabin of fishes with his head?

34. In the net of the Church fishermen were first taken, then through them rhetoricians and philosophers.---What is designated by nets or the cabin of fishes but the churches of the faithful, which make one Catholic Church? Whence it is written in the Gospel: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net cast into the sea, and gathering of every kind of fishes (Matth. 13:47). The Church indeed is called the kingdom of heaven, whose morals while the Lord raises to heavenly things, she already reigns in the Lord through heavenly conversation. Which is also rightly compared to a net cast into the sea, gathering of every kind of fishes, because being cast into this world of gentility, it rejects none; but it took the bad with the good, the proud with the humble, the wrathful with the mild, and the foolish with the wise. In the skin indeed of this Leviathan, we take the foolish of his body, but in the head the prudent. Or certainly by the skin, which is outside, the subjects serving in these last things are designated, but by the head those set over. And well the Lord, the order being kept, asserts that He will fill these nets or the cabin of fishes, that is His Church, and the vows of the faithful, first with his skin and afterwards with his head, because, as we said above (Sup., c. 16 of this book, n. 32), He first chose the weak things, that afterwards He might confound the strong. He chose

indeed the foolish things of the world, that He might confound the wise (1 Cor. 1:27). For He first gathered the unlearned, and afterwards the philosophers; and He did not teach fishermen through rhetoricians, but by wonderful power He subdued rhetoricians through fishermen. He says therefore: Wilt thou fill nets with his skin, or the cabin of fishes with his head? Understand, as I, who within the Church of the faithful first gather as it were the skin of the devil, the last and lowest, and afterwards subject to myself his head, that is my prudent adversaries. It follows: Wilt thou lay thy hand upon him? That is as I, who repressing him with strong power, do not permit him to rage more than is expedient, and I retort his rage as much as I shall have permitted it to the utility of my elect. Or certainly to lay the hand upon him is to overcome him by the power of virtue. It is said therefore to blessed Job by interrogation: VERS. 27.---Wilt thou lay thy hand upon him? [Old XXIII.] As if it were openly said: Wilt thou repress him by thy own virtue? Whence also it is aptly added soon after:

CHAPTER XIX.

IBID.---Remember the war, and add not to speak any more.

35. By how high a dispensation God presses His servants either with threats, or even with scourges.---The high dispensation of the judgments of God therefore often assails well-deserving servants either with threats, or presses them with scourges, or burdens them with certain

superimposed loads, or implicates them in laborious occupations, because by wonderful power He foresees that if they persisted quiet and free in tranquility, not being able to bear the temptations of the adversary, they would lie prostrate by the wounds of the mind. While therefore He occupies them outside with scourges or burdens to be tolerated, He hides them from receiving within the darts of temptations. For it is of a medicinal custom, that it often draws the heat of the viscera into the itch of the skin, and for the most part cures from thence interiorly, from whence it wounds exteriorly. So sometimes it is acted by the medicine of divine dispensation that the internal wound is taken away by exterior pains, and that internal rottenness of vices which was able to occupy the mind is repelled by the sections of scourges; and yet often while men are not conscious to themselves of open fault, and are either tortured with pains, or depressed with labors, they break forth into complaint against the just and almighty Judge, namely looking less against how strong an adversary they carry on war. Whose intolerable strengths if they solicitously attended to, they would by no means murmur concerning these things which they tolerate exteriorly.

36. These heavy things do not seem so, if we ponder the heavier wars of the hidden adversary. Let us not fear the scourge of the father but the sword of the enemy.---But therefore these things seem to us heavy, because we will not weigh the heavier wars of the hidden adversary. From

which wars for the most part, as we said, while we are scourged, we are defended, while we are afflicted, we are hidden. For our flesh before it be solidified by the incorruption of the resurrection, if it be affected by no sorrow, is unbridled in temptations. But who knows not that it is much better to burn with the flame of fevers than with the fire of vices? And yet when we are seized with fever, because we neglect to consider the heat of vices which was able to occupy us, we murmur concerning the smiting. Who knows not that it is much better to be subjected to hard men in service, than to be subjected to flattering demoniacal spirits? And yet when by the high judgment of God we are worn down by the yoke of human condition, we break forth into complaint, namely because we attend less that if no condition of servitude oppressed us, perhaps our mind being free would serve many iniquities worse. Therefore then we believe these things which we tolerate to be heavy, because we do not see how hard and intolerable the wars of the crafty enemy are against us. For every weight would become vile to our mind, if it weighed the wars of the hidden adversary, which were able to overwhelm it. For what if almighty God should lift the burdens which we suffer, but yet should withdraw His helps from us, and leave us among the temptings of this Leviathan? With such an enemy raging whither shall we go, if we be defended by no protections of our Author? Because therefore blessed Job was not conscious to himself of fault, and yet tolerated hard scourges, lest perhaps he should

exceed in the vice of murmuring, let him remember what he should fear, and let it be said to him: Remember the war, and add not to speak any more. [Rec. 18.] As if it were openly said to him: If thou considerest the war of the hidden enemy against thee, thou dost not accuse whatever thou sufferest from Me. If thou lookest forward to the sword of the adversary assailing thee, thou in no wise dreadest the scourge of the father. For thou seest with what scourge I strike thee, but thou neglectest to behold from how great an enemy I keep thee free by scourging. Remember therefore the war, and add not to speak any more, that is, exhibit thyself as much silent to the discipline of the father, as thou lookest forward to thyself weak to the wars of the enemy. While therefore being corrected by Me thou art smitten, that thou mayest bear it with equanimity, recall thy enemy to memory, and do not estimate as hard everything which thou sufferest, while by external tortures thou art freed from internal passion. But because this Leviathan flatters himself with a false promise concerning divine mercy, after He brought in the terror of his strength, and moved the mind of blessed Job in his circumspection, saying: Remember the war, and add not to speak any more; that He might show his unpardonable guilt, He immediately added:

CHAPTER XX

[Old XXIV, Rec. XIX].

VERS. 28.---Behold, his hope shall frustrate him.

37. The eternal damnation of the devil and of all the reprobate, to be published before all the elect present.---Which ought so to be understood of him, that it can also be referred to his body, because all the wicked who do not fear the strictness of divine justice, flatter themselves in vain concerning mercy. And soon returning to our consolation, He foretells his future destruction of the last judgment, saying: And in the sight of all he shall be cast down. For in the sight of all he shall be cast down, because the eternal Judge then terribly appearing, the legions of angels standing by, all the ministry of the heavenly powers assisting, and all the elect being led to this spectacle, this cruel and strong beast is led forth captive into the midst, and with his body, that is with all the reprobate, is delivered to the eternal burnings of Gehenna, when it is said: Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matth. 25:41). Oh what a spectacle will that be, when this most immense beast shall be shown to the eyes of the elect, which in this time of war might have terrified them too much, if it were seen! But it is acted by the secret and wonderful counsel of God, that both now through His grace it is conquered by those fighting without being seen, and then it is seen already captive by the joyful victors. But then the just more fully recognize how much they are debtors to the divine help, when they shall have seen so strong

a beast which now being weak they overcame, and in the immensity of their enemy behold how much they owe to the grace of their Defender. For our soldiers of virtues then return from this battle bringing back trophies; and their bodies being received, when now in that judgment they obtain the entrance of the heavenly kingdom, they first behold the most immense strengths of this ancient serpent, lest they should estimate as vile that which they escaped. Well therefore is it said: And in the sight of all he shall be cast down, because his death being seen then exhibits joy, whose tolerated life now daily moves war to the just in tortures. But hearing these things, as if we immediately complained, saying to the Lord: Lord, who art not ignorant that this Leviathan is of so great strength, why dost Thou rouse him up in the contest of our weakness? He immediately added: CHAP. 41, VERS. 1.---Not as if cruel will I rouse him up. [Old XXV, Rec. XX.] And as if a cause of reason were soon sought from us: How dost Thou not rouse him up as if cruel, whom we know that Thou permittest to invade and devour so many? He immediately added, saying:

CHAPTER XXI.

VERS. 1, 2.---For who can resist My face? and who hath first given to Me, that I may repay him?

38. The grace of God is gratuitous.---In which two verses He fulfilled both the virtue of His power, and every weight of reason. For on account of power He said: For who can resist My face? And on account of reason He added: Who

hath first given to Me, that I may repay him? As if He said: I do not rouse him up as if cruel, because from his strength I both powerfully snatch My elect, and again I damn the reprobate not unjustly, but rationally; that is, I both can wonderfully snatch those whom I benignly choose, and I do not unjustly leave those whom I reject. For no one, that divine grace may follow him, first conferred anything upon God. For if we prevent God by working well, where is that which the Prophet saith: His mercy shall prevent me (Psal. 58:11). If we gave anything of good operation, that we might merit His grace, where is that which the Apostle saith: By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God, not of works (Ephes. 2:8)? If our love prevents God, where is that which John the apostle saith: Not that we loved God, but that He first loved us (1 John 4:10)? Where is that which through Hosea the Lord saith: I will love them freely (Hosea 14:5)? If without His gift we follow God by our own virtue, where is that which through the Gospel Truth protests, saying: Without Me ye can do nothing (John 15:5)? Where is that which He saith: No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him (Ibid. 6:44)? Where is that which He saith again: Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you (Ibid. 15:16)? If at least we prevent the gifts of good works by our own virtue by thinking well, where is that which again through Paul is so healthfully said, that all confidence of the human mind concerning itself may be cut off from the very root of the heart,

when he saith: Not that we are sufficient to think any thing of ourselves as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God (2 Cor. 3:5)? No one therefore prevents God with merits, that he may be able to hold Him as a debtor; but in a wonderful way the Author equal to all, both pre-elects some, and justly leaves some in their own wicked morals.

39. Neither to the elect is piety shown without justice, nor to the reprobate justice without mercy. Nor yet does He exhibit piety to His elect without justice, because here He presses them with hard afflictions; nor again does He exercise justice to the reprobate without mercy, because here He with equanimity tolerates those whom some time He damns for ever. If therefore both the elect follow the grace preventing them, and the reprobate receive according to what they merit, both the elect find from mercy what they may praise, and the reprobate have nothing from justice what they may accuse. Well therefore is it said: Who hath first given to Me, that I may repay him? As if it were openly said: I am compelled by no reason to spare the reprobate, because I am not held a debtor to them from their own action. For therefore they by no means perceive the eternal rewards of the heavenly country, because they contemned them now while they were able to earn them, from free will. Which free will indeed is formed in good for the elect, when their mind is suspended from earthly desires by grace breathing upon them.

[Old XXVI.] 40. The good which we do is both God's and ours.---For the good which we do is

both God's and ours: God's through preventing grace, ours through obeying free will. For if it is not God's, whence do we give Him thanks for ever? Again if it is not ours, whence do we hope rewards to be repaid to us? Because therefore not undeservedly we give thanks, we know that we are prevented by His gift; and again, because not undeservedly we seek retribution, we know that by obeying free will we chose the good things which we should act. It follows: All things that are under heaven are mine. It is clear to all that not only those things which are under heaven, but those very things also which being created above the heavens are called heavenly, serve His will by whom they remember themselves to have been created. Why therefore speaking only of the inferior things saith He?

CHAPTER XXII.

IBID.---All things that are under heaven are mine?

41. All things serve God.---But because He speaks of Leviathan, who is no longer contained in the seat of the ethereal heaven, He asserts that all things which are under heaven are His, so that He may teach that he also who fell from heaven serves His power, as if He said: That Leviathan indeed lost My blessedness, but he did not escape My dominion, because those very powers serve Me which oppose Me by their wicked actions. It follows:

VERS. 3.---I will not spare him for powerful words, and composed for entreaty.

[Rec. XXI.] 42. In what sense the devil is said to entreat God.---Who would think this, which he by no means knows himself to have read, that the devil is going to seek pardon for his faults? But perhaps that man, whom this Leviathan at the end of the world makes a vessel proper to himself, whom, Paul attesting, the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8), terrified by the presence of such great majesty, because he is not able to exercise his strengths, is inclined to prayers. Which nevertheless can more fitly be understood of his body, that is, of all the wicked, who come too late to the words of petitions, because they now contemn to perform deeds. Whence through the Gospel Truth saith: Last of all come also the other virgins, saying: Lord, Lord, open to us (Matth. 25:11). To whom it is immediately answered: Amen I say unto you, I know you not (Ibid. 12). But when He is said to compose powerful words for entreaty, it urges more that what we have said of his body in the future, we should feel in this time.

[Old XXVII.] 1102 43. Prayers are void which a pious life does not follow. In some prayer is turned to the use of traffic. Bitter groans, not composed words, effect true prayer.---For there are some within the holy Church, who have long prayers to the Lord, but have not the life of those entreating; for they follow heavenly promises with petitions, but flee them with works. These sometimes even perceive tears in prayer, but when after the times of prayer pride

hath knocked at their mind, they immediately swell in the haughtiness of elation; when avarice instigates, they soon boil through the fires of greedy thought; when luxury hath tempted, they straightway pant with illicit desires; when anger hath persuaded, soon the flame of madness burns the gentleness of the mind. As we have said, they both perceive weeping in prayer, and yet, prayers being finished, when they are knocked at by the suggestion of vices, they by no means remembered that they had wept for the desire of the eternal kingdom. Which Balaam openly made known concerning himself, who beholding the tabernacles of the just, saith: Let my soul die the death of the just, and let my last end be like to these (Num. 23:10). But when the time of compunction departed, he gave counsel against the life of those to whom he had asked to be made like even in dying; and when he found occasion from avarice, he immediately forgot whatever he wished for himself concerning innocence. Prayer therefore has not the weight of virtue, which perseverance of continual love by no means holds. On which contrary it is well reported of Anna weeping: And her countenance was no more changed to different ways (1 Sam. 1:18), because indeed her mind by no means after prayers lost by lascivious playing that which it sought out in the time of its orison by the rigor of groans. But to some the labor of prayer is turned to the use of traffic. Of whom in the Gospel Truth saith: They devour widows' houses under the pretence of long prayer. These shall receive

longer judgment (Mark 12:40). Because therefore by no means is spare given to the petitions of the wicked who are the body of this Leviathan, when their prayers are destroyed by work, rightly is it now said: I will not spare him for powerful words and composed for entreaty. Although also through this that powerful words and composed for entreaty are referred, the emptiness of prayer is openly shown. For to pray truly, is to resound bitter groans in compunction, and not composed words.

[Old XXVIII.] But because the ancient enemy by how much more strictly he is broken, by so much more wickedly is he dilated through manifold arguments, whose snares nevertheless the Lord by how much more subtly He considers them to be hidden, by so much more mercifully He manifests them to us, rightly is it subjoined:

CHAPTER XXIV

[Rec. XXII].

VERS. 14.---Who will reveal the face of his garment?

44. Satan tempts religious minds in one way, those given to the world in another.---This Leviathan tempts the religious minds of men in one way, but in another those given to this world; for to the wicked he openly objects the evils which they desire, but to the good, lying in wait latently, he mocks them under the appearance of sanctity. To those as to his familiars he more manifestly insinuates himself as wicked; but to

these as to strangers he cloaks himself as if by the pretext of some honesty, so that the evils which he is not able to bring to them publicly, he may subintroduce covered by the veil of good action. Whence also his members often when they cannot hurt with open wickedness, assume the habit of good action; and they indeed exhibit themselves as depraved in work, but they lie with a holy appearance. For the wicked if they were openly evil, could not at all be received by the good; but they assume something from the vision of the good, 1103 so that while good men receive in them the appearance which they love, they may receive also the mixed virus which they avoid. Whence the apostle Paul beholding some serving the study of the belly under the veil of preaching, saith: For Satan himself transformeth himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). What wonder therefore if his ministers are transformed as ministers of justice? This transformation Joshua feared, when seeing an angel, he inquired whose part he was of, saying: Art thou ours, or of our adversaries (Joshua 5:13)? so that indeed if he were of the adverse power, by that very thing that he knew himself to be suspected, he might leap back from the illusion. Because therefore this Leviathan in that which he plots the work of iniquity, is often clothed with the appearance of sanctity; and because unless through divine grace the garments of his simulation cannot be detected, well is it said: Who will reveal the face of his garment? Understand except I, who inspire into the minds of My servants the grace of

most subtle discretion, so that the malice being revealed they may see his naked face, which he hides covered under the habit of sanctity. And because sometimes he endeavors to corrupt the minds of the faithful by his showing, sometimes by suggestion (for he acts now by work, now by persuasion), rightly is it subjoined:

CHAPTER XXV.

IBID.---And into the midst of his mouth who will enter?

45. God reveals his craftiness to the elect.---Understand except I, who through the discrete minds of the elect discuss the words of his suggestions, and manifest these things not to be as they sounded. For they seem to promise good, but they draw to a lost end. To enter therefore into the midst of his mouth is to penetrate the words of his craftiness, so that it may by no means be weighed what they resound, but whither they intend. Adam would not enter into the midst of his mouth, when he neglected cautiously to weigh the intention of that persuasion; for he believed himself to receive divinity through him, and he lost immortality (Gen. 3). Whence therefore from the understanding of his words he stood incautiously without, thence he offered himself to that mouth to be devoured fundamentally. It follows:

CHAPTER XXVI.

[Rec. XXIII].

VERS. 5.---Who will open the doors of his face?

46. The doors of Leviathan are called false preachers. These the Lord opens, by manifesting the masters of errors.---The doors of his face are the wicked doctors, who are therefore called the doors of his face, because through them every one enters, so that this Leviathan may be seen as if in the principality of his power. For as the sacred Scripture is accustomed to call holy men the doors of Sion (for Sion is interpreted "watch-tower", and not undeservedly do we call holy preachers the doors of Sion, because through their life and doctrine we enter the hidden things of heavenly contemplation), so also by the doors of this Leviathan the masters of errors are signified, through whose perverse preaching, when it is received, the way of perdition is opened to the miserable hearers. But these doors before the eyes of men are for the most part open indeed for introducing, but yet closed for detecting, because they exhibit right things in appearance, but persuade depraved things in work. For detecting therefore they are closed, because lest they should be able to be known within, they are fortified by exterior simulation. Which nevertheless the Lord by a wonderful power opens, because He makes the minds of hypocrites comprehensible to His elect. Who therefore will open the doors of his face? Understand except I, who manifest to My elect the masters of errors hidden 1104 under the appearance of sanctity by a clear knowledge. And because Antichrist coming shall obtain even the very highest powers of this age, who raging

with a double error endeavors to draw the hearts of men to himself both by preachers being sent, and to incline them by the powers being moved, well concerning this Leviathan did the Lord subjoin, saying:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Old XXIX].

IBID.---Round about his teeth is dread.

47. The teeth of Leviathan are the same false doctors.---For the name being changed, He wished to insinuate these teeth of his in another way, whom above He called doors. For perverse preachers are his doors, because they open the entrance of perdition. They are his teeth, because those whom they take in error, they break from the solidity of truth. For as we take the teeth of the holy Church to be those who by their preachings crush the hardness of sinners, whence it is said to her through Solomon: Thy teeth are like flocks of shorn sheep coming up from the washing (Cant. 4:2); who not undeservedly are compared to shorn and washed sheep, because assuming an innocent life, they laid down in the washing of baptism the old fleeces of their former conversation; so also by the teeth of this Leviathan the masters of errors are figured, because they tear in pieces the life of the reprobate by biting, and those being withdrawn from the integrity of truth they slay in the sacrifice of falsehood. Whose preaching indeed could easily be despised by the hearers, but the added terror

of secular powers exalts this before human judgments.

48. The powers of the age fortify them. Some rage with words, others with swords. The snares of Antichrist from false miracles.---Rightly therefore is it said: Round about his teeth is dread, that is, the perverse powers of this age protect the wicked preachers of Antichrist. For those whom they seek to seduce by speaking, many of the powerful study to terrify by raging. Round about his teeth therefore is dread, as if it were openly said: For this reason these perverse preachers crush some by persuading, because round about them are others who afflict the minds of the weak by terrifying. What sort therefore will that time of persecution appear, when for perverting the piety of the faithful some rage with words, others with swords? For who even weak would not despise the teeth of this Leviathan, if the terror of secular powers did not fortify them round about? But it is acted against them with double craftiness, because that which is said to them by some with flattering words, this is commanded by others with striking swords. Which action of both, that is, of the powerful and of those speaking, is comprised in a short sentence in the Apocalypse of John, where it is said: The power of the horses was in their mouth and in their tails (Apoc. 9:19). For in the mouth of the doctors, knowledge; but in the tail, the power of seculars is figured. For by the tail, which is behind, the temporality of this age which is to be postponed is designated, of which the apostle Paul saith: But one thing,

forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth myself unto those things which are before (Philip. 3:13). For behind is everything which passes, but before is everything which coming remains. To these horses therefore, that is, to the most wicked preachers, running everywhere by carnal impulse, there is power in their mouth and in their tail, because they indeed preach by persuading perverse things, but supported by temporal powers, they exalt themselves through those things which are behind. And because they themselves can appear despicable, they exact reverence for themselves from their wicked hearers through those by whose patronages they are supported. Whence here also 1105 not undeservedly dread is described to be in them round about his teeth, because it is acted with many terrors, so that in their perverse preachings if not the sentence of truth, certainly the temporal power may be feared. Whence well the Psalmist described the same Antichrist, saying: Under his tongue is labor and sorrow, he sitteth in ambush with the rich in secret places (Psal. 9:28). For on account of perverse dogmas under his tongue is labor and sorrow; but on account of the appearance of miracles he sitteth in ambush; but on account of the glory of secular power, with the rich in secret places. For because at the same time he uses both the fraud of miracles and earthly power, he is said to sit both in secret places and with the rich:

CHAPTER XXVIII

[Rec. XXIV].

VERS. 6.---His body is like molten shields.

49. The wicked oppose the shield of excuse to those reproving.---Sacred Scripture is accustomed to use the name of a shield sometimes in a prosperous part, sometimes in an adverse. For often the defense of a shield is put for divine protection, but sometimes it is mentioned for human resistance. For it is put for divine protection, as is said through the Psalmist: With the shield of Thy good will hast Thou crowned us (Psal. 5:13). The Lord is reported to crown us with a shield, because those whom He helps by protecting, He crowns by rewarding. Again, for human resistance the shield is put by the same Prophet as he saith elsewhere: There He brake the horns, the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle (Psal. 75:4). In the horns indeed the elation of the proud, in the bow the snares of those striking from afar, in the shield the obstinate hardness of defenses, in the sword the neighboring stroke, in the battle the very motion of the mind against the Lord is designated. Which forsooth is all broken in the holy Church, when the minds of those resisting God are subdued, the yoke of humility being placed upon them. Hence again it is said through the same Psalmist: He shall bruise the bow, and break the arms, and burn the shields with fire (Psal. 45:10). For the Lord bruises the bow, when He dissolves the hidden machinations of those lying in wait. He breaks the arms, when He diminishes those human patronages

which had been erected against Him. He burns the shields with fire, when the minds of sinners defending themselves with obstinate hardness, He kindles to the ardor of penitence and confession by the heat of the Holy Spirit. [Old XXX.] But because in this place the body of this Leviathan is compared to molten shields, it is hinted to us to be searched into, because every vessel which is molten is wont to be indeed hard, but yet when it falls, fragile. Shields therefore if they are molten, are robust in receiving the stroke of arrows, but fragile by a fall. By the blow indeed of those striking they are by no means penetrated, but by their own fall they dissolve themselves through fragments. The body therefore of this Leviathan, that is, all the wicked, because they are hard through obstinacy, but fragile through life, are compared to molten shields. For when they hear the words of preaching, they permit no darts of reproof to penetrate them, because in every sin which they do, they oppose the shield of proud defense. For when any such one is argued of the guilt of his iniquity, he does not soon think how he may correct the fault, but what he may oppose in the help of his defense. By no arrow of truth therefore is he penetrated, because he receives the words of holy reproof in the shield of proud defense. Whence well of the Jews defending themselves with proud defense against the precepts of the Lord it is said through Jeremiah: Thou shalt render them a recompense, O Lord, according to the works of their hands (Lam. 3:64). 1106 And soon he subjoined the same

recompense more expressly saying: Thou shalt give them for a shield of heart Thy labor (Ibid. 65). For the labor of the Lord appearing among men was His passible humanity, which the Jews wisely proud while they beheld, they despised; and they deigned not to believe Him immortal, whom they saw mortal by a passible nature. And when they beheld His humility, hardened by the haughtiness of pride, they labored with greatest care, lest the holy words of those preaching should penetrate their minds. While therefore the Lord rendered to them the recompense of evil works, He gave them for a shield of heart His labor, because by a right judgment He exhibited them thence proudly obstinate against Himself, whence He Himself labored in infirmity for us. For they repelled from themselves the words of those preaching, because they disdained in the Lord the weak things of passions. They had therefore the labor of the Lord for a shield of heart against the same Lord, because to those wisely proud He appeared despicable by that by which He was humble for their sake.

[Old XXXI.] 50. Adam and Eva used this shield.---This shield, as we have already said above, that first sinner held, who, the Lord requiring why he had touched the forbidden tree, did not refer the fault to himself, but answered that he had received it from the woman whom the Lord had given (Gen. 3:12); so that as if obliquely he might cast back his guilt upon the Author, who had given him the woman who should persuade such things. This shield also the

woman being required held, when neither she herself referred the fault to herself, but replied it to the persuasions of the serpent, saying: The serpent deceived me, and I did eat (Ibid. 13), so that she also might obliquely bring back her guilt upon the Creator, who had permitted the serpent to enter thither who should persuade such things. But the serpent is no longer required, because neither was his penitence sought. But these whose penitence was sought, brought forth the shield of most wicked defense against the words of most just reproof (Gen. 3). Whence even until now it is drawn into the use of sinners, that a fault when it is argued should be defended; and whence guilt ought to have been finished, thence it is accumulated. Well therefore is it said: His body is like molten shields, because all the wicked, lest the words of those reproving should reach them, prepare as if against the darts of adversaries shields of defenses. Which body indeed he still more expressly detects to us, while he subjoins:

CHAPTER XXIX.

IBID.---Compact with scales pressing themselves.

51. The reprobate covered with scales resist the darts of truth.---It is reported that the body of a dragon is covered with scales, lest it be more quickly penetrated by javelins. So all the body of the devil, that is the multitude of the reprobate, when it is reproved for its iniquity, endeavors to excuse itself with what tergiversations it can, and

objects as it were certain scales of defense, lest it be able to be transfixed by the arrow of truth. For whoever while he is reproved, desires more to excuse his sin than to bewail it, is as it were covered with scales, while he is shot at by holy preachers with the sword of the word. He has scales, and therefore the arrow of the word has not a way of passing to his heart. For it is repelled by carnal hardness, lest the spiritual sword be fixed in him.

52. The heart of Saul, hardened with these scales, was open to the arrows of grace.---Saul had hardened with carnal wisdom against God, when no arrow of Evangelical preaching penetrated his heart. But after being shot at by a strong rebuke from heaven, and blinded by a heavenly regard (for he lost light that he might receive it), coming to Ananias he is illuminated. In which 1107 illumination because he lacked the hardness of his defenses, it is well written of him: There fell as it were scales from his eyes (Acts 9:18). The hardness of a carnal covering indeed had pressed him, and therefore he saw not the rays of the true light. But after his proud resistances were conquered, the scales of his defenses fell. Which indeed under the hands of Ananias fell from the eyes of the body, but already before under the Lord's rebuke they had fallen from the eyes of the heart. For when he lay transfixed by the javelin of a high invective, with a heart now humble and penetrated he inquired, saying: Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do (Acts 11:6)? The scales indeed being repelled, already the arrow of truth had reached to the bowels of the heart,

when, the elation of pride being laid down, confessing Him whom he had impugned as Lord, and not knowing what he should do, he inquired. It is pleasing to behold where is that cruel persecutor, where the rapacious wolf. [Old XXXII.] Behold he is already turned into a sheep, who inquires for the path of the shepherd which he may follow. And it is to be noted that when he said: Who art Thou, Lord (Acts 22:8)? it is not answered to him by the Lord: I am the only-begotten of the Father, I the beginning, I the Word before the ages. For because Saul contemned to believe the incarnate Lord, and had despised the weak things of His humanity, from heaven he heard this which he had contemned: I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest (Ibid. 8). As if He said: Hear this from Me concerning superior things, which thou despisest in Me concerning inferior things. Thou hadst despised the Author of heaven to have come into the earth, from earth therefore know the man from heaven, so that thou mayest so much more fear in Me the sacraments of infirmity, by how much thou provest these also brought in heavenly things to the excellence of power. Prostrating thyself therefore, by no means do I assert to thee this that I am God before the ages; but thou hearest from Me that which thou deignest not to believe of Me. For after He said Jesus, He added still for the expression of His earthly inhabitation of Nazareth; as if it were more openly said: Receive the weak things of My humility, and lose the scales of thy pride.

53. In hypocrites those scales are harder. Malicious minds are like hedgehogs.---It is to be known nevertheless that these scales of defenses, although they cover almost all the human race, nevertheless press especially the minds of hypocrites and of crafty men. For they themselves by so much more vehemently fly from confessing their faults, by how much more foolishly they blush to be seen by men as sinners. The simulation of sanctity therefore being reproved, and hidden malice detected, it objects the scales of defense, and repels the sword of truth. Whence well through the Prophet against Judea it is said: There the screech-owl hath lain, and hath found for herself rest, there the hedgehog hath had his hole (Isai. 34:14, 15). By the screech-owl indeed hypocrites, but by the hedgehog any malicious ones, who cover themselves with various defenses, are designated. For the screech-owl is said to have a human face, but a bestial body. So also all hypocrites in the first face which they show it is as if from the reason of sanctity; but bestial is the body which follows, because very wicked are the things which they plot under the appearance of good. But by the name of the hedgehog the defense of malicious minds is designated, because forsooth when the hedgehog is apprehended both his head is seen, 1108 and his feet are seen, and all his body is beheld; but as soon as he shall have been apprehended, he collects himself into a sphere, withdraws his feet within, hides his head; and within the hand of the one holding all is lost at once, which

all together before was seen. So forsooth, so are malicious minds, when they are comprehended in their excesses. For the head of the hedgehog is seen, because by what beginning the sinner approached to the fault is seen. The feet of the hedgehog are beheld, because by what footsteps the wickedness was perpetrated is known; and yet, excuses being suddenly brought in, the malicious mind collects its feet within, because it hides all the footsteps of its iniquity. It withdraws its head, because by wonderful defenses it shows itself not even to have begun anything depraved; and as it were a sphere remains in the hand of the one holding, because he who reproves, suddenly losing all things which he had already known, holds the sinner involved within his conscience, and he who by detecting had already seen all, mocked by the tergiversation of a depraved defense, is equally ignorant of all. The hedgehog therefore has a hole in the reprobate, because the malicious mind collecting itself within itself hides in the darkness of defense. But in this that the sinner excuses himself, in this that with dark defenses he clouds the eye of the one reproving fixed upon him, the divine word shows us also how he is supported by his like. It follows:

CHAPTER XXX

[Vet. XXXIII].

VERSE 7. --- One is joined to another, and not even a breath enters through them.

54. The wicked protect one another by mutual defense. These scales of sinners, so that they may not be penetrated by any breath of life from the mouth of those preaching, are both hardened and joined together. For those whom a similar guilt unites, a perverse defense also crowds together with harmonious persistence, so that they protect one another from their crimes by mutual defense. For each one fears for himself when he sees another being admonished or corrected; and for that reason, he rises up with one mind against the words of those reproving, because he protects himself in the other. Well, therefore, is it said: One is joined to another, and not even a breath enters through them, because in their iniquities, while they protect themselves by turns with proud defense, they in no way allow the breaths of holy exhortation to enter unto them. Whose pestilential concord he added even more clearly, saying:

CHAPTER XXXI.

VERSE 8. --- One shall cleave to another, and holding one another, they shall in no way be separated.

55. Those who, when divided, could scarcely be corrected, how shall they be amended when united? For those who, when divided, could be corrected, remain united in the persistence of their iniquities, and are daily so much the more inseparable from the knowledge of justice, as they are separated from one another by no rebuke. For just as it is usually harmful if unity

is lacking to the good, so it is pernicious if it is not lacking to the evil. For unity strengthens the perverse while it harmonizes them; and makes them all the more incorrigible, as it makes them of one mind. Of this unity of the reprobate, it is said through the Wise Man: The congregation of sinners is like tow heaped together (Ecclus. 21:10). Of this, the prophet Nahum says: As thorns embrace one another, so is the banquet of those drinking together (Nahum 1:10). For the banquet of the reprobate is the delight in temporal pleasures. In which banquet, doubtless, those drink together who harmoniously inebriate themselves with the allurements of their own delight. Therefore, because the members of this Leviathan, that is, all the wicked, whom the word of God compares to the joinings of scales, are harmonized in the same guilt for their own defense, it is well said: One shall cleave to another, and holding one another, they shall in no way be separated. For holding one another, they cannot be separated, because they are bound to one another for their mutual defense by the very fact that they remember themselves to be like one another in all things. Having thus described his body, the discourse is brought back to the head, and it is announced what the ancient enemy himself performs at the time of the final persecution. For it follows:

CHAPTER XXXII

[Vet. XXXIV, Rec. XXV].

VERSE 9. --- His sneezing is the splendor of fire.

56. How great a commotion from the signs and virtues of the Antichrist is imminent. We explain this better if we first investigate how sneezing is produced. For in sneezing, an inflation rises from the chest, which, when it does not find open pores to flow out, touches the brain, and coming out through the nostrils in a mass, immediately shakes the whole head. In this body of Leviathan, therefore, that is, either in the malignant spirits or in the reprobate men who have clung to him by similarity of iniquity, an inflation rises, as it were, from the chest, while elation raises itself from the power of the present world. Which, as it were, does not find pores to flow out, because in that it is extolled against the just, it is prohibited, by God's dispensation, from prevailing as much as it desires. But rising up it touches and shakes the brain, because the gathered elation of Satan strikes more closely his sense at the end of the world, and troubles the head, while it more vehemently excites the author himself of the malignant spirits through him who is called the Antichrist in the persecution of the faithful. Then the gathered inflation goes out through his nostrils, because the whole iniquity of his pride is demonstrated by the open blasts of malice. Because, therefore, sneezing especially shakes the head, that final commotion of this Leviathan is called a sneezing, by which he enters the damned man and through him rules over the reprobate. Who then moves himself with such great power

that he might disturb even the elect members of the Lord, if it were possible; he uses such great signs and wonders that by the power of miracles he seems to shine, as it were, with a certain light of fire. Because, therefore, his shaken head strives to become clear by miracles, his sneezing is rightly called the splendor of fire. For in that he moves himself to persecute the just, he shines before the eyes of the reprobate with the virtues of signs. And because the wise of the world cleave to his tyranny, and by their counsels he performs everything perverse that he plots, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIII

[Vet. XXXV].

IBID. --- And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.

57. His eyes, that is, his counselors, why they are compared to the eyelids of the morning. By the eyes, which, clinging to the head, serve the utility of vision, not undeservedly are his counselors designated, who while by perverse machinations they foresee what things are to be done and how, they provide a shown way, as it were, for his malignant workers' feet. Who are rightly compared to the eyelids of the morning. For by the eyelids of the morning, we understand the last hours of the night, in which, as it were, the night opens its eyes, while it already shows the beginnings of the coming light. The wise ones of the world, therefore, clinging to the per-

verse counsels of the malice of the Antichrist, are like the eyelids of the morning, because the faith which they find in Christ they assert to be, as it were, a night of error, and the veneration of the Antichrist they promise to be the true morning. For they promise that they repel the darkness and announce the light of truth by clear signs, because they cannot persuade what they wish, unless they profess to exhibit better things. Whence this same serpent in paradise speaking to the first parents (Gen. 3:5), in that he simulated that he provided something better, opened as it were the eyelids of the morning, when he reproved the ignorance of humanity in innocent minds, and promised the knowledge of divinity. For he was repelling, as it were, the darkness of ignorance, and was announcing a divine morning of eternal knowledge, saying: Your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (Ibid.). So coming in that then-damned man, his eyes are compared to the eyelids of the morning, because his wise ones reject the simplicity of the true faith as if the darkness of a past night, and show his lying signs as if the rays of the rising sun. But because this Leviathan not only has eyes that provide perverse things by malignant counsels, but also opens his mouth to pervert the minds of men, since through perverse preachers he inflames the hearts of the hearers to love the fallacy of error, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXIV

[Rec. XXVI].

VERSE 10. --- Out of his mouth proceed lamps.

58. The mouth of the Antichrist are his preachers. For those who provide are called eyes, but those who preach are called the mouth. But out of this mouth lamps go forth, because they inflame the minds of the hearers to the love of perfidy; and whence they shine, as it were, through wisdom, thence without doubt they burn through wickedness. But what kind of light their very wisdom is, is shown, when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXV

[Vet. XXXVI].

IBID. --- Like torches of fire kindled.

59. They burn through malice, they shine through the simulation of virtue. Behold, now their hypocrisy is openly described, whose preaching is compared to the lamps of torches. For a torch when it is kindled has indeed a sweet odor, but an obscure light. So these preachers of the Antichrist, because they arrogant to themselves the appearance of sanctity, but nevertheless exercise works of iniquity, that which they smell of is, as it were, pleasant, but that which they shine is black. For they smell through the simulation of justice, but they burn obscurely through the perpetration of wickedness. Whose malice of simulation John in the Apocalypse comprehended in a brief description, saying: I saw another beast ascending from the earth, having two horns like a lamb, and it spoke as a dragon

(Rev. 13:11). For he had already narrated the former beast, that is, the Antichrist, in a previous description; after whom also this other beast is said to have ascended, because after him a multitude of his preachers glories in earthly power. For to ascend from the earth is to be proud of earthly glory. Which has two horns like a lamb, because through the hypocrisy of sanctity it lies that there is in it both the singular wisdom and life which the Lord truly had in Himself. But because under the appearance of a lamb it infuses serpentine poison into the reprobate hearers, it is rightly added there: And it spoke as a dragon. This beast, therefore, that is, the multitude of those preaching, if it spoke openly as a dragon, would not appear like a lamb; but it assumes the appearance of a lamb, so that it may exercise the operation of a dragon. Both of which are expressed here through the lamps of torches, because they both burn obscurely through the effect of malice, and as it were smell sweet through the simulation of life.

60. Many preachers of the Antichrist already exist. Their life must be explored like a coin. It should agree with the institutions of the ancient fathers. But it is by no means to be thought that the preachers of the Antichrist will appear only then, and are now absent from human deceptions. For even now, before he appears through himself, some preach him with their voices, but many with their morals. Or are those not preachers of his simulation, who while they obtain the sacred orders of God, hold the fleeing world

with all their desires; who show that they are virtues which they do, but everything they act is vice? [Vet. XXXVII.] But the mind of the elect, as much more as it clings to the internal light, so much more subtly does it see how it ought to discern virtues from vices. But what wonder is it that we do this spiritually, which we daily see money-changers perform corporally? Who when they receive a coin, first examine its quality, then the figure, but at the last the weight, lest either brass lurk under the appearance of gold, or the figure of a reprobate mint should dishonor that which is truly gold; or that which is both gold and of the right figure, should not have the full weight. When, therefore, we behold the wonderful deeds of unknown men, we ought to reside at the balance of our mind like skillful money-changers, so that first discretion may examine the gold, lest vice hide itself under virtue, and that which is done with a perverse intention be cloaked by the vision of rectitude. Whose quality of intention if it be approved, the figure of the impressed formula is soon to be sought, if it is derived from approved minters, that is, from the ancient fathers, and is vitiated by no error from the similarity of their life. But when both the quality through the intention, and the right figure through the example are known, it remains that its full weight be sought out. For the good which flashes through signs and miracles, if it has not the sum of perfection, ought to be weighed carefully through the caution of circumspection, lest while an imperfect thing is accepted as if for

a perfect one, it should turn to the loss of the receiver. How, therefore, do the preachers of the Antichrist hold the true quality of the coin, who in those things which they act do not know the power of a right intention, because through these they do not seek the heavenly country, but the height of temporal glory? How do they not differ from the figure of the mint, who by persecuting the just differ from all the piety of the just? How do they show in themselves the weight of integrity, who have not only in no way attained the perfection of humility, but have not even touched its very first gate? Hence, therefore, hence let the elect know how they should despise their signs, whose action certainly impugns everything that is remembered as having been done by the pious fathers. But the elect themselves also, while they behold so many signs, while contemning life they dread such great miracles of his, suffer a certain cloud of doubt in their heart, because while his malice elevates itself through wonders, in these the surer vision is somewhat darkened. Whence it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVI

[Rec. XXVII].

VERSE 11. --- Out of his nostrils proceedeth smoke.

61. Upon seeing the prodigies of the Antichrist, the elect will be troubled and will waver. That they should be fully taken in error is impossible. For the keenness of the eyes is wounded

by smoke. Smoke, therefore, is said to proceed from his nostrils, because from the snares of his miracles a dark doubt is for a moment generated even in the heart of the elect. Out of the nostrils of Leviathan smoke goes forth, because from his lying wonders the darkness of trepidation confounds even the eyes of good minds. For then, when terrible signs have been beheld, a dark thought is gathered together in the hearts of the elect. Whence that which we have already brought forward above is said by the mouth of Truth through the Gospel: There shall rise false Christs and false prophets, and shall give signs and wonders, so as to lead into error, if it be possible, even the elect (Mark 13:22). In which matter it is greatly to be asked how either those who are elect can be led into error, or why If it be possible is subjoined as if from doubt, since the Lord, foreknowing all things, awaits what is to be done. But because the heart of the elect is both shaken by trembling thought, and yet their constancy is not moved, the Lord has embraced both in this one sentence, saying: So as to lead into error, if it be possible, even the elect. For to waver in thought is already, as it were, to err; but immediately If it be possible is subjoined, because without doubt it cannot happen that the elect be fully taken in error. But in this darkness of smoke the very fervor of minds is also well expressed when it is immediately subjoined:

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IBID. --- As of a boiling pot and kindled.

62. With how much zeal they shall then seethe. What the devil works in human hearts with the smoke of a pestilential breath. God cannot be known except by a tranquil heart. For like a boiling pot is every soul then, sustaining the impetus of its own thoughts as if the foams of burning waves, which both the fire of zeal moves, and the temporal oppression itself, in the manner of a pot, keeps closed within. Whence John also, when he related the signs of this beast, added: So that he should make fire come down from heaven (Rev. 13:13). For fire to come down from heaven is for the flames of holy zeal to emanate from the heavenly souls of the elect. [Vet. XXXVIII.] But because this Leviathan is elsewhere called not only a serpent, but also a cockatrice (regulus), for the reason that he rules over unclean spirits or reprobate men, as Isaiah says: Out of the root of the serpent shall come forth a cockatrice (Isa. 14:29), we must examine very carefully how the cockatrice kills, so that from the operation of the cockatrice his malice may become more clearly known to us. For the cockatrice does not kill by a bite, but consumes with a breath. Often also he affects the air with his breath, and whatever he has touched, even if placed far off, he makes to rot by the mere inspiration of his nostrils.

63. Hence, therefore, hence we are compelled to weigh, by this that smoke is said to proceed from his nostrils, even before he appears openly, what he works daily in human hearts with the smoke of a pestiferous exhalation. For because, as we also said above, the keenness of the eyes

is weakened by smoke, not undeservedly is it asserted that smoke proceeds from his nostrils, by whose noxious inspirations a perverse thought is born in human hearts, through which the keenness of the mind is blunted, lest the internal light be seen. For as if by the breath of his nostrils he emits a darkness, because in the hearts of the reprobate, by the aspirations of his snares, he heaps up from the love of temporal life a seething of manifold thoughts. And as if he multiplies globes of smoke, because he heaps together the most vain cares of the present life in the mind of earthly men. This smoke proceeding from his nostrils sometimes touches even the eyes of the elect. For the Prophet was suffering this internal smoke when he said: My eye is troubled because of wrath (Psalm 6:8). He was pressed by the inundation of this, saying: My heart is troubled within me, and the light of my eyes is not with me (Psalm 37:11). For this smoke blunts the keenness of the heart, because by the cloud of its darkness it troubles the serenity of internal rest. But God cannot be known except by a tranquil heart. Whence by the same prophet it is said again: Be still, and see that I am God (Psalm 45:11). But the mind which is pressed by the inundations of this smoke cannot be still, because in it the volumes of earthly thoughts are gathered together from the love of the present life. The light of internal rest, therefore, is lost by this smoke, because while the eye of the heart is confounded by the itch of cares, it is darkened.

64. This smoke troubles the minds of the elect in one way, and blinds the eyes of the reprobate in another. But this smoke troubles the minds of the elect in one way, and blinds the eyes of the reprobate in another. For it is scattered from the eyes of the good by the breath of spiritual desires, lest it be thickened by a prevailing wretched thought. But in the minds of the reprobate, the more freely it collects itself through foul thoughts, the more it utterly takes away from them the light of truth. As many illicit desires as this smoke brings into the hearts of the reprobate, it swells before them as if by so many globes.

[Vet. XXXIX.] 65. In the carnal soul, some globes of smoke of concupiscence vanish above, others rise below. Vices succeed vices. And certainly we know the globes of smoke, that while some vanish above, others rise below; so also in carnal thought, even if other desires of depravity pass away, others succeed. Often, however, the wretched mind sees what has already passed, but where it is still held it does not see. It rejoices concerning certain vices that it is no longer subject to them, and neglects to beware and to groan, because in their place others have succeeded, to which perhaps it succumbs more wickedly; and so it happens that while other vices pass away, and others always succeed, the heart of the reprobate is held without intermission by this serpent. Whence it is well said through the prophet Joel: That which the palmerworm hath left, the locust hath eaten; and that which the locust hath left, the cankerworm hath eaten; and

that which the cankerworm hath left, the mildew [caterpillar] hath eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep (Joel 1:4, 5). For what is designated by the palmerworm (eruca), which creeps with its whole body on the earth, but luxury? which so pollutes the heart that it holds, that it cannot rise to the love of superior cleanness. What is expressed by the locust, which flies out with leaps, but vain glory, which exalts itself with vain presumptions? What is figured by the cankerworm (bruchus), whose almost whole body is gathered into the belly, but the gluttony of eating? What is hinted by the mildew (rubigo), which when it touches, it burns, but wrath? The residue of the palmerworm, therefore, the locust eats, because often when the vice of luxury has departed from the mind, vain glory succeeds. For because it is no longer prostrated by the love of the heart, it glories in itself, as it were, as holy from chastity. And the residue of the locust the cankerworm eats, because often when vain glory, which came as it were from sanctity, is resisted, one indulges more immoderately either the belly or any desires of ambition. For the mind ignorant of God is led all the more atrociously to any ambition, as it is refrained by no love even of human praise. The residue of the cankerworm the mildew consumes, because often while the gluttony of the belly is restrained through abstinence, the impatience of wrath rules more sharply; which, after the manner of mildew, eats the harvest, as it were, by parching it, because the flame of impatience makes the fruits of virtues to rot.

When, therefore, vices succeed vices, one plague devours the field of the mind while it leaves another.

[Vet. XL.] 66. They are drunk who, troubled by the love of this world, do not feel the evils which they suffer. Well, however, is it added there: Awake, ye drunkards, and weep (Joel 1:5). For they are called drunkards who, confused by the love of this world, do not feel the evils which they suffer. What is it, then, to say: Awake, ye drunkards, and weep (Joel 1:5), except: shake off the sleep of your insensibility, and, in the devastation of the heart by so many succeeding plagues of vices, meet them with watchful lamentations? Through as many globes of smoke, therefore, as rise from the nostrils of Leviathan, through so many plagues, surely, does he consume the fruit of the reprobate heart by a secret breathing. The force of which smoke the Lord still carefully expresses, when He immediately joins: As of a boiling pot, and heated. For the pot is heated when the human mind is instigated by the persuasions of the malignant enemy. But the pot boils when it is now also kindled by consent in the desires of a depraved persuasion. And it casts forth as many waves, as it were by boiling, through as many wickednesses as it extends itself even to exterior works. For the prophet had beheld this fervor of the carnal conscience, that is, of the pot, coming from the smoke of Leviathan, when he said: I see a boiling pot, and the face thereof is from the face of the North (Jer. 1:13). For from the face of the North the pot of the human heart is heated, while

it is inflamed by illicit desires at the instigation of the adversary spirit. For he who says: I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the North (Isa. 14:13), kindles the mind which he has once seized with the malignant blasts of his persuasion, as if with fires placed under it, so that, not content with present things, it may incessantly boil through desires, to seek some things to be despised, to despise others when obtained: that now it may gape for its own gains, now it may contradict the advantages of others even with its own detriment, now it may satisfy the allurements of the flesh, now, as if snatched into a certain summit through the pride of thought, carnal care being postponed, it may lift itself up entirely in the vanity of elation. Because, therefore, the heart is led away through various desires, which is inflamed by the instigations of this Leviathan, rightly is his smoke said to be like a boiling and heated pot, because through as many fervors does the conscience, breathed upon by his temptations, raise itself, as through as many thoughts it swells within itself. Which truth still more clearly follows in other words, while it is joined:

CHAPTER XXXVIII

[Rec. XXVIII].

VERSE 12.---His breath kindleth coals.

67. The carnal mind, like a coal inflamed by the breath of the devil.---For what does he call "coals" but the minds of reprobate men, kindled

in earthly concupiscences? For they burn when they seek any temporal thing, because surely those desires burn which do not permit the soul to be quiet and whole. So many times, therefore, does the breath of Leviathan kindle the coals, as often as his secret suggestion draws human minds to illicit pleasures. For at one time he inflames them with the torches of pride, at another of envy, at another of luxury, at another of avarice. Surely he placed the torch of pride under the mind of Eve, when he instigated her to despise the words of the Lord's command (Gen. 3:5). The flame of envy also kindled the soul of Cain, when he grieved concerning his brother's accepted sacrifice, and through this arrived even at the crime of fratricide (Gen. 4:8). With the torches of luxury he consumed the heart of Solomon, whom he subjected to such great love for women that, led down even to the worship of idols, while he followed the pleasure of the flesh, he forgot the reverence of the Creator (1 Kings 11:4). With the fire of avarice also he burned the soul of Ahab, when he impelled him with impatient desires to seek another's vineyard, and through this drew him even to the guilt of homicide (1 Kings 21). So much, therefore, does this Leviathan blow with his breath upon the coals, as much as he inflames human minds to illicit things by the effort of secret suggestion. Whence also it is well added soon:

CHAPTER XXXIX

[Vet. XLI]

IBID.---And a flame goeth out of his mouth.

68. He will rage more fiercely through the Antichrist. He consumes nothing but wood, hay, stubble. Tears extinguish his flame.---The flame of his mouth is surely the very instigation of secret speech. For he addresses words of depraved persuasion to the soul of each one, but that which goeth out of his mouth is a flame, because the soul burns in desires when it is instigated by his suggestions. These things he suggests daily, these things he does not cease to suggest until the end of the present life; but then he dilates himself more wickedly, when coming through that damned man, he shows himself more openly in the glory of this world. Then a vaster smoke proceeds from his nostrils, because a fuller instigation strikes human hearts, terrified by the wonders of his signs. Then his breath makes the coals to burn more vehemently, because the minds of the reprobate, which he shall have already found warming with the love of temporal glory, he kindles by the blasts of his suggestion even to the exercise of the wickedness of cruelty. Then a flame goeth out of his mouth, because whatever he speaks through himself, whatever he speaks through his preachers, is a fire by which unfruitful wood is burned. But with the fire of earthly concupiscence the mind of those is touched, who by no means desire to become precious metals. He, therefore, who does not wish to be affected by the flame of his mouth, according to the sentence of the true teacher, let him care to be found not wood, hay, stubble, but gold, silver,

and precious stone (1 Cor. 3:12), because the fire of that persuasion kindles so much the more, as each one shall have offered himself more soft to consent to him. But because it is by no means granted that the mind placed in this corruptible flesh should not be touched by the heat of that persuasion, it remains that, scorched by malignant blasts, it should turn itself without ceasing to the aid of prayer. For the wave of tears more quickly extinguishes the flame of his suggestions.

Book thirty

FOUR.

Verse 13 of Chapter XLI is explained with the rest, especially concerning the pride of the devil and the most cruel persecutions of the Antichrist against the saints.

CHAPTER I.

1. As the world grows old, tribulations increase with the times. The devil rages so much more fiercely, as he is nearer to the consummation of his punishment.---Since we carry a body from this world, let us weigh the end of the universe from that part from which we are. For we more quickly recognize what the end of the world is, if we carefully look at this which we carry from the world. For our age flourishes more robustly through youthful years, but in old age it is parched by frequent diseases; and while it is extended longer that it may subsist, in the place of dying it daily fails through the moments of living. So also the time of the world, while it is increased by coming years, is affected by increasing evils; and from whence it perceives an increase of age, from thence it feels a loss of health. For tribulations increase for it with the times, and it

tolerates the losses of life the more weakly as it lasts more advanced, as it were, towards life. For the ancient enemy is loosed against it with all his strength, who, although he has already perished now because he has lost the blessedness of his heavenly condition, is nevertheless then more fully extinguished when, also being withdrawn from the license of tempting, he is bound in eternal fires. Whence also he approaches to tempt more atrociously the extremities of the world, because he becomes so much the more fervent for cruelty, as he feels himself nearer to punishment. For he considers that it is near that he should lose the license of his most wicked liberty, and as much as he is narrowed by the shortness of time, so much is he expanded by the multiplicity of cruelty, as is said of him by the angelic voice to John: Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time (Rev. 12:12). Then, therefore, he dilates himself into the fervor of great wrath, lest he who could not stand in blessedness should fall into the pit of his damnation with few. Then whatever he has been wickedly able, he more craftily seeks out; then he raises the neck of pride higher, and through that damned man whom he carries, he wickedly shows everything that temporally prevails. Whence also by the divine voice it is now rightly said:

CHAPTER II.

VERSE 13.---In his neck shall strength dwell.

2. The power to fulfill wickedness will be added to the pride of the Antichrist. For what is designated by the neck of this Leviathan, except the extension of elation? By which, raising himself against God, he is extolled with the simulation of sanctity and also with the swelling of power. For that pride is expressed by the neck, the prophet Isaiah testifies, who rebukes the daughters of Jerusalem, saying: They have walked with stretched-forth necks (Isa. 3:16). In the neck, therefore, of this Leviathan, strength is said to dwell, because power, being joined to it, also supports his elation. For whatever is then proudly extolled, whatever is craftily devised, he also executes with the virtue of secular power. Which the prophet Daniel, beholding, says: Deceit shall be directed in his hand (Dan. 8:25). For deceit in his hand is fraud in virtue, because everything that he wickedly wills, this he is also able to execute strongly for a time. But his deceit is said to be directed, because the malice of his fraud is hindered by no difficulty. For this, this Leviathan or his vessels are frequently accustomed to have as their own, that they are able more wickedly to fulfill those things which they wickedly desire, unto the heap of their iniquity.

3. It is of the divine gift towards the elect, that they are unable to perpetrate the evil they have thought. For when perhaps the elect are weakened, and fall into illicit desires, they are for the most part restrained by the hand of the divine gift in this, that they find no effects of their miserable will. And when a strong contrariety arises

to their vows, they are for the most part corrected by that very impossibility, and by a wonderful order of internal disposition, a change of the evil will follows through conversion, while perfection is denied through infirmity. For hence it is that, under the species of each soul, concerning weakening Judea, and walking in crooked paths, the Lord says through the prophet: Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will hedge it with a wall, and she shall not find her paths, and she shall follow her lovers, and she shall not overtake them, and she shall seek them, and not finding them shall say: I will go and return to my first husband, because it was better with me then than now (Hos. 2:6). For the ways of the elect are hedged with thorns, while they find the pain of pricking in that which they temporally desire. As if an interposed wall, it meets their ways, whose desires indeed the difficulty of perfection opposes. The souls of these indeed seek their lovers, and find them not, while by following malignant spirits, they by no means overtake those pleasures of this world which they desire. But it is well added that from that very difficulty she should soon say: I will go and return to my first husband, because it was better with me then than now (Matth. 12:44). For the first husband is the Lord, who has joined a chaste soul to Himself by the interposed love of the Holy Spirit. Whom then the mind of each one desires, when it finds manifold bitternesses like certain thorns in those delights which it temporally desires. For when the soul has begun to be bitten by the adversities

of the world which it loves, then it more fully understands how much better it was for it with its former husband.

4. Adversity often corrects those whom a depraved will perverts. Those, therefore, whom a depraved will perverts, adversity for the most part corrects. Whence also it is greatly to be feared lest prosperous things should follow when unjust things are desired, because that evil is more difficultly corrected, which is supported also by the prosperity of perfection. This Leviathan, therefore, who with his members is appointed to eternal torments, and deceit is directed in his hand, and strength dwells in his neck, because this which he desires temporally with a perverted will against the good, he consummates with a more perverted faculty, so that nothing from adversity in the present should withstand him, as much as nothing of prosperity remains for him in the future. And because everyone who becomes known to his friendships by perverted morals first loses the true riches of the mind, it is aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER III.

IBID.---And want shall go before his face.

5. The poverty of the elect is to have lost the heavenly riches. For by the face, notice is usually designated. Whence it is written: And my face shall go before thee (Exod. 33:14), that is, notice shall provide guidance. But it should be known that want in sacred eloquence is placed in one way for the elect, and in another for the

reprobate. For the want of the elect is when the true riches of the heavenly country return to their mind, and being placed in this troublesome exile of the present life, they remember that they are poor. For they sigh without ceasing for those riches, of which Paul says: That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints (Eph. 1:18). And because they as yet by no means behold them, they meanwhile groan studiously in the trouble of this poverty. Jeremiah had without doubt looked upon this poverty when he said: I am the man that seeth my poverty in the rod of his indignation (Lam. 3:1). For the rod of the indignation of God is the stroke of strictness. Which indignation man then endured, when, being driven out of paradise, he lost the true riches of internal joy (Gen. 3:24). But because all the elect incessantly behold that they have fallen into the penury of the present life from that faculty of inborn power, it is well said: I am the man that seeth my poverty (Lam. 3:1). For whoever as yet desires these visible things, understands not the evil of his pilgrimage, and knows not how to see this very thing which he suffers. David the prophet, beholding this poverty, says: My strength is weakened in poverty (Ps. 30:11). For strength is said to be weakened in poverty, because the mind, having fallen in this pilgrimage, and being reverberated by the molestations of its corruption, is hindered from contemplating that which it has lost.

6. The reprobate know not this poverty. They are emptied of the riches of virtues, and understand it not.

But the reprobate know not how to consider this poverty, because while they follow those things which they behold, they neglect to think on the invisible things which they have lost. Whence also their want is properly so called, because while they are filled with vices, they are emptied of the riches of virtues. To whom it often happens that, being lifted up by the madness of elation, while they by no means consider the losses of their ruin, they know not themselves to be also destitute of good actions. Whence by the angelic voice it is said to the preacher of Laodicea: Thou sayest that I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked (Rev. 3:17). He asserts himself to be rich, who is extolled by the arrogance of sanctity, but he is rebuked as poor, and blind, and naked. Poor indeed, because he has not the riches of virtues; blind, because he sees not even the poverty which he suffers; naked, because he has lost the first robe, but worse, because he does not even know that he has lost it. Because therefore, as we have said, the want of the reprobate is the defrauding of merits, it is rightly said of Leviathan: Want shall go before his face. For no one is joined to his knowledge, unless he be first denuded of the riches of virtues. For first he withdraws good thoughts, and then he infuses into them a more open notice of his iniquity.

Want, therefore, is said to precede his face, because first the faculty of strengths is lost, that as if through familiarity his notice may afterwards be known. Or certainly because he so fraudulently creeps upon many, that he can by no means be detected by them, and so he evacuates their virtues, in order that he may not show the malice of his craftiness, want is said to go before his face, as if it were openly said, that when he tempts by lying in wait, he spoils before he is seen. For hence it is that it is said of Ephraim through the prophet: Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knew it not (Hos. 7:9). For apostate angels are usually understood by strangers, who devour strength while they consume the virtue of the mind by perverting it. Which Ephraim both endured and knew not, because in the temptation of malignant spirits he both lost the strength of the soul, and understood not this very thing, that he had lost it. Want, therefore, precedes the face of Leviathan, because he first spoils the minds of the negligent by tempting, before he who is tempted recognizes his snares. By this, therefore, which was said: In his neck shall strength dwell, the power of violence is shown. But by this which is subjoined: And want shall go before his face, the subtlety of fraud is designated.

7. Before the coming of the Antichrist, the signs of virtues will be withdrawn from the Church, or few will remain.

Although from this that we know that want goes before his face, another thing occurs to us which we may nevertheless more sadly explain.

For by a terrible order of secret dispensation, before this Leviathan appears in that damned man whom he assumes, the signs of virtues are withdrawn from the holy Church. For prophecy is hidden, the grace of healings is taken away, the virtue of longer abstinence is diminished, the words of doctrine are silenced, the prodigies of miracles are removed. Which things indeed the heavenly dispensation by no means entirely withdraws, but it does not show these as openly and manifoldly as in former times. Which nevertheless is done by a wonderful dispensation, so that from one thing divine piety and justice may at once be fulfilled. For while, the virtues of signs being withdrawn, the holy Church appears as if more abject, both the reward of the good increases, who venerate her for the hope of heavenly things, and not on account of present signs, and the mind of the evil is more quickly shown against her, who neglect to follow the invisible things which she promises, while they are not held by visible signs. While therefore the humility of the faithful is as if destitute of the multitude and manifestation of signs, by a terrible examination of secret dispensation mercy is more bountiful to the good, from whence just wrath is heaped up for the evil. Because therefore this Leviathan, before he comes manifest and conspicuous, the signs of virtues cease for the most part in the holy Church, it is now rightly said: Want shall go before his face. For the riches of miracles are first withdrawn from the faithful, and then that ancient enemy is shown against them by open

prodigies, so that in that in which he is extolled by signs, he may be more robustly and laudably overcome by the faithful without signs. Although also signs will not be wanting to the faithful in his contest, but his will be so great, that ours may seem either few or none. Whose virtue indeed becomes more powerful than all signs, when it treads under the heel of internal constancy everything which it beholds to be terribly done by him. But the malignant enemy exhibits himself with so much more sharp immanity against them, as he grieves to be despised even with clear miracles. He therefore collects himself entirely for their destruction, and joins all the reprobate in the slaughter of the faithful with unanimous cruelty, that he may exert his cruelty so much more robustly, as in those things which he desires to do perversely, no members of his body disagree with him. Whence also it is rightly said:

CHAPTER IV.

VERSE 14.---The members of his flesh cleaving together to himself.

8. The harmful concord of the reprobate with Satan and among themselves. For the flesh of this Leviathan are all the reprobate, who do not rise by desire to the understanding of the spiritual country. But the members of his flesh are those who are joined to the same persons acting perversely, and preceding them to iniquity, as on the other hand it is said through Paul to the Lord's body: Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular (1 Cor. 12:27). For a member of the body

is one thing, a member of a member another. For a member of the body is a part to the whole, but a member of a member is a small part to a part. For a finger is a member of a member to the hand, the hand to the arm; but a member of the body is all this together to the whole body. As therefore in the spiritual body of the Lord we call those members of a member who are ruled by others in His Church, so in that reprobate congregation of this Leviathan the members of his flesh are those who are joined in an iniquitous work to some more wicked than themselves. But because the malignant enemy agrees with himself in a perverted work from the first even to the last, the divine word mentions in him the members of his flesh cleaving together to himself. For they think perverted things so unanimously, that they are divided by no disputation among themselves in turn. No altercation of diversity then cuts them, and therefore they vehemently prevail against the good, because they hold themselves concordantly in evil. For as we have already said above (Book XXXIII, num. 55), as it is pernicious if unity be wanting to the good, so it is more pernicious if it be not wanting to the evil. For the unity of the reprobate hinders the way of the good so much more hardly, as it opposes it more hardly by gathering together.

9. It is lawful to dissolve this unity, by the example of Paul. Paul had beheld this unity of the reprobate as harmful to himself, when, being caught in the midst of the Sadducees and Pharisees, he said: Of the hope and resurrection of

the dead I am judged (Acts 23:6). At which voice indeed, being struck, the crowd of hearers immediately leaped apart against themselves in turn. And when the multitude of the tumultuous is divided into two parts, the way of escape is opened to Paul, because he whom the united crowd of persecutors had constrained, the divided crowd loosed. The just therefore are rescued while the unjust are divided, and the vows of the elect arrive at perfection while the ranks of the reprobate are confounded by discord. Which is well designated also by the division of the Red Sea (Exod. 14:21, etc.). For while the wave is divided into two parts, the way is held by the elect people to the land of promise, because while the unity of the evil is cut, good minds are led through to that which they desire. If the unity of the evil had not been harmful, the divine providence would by no means have dissipated the tongues of the proud in so much diversity (Gen. 11:8). If the unity of the evil had not been harmful, the Prophet would not say of the enemies of the holy Church: Cast down, O Lord, and divide their tongues (Ps. 54:10). Because therefore this Leviathan is then unbridled in his strengths against the elect of God, for the increase of his malice unity also is permitted to be in the reprobate, that he may exert his strengths so much more robustly against us, as he impugns us not only with the stroke of fortitude, but also with the mass of gathering together. But who may be sufficient against these things? What mind may not tremble from the very root of its thoughts at the weights of so much elation and

joining together? Whence because He beholds us to tremble through infirmity, immediately the divine clemency subjoins what He does through Himself. For there follows:

CHAPTER V.

IBID.---He shall send lightnings against him, and they shall not be carried to another place.

10. They will be crushed by lightning in the judgment, the just being unhurt and rejoicing. What is designated by the name of lightnings, except those tremendous sentences of the last judgment? Which are called lightnings for this reason, because they indeed set on fire forever those whom they strike. Paul had beheld lightnings coming upon him, when he said: Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming (2 Thess. 2:8). But these lightnings which are sent against him are not carried to another place, because, while the just rejoice, they then strike only the reprobate. For after the threshing of the present life, in which the wheat now groans under the chaff, there is such a discerning between the wheat and the chaff by that fan of the last judgment, that the chaff may not pass into the granary of the wheat, nor the grains of the granary fall into the fire of the chaff. Those lightnings, therefore, by no means touch another place, because forsooth they set on fire by their flame not the grains, but the chaff. But because punishment does not correct this Leviathan, he insinuates it while he subjoins:

CHAPTER VI.

VERSE 15.---His heart shall be hardened as a stone.

11. The impenitence of Satan. He is most aptly called like an anvil. For the heart of the ancient enemy shall be hardened as a stone, because it shall never be softened by any repentance of conversion. Who, because he shall be adapted only to the strokes of eternal vengeance, is rightly subjoined immediately:

IBID.---And shall be bound as a smith's anvil.

For the smith fixes the anvil as adapted only for strokes. For to this end is the anvil appointed, that it may be struck with frequent blows. Leviathan therefore is bound as a smith's anvil, because he shall be coarcted by the chains of hell, that he may be beaten by the continual striking of eternal punishment. Who now also is struck, while all the just are saved, he indeed watching in snares, but wasting away with pains. But on the anvil other vessels are formed, but it itself is not transferred into another vessel by so many strikings. Rightly therefore is this Leviathan compared to an anvil, because we are composed while he persecutes us, but he himself is both always struck, and never changed into a useful vessel. We leave him to eternal striking, and we, being struck by the hand of the heavenly Artificer in his temptation, pass through like vessels formed by him. For in him we are beaten, but that we may come to the use of the heavenly house. But he indeed is bound like an anvil, because although

he now goes about the world by tempting, yet being placed in hell, he no longer wanders under the stroke of the sentence. There follows:

CHAPTER VII.

VERSE 16.---When he shall be taken up, the angels shall fear, and being terrified they shall be purified.

12. The reprobate angels falling, the good were terrified and solidified by fear.

Sacred Scripture sometimes so mixes the past and future time, that it sometimes uses the future for the past, sometimes indeed uses the past for the future. For it uses the future for the past when to John is shown the woman about to bring forth a male, who should rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5). Which because it had already then been done by the coming of the incarnate Lord, the thing done was announced. Again it uses the past for the future, as the Lord speaks through the Psalmist, saying: They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones (Ps. 22:18). By which words indeed the species of the Lord's passion is described as if already transacted, but nevertheless as yet to be in the far future. In this place, therefore, where it is said: When he shall be taken up, the angels shall fear, nothing hinders it from being understood that past things are described under the mode of future time. Nor do we leave the sense of right understanding, if we believe that while this Leviathan was falling from the citadel of blessedness, in his ruin the elect angels also were

terrified, so that while the lapse of pride ejected him from their number, fear itself solidified them to stand more robustly. Whence also follows: And being terrified they shall be purified.

13. In what manner they were then purified. Others falling, it was given to the rest that they should not be able to fall. But they were purified, because forsooth while he was going out with the reprobate legions, those only remained in the heavenly seats who should live blessedly forever. His lapse, therefore, terrified and purified them: it terrified them, lest they should proudly despise their Creator; but it purified them, because, the reprobate going out, it was brought about that the elect alone should remain. And because the Maker of all things, God, knows how to use well even the evil action of the reprobate for the custody of the good, He turned the lapse of the falling into the progress of those remaining; and from whence the fault of the proud was punished, from thence for the humble angels increases of merits were both found and solidified. For while these were falling, it was given to those in gift that they should by no means be able to fall. For the holy angels, while they behold in these the losses of their nature, consist already in themselves more cautiously and robustly. Whence it comes to pass, the Lord the Author of all things wonderfully ordering all things, that the ruin of their own also profits those countries of elect spirits, while from thence it is more firmly constructed from whence it had been in part destroyed.

14. Holy preachers are called angels. But because Sacred Scripture often is accustomed to designate the preachers of the Church by the name of angels, for this reason that they announce the glory of the heavenly country, we can in this place take the holy preachers for angels. For hence it is that John in the Apocalypse, writing to the seven Churches, speaks to the angels of the Churches, that is, to the preachers of the peoples (Rev. 1:4). Hence the prophet says: And the angels of peace shall weep bitterly (Isa. 33:7). Hence again the prophet Malachi says: The lips of the priest keep knowledge, and they seek the law from his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts (Malac. 2:7). Hence Paul says: Great is the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, appeared to angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in this world, taken up in glory (1 Tim. 3:16). He therefore who said the mystery of dispensation after it had appeared to angels, added that it was preached to the Gentiles, forsooth by the name of angels designated the holy preachers, that is, the messengers of truth.

15. These are terrified and purged by the fall and punishment of the angels. If therefore that which is said: When he is taken up, the angels shall fear, and being terrified they shall be purged, is referred to the future time, the extreme damnation of this Leviathan is here designated at the coming of the strict Judge, because he is taken away from this world by the wrath of judgment, who is now tolerated with wondrous

long-suffering of mildness. But he is shaken out from here with such a weight of terror that even the strength of the holy preachers is disturbed; for When he is taken up, the angels shall fear, because when he is snatched away by the whirlwind of judgment, those who can be found in their bodies, being shaken by immense terror, even the messengers of the heavenly country tremble. For although they are already strong and perfect, yet because they are placed in the flesh, they cannot be shaken by no dread in the whirlwind of such great terror. But when this Leviathan is snatched away, and when all elements are shaken in his destruction, the hope of the nearness of the kingdom gladdens the holy preachers, whom, as I said, that time of judgment shall find still in their bodies, and the infirmity of the flesh disturbs them at the showing of wrath. There will be therefore in them in some way a joyful trembling, and a secure fear, because they are both certain that they are rewarded by the heavenly kingdom, and they tremble for the infirmity of the flesh through the fear of such a great whirlwind.

16. How great a shaking of the reprobate there will be when the just are trembling. Let us therefore consider how the conscience of the wicked is then shaken, when even the life of the just is disturbed. Those who have hated the coming of the Judge, what shall they do, if even those who love it dread the terror of such a great judgment? And because in the holy preachers this dross is boiled away by this fear, if any rust of light sins

could be in them, after he said: When he is taken up, the angels shall fear, he aptly soon added: And being terrified they shall be purged. But because we have known these things concerning the end of this Leviathan, let us in the meantime hear what he does before he perishes. There follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. VIII].

VERS. 17. --- When the sword shall reach him, it shall not be able to stand, neither the sword, nor the spear, nor the breastplate.

17. Antichrist is rightly called the sword of the devil. In holy Scripture sometimes by a sword holy preaching, sometimes eternal damnation, sometimes temporal tribulation, sometimes the wrath or persuasion of the old enemy is designated. For the sword is put for holy preaching, as Paul says: And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6:17). By the name of sword eternal damnation is designated, as it is written of the preaching heretic: If his children be multiplied, they shall be in joy (Job 27:14), because in however great number they sprout here, they are consumed by eternal damnation. Sword is taken for temporal tribulation, as it is said to Mary concerning the tribulations to follow: And a sword shall pierce through thy own soul (Luke 2:35). Again, by the sword the wrath or persuasion of the malignant enemy is expressed, as the Psalmist says: Who hast delivered David thy servant from the malignant sword (Psal. 143:10).

For benign is the sword of holy preaching, by which we are struck that we may die to fault. But malignant is the sword of diabolical persuasion, by which each one is struck evilly that he may be extinguished from the life of rectitude. The sword of the old enemy, therefore, is that then condemned man, assumed into the use of his ministry. For he whets him through the malice of fraud, and transfixes the hearts of the weak. The sword of this Leviathan, therefore, reaches him, when his own condemned man shall have received him. But if by the name of the sword his wrath is signaled, it is rightly described not that he reaches the sword, but that he is reached by the sword. For he is then turned into such great madness that, desiring to dominate all, he by no means dominates his own wrath. For we, when we assume wrath in the use of justice, hold the sword, because by possessing it under the equity of judgment we moderate it. But he, because he is snatched away through the precipices of fury, is said not to reach the sword, but to be reached by the sword. For he does not hold wrath as possessing it, but is held by wrath as raging.

18. In what sense the spear and the breastplate are said to yield to this sword. For it is clear to all that with the spear we strike the adversary, but with the breastplate we are protected from the adversary. By the spear we inflict wounds, by the breastplate we are covered lest we be wounded. What therefore is designated by the spear but the dart of preaching, what by the breastplate but the strength of patience? This Leviathan, therefore,

because he is unbridled in wrath of every kind of cruelty through the assumed reprobate man, is said to be reached by the sword. For through the showing of immense strength he then exhibits whatever he wickedly can. And neither spear nor breastplate shall be able to stand, because coming into Antichrist, he will appear of such great power that, if heavenly help be wanting, he both blunts the sharpness of those preaching and destroys the long-suffering of those enduring. For unless heavenly grace solidifies the life of the just, the spear does not stand, because the power of the preachers is broken; the breastplate does not stand, because the patience of the constant is pierced through and broken. Whence also is added:

19. While Antichrist is raging, the power of the preachers and the constancy of the stronger ones will be endangered. That which he above called a spear, he below repeated with the appellation of iron; and what he brought forth as a breastplate, he signaled again by the mention of brass. For iron is whetted that the adversary may be wounded, but brass is consumed by almost no rust. By iron therefore the darts of preaching, but by brass the constancy of long-suffering is designated. Whence also under the species of Asher it is said of the holy Church through Moses: Iron and brass his shoe (Deut. 33:25). For a shoe in holy Scripture is taken for the protection of preaching, as it is written: Having your feet shod in the preparation of the Gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). Because therefore by iron power, but by

brass perseverance is expressed, iron and brass are called his shoe, when his preaching is protected at once by sharpness and by constancy. For by iron he penetrates opposing evils, but by brass he long-sufferingly keeps the goods which he has proposed. Whose perseverance he there surely more openly intimates, saying: As the days of his youth, so shall his old age be (Deut. 33:25). [Rec. IX.] But this Leviathan, when he shall have assumed that sword which the sacred oracles call Antichrist into the exercise of his iniquity, shall esteem both iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood, because unless divine grace protects, he will both consume the strengths of those preaching as straw with the fire of his iniquity, and reduce the constancy of those enduring as rotten wood into dust. And therefore both the sharpness of iron and the strength of brass fail, while through the violence of his power both the sense of preaching is blunted, and the long-suffering of patience is dissipated.

20. And unless God brings help, they will fail. Unless therefore divine help strengthens his elect, where then will the weak be, if the strong are esteemed as straw? What will this Leviathan do then with the straw, if he shall estimate iron as straw? What is he about to do with rotten woods, if he shall dissolve the strength of brass as rotten wood? But oh, how many, who by their own strengths estimate themselves to be iron or brass, in that fire of tribulation then find themselves to be straw; and how many, who through their own infirmity fear themselves to be straw,

being supported by divine help, are strengthened in the solidity of iron and brass, so that they may be so much the more strong in God against their adversary, by how much they have more remembered themselves to be weak of themselves. But by how much higher this Behemoth is raised against the elect of God through miracles, by so much the more vehemently all the holy ones constrain themselves to the words of preaching. Who yet so possesses the minds of the reprobate, that he leaves them transfixed by no dart of truth. Whence also is added:

IBID. 19. --- The archer shall not put him to flight.

21. Holy preaching does not drive Satan from the hearts of the reprobate. For what do we take the arrows for, but the words of the preachers? Which while they are distinguished by the voice of those living well, they transfix the hearts of the hearers. By these arrows the holy Church had been struck, which said: I am wounded with charity (Cant. 2:5). Of these arrows it is narrated by the voice of the Psalmist: The arrows of little ones are become their wounds (Psal. 63:8), because scilicet the words of the humble have penetrated the minds of the proud. Of these arrows it is said to the coming Defender: Thy arrows are sharp, O most mighty, the people shall fall under thee in the heart (Psal. 44:6). He is therefore an archer who through the bow of holy intention infixes the words of right exhortation in the hearts of the hearers. Because therefore this Leviathan despises the words of those preaching, and, when

he has bitten the minds of the reprobate by evilly persuading them, being hard among the darts he by no means leaves them, it is rightly said: The archer shall not put him to flight. As if it were openly said: From the hearts of the reprobate the arrow of the holy preacher does not shake him out, because whoever is reached by him, now contemns to hear the words of those preaching. Whence well, being angry at preceding sins, concerning those whom he leaves in the hand of the old enemy, the Lord says through the prophet: I will send you basilisks, for whom there is no incantation (Jer. 8:17). As if he should say: By a just judgment I will deliver you to such unclean spirits, who cannot be shaken out from you by the exhortation of those preaching as if by the speech of those incanting. But because this Leviathan is not moved from the hearts of the reprobate by the darts of holy preaching, the contempt itself also of holy men is added, when it is immediately subjoined:

CAPUT XI

[Vet. VI].

IBID. --- The stones of the sling are turned for him into stubble.

22. Against him and Antichrist the strength of the saints is seen as stubble. Yet he can do nothing against their soul. For what is figured by the sling but the holy Church? For while the sling is sent in a circle, stones go out from it by which the breasts of adversaries may be struck;

so the holy Church while she is led through the circuit of tribulations by the volubility of times, strong men come forth from her by whom the hearts of the wicked may be beaten as if by stony blows. Whence to the prophet concerning good teachers the Lord says: They shall devour, and subdue with the stones of a sling (Zech. 9:15). For holy teachers who instruct others also to virtue, devour enemies while they change them within their own body through the power of conversion. Whom they subject to the stones of the sling, because while they institute each of the strong men in the holy Church, through them they break the proud breasts of adversaries. Whence also Goliath most immense dies by the stone of the sling (1 Sam. 17:49), because by the singular stone of the holy Church diabolical height is overcome. This Leviathan therefore, because, having assumed that condemned man, he despises any of the strong men of the Church as weak, and temporarily presses their strengths, it is now rightly said: The stones of the sling are turned for him into stubble. As if it were openly said: He reduces the strength of the saints as if into the softness of stubble, whose tongue before beat his breast with hard blows. For exercising all the strength of his iniquity, by how much he grieves to be overcome by them spiritually, by so much the more atrociously he prevails against them corporally. And because he considers that he prevails nothing against their spirit, he consumes all the arguments of his cruelty in their flesh. [Vet. VII.] But what wonder if he despises human strengths,

who contemns even the eternal torments of the heavenly judgment upon himself? Whence also is added:

23. The proud one despises the vengeance of God. As if he should say: He also despises the weight of his animadversion, which strikes him by punishment coming from above. For in holy Scripture by the name of a hammer sometimes the devil is designated, through whom the faults of those now delinquent are struck; but sometimes the heavenly percussion is taken, by which either the elect feel the heavenly blows, that they may be corrected from evil ways, or a just wrath strikes the reprobate, so that already prevenient of eternal punishments, it may show what they also deserve in the future. For because the old enemy is expressed by the appellation of a hammer, the prophet testifies, when he contemplates the power of the extreme judgment upon him, saying: How is the hammer of the whole earth broken and crushed! (Jer. 50:23). As if he should say: Who may weigh with what whirlwind, at the coming of the extreme judgment, the Lord crushes in eternal damnation him through whom he strikes his vessels to be formed for the use of his ministry? Again, by the hammer is expressed the heavenly percussion, which is signaled by Solomon building the temple, when it is said: But the house, when it was in building, was built of stones hewn and made perfect, and neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron was heard in the house, while it was in building (1 Kings 6:7). For what did that house figure but the holy

Church, which the Lord inhabits in the heavens? For the building of which the souls of the elect, as if certain polished stones, are brought. Which when it is built in the heavens, no hammer of discipline now resounds there, because we are brought there as hewn and perfect stones, that we may be disposed in places suitable according to merit. For here we are beaten outside, that we may come there without reproach. Here the hammer, here the axe, here all the tools of beatings resound. But in the house of God no blows are heard, because in the eternal country all the noises of percussions now become silent. By no means does the hammer strike there, because no animadversion afflicts. By no means does the axe cut, because no sentence of severity casts out any who have been received within. By no means do the iron tools make a noise, because not even any minimal scourges are felt there any longer. Because therefore by the hammer coming from above the weight of the heavenly percussion is expressed, what is it that this Leviathan despises the hammer, but that he contemns to dread the blows of the heavenly animadversion? And he accounts the hammer as stubble, because he prepares himself for the weights of just wrath as if against the lightest terrors. Whence also more expressly is added:

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. XII].

IBID. 21. --- Under him shall be the rays of the sun.

25. Some are subjected to him, who seemed to shine in the Church by doctrine or sanctity. In holy Scripture when the sun is put figuratively, sometimes the Lord, sometimes persecution, sometimes the showing of a manifest vision of anything, but sometimes the intelligence of the wise is designated. For by the sun the Lord is figured, as is brought forth in the book of Wisdom, that all the impious in the extreme day of judgment, their damnation being known, are about to say: We have erred from the way of truth, and the light of justice has not shined to us, and the sun has not risen to us (Wisd. 5:6). As if they should openly say: The ray of internal light has not shone back to us. Whence also John says: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet (Rev. 12:1). For in the sun the illustration of truth, but in the moon, which fails by monthly supplies, the mutability of temporality is taken. But the holy Church, because she is protected by the splendor of the heavenly light, is clothed as it were with the sun; but because she despises all temporal things, she presses the moon under her feet. Again, by the sun persecution is designated, as in the Gospel Truth says, that the seeds born without roots withered when the sun was risen (Matt. 13:6), because videlicet the words of life flourishing for a temporal moment in the heart of earthly men, are dried up at the supervening heat of persecution. Again, by the sun the showing of a manifest vision is designated, as the Prophet

denounces the Lord appearing to the eyes of all, saying: In the sun he has placed his tabernacle (Psal. 18:6). As if he should say: He showed the sacrament of the assumed humanity in the light of manifest vision. And as it is said to the same Prophet by the divine voice through Nathan: Thou didst it in secret, but I will do this word in the sight of all Israel, and in the sight of the sun (2 Sam. 12:12). For what does he intimate by the sight of the sun, but the knowledge of manifest vision? Again, by the name of the sun, the intellect of the wise is expressed, as it is written in the Apocalypse: The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and it was given to him to affect men with heat and fire (Rev. 16:8). Videlicet to pour the vial upon the sun is to inflict the punishments of persecution upon men shining with the splendor of wisdom: And it was given to him that he should affect men with heat and fire, because while wise men, overcome by tortures, are touched by the error of acting evilly, all the weak, persuaded by their example, burn in temporal desires. For the ruins of the strong provide increases for the perditions of the weak. Because by the sun the sharpness of wisdom is designated, it is also said by Solomon by comparison: The wise man remains as the sun, the fool is changed as the moon (Ecclus. 27:12). [Vet. VIII.] In this place therefore what are demonstrated by the rays of the sun but the sharpnesses of the wise? For because many, who in the holy Church seemed to resplend by the light of wisdom, being then either taken by persuasions, or terrified by

threats, or broken by tortures, are subjected to the sedition of this Leviathan, it is rightly said: Under him shall be the rays of the sun. As if it were openly said: These who within the holy Church seemed to sprinkle light through the sharpnesses of wisdom, and to resplend from above through the authority of rectitude, substern themselves to the iniquitous operation of this Leviathan, so that they no longer shine from above by preaching right things, but serve him perversely by obeying. The rays of the sun, therefore, are under him, when some even learned men do not lift up the sharpnesses of their wisdom by acting freely, but incline them to the footsteps of this Leviathan both by perversity of work, and by the flattery of adulation, so that intelligence, which was to them as the sun from above from the heavenly gift, is substerned to the feet of the old enemy from earthly cupidity. Whence also now when any of the wise and of the teachers for the convenience or glory of temporal life subjects himself through the lapse of adulation to earthly powers acting depravedly, he strews himself with the rays of the sun as if under the footsteps of the coming Antichrist. And Behemoth humiliates to himself as it were the light of heaven, while he treads upon the minds of the wise through pestiferous assent. But so many times the rays of the sun subject themselves to the feet of this Leviathan, as often as these who seem to resplend with the light of doctrine, feel depraved things in the sacred oracle by immoderate sharpness, and substern themselves to his errors by

perverse senses, because while they erect themselves against the faithful preachments of truth, they serve the footsteps of this Leviathan by feeling false things. So many times the rays of the sun are under him, as often as the learned indeed, and prevailing in the light of intelligence, either erect themselves in elation by despising others; or postposing the highest things which they are wise in, are defiled by sordid desires of the flesh; or having forgotten heavenly things, they ambition earthly ones; or not remembering that they are earth, they glory vainly concerning the knowledge of heavenly things. Whence also it is rightly subjoined there:

CAPUT XV

[Rec. XIII].

IBID. --- He shall spread gold under him as mire.

26. What gold signifies in holy Scripture. For by the appellation of gold in the sacred oracle sometimes the brightness of the divinity, sometimes the splendor of the heavenly city, sometimes charity, sometimes the brightness of worldly glory, sometimes the beauty of sanctity is taken. For by the name of gold the very intimate brightness of the divinity is designated, as the appearance of the bridegroom is described in the Song of Songs: His head is the best gold (Cant. 5:11). For because the head of Christ is God, but nothing in metals is more resplendent than gold, the head of the bridegroom is called gold,

because his humanity is ruled by the brightness of his divinity to us. Again, by the name of gold the splendor of the heavenly city is taken, as John testifies that he saw her, saying: The city itself was pure gold like to pure glass (Rev. 21:18). For the gold of which that city consists is called like to glass, that she may be designated both bright by gold and transparent by glass. Again, by the name of gold charity is intimated, as the Angel whom the same John beheld speaking to him (Rev. 1:13), he saw girt about the paps with a golden girdle, because nimirum the breasts of the heavenly citizens, while they are now by no means subject to penal fear, and are solved from each other by no scission, constrain themselves from charity alone. But to have a golden girdle about the paps is to restrain all the movements of mutable thoughts by the bonds of only love now. Again, by the name of gold the brightness of temporal glory is expressed, as is said through the Prophet: Babylon is a golden cup (Jer. 51:7). For what is designated by the name of Babylon but the glory of this world? Which is called a golden cup, because while it ostentates temporal things to be beautiful, it inebriates foolish minds in its concupiscence, so that they may desire specious temporal things, and contemn beautiful invisible ones. With this golden cup Eve first was inebriated of her own will, of whom the history of truth says, that when she should concupisce the forbidden tree, she saw that it was beautiful to the sight, and delectable to the aspect, and she ate (Gen. 3:6). Babylon is therefore a golden

cup, because while it shows the vision of exterior beauty, it withdraws the sense of internal rectitude. Again, by the name of gold the splendor of sanctity is taken, as Jeremiah deplores the Jewish people changed from the splendor of justice to the darknesses of iniquity, saying: How is the gold become obscure, the best color changed? (Lam. 4:1). For as we said above, the gold is obscured when, the darknesses of iniquities subfollowing, the beauty of justice is deserted. The best color is changed, when the splendor of innocence is turned into the foulness of fault.

[Vet. IX.] 27. What mire is. By the name of mire also, in the sacred oracle sometimes the multiplicity of earthly things, sometimes an iniquitous doctrine savoring of the sordid, sometimes the allurement of carnal desire is designated. For by mire the multiplicity of earthly things is figured, as is said by Habakkuk the prophet: Woe to him who multiplies not his own! how long does he aggravate against himself thick mire? (Hab. 2:6). For he aggravates himself with thick mire who, multiplying earthly things by avarice, constrains himself by the oppression of his own sin. Again, by the name of mire a doctrine savoring of the sordid is designated, as is said to the Lord by the same prophet: Thou hast made a way in the sea for thy horses, in the mire of many waters (Hab. 3:15). As if he should say: Thou hast opened a way for thy preachers among the doctrines of this world savoring of sordid and earthly things. By mire also the desire of sordid pleasure is expressed, as the Psalmist praying says: Deliver

me from the mire, that I may not stick fast (Psal. 68:15). For to stick fast in the mire is to be defiled by the sordid desires of carnal concupiscence.

28. The ancient enemy mocks some under the appearance of sanctity, and baits others through foul vices. In this place, therefore, by gold the brightness of sanctity is taken, but by mire either the avarice of earthly things, or the contagion of wicked doctrines, or the filth of carnal pleasures is understood, nothing hindering. For because this Leviathan subjects many, who within the holy Church seemed to shine with the brightness of justice, then either to the concupiscence of earthly things, or to the contagion of wandering doctrine, or to carnal pleasures for himself, he undoubtedly spreads gold for himself as mire. For to spread gold as mire is in some to trample on the purity of life through illicit desires, so that these also may serve his sordid footsteps, who before were glowing against him with the splendor of virtues. And so the ancient enemy then mocks some under the appearance of sanctity, but intercepts others through the foul vices of carnal life. But then he will grassate openly through these, but now he rules secretly in the hearts of many, as the Apostle Paul says: That he may be revealed in his time, for the mystery of iniquity already works (2 Thess. 2:6). So many times therefore even now he subjects gold to himself as mire, as often as he prostrates the chastity of the faithful through the vices of the flesh. So many times he treads gold as mire, as often as he dissipates the sense of the continent through unclean desires. Which

then he performs so much more vehemently as, committed to his lost liberty, he perpetrates that which he desires more unbridledly.

29. Those who are prostrated under the devil, although they seem to be gold, are mire. And perhaps it may move anyone why the merciful God permits these things to be done, that this Leviathan either now through crafty suggestions, or then through that damned man whom he fills, should subject even the rays of the sun, that is, any learned and wise men, or should prostrate gold, that is, men shining with the brightness of sanctity, as mire for himself by defiling them with vices. But we answer more quickly because the gold which could be spread as mire by his wicked persuasions, was never gold before the eyes of God (De poenit., dist. 2, c. Citius). For those who can at any time be seduced so as not to return, seem to lose to the eyes of men a sanctity they were thought to have; but they never had it before the eyes of God. For often a man is secretly involved in many sins, and in some one virtue he seems great. Which very virtue also failing vanishes, because while it becomes known to men, it is undoubtedly praised, and its praise is gaspingly desired. Whence it comes to pass that the virtue itself is not virtue before the eyes of God, while it hides what displeases, and brings forth what pleases. What merits therefore can there be with God, when both the evils are hidden, and the goods public? For for the most part, as we have said, pride lies hid, and chastity becomes known; and therefore chastity shown for a long

time is lost about the end of life, because covered pride is retained uncorrected even to the end. Another is vacant for alms, distributes his own; but yet he serves many injustices, or perhaps exercises his tongue in slanders. And it happens for the most part that he who had been merciful near the term of his life glows with the stings of rapacity and cruelty. Which is done by a very just judgment, that he may also lose before men that by which he pleased men, who never cared to correct that by which he displeased God. Another studies patience; but while he does not beware to envy others, and to keep malice in his heart, he becomes at some time impatient, who for a long time lay hid grieving. These therefore are both through something gold, and through something mire. And this gold is spread as mire, when, secret sins requiring it, even the virtue which had publicly shone is dissipated. But we believe it worth the price of the labor if in these we should weigh more subtly the power of the heavenly order.

30. God tolerates the secret evils of some, so that the good they do in the open may profit the elect. For often almighty God tolerates the secret evils of some, so that He may dispense their open goods to be of use to His elect. For some, by no means thoroughly deserting the world, and not about to persevere, take up the narrow way, but by their example they kindle those to seek the narrow way who are about to persevere. Whence it comes to pass for the most part that this very thing that they seem to live well, they live not for themselves, but rather for the elect alone, while

by their examples those who are not about to persevere provoke others who will persevere to the studies of living well. For we often see some enter the way, and hasten to a proposed place, whom others follow because they behold them going; and they parterly seek the same place. But it happens for the most part that, some article of complication rushing in, those who went before return behind themselves, and those arrive at the place who followed. So nimirum are they who, not about to persevere, take up the way of sanctity. For therefore they begin the journey of virtue, not about to arrive, that they may show those who are about to arrive where they should walk. Whose fall also, by no small utility, serves the proficiencies of the elect, because while they behold their lapse, they tremble for their own state; and the ruin which damns those humiliates these. For they learn to trust in the protection of heavenly aid, while they behold many to have fallen from their own strengths. When therefore the reprobate seem to act well, they show as it were a level way to the elect following; but when they fall into the lapse of iniquity, they show to the elect proceeding after them as it were a pit of pride to be avoided. This Leviathan was therefore, and may subject the rays of the sun to himself, and subject gold in the manner of mire. Almighty God knows how to use well the evil of the reprobate for the solace of His elect, when those who are about to arrive at Him, both profit to Him by their own merits, and are often corrected by the lapses of others in that which they

proudly savor. But if this Leviathan acts these things even in those whom some virtue shows bright, what is he about to do to those whose mind is not even in some part raised from earthly concupiscences? Whom nevertheless the divine word openly expresses, while it subjoins:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. XIV].

VERSE 22. --- He shall make the deep sea to boil like a pot.

31. In the last persecution the wrath of the reprobate shall boil over against the Saints. What is expressed by the sea but the life of the secular, what by the deep but their high and hidden thoughts? Which deep sea this Leviathan makes to boil like a pot, because nimirum it is certain, that in the time of the extreme persecution he studies to excite the minds of the reprobate through the flame of cruelty against the life of the elect. Then the deep sea boils like a pot, when he inflames the hearts of the lovers of the world with a strong heat, and those things which in this time of peace lay hidden shut up within their malice, then boil over into the tide of a most immense persecution, and through the abrupt license of open cruelty they exhale those hatreds of ancient malice which they had long pressed down. But because, persuaded by pestiferous error, they so serve the Antichrist in these things, that then they more truly estimate themselves to offer ser-

vice to Christ, after he said: He shall make the deep sea to boil like a pot, he aptly subjoined:

CHAPTER XXVII

[Vet. XI]

IBID. --- He will set it as when ointments boil.

32. Those who will fight for the Antichrist against the saints will believe they are offering service to God. For ointments when they boil, give back a fragrance of sweetness. Because therefore this Leviathan will so seduce the hearts of the reprobate, that whatever they act from the iniquity of perfidy they suspect themselves to act for the truth of the right faith, that which they exercise with religious zeal smells as it were well to them. Whence in the Gospel the Truth says to the disciples: That every one who killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God (John 16:2). Therefore they boil like a pot, while they cruelly persecute; but with them the persecution itself redolent of the fragrance of ointments, while their mind, deceived by vain suspicions, estimates that it pays service to God. For in holy Scripture by the odors of ointments the opinion of virtues is wont to be signified. Whence the bride in the Song of Songs desiring the bridegroom says: In the odor of thy ointments we run (Cant. 1:3). And whence Paul the apostle, knowing himself to be fragrant with the praise of virtues, says: We are the good odor of Christ to God (2 Cor. 2:15). And so because this Leviathan intercepts the ministers of that lost vessel of his

in works of cruelty under the opinion of praise and the pretext of virtue, after he said: He shall make the deep sea to boil like a pot, he rightly soon subjoined: He will set it as when ointments boil. For this that the sea boils through the fire of cruelty, he shows in the judgment of those same who are excited by the false name of virtue, as if ointments should boil, so that they may become so much more atrocious to cruelty, as they also estimate themselves to merit rewards as it were for religious zeal. And this is just by the divine judgment, that those who neglect to weigh and to keep the force of piety, should be deceived by the odor of their own suspicion. Whence also, to the increase of the illusion, signs also and wonders follow them perpetrating cruel things, as is also rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XVIII

[Vet. XII, Rec. XV].

VERSE 23. --- After him a path shall shine.

33. The path of the Antichrist shall shine with miracles. For after Leviathan a path is said to shine, because wherever he passes, he leaves behind an excessive admiration from the brightness of his miracles; and whether he goes forth through himself, or through his ministers, he glitters with lying signs. Whence also this which we have already often brought forward the Truth says in the Gospel: False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall give signs and wonders, so as to induce into error, if it can be done,

even the elect (Mark 13:22). The path therefore shines after Leviathan, because he illustrates the works of those whose hearts he penetrates with wonders, that nimirum he may hold their minds so much more deeply in the darkness of error, as he ostentates light from miracles more powerfully as it were without through them. But there are some who, retaining in memory both the prophetic words and the Evangelical precepts, know both that the signs which he exhibits are false, and the punishments true to which the deceiver draws. The hearts of these this Leviathan, because he does not intercept them by the ostentation of sanctity, composes himself to them in another illusion. For he beholds some knowing these things, but yet loving the present life, whose minds he immediately lightens of future punishments, asserts the judgments of strictness to be about to be ended at some time, and craftily raps those deceived to present pleasures. Whence also it is aptly soon subjoined:

CHAPTER XIX

[Rec. XVI].

IBID. --- He shall estimate the abyss as it were growing old.

34. The reprobate, led into error by the devil, do not believe in the eternity of punishments. Their false reasons are answered. That the eternal and incomprehensible judgments are wont to be designated by the name of the abyss, the Psalmist testifies saying: Thy judgments are a great abyss

(Psal. 35:7). But old age is sometimes put for the proximity of the end. Whence the Apostle says: That which is made old and groweth old, is near unto perishing (Hebr. 8:13). This Leviathan therefore shall estimate the abyss as it were growing old, because he so infatuates the hearts of the reprobate, that he infuses into them a suspicion about the coming judgment as if it should be ended. For he estimates the abyss to grow old, who thinks that the heavenly animadversion is to be terminated at some time in punishments. Therefore this ancient persuader in his members, that is in the minds of the iniquitous, lightens future punishments, which he determines as it were by a certain end, so that he may extend their faults without an end of correction; and they do not end their sins here so much more, as they estimate the punishments of sins to be about to be ended there.

35. For there are even now those who for this reason neglect to put an end to their sins, because they suspect the future judgments over them to have at some time an end. To whom we answer briefly: If at some time the punishments of the reprobate are to be ended, then at some time also the joys of the blessed are to be ended. For through itself the Truth says: These shall go into eternal punishment, but the just into life eternal (Matt. 25:46). If therefore this is not true which He threatened, neither is that true which He promised. But they say: He therefore threatened eternal punishment to those sinning, that He might restrain them from the perpetration of

sins, because He ought to threaten eternal punishments to His creature, not to inflict them. To whom we answer more quickly: If He threatened false things that He might correct from injustice, He also promised false things that He might provoke to justice. And who could tolerate this madness of theirs, who while by their promises they assert the punishments of the reprobate to be ended, by their assertion also confound the rewards and remunerations of the elect? Who could tolerate this madness of theirs, who try to build up that it is not true, which the Truth threatened concerning the eternal fire, and while they busy themselves to perhibit God merciful, they fear not to preach Him fallacious?

36. How just it is that sinners should be addicted to eternal punishments. But they say: A fault with an end ought not to be punished without end. The almighty God is nimirum just, and that which was not committed by an eternal sin, ought not to be punished by an eternal torment. To whom we answer more quickly that they would speak rightly, if the just and strict Judge coming, did not weigh the hearts of men, but their facts. For the iniquitous therefore offended with an end, because they lived with an end. For they would have wished to live without end, so that they might have been able to remain in iniquities without end. For they more desire to sin than to live; and therefore they desire to live here always, that they may never cease to sin, while they live. It pertains therefore to the justice of the strict Judge, that they should never lack punish-

ment, whose mind in this life never wished to lack sin; and that no end of vengeance be given to the iniquitous, because as long as he was able, he wished not to have an end of crime.

[Vet. XIII.] 37. The just, seeing in the torments of the wicked what punishments they have escaped, are excited to the praises of God. But they say: No just man is fed by cruelties, and a delinquent servant is commanded to be beaten by a just master for this reason, that he may be corrected from wickedness. To some purpose therefore he is beaten since his master is not delighted by torments. But the iniquitous delivered to the fires of Gehenna, for what end will they always burn? And because it is certain that the pious and almighty God is not fed by the torments of the iniquitous, why are the wretched tormented, if they are not expiated? To whom we answer more quickly that the almighty God, because He is pious, is not fed by the torment of the wretched; but because He is just, He is not settled from the vengeance of the iniquitous forever. But all the iniquitous are punished with eternal punishment, indeed by their own iniquity; and yet they are burned to some purpose, namely that all the just may both see in God the joys which they perceive, and look back in those upon the punishments which they have escaped, so that they may recognize themselves to be debtors to divine grace so much more in eternity, as they behold in eternity the evils to be punished which they were able to avoid by His help.

38. Why the saints pray no longer for their enemies addicted to Gehenna. But they say: And where is it that they are saints, if they shall not pray for their enemies, whom they shall then see burning, to whom certainly it was said: Pray for your enemies (Matt. 5:44)? But we answer more quickly: They pray for their enemies at that time, in which they can convert their hearts to fruitful penitence, and save them by that very conversion. For what else is to be prayed for enemies, except this which the Apostle says: That God may give them penitence, and they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive, to his will (2 Tim. 2:25, 26)? And how shall it be prayed for them then, when they can already in no wise be changed from iniquity to the works of justice? Therefore there is the same cause why it is not prayed then for men damned to eternal fire, which is now also the cause that it is not prayed for the devil and his angels deputed to eternal punishment. Which is now also the cause, that holy men do not pray for infidel and impious men deceased, who certainly concerning those whom they already know to be deputed to eternal punishment before that sight of the just Judge, shrink from the merit of their prayer being made void. But if now also the living just do not at all feel compassion for the dead and damned unjust, when they yet know themselves to suffer something judgeable concerning their own flesh, how much more strictly do they then look back upon the torments of the iniquitous, when, stripped of every vice of corruption, they

shall now adhere more nearly and more closely to justice? For so the sight of strictness absorbs their minds through this that they adhere to the most just Judge, that it is not at all pleasing to them whatever disagrees from the subtlety of that internal rule.

But because, a point of occasion having arisen, we have said these things briefly against the Origenists, let us recur to that order of expounding which we passed over. After the merciful Lord indicated the crafty machinations of this Leviathan, openly preaching all that which vehemently oppresses the elect outwardly, all that which by his suggestion he blandly infuses into the reprobate inwardly, soon briefly insinuating the immanity of his power He adds:

CAPUT XX

[Vet. XIV, Rec. XVII].

VERS. 24. --- There is no power on earth that may be compared to him.

39. The devil, having lost his happiness, nevertheless preserved the magnitude of his angelic nature. His power over the earth is said to be more eminent than all, because although by the merit of his action he fell below men, nevertheless he transcends the whole human race by the condition of his angelic nature. For although he lost the blessedness of internal happiness, nevertheless he did not lose the magnitude of his nature, by the powers of which he still surpasses all human things, although he may be subject to

holy men by the dejection of his merits. Whence also to the same saints fighting against him, the merit of their retribution increases for this reason, that he is conquered by them, who through the power of nature glories as if by right to be over men. It follows:

CAPUT XXI.

IBID. --- Who was made to fear no one.

40. The first angel was so created, that he should fear God chastely. The liberty which he desired bound him. Thus indeed he was made by nature, that he ought to have feared his Creator chastely, with a sober and secure fear namely; not with the fear which charity casts out, but with the fear which remains for ever and ever (1 John 4:18), that is, which charity begets. For a loving wife fears her husband in one way, and a sinning maidservant her master in another. Thus therefore he had been created, so that with a joyful fear he, both loving, might dread his Author, and dreading, might love Him. But by his own perversity he was made such, that he should fear no one. For he despised to be subject to Him by whom he had been created. For God is so above all things, that He Himself is under no one. But this Leviathan, beholding the summit of His highness, desired the right of perverse liberty, that he might both be over others, and be under no one, saying: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the Most High (Isai. 14:14). Whose likeness he lost by that very thing, by which he proudly coveted to be

like Him in highness. For he who ought to have imitated His charity, being subject, ambitiously sought His highness, and that which he was able to imitate, he, being elated, lost. He would indeed be high, if he had wished to adhere to Him who is truly high. He would be high, if he had been content with the participation of true highness. But while he proudly desired a private highness, he justly lost the participated one. For having left that Principle to which he ought to have adhered, he desired his own principle to be to himself in a certain way. Having left Him who truly was able to suffice him, he judged himself to be able to suffice himself; and he fell below himself so much more, as he raised himself more against the glory of his Creator. For whom free service was exalting, captive liberty cast down. By which liberty he is now unbridled so as to fear no one, but he is heavily restrained by that very unbridling. For the heavenly judgment wonderfully ordering all things, the liberty which he desired bound him, because now not fearing in every way he lies under all punishments, who was able to be over even the elements, if he had wished to fear the One whom he ought. Surely he would possess all things fearing the One, who now not fearing the One suffers all things.

41. He lost the fear of God. With how great a loss to himself. He was made therefore to fear no one, no one namely, because neither does he fear God, nor even this which he is about to suffer. For whom surely it had been more happy to avoid punishments by fearing than to tolerate them

by not fearing. Therefore he turned the appetite for highness into a rigor of mind, so that now through hardness he does not feel that he has done evilly, who was seeking to be over others through glory. For because he did not obtain the right of the power he sought, he found the madness of insensibility as a certain remedy of his pride; and because he was not able to transcend all things by advancement, he prepared himself against all things by contempt. [Vet. XV.] Whose pride is still studiously described, when there is immediately subjoined:

CAPUT XXII.

VERS. 25. --- He seeth every high thing.

42. The immense pride of the devil and his members. Saul reprobated on account of elation. The humility of David in the highest dignity. That is, he looks back upon all as if placed below himself from a high place, because while through intention he strives against the Author, he disdains to estimate anyone like to himself. Which aptly also agrees to his members, because all the iniquitous elated through the tumor of the heart despise all whom they see with the pride of highness; and if at any time they venerate outwardly, nevertheless within in the secret of the heart, where they are great in their own estimation with themselves, they postpone the life and merit of all to themselves, and they look back upon them as being below themselves, because through the elated thought of the heart they have placed themselves in the citadel of a certain altitude. To

whom it is well said through the prophet: Woe to you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight (Isai. 5:21). Hence also Paul says: Be not wise in your own conceits (Rom. 12:16). Hence it is said to Saul by divine increpation: When thou wast a little one in thy own eyes, did I not constitute thee head in the tribes of Israel (1 Kings 15:17)? For he is a little one in his own eyes, who in that which he considers himself, weighs himself as unequal to the merits of others. For he looks upon himself as if great, whoever extends himself through elation of thought over the merits of others. But Saul, the reprobate, did not remain in the good which he had begun, because he swelled with the pride of the power he had received. [Vet. XVI.] But on the contrary, David, always feeling humble things concerning himself, and postponing himself to the comparison even of that Saul, after he found a place for striking, and spared that same raging adversary, prostrated himself with a humble profession, saying: After whom dost thou pursue, O king of Israel? after whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, and after a flea (1 Kings 24:15)? And surely he had already been anointed as king, already by the prayer of Samuel, and by the horn pouring oil over him, he had learned that divine grace, Saul having been reprobated, was preserving him for possessing the governance of the kingdom, and nevertheless he was prostrating himself with a humble mind to his pursuing adversary, to whom he knew himself to have been preferred by divine judgment. He was therefore humbly postponing

himself to him than whom he knew himself to be incomparably better through the grace of election. Let them learn therefore how they ought to be humbled to their neighbors, who still know not in what place they are held with God, if the elect of Him so humble themselves even to those over whom they already discover themselves to be preferred through internal judgments.

43. Humility proper to the elect. But this is wont to be the proper specimen of the elect, that they always feel concerning themselves below what they are. For hence it is said by the same David: If I did not feel humbly, but exalted my soul (Psal. 131:2). Hence Solomon calls little ones to wisdom, saying: If anyone is a little one, let him come to me (Prov. 9:4). For he who does not yet despise himself, does not apprehend the humble wisdom of God. Hence in the Gospel the Lord says: I confess to Thee, O Lord Father of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones (Matt. 11:25). Hence again the Psalmist says: The Lord keeping little ones (Ps. 116:6). Hence the teacher of the Gentiles says: We were made little ones in the midst of you (1 Thess. 2:7). Hence admonishing the disciples, he says: In humility let each esteem others better than themselves (Philip. 2:3). For because every iniquitous one thinks every one whom he knows to be inferior to himself, on the contrary the just one studies that he may attend to every neighbor as superior. And lest while one humbles himself to another, the humiliation should go into elation

for the other, he well admonished both parts, saying: Esteeming others better than themselves, so that in the thoughts of the heart both I may prefer him to myself, and he in turn me to himself, so that when from both parts the heart is pressed lower, no one may be raised up from the honor bestowed.

44. The reprobate do not hold this form of humility, but despise it. But this form of humility the reprobate, because they are members of this Leviathan, either despise to know or to hold, because even if at any time they show themselves humble in appearance only, they neglect to preserve the force of humility within. To whom it often happens that if at any time they do any one good thing, even the smallest, they immediately avert the respect of the mind from all their evils, and that which they did even as the extreme good, they always inspect with their whole intention, and from it they look upon themselves already as it were holy, forgotten of all the evils which they committed, mindful only of their one good, which perhaps they were not even able to do perfectly; as is wont to happen on the contrary to the elect, so that when they are strong with the grace of many virtues, one vice, even the thinnest, greatly fatiguing them, knocks, so that while from a certain part they consider themselves to be weakened, they may not at all extoll themselves concerning those virtues in which they prevail; and while they tremble concerning infirmity, they also preserve more humbly that wherein they are strong. Often

therefore the reprobate, through this that they incautiously behold their one or smallest good, do not acknowledge the many and heavy evils in which they are immersed. And often to the elect, through this that they tremble to be weakened at their thinnest evil, it is acted by a wonderful dispensation, that they may not lose the great goods to which they have been advanced.

45. Evils help the elect, goods harm the reprobate. The reprobate uses good evilly, and the upright uses evil well. Therefore the measure of the just and hidden examination is so disposed, that both evils may help these, and goods may burden those, while both these use light evils for the advancement of good, and those use the smallest goods for the increase of evil. For these indeed profit more perfectly in good from whence they are tempted by evil; but those fail into greater evil from whence they glory concerning good. Thus therefore the reprobate uses good evilly, and the upright uses evil well; just as it often happens that one incurs the plague of languor from salutary food taken inordinately; another, the poison of the serpent being applied in the medicine of an ordered confection, overcomes the molestation of languor. He therefore who would not use salutary food rightly, perishes perniciously from thence, from whence others live salubriously; but he who studied to use the poison of the serpent cautiously, lives salubriously from thence, from whence others perish perniciously. Therefore we call the poison of the serpent not wickedness itself, but the suggestion of wicked-

ness, by which, being unwilling and resisting, we are often tempted. Which then is turned into medicine when the mind, erected by the virtues beheld, is humbled by the temptations against it. The iniquitous therefore and the reprobate from the approbation of the internal examination, whatever works they may do, in whatever virtues they may shine, are utterly ignorant of the sense of humility, because they are surely members of this Leviathan, concerning whom it is said by the heavenly voice, He seeth every high thing, because not only through himself, but through the hearts also of those whom he has taken, he despises all as if from a high place below himself.

[Vet. XVII.] 46. Pride shows itself through the eyes as if through certain windows. But it is to be noted that this Leviathan, who is designated through the corporeal beast, is described to see the high thing, because surely the pride of the heart when it is extended outwardly as far as the body, is first indicated through the eyes. For they, inflated through the pride of the tumor, look back as if from a high place, and by how much they depress themselves, they extoll themselves more highly. For unless pride showed itself through the eyes as if through certain windows, the Psalmist would in no wise have said to God: Thou wilt save the humble people, and wilt humble the eyes of the proud (Psal. 18:27). Unless pride poured itself through the eyes, Solomon also would not have said concerning the elation of Judea: A generation whose eyes are lofty, and their eyelids lifted up on high (Prov. 30:13). Because therefore through a

corporeal animal this Leviathan is signified, and pride proceeding as far as the body more openly has dominion in the eyes, the ancient enemy is described to see all things as if from a high place. But because many things have been brought forward to show the enemy of the human race, the mind greatly desires that in the end of the divine speech, one certain thing be more manifestly expressed, whence his members may be shown to us by a brief designation. It follows:

CAPUT XXIII.

IBID. --- He is king over all the children of pride.

47. Pride is the root of all vices and evils. That this Leviathan might fall into all those things which have been said above, pride alone struck him. For neither would he have withered through so many branches of vices, unless he had first rotted in the root through this. For it is written: Pride is the beginning of all sin (Ecclus. 10:15). Through this he himself succumbed, through this he prostrated the man following him. For he attacked the safety of our immortality with that weapon, with which he extinguished the life of his own blessedness. But for this reason the Lord inserted this at the end of His speech, so that when He said the pride of this Leviathan after all evils, He might indicate what was worse than all evils. Although also through this that it is placed in the bottom it is shown to be the root of vices. For as the root is covered below, but from it the branches are expanded outwardly, so pride hides

itself within, but from it open vices immediately sprout. For no evils would proceed to the public, unless this constrained the mind in secret. This is that which makes the sense of this Leviathan to boil like a pot. Whence also he shakes human minds in a certain fervor of madness, but through open works he shows how he subverts the soul of the shaken one. For within it first boils over in elation, that which afterwards foams out in work.

[Vet. XVIII.] 48. It does not attack only one virtue, like other vices, but all. But because an occasion concerning the discussion of pride has presented itself, we ought to discuss this more subtly and more solicitously, and to demonstrate to human minds how much or what kind it comes, and to whom or in what manner it steals upon. For other vices attack only those virtues by which they themselves are destroyed, as namely anger attacks patience, gluttony abstinence, lust continence. But pride, which we have called the root of vices, not at all content with the extinction of one virtue, raises itself against all the members of the soul, and as a general and pestiferous disease corrupts the whole body, so that whatever is acted while that is invading, even if it is shown to be a virtue, it may not serve God by this, but only vain glory. For as a certain tyrant he intercepts the besieged city, when pride breaks into the mind; and by how much he takes anyone richer, so much more harsh he arises in dominion, because the more the thing of virtue is acted without humility, the more widely that one dominates. But whoever has received his tyranny with a captive

mind, suffers this first damage, that, the eye of the heart being closed, he loses the equity of judgment. For all things which are even well done by others displease him, and only those things which he himself even has evilly done please him. He always despises the works of others, he always wonders at those which he himself does, because also whatever he has done, he believes himself to have done singularly, and in that which he exhibits through the desire for glory, he favors himself through thought, and when he estimates himself to transcend others in all things, walking with himself through broad spaces of thoughts, he silently shouts his own praises. But sometimes the mind is led to so much elation, that in that which it swells, it is even unbridled through the ostentation of speech. But so much more easily ruin follows, as each one is more impudently exalted with himself. For hence it is written: Before ruin the heart is exalted (Prov. 16:18). Hence it is said through Daniel: The king was walking in the palace of Babylon, and he answered and said: Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the house of the kingdom, in the strength of my fortitude, in the glory of my beauty (Dan. 4:26)? But how quick a vengeance repressed this tumor, he immediately added, saying: While the word was yet in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: To thee it is said, O king Nebuchadnezzar: Thy kingdom shall pass from thee, and they shall cast thee out from men, and thy habitation shall be with the beasts and wild animals; thou shalt eat grass like an ox, and seven times shall change

over thee (Dan. 4:28). Behold because the tumor of the mind brought itself even to open words, the patience of the Judge immediately broke forth even to the sentence; and by so much more strictly He struck him, as his pride raised itself more immoderately; and because by enumerating he said the goods in which he pleased himself, he heard the enumerated evils in which he should be struck.

[Vet. XIX.] 49. One elation arises from secular things, another from spiritual things. One is the pride of prelates, another of subjects. Humility is the mother of virtues. That which the proud build grows only for ruin. But it is to be known that this same elation concerning which we treat possesses some from secular things, but others from spiritual things. For one swells with gold, another with eloquence, another with lowest and earthly things, another with highest and heavenly virtues; nevertheless one and the same thing is acted before the eyes of God, although coming to human hearts it is cloaked with a different garment in their sights. For when he who before was proud of earthly glory is afterwards extolled for sanctity, the elation did not at all leave his heart, but coming to him as usual, so that it may not be known, it changed its dress.

It is also to be known that this tempts those set over others in one way and subjects in another. For it suggests to the prelate in his thoughts that he grew above others by the merit of life alone; and if any things were at any time well done by him, it importunately objects these to his

mind; and when it insinuates that this man has uniquely pleased God, so that it may more easily persuade the suggested things, it calls the very retribution for the delivered power to testimony, saying that unless the almighty God saw thee better than these men, He would not have given all these under thy rule; and it soon raises his mind, shows those who are subjects as vile and useless, so that he now respects no one as it were worthy to whom he may speak equanimably. Whence also soon the tranquility of the mind is turned into anger, because while he despises all, while he reproves the sense and life of all without moderation, he dilates himself so much more unbridledly into wrath, as he thinks those who have been committed to him to be unworthy of himself.

[Vet. XX.] 51. But on the contrary when pride instigates the heart of subjects, it strives to act this above all, that they utterly neglect to consider their own acts, and always by silent thoughts become the judges of their ruler; who while they importunately respect in him what they ought to reprove, never see in themselves what they may correct. Whence also they perish so much more atrociously, as they avert their eyes from themselves, because in the journey of this life they fall offending, while they intend elsewhere. And indeed they assert themselves to be sinners, yet not so much as that they should be delivered to so noxious persons in rule. And while they despise his facts, while they contemn his precepts, they are devolved even to so much

madness, as not to estimate God to care for human things, because they grieve that they have been committed to him who as it were by right is reproved. And so while they are proud against the ruler, they also swell against the judgments of the Creator; and while they judge the life of their pastor, they also impugn the very wisdom of Him who disposes all things. But often they protervely meet the sayings of their ruler, and they call that same pride of voice liberty. For so elation objects itself as if for the rectitude of liberty, just as often also fear supposes itself for humility. For as many are silent from fear, and yet estimate themselves to be silent from humility, so some speak through the impatience of elation, and yet believe themselves to speak through the liberty of rectitude. But sometimes subjects in no wise bring forth the proterve things which they feel; and these whose loquacity is scarcely restrained, sometimes from the sole bitterness of internal rancor become mute. Who, withdrawing the words of their procacity through the pain of the mind, when they are wont to speak evilly, be silent worse, because when sinning they hear anything concerning correction, being indignant they also suspend the words of response. When it is acted harshly with these, they often leap forth to the voice of complaint concerning this very asperity. But when their masters blandly prevent them, they are more heavily indignant concerning this very humility by which they have been prevented, and their mind is so much more vastly kindled, as it is judged more considerately weak.

These surely, because they know not humility, which is the mother of virtues, lose the use of their labor, even if there are any good things which they may seem to work, because the robust highness of a rising fabric is not fixed, which is in no wise solidified upon the rock through the fortitude of the foundation. Therefore that which they build grows only for ruin, because before the mass of the fabric they do not procure the foundations of humility. Whom we well produce from internal things, if we show them in a few external things.

52. The image of the proud man. For in all those swelling with proud thought with themselves there is a clamor in speech, bitterness in silence, dissolution in hilarity, fury in sadness, dishonesty in action, honesty in image, elation in gait, rancor in response. The mind of these is always strong for irrogating contumelies, weak for tolerating them; lazy for obeying, but importunate for provoking others; slothful for those things which it both ought and prevails to do, but ready for those things which it neither ought nor prevails to do. This in that which it does not spontaneously desire is bent by no exhortation, but to this which it secretly desires it seeks that it may be compelled, because while it fears to become vile from its own desire, it opts to tolerate force in its very own will.

[Vet. XXI.] 53. Exhortation to humility. Therefore because we have said that human souls are tempted in one way from carnal things, and in another from spiritual things, let those hear: All

flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field (Isai. 40:6). And let these hear what is said to some after miracles: I know you not whence you are, depart from me, all you workers of iniquity (Luke 13:27). Let those hear: If riches abound, set not your heart upon them (Psal. 62:10). Let these hear that the foolish virgins, who come with empty vessels, are excluded from the internal nuptials (Matt. 25:12). Again, because we have prefaced that prelates are tempted in one way, and subjects in another, let those hear what is said through a certain wise man: Have they made thee a leader? be not extolled, but be among them as one of them (Ecclus. 32:1). Let these hear: Obey your prelates, and be subject to them; for they watch as being to render an account for your souls (Hebr. 13:17). Let those hear, when they glory concerning the power received, this which is said by the voice of Abraham to the burning rich man: Remember, son, that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime (Luke 16:25). Let these hear, when they leap forth into complaints against their rulers, this which is answered to the murmuring people by the voices of Moses and Aaron: Neither is your murmuring against us, but against the Lord. For what are we (Exod. 16:8)? Let those hear: They shall be troubled at the presence of Him who is the father of orphans and the judge of widows (Psal. 68:5). Let these hear what is said against the contumacy of subjects: He that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God (Rom. 13:2). Let all hear together: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace

to the humble (James 4:6). Let all hear: Every one that exalteth his heart is unclean before God (Prov. 16:5). Let all hear: Why art thou proud, dust and ashes (Ecclus. 9:9)? Against the plague of this languor let us all hear what the Teacher Truth teaches saying: Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart (Matt. 11:29).

[Vet. XXII.] 54. The humble God teaches that man should not be proud. For to this the only-begotten Son of God received the form of our infirmity, to this the invisible appeared not only visible, but even despised, to this He tolerated the mockeries of contumelies, the reproaches of derisions, and the torments of passions, so that the humble God might teach that man should not be proud. How great therefore is the virtue of humility, for the sake of which alone to be truly taught He who is great without estimation, was made small even to passion? For because pride of the devil provided the origin for our perdition, the humility of God was found as the instrument of our redemption. For our enemy, being created great among all things, wished to be seen elated above all things. But our Redeemer, remaining great above all things, deigned to become small among all things.

55. What the author of death teaches, what the Creator of life. But we detect more clearly both the cause of elation and open the foundations of humility, if we briefly run over what the author of death, what the Creator of life says. For the former says: I will ascend into heaven (Isai. 14:13); but the latter says through the Prophet: My

soul is filled with evils, and my life hath drawn nigh to hell (Psal. 88:3). The former says: I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven (Isai. 14:13); the latter says to the human race expelled from the seats of paradise: Behold I come quickly, and I will dwell in the midst of thee (Zech. 2:10). The former says: I will sit in the mountain of the testament, in the sides of the North (Isai. 14:13): the latter says: I am a worm, and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people (Psal. 22:6). The former says: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High (Isai. 14:14); the latter, when He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant (Philip. 2:6); and through His members He speaks saying: Lord, who is like to Thee (Psal. 35:10)? The former speaks through his members, saying: I know not the Lord, and I will not let Israel go (Exod. 5:2). The latter says through Himself: If I shall say that I know Him not, I shall be like to you, a liar; but I know Him, and I keep His word (John 8:55). The former says: The rivers are mine, and I made them (Ezek. 29:9); the latter says: I cannot of myself do anything (John 5:30), and again: My Father remaining in me, He doeth the works (John 14:10). The former showing all kingdoms, says: To thee will I give all this power and the glory of them, for they are delivered to me, and to whom I will I give them (Luke 4:6); the latter says: My chalice indeed you shall drink, but to sit on my right hand, or on my left, is not mine to give to

you, but to them for whom it is prepared by my Father (Matt. 20:23). The former says: You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil (Gen. 3:5); the latter says: It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in His own power (Acts 1:7). The former that the divine will might be despised, and that his own might be persuaded, says: Why hath God commanded you that you should not eat of every tree of paradise (Gen. 3:1)? And a little after: For God knoweth, that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened (Ibid. 5); the latter says: I seek not my own will, but the will of Him who sent me (John 5:30). The former speaks through his members, saying: Let no meadow escape our riot; let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered, let us leave signs of our joy everywhere (Wisd. 2:8); the latter announces to His members, saying: You shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice (John 16:20). The former teaches nothing else to the minds subject to him than to desire the summit of highness, to transcend all equal things by tumor of mind, to pass through the society of all men with high elation, and to raise themselves even against the power of the Creator, just as it is said concerning the same through the Psalmist: They have passed into the disposition of the heart, they have thought and spoken wicked things, they have spoken iniquity on high (Psal. 73:7, 8); the latter coming to spittings, to palms, to buffets, to the crown of thorns, to the cross, to the lance, and even to death,

admonishes His members, saying: If any man minister to me, let him follow me (John 12:26).

[Old 23] 56. Pride is the most evident sign of reprobation; humility, of election. ---Since therefore our Redeemer rules the hearts of the humble, and this Leviathan is called the king of the proud, we clearly know that pride is the most evident sign of the reprobate, and on the contrary, humility of the elect. When therefore it is known which of these each one has, it is found under which king he serves. For each one carries as it were a certain title of his work, by which he may easily show under the power of which ruler he serves. Whence also it is said through the Gospel: By their fruits you shall know them (Matt. 7:16). Lest therefore the members of this Leviathan should deceive us even by doing wonders, the Lord showed an open sign by which they might be detected, saying: He is king over all the children of pride. Who even if at times they assume a feigned appearance of humility, yet they can by no means hide themselves in all things, because their pride, not enduring to lie hidden long, when it is covered in one action, is stripped bare by another. But they who serve under the king of humility, always fearful, and circumspect on every side, fight against the darts of elation, and as if against coming blows, they guard especially that one eye in their body, while they principally protect humility in themselves.

THIRTY-FIFTH AND LAST BOOK.

In which many things already said are recalled through recapitulation, and this immense work is finished with a most humble confession of human infirmity.

[Old and Rec. 1] 1143 1. What is to be performed in this book. ---Since this is the last book of this work, and, the more difficult places having been handled, those things which remain are less obscure, it is pleasing to run through this more indulgently and remissly. For as if having traversed a great sea, we already see the shore, and lowering the sails of our intention, we are not led with the same impetus as before, but yet we still go from the impulse of the former breath. As if the wind of our anxiety has fallen, but yet its force, now more tranquil in itself, impels us even to the station of the shore. Therefore, after the Lord showed to His faithful servant how strong and crafty Leviathan his enemy is, while He subtly laid open his strengths and frauds, blessed Job replied to both, saying:

CHAPTER 1

[Rec. 2].

CHAP. 42, VER. 2.---I know that Thou canst do all things, and no thought is hidden from Thee.

2. The omnipotence of God is opposed to the strengths of the devil, infinite Wisdom to his machinations. ---Against his immense strengths indeed he brought in: I know that Thou canst do all things; but against his hidden machinations he subjoined: And no thought is hidden from Thee. Whence also presently he reproaches the same Leviathan, saying:

VER. 3.---Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge? For without knowledge Leviathan hideth counsel; because although he is hidden by many frauds against our infirmity, yet he is detected by the holy inspiration of our Protector for us. He hideth counsel without knowledge, because although he may be hidden from the tempted, yet he cannot be hidden from the Protector of the tempted. Therefore, having heard the fortitude and craftiness of the devil, having heard also the power of our Creator, which both valiantly represses him and mercifully covers us, we beseech thee, blessed Job, that thou wouldst by no means hide from us what thou feelest concerning thyself. It follows:

CHAPTER 2.

IBID.---Therefore I have spoken foolishly, and things that exceed my knowledge beyond measure.

3. Whatever in created things is compared to God, becomes vain and nothing. ---All human wisdom, however much it may excel in sharp-

ness, compared to divine wisdom, is foolishness. For all human things, which are just, which are beautiful, compared to the justice and beauty of God, are neither just nor beautiful, nor are they at all. Blessed Job therefore would have believed that he had spoken wisely those things which he had said, if he had not heard the words of superior wisdom. 1144 In comparison with which, all that within us has taste is foolish. And he who indeed had spoken wisely to men, yet hearing divine sentences, knows more wisely that he is not wise. Hence it is that Abraham amidst the words of the Lord saw himself as nothing but dust, saying: I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes (Gen. 18:27). Hence it is that Moses, instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, from the time he heard the Lord speaking, perceived himself to be of a more impeded and slower tongue, saying: I beseech Thee, Lord, I am not eloquent; for since yesterday and the day before, from the time Thou hast spoken to Thy servant, I am of a more impeded and slower tongue (Exod. 4:10). Hence it is that Isaiah, after he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and elevated, after he beheld the seraphim with two wings covering the face, with two the feet, and with two flying, after he heard that which is Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, one crying to another (Isai. 6), returning to himself, said: Woe is me because I have held my peace, because I am a man of polluted lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people having polluted lips (Ibid. 5). And presently subjoining the pollution itself from whence he had known it, he

said: And I have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of hosts (Ibid.). Hence also Jeremiah, hearing divine words, knew that he had no words, saying: Ah, ah, ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child (Jer. 1:6).

[Old 2] Hence Ezekiel, speaking of the four animals, says: When there was a voice above the firmament, that was over their heads, they stood and let down their wings (Ezek. 1:25). For what is designated by the flight of the animals, but the sublimity of evangelists and teachers? Or what are the wings of the animals, but the contemplations of the saints raising them to heavenly things? But when there is a voice above the firmament, which is over their heads, they stand and let down their wings, because when they hear the internal voice of supernal wisdom, they as it were lay aside the wings of their flight, because namely they know that they are less able to contemplate the very height of truth. To let down the wings at the voice coming from above, therefore, is, supernal power being known, to humble one's own virtues and by the consideration of the Creator to feel nothing else of oneself than abject things. Holy men therefore, while they hear the sentences of divinity, by how much more they profit in contemplating, 1145 by so much more, in despising what they are, do they know themselves to be either nothing or almost nothing. Let blessed Job therefore reply to the divine discourses, and profiting wisely, let him perceive himself to be foolish, saying: I have spoken foolishly, and things that exceed my

knowledge beyond measure. Behold he reproves himself so much the more, by how much more he profits, and he believed that his knowledge exceeded measure, because in the words of the Lord he acknowledged the secrets of His wisdom more than he had estimated. It follows:

CHAPTER 3

[Rec. 3].

VER. 4.---Hear, and I will speak; I will ask Thee, and do Thou answer me.

4. What it is for man to ask God; or what it is for God to answer man. ---Our hearing is to lend the ear placed in another direction to a sound coming from elsewhere. But on the contrary, for God, to whom nothing is without, to hear is properly to perceive our desires rising under Himself. To speak to God, therefore, who knows even the hearts of those who are silent, is for us not to betray by voices of the throat that which we feel, but to pant with ready desires for Him. And because each one asks for this reason, that he may be able to learn what he is ignorant of, for man to ask God is to acknowledge himself as ignorant in His sight. But the answering of God is to instruct by hidden inspirations him who has humbly acknowledged himself as ignorant. Blessed Job says therefore: Hear, and I will speak. As if he said: Mercifully perceive my desires, so that while this Thy piety helping perceives them, more manifold desires may rise to Thee. For good vows as often as they perceive effect, are multiplied. Whence

elsewhere it is written: I have cried, for Thou hast heard me (Psal. 17:6). For he does not say: Because I have cried, Thou hast heard me; but I have cried, for Thou hast heard me. For he who speaking had been heard, being heard with profiting vows, cried out: I will ask Thee, and do Thou answer me. As if he said: I know myself to be ignorant from the contemplation of Thy knowledge. Answer therefore the one asking, that is, teach the one humbly acknowledging his own foolishness. For that he asked from the desire of humility, and sought for God to answer him from the mastery of aspiration, is declared by the following words. For he declared that he would ask, but subjoins nothing in asking. For feeling only humble things concerning himself, and acknowledging those things which he has mercifully perceived from the Lord, he straightway subjoins:

CHAPTER 4

[Rec. 4].

VER. 5.---With the hearing of the ear I have heard Thee, but now my eye seeth Thee.

5. How much Job profited through scourges in the knowledge of God and of himself. ---By these words indeed he openly indicates that by how much sight is superior to hearing, by so much does that which he later profited through scourges differ from that which existed before. And because he had beheld the light of truth more with the internal eye, he saw more as

he judged the darkness of his own humanity. Whence also it follows:

CHAPTER 5

[Rec. 5].

VER. 6.---Therefore I reprehend myself.

6. By how much more each one sees himself, by so much more he displeases himself. ---For by how much less each one sees himself, by so much less he displeases himself; and by how much he perceives the light of greater grace, by so much more he knows himself to be reprehensible. For when he is raised up within through all that he is, he strives to agree with that rule which he beholds above him. And because human infirmity still hinders, he perceives that he disagrees with it in no small part; and all that is of himself is burdensome to him, which is not suited to the internal rule. Which rule blessed Job, profiting after scourges, more fully receives, and disagrees with himself in great reproof of himself, 1146 saying: Therefore I reprehend myself. But because there is no knowledge of reprehension, if there follow not also the lamentations of penitence, rightly after reprehension is subjoined:

CHAPTER VI.

IBID.---And I do penance in embers and ashes.

7. Vain is the knowledge of ourselves which penance does not follow. What is to be considered in the haircloth and ashes of penance. ---For

to do penance in embers and ashes is, having contemplated the supreme Essence, to know oneself to be nothing else than embers and ashes. Whence also the Lord says in the Gospel to the reprobate city: If in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the miracles which have been wrought in you, they had done penance long ago in haircloth and ashes (Matth. XI, 21). For in haircloth is shown the roughness and pricking of sins, but in ashes the dust of the dead. And therefore both of these are usually employed for penance, that in the pricking of the haircloth we may know what we have done through fault, and in the embers of the ashes we may weigh what we have become through judgment. Let the pricking vices, therefore, be considered in the haircloth; let the just punishment of vices following through the sentence of death be considered in the ashes. For because after sin the insults of the flesh arose, let man see in the roughness of the haircloth what he did by being proud; let him see in the ashes whither he has arrived by sinning. Also by haircloth the very pricking of griefs through remembrance and penance can be designated. For this which blessed Job says: I reprehend myself, is pricked as if by a certain haircloth, while he is rubbed in his mind with the sharp stings of reproofs. But he does penance in ashes, because he carefully attends from the first sin to what he has been made through just judgment, saying: I do penance in embers and ashes. As if he should say openly: I am proud of no gift of my Creator, because taken from the dust, I know that I return

to dust through the sentence of death inflicted upon me.

8. The judgment of God concerning Job and his friends.---Having heard, therefore, all the speeches of Job, and having known also the responses of his friends, it is pleasing to turn the expectation of our mind to the sentence of the internal Judge, and to say to Him: Behold, O Lord, we have heard both parties of those discoursing in Thy sight, and we have known Job indeed in this contest of his virtue to revolve his deeds, and his friends against him to defend the glory of Thy justice. But meanwhile Thou knowest what our mind feels. For we cannot reprehend their words, whom we know to be devoted to Thy defense. But behold the parties are present, they await the sentence; bring forth, therefore, O Lord, from the invisible rule the most subtle examination of Thy discretion, and show who in that contention has spoken more rightly. It follows:

VERS.---And after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, He said to Eliphaz the Temanite: My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, because ye have not spoken before Me that which is right, as My servant Job hath.

9. He is absolved, they are condemned. Why?---O Lord, the sentence of Thy judgment indicates how much our blindness disagrees from the light of Thy rectitude. Behold, we know by Thee as Judge that blessed Job is the victor, whom we believed to have sinned in speaking against Thee. By Thee as Judge they are condemned, who believed that they transcended the merits of

blessed Job by speaking for Thee. Because, therefore, we have known from the divine sentence what we should think of the parties, let us now weigh the words of the same sentence a little more subtly. For how is blessed Job reprehended above, if in comparison of his rectitude his friends are recorded to have by no means spoken right before the Lord? Or is that sentence concerning him still confirmed, in which it is said to the old enemy: Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth (Job I, 8)? But what is this, that he is both praised to the enemy, and reprehended in himself: but he is reprehended in himself, and yet preferred to his friends speaking, unless because the holy man transcends all by the virtue of his merits; but by the very fact that he was a man, he could not be without reprehension before the eyes of God? For in a holy man dwelling meanwhile in this life, the rule of the divine examination has still what to judge, although from the comparison of other men it already has what to praise. Blessed Job, therefore, believed himself to be scourged for fault, and not for grace; he estimated that vices were being cut off in him, not that merits were being increased. And in this he is reprehended, that he suspects the intention of the scourge to have been another, and yet he is preferred to his resisting friends by the definition of the internal Judge.

[Vet IV.] Whence it is clearly gathered of how great justice he was in that he asserted the innocence of his operation against the words of his

friends, who by the divine judgment is preferred even to these same defenders of the divine judgment. But in the beginning of this book we knew that Satan had said to the Lord concerning him: Put forth Thy hand, and touch him, and see if he will not bless Thee to Thy face (Job II, 5). At which petition blessed Job is permitted to be touched by losses, bereavement, wounds, and the scandals of words, because He who had praised him was certain that the holy man would by no means fall into the fault of malediction according to the assertion of the devil. As, therefore, we have said above, whoever estimates that blessed Job sinned in his speech after the scourges, openly judges that the Lord lost in His assertion. And although the Lord, speaking to the devil, preferred his present good things, but did not promise his perseverance, yet it is to be known that He would by no means have preferred his justice to be permitted to be tempted, if He did not foresee that he could persist as just in temptation. The devil, therefore, being divinely permitted in his temptation, whoever thinks that he succumbed in temptation, accuses the ignorance of Him who permitted it.

10. Some are the judgments of God, others of men.---Let us therefore truthfully approve Job in his sayings, lest we wickedly accuse God in His providence. And indeed, as far as human judgments go, his friends would be believed to have spoken many things more rightly than he; but the Truth, bringing forth another rule from the secret place, says: Ye have not spoken before

Me that which is right, as My servant Job hath. Before Me, He says, that is, within, where the life of many often displeases, which even pleases men without. Whence it is said with too much caution in the praise of the just spouses: They were both just before God (Luke I, 6). For it is not a secure praise to appear just before men. For often human sentence approves some one as if great in God; but Almighty God, who is approved as if by Himself, ignores him. Hence it is that the Psalmist vigilantly prays, saying: Direct my way in Thy sight (Psal. V, 8). 1148 Doubtless because for the most part in the sight of men that way is believed right which is also depraved from the journey of truth. And it is to be noted that it is not said: Ye have not spoken before Me that which is right as Job, but, as My servant Job, that namely by the interposition of servitude, while He commemorates him as if under a certain peculiarity, He may show that all things which he had said in his defense, he said not with contumacious pride, but with humble truth. [Vet. V.] But because God is just and merciful, He both strictly reproves his friends through justice, and benignly converts them through mercy. For it follows:

CHAPTER VIII

[Rec. VII].

VERS. 8.---Take unto you seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. But My servant Job

shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that your folly be not imputed to you.

11. God reproves the friends of Job through justice, and converts them through mercy.---Behold, the just and merciful God neither leaves faults without chiding, nor abandons guilt without conversion. For because He is an internal Physician, He first made known the putrefaction of the wound, and afterwards indicated the remedies for obtaining health. But we have often said already that the friends of blessed Job hold the figure of heretics, who while they strive to defend God, offend Him, because in their sayings they are rebellious against the truth, which they suspect themselves to be serving in their false assertion. Because, therefore, Almighty God often incorporates them into the body of the holy Church through the knowledge of the truth, well also is their very conversion, which is often mercifully wrought, designated by this pardon which the friends of Job receive.

12. Heretics cannot appease God by a sacrifice offered by themselves. They cannot be reconciled except through the Church.---But it is to be noted especially that they are commanded to offer the sacrifice of their conversion to the Lord not by themselves, but by Job. Doubtless heretics, when they return from error, are by no means able to appease the wrath of the Lord towards themselves by a sacrifice offered by themselves, unless they are converted to the Catholic Church, which blessed Job signifies, that they may obtain their salvation by her prayers, whose faith they were

impugning with perverse assertions. For He says: My servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that your folly be not imputed to you. As if He should say openly to heretics: I do not receive your sacrifices, I do not hear the words of your petitions, except through the intercession of him, the words of whose profession concerning Me I recognize as truthful. And do ye indeed lead bulls and rams to exhibit the sacrifices of your conversion, but ask your salvation from Me through the Catholic Church, which I love. For I will to forgive her that which ye have offended Me in her, that she may obtain your safety, who was laboring from your languor.

[Vet. VI.] 13. Prerogatives of the Church.--- For she is the only one through whom the Lord willingly receives a sacrifice (24, q. 1, c. 22, § Sola quippe), the only one who may faithfully intercede for those erring. Whence also the Lord commanded concerning the victim of the lamb, saying: In one house it shall be eaten, neither shall ye carry forth of the flesh thereof out of doors (Exod. XII, 46). For in one house the lamb is eaten, because in one Catholic Church the true victim of the Redeemer is sacrificed. 1149 From the flesh of which the divine law prohibits anything to be carried forth, because it forbids the holy to be given to dogs (Matth. VII, 6). She is the only one in whom a good work is fruitfully performed, whence also they did not receive the reward of the penny except those who had labored within the vineyard (Matth. XX, 8). She is the only one who keeps those placed within her

by the bond of strong charity. Whence also the water of the deluge indeed raised the ark to the higher parts, but extinguished all whom it found outside the ark (Gen. VII, 20, 21, seq.). She is the only one in whom we may truthfully contemplate the supernal mysteries. Whence also the Lord says to Moses: There is a place with Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock (Exod. XXXIII, 21). And a little after: I will take away My hand, and thou shalt see My back parts (Ibid., XXIII, 24). For because truth is beheld from the only Catholic Church (Q. 1, c. 22), the Lord asserts that there is a place with Him from which it may be seen. Moses is placed on a rock, that he may contemplate the appearance of God, because unless one holds the solidity of faith, he does not know the divine presence. Of which solidity the Lord says: Upon this rock I will build My Church (Matth. XVI, 18). What is it, therefore, to say in this place to the friends of Job: Go to Job, except to ascend the rock? What is, His face I will accept for you, that your folly be not imputed to you, except that which is said there: Thou shalt see My back parts (Exod. XXXIII, 23)? that is, thou shalt understand the mysteries of the Incarnation which is to be hereafter.

14. What is to be performed for heretics that they may return to the Church.---But heretics, for that they despise to stand upon the rock, do not behold the back parts of the passing Lord, because being placed outside the Church, they do not recognize the mysteries of His Incarnation as they are. But as we have said above, by bulls the

neck of pride is expressed, but by rams the leadership, which is exercised by heretics over the persuaded peoples, as if over seduced flocks. For of heretics being proud it is said, who corrupt the minds of the weak by evil persuasion: The assembly of bulls among the cows of the people (Psal. LXVII, 31). And because they lead the peoples following them as if flocks, they are sometimes called rams. For rams lead the flock. Whence Jeremiah says through chiding: Thy princes like rams (Lam. I, 6). Because, therefore, heretics when they return to the holy Church, desert the elation of pride, and no longer lead the bands of the peoples as if following flocks to destruction, the friends of blessed Job are commanded to offer bulls and rams. For to offer bulls and rams in sacrifice is to slay the proud leadership by the humility of conversion, that the neck of pride being tamed, they may learn to follow by obeying, who lately were striving to go before by teaching. Rightly also this pride of theirs is expiated by seven sacrifices, because heretics returning to the Church receive the gifts of the sevenfold grace of the Spirit through the victim of humility, that they who had wasted away by the oldness of their elation, may be reformed by the newness of grace.

15. The number seven is perfect. What does it signify? The perfection of eternity, the time of the present life, the universality of the Church.--- But the number seven is held among the wise of this world as perfect by a certain reason of its own, that it is consummated from the first even

and from the first odd. For the first odd is three, and the first even is four. From which two the seven consists, which being multiplied by those same parts of its own, rises into twelve. For whether we lead three by four, or four by three, we arrive at twelve. But we, because we perceive the predicaments of truth from a supernal gift, tread upon these things by despising them with a fixed height of science, 1150 holding this doubtless with unshaken faith, that the sevenfold grace of the Spirit perfects those whom it has filled, and provides for them not only the knowledge of the Trinity, but also the operation of the four virtues, that is, of prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice. Which is increased in some way also in those its own parts which it enters, while both through the knowledge of the Trinity the action of the four virtues is received, and through the operation of the four virtues one arrives even to the manifest appearance of the Trinity. And among us, therefore, the seven is perfect, but far differently, because it rises fully and not vainly into twelve, while both through faith it perfects works, and again through works it perfects faith. The holy apostles also, being to be filled with the Spirit of sevenfold grace, were twelve chosen. For into the four parts of the world they were being sent to make known the Trinity, which is God. Twelve, therefore, were chosen that also from the reason of the number itself the cause might become clear, that through the four lowest things they should preach the three highest.

16. Whether, therefore, for this or perhaps for some other reason, yet in holy Scripture by the number seven sometimes the secure rest of eternity, sometimes the universality of this present time, but sometimes the universality of holy Church is designated. For by the number seven the perfection of eternity is hinted at, when the seventh day is called hallowed for the rest of the Lord (Gen. 2:2). To which evening is no longer said to belong, because the rest of eternal blessedness is narrowed by no limit. Hence it is also that when the law was given, the seventh day is commanded to be a day of rest (Exod. 20:11), that eternal rest might be designated by it. Hence it is that in the course of years the number seven being multiplied seven times, a monad being added, is led to fifty, so that marking perpetual blessedness the most sacred rest of the jubilee might be observed (Lev. 25:8, 9). Hence it is that the Lord rising again and frequently appearing (John 21), is described as having eaten with seven disciples at the last feast, because they who are now perfect in Him, are satisfied with eternal refreshment through Him.

Again, by the number seven this universality of temporality is understood. For hence it is that through seven days this whole time of the present life is unrolled. Hence it is that in a type of holy Church, which at all times goes around this world by preaching, the ark of the Lord with trumpets clanging broke the walls of Jericho, having been led around for seven days (Josh. 6:20). Hence the Prophet says: Seven times in a day have I said

praise to Thee (Ps. 119:164). Which he himself again signifying that he had said for the whole and entire time of his prayer, says: His praise shall ever be in my mouth (Ps. 34:1). But that by the number seven the universality of the present life is designated, is then more shown, when after it also the number eight is brought in. For when yet another follows the seven, it is expressed from its very increase that the temporality which is to be ended is concluded by eternity. For hence it is that Solomon admonishes, saying: Give portions to seven, and also to eight (Eccles. 11:2). For by the number seven he expressed this present time which is spent in seven days; but by the number eight he designated perpetual life, which the Lord opened to us by His resurrection. For He rose on the Lord's day, which while it follows the seventh day, that is, the Sabbath, 1151 is found to be the eighth from the creation. But it is well said: Give portions to seven, and also to eight, because thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth (Ibid.). As if it were openly said: So dispense temporal things, that thou mayest not forget to desire eternal things. For it behoves thee to provide for the future by well-doing, who knowest not how great tribulation follows from the coming judgment. Hence it is that the temple is ascended by fifteen steps, so that from its very ascent it may be learned in what way through seven and eight both temporal action may be solicitously dispensed, and an eternal mansion may be providently sought. Hence it is also that while a monad rises into a denary, the Prophet

sang a hundred and fifty psalms. On account of this number seven marking temporal things, but eight marking eternal things, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon a hundred and twenty believers residing in the upper room (Acts 2). For by seven and eight fifteen are composed, and if by counting from one even to fifteen we rise little by little through increments, we arrive at the number a hundred and twenty. By which effusion of the Holy Spirit, namely, they learned that they should both pass through temporal things by enduring them, and longingly desire eternal things.

18. Again, by the number seven the universality of holy Church is designated. Whence John in the Apocalypse writes to the seven Churches (Rev. 1:4); but by them what else did he wish to be understood but the universal Church? Which universal Church, namely, that it might be marked as full of the Spirit of sevenfold grace, Elisha is described as having breathed seven times upon the dead boy (2 Kings 4:34). For the Lord coming upon the dead people, as it were, yawns seven times, because He mercifully bestows upon them the gifts of the Spirit of sevenfold grace. Since, therefore, the universality of holy Church is often figured by the number seven, let the friends of blessed Job come to him, and let them offer the burnt offering commanded by the Divinity. But let them keep the secrets of the number seven with all watchfulness, so that namely they who are placed outside may first mix themselves with the universality of holy Church, and then at length seek pardon for the guilt of

their former elation. For their fault let them offer seven sacrifices, because they do not receive the washing away of their guilt, unless they be gathered together by the Spirit of sevenfold grace into the universal peace from which they had been cut off. Let it be said, therefore: Take unto you seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer a burnt offering for yourselves; and my servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you. As if it were openly said to returning heretics: Join yourselves to the universal Church through the humility of penance, and obtain from Me that pardon of hers of which you are not worthy through yourselves, by his prayers; who when you learn to be truly wise through her, you blot out the folly of your former wisdom with Me. It follows:

CHAPTER IX

[Vet. VIII]. VER. 8.---For you have not spoken before me what is right, as my servant Job has.

19. The iteration of a sentence in holy letters is an argument of its immutability.---These things the Lord had already brought forth a little before, and yet He subjoins these same things by iterating them. What is this, but that the sentence, which He had once said in judging, He confirms by again repeating it? and that the righteousness of blessed Job and the unrighteousness of his friends may be more manifestly shown, his praise and their reproof are brought forth with an iterated voice, so that being repeated they

may appear outwardly as fixed as they are held inwardly. For when 1152 the king of Egypt had known the times of the coming famine which were to be feared under the appearance of the bulls and the ears of corn by a twofold vision, he heard from the voice of the holy interpreter: That thou sawest the dream a second time pertaining to the same thing, is an indication of firmness (Gen. 41:32). From which thing it is openly gathered that whatever is repeated in divine speech, is more robustly confirmed. But since we have heard what the judge has decreed, let us hear also what those who were condemned should do. It follows:

CHAPTER X.

VER. 9.---So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did as the Lord commanded them, and the Lord accepted the face of Job.

20. The order of pardon.---The interpretation of these names we therefore pass over in silence, because we remember that we have discussed it more at length at the beginning of this work. But it must be observed that the order of the pardon received is so carefully kept, as had been foretold, that in the sacrifices the Lord is related to have accepted not their face, but the face of blessed Job. But because whoever strives to intercede for others, supports himself rather from that very charity, it is rightly subjoined:

CHAPTER XI.

VER. 10.---The Lord also turned to the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends.

21. We are sooner heard when praying for ourselves, if our prayer be seasoned with love of our neighbor and especially of our adversary.--- For already above he is shown to have been heard for his friends, when the fact which we have mentioned is recorded: They did as the Lord commanded them, and the Lord accepted the face of Job. But when it is immediately subjoined: The Lord also turned to the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends, it is openly shown that even for himself as a penitent he deserved to be the more quickly heard, in proportion as he devoutly interceded for others. For he makes his prayers more avail for himself, who bestows them also for others. For that sacrifice of prayer is more willingly accepted, which is seasoned in the sight of the merciful judge with the love of our neighbor. Which each one then truly heaps up, if he bestows this even for his adversaries. For hence it is that the mistress Truth says: Pray for them that persecute you and calumniate you (Luke 6:28). Hence again He says: When you shall stand to pray, forgive if you have anything against any man, that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your sins (Mark 11:25). But how much he obtained for himself, who intervened for others, is instantly demonstrated, when it is added:

CHAPTER XII

[Rec. VIII]. Ibid.---The Lord added all things whatsoever had been Job's double.

22. According to the weight of affliction is the measure of consolation arranged.---All things which he had lost he received double, because by the piety of the kind judge the supports of consolations overcome the loss of our temptation. But the trial tempts less than the remuneration consoles, so that from the merit of the retribution he may acknowledge that what he endured was light, who from the weight of the stroke was judging that he was enduring something heavy. Whence it is said also to afflicted Judea: For a moment in a small thing have I forsaken thee, and in great mercies will I gather thee (Is. 54:7). But sometimes the measure of consolation is arranged according to the weight of affliction. Whence it is written elsewhere: According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart Thy consolations have made my soul joyful (Ps. 94:19). For he indicates that he was consoled in that measure in which he had been afflicted, who cries out that he was made joyful according to the multitude of his sorrows. But the reader is not slightly instructed, if he contemplates the very order of the remuneration. For gifts follow pardon, 1153 pardon penance, penance correction, correction excess. But because, being struck by the permission of the divine dispensation, he was afflicted also by the words of his friends, being consoled by the gifts of divine piety, he ought to be refreshed also by human charity; so that from all sides the joys of consolation may answer to

him, whom from all sides the sorrows and adversities of pains were lacerating. Whence also it is subjoined:

CHAPTER XIII. VER. 11. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before; and did eat bread with him in his house, and they moved their head over him.

23. Not only divine, but also human.---What is designated in the eating of bread but charity, and what in the moving of the head but admiration? But it is well subjoined: IBID.---And they comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him. For to comfort the grief of one who has been struck is to rejoice with him concerning his pardon after the stroke. For as much as each one is seen to be cheered concerning the restored health of his neighbor, so much he indicates that he grieved for its having been taken away.

CHAPTER XIV

[Rec. IX]. IBID.---And every man gave him one sheep, and one golden earring.

24. The Church is to receive double at some time.---Although all these things are truly said according to history, yet we are compelled by the very gifts offered to return to the mystery of allegory. For we ought not to take it idly that they offered a sheep, that one, that a golden earring, that one. And if perhaps according to the letter it is not wonderful why one sheep was offered, yet

it is very wonderful why one earring was offered. But what does a sheep pertain to an earring, or what an earring to a sheep? We are compelled, therefore, from the very end of the gifts to track out in the mysteries of allegory the former things also, which we run through by touching them on the surface according to the history alone. Since, therefore, Christ and the Church, that is, the head and the body, are one person, we have often said that blessed Job designates now the figure of the head, now that of the body [Vet. IX]. The truth of the history being preserved, therefore, let us perceive under a type the action of holy Church in that which is written: The Lord added all things whatsoever had been Job's double. For holy Church, although she now loses many by the stroke of temptation, yet in the end of this world she receives those things which are hers double, when the Gentiles having been fully received, all Judea also which shall then be found, consents to run to her faith. For hence it is written: Until the fullness of the Gentiles should enter in, and so all Israel should be saved (Rom. 11:25). Hence in the Gospel also the Truth says: Elias shall come, and he shall restore all things (Matt. 17:11). For now the Church has lost the Israelites, whom she has not been able to convert by preaching, but then by the preaching of Elias, while he gathers together as many as he shall find, she receives as it were more fully what she lost.

25. Before the resurrection the saints receive single robes, double after the resurrection.---Or certainly for holy Church to receive double in her

end is for each of us both to rejoice concerning the beatitude of the soul, and concerning the incorruption of the flesh. For hence it is that it is said by the prophet concerning the elect: In their land they shall possess double (Is. 61:7). For hence it is that John the apostle says concerning the saints seeking the end of the world: White robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little time, until the number of their fellow-servants and their brethren should be fulfilled (Rev. 6:11). For as we said far above (namely of the preface, c. 10, n. 20), before the resurrection the saints 1154 receive single robes, because they enjoy the beatitude of their souls alone; but in the end of the world they are to have double, because with the beatitude of the mind they will possess also the glory of the flesh.

26. The conversion of the Jews at the end of the world foretold.---But those things which are subjoined, testify that they announce the conversion of the Jewish people rather in the end of this world. For it is subjoined: Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house. For then his brethren and sisters come to Christ, when from the Jewish people as many as shall have been brought in are converted. For from that people He took the matter of His flesh. Then, therefore, brethren and sisters approach to Him, when from that people which is joined to Him by kindred, either they who are to be strong, as it

were brethren, or they who are weak, as it were sisters, run together to Him by the knowledge of faith with devout congratulation. Then they exhibit a feast of most celebrated festivity with Him, when no longer despising Him as if a pure man, but mindful of their kinship, they rejoice together to adhere to His divinity. Then they eat bread in His house, when, the observation of the underlying letter being postponed, they are fed in holy Church with the marrow of the mystical speech as it were of the grain [Vet. X]. But it is well subjoined: All they that had been of his acquaintance before. For they knew Him before, whom they despised in His passion as if unknown. For no one who fully learned the law was ignorant of Christ who was to be born. Whence also King Herod, terrified by the arrival of the Magi, studied to inquire of the priests and princes where they foreknew that Christ should be born; to whom they instantly answered: In Bethlehem of Judea (Matt. 2:5). They knew Him before, therefore, whom in the time of His passion while they despised they knew not. Whose both former knowledge and latter ignorance are well and briefly marked by the blindness of Isaac. Who while he blessed Jacob, both foresaw what should happen in the future, and knew not who was present standing by him (Gen. 27). For so was the people of the Israelites, which received the mysteries of prophecy, but yet had blind eyes in contemplation, because it saw Him not present, of whom it foresaw so many things in the future. For it was in no way able to discern

Him placed before itself, whose power of coming it announced long before. But behold in the end of the world they come, and they recognize Him whom they knew before. Behold they eat bread in His house; because they are fed in holy Church with the grain of the sacred speech, and they shake off all the insensibility of their former torpor. Whence also it is subjoined: And they moved their head over him. For what is understood in the head but the principal part of the mind? as is said by the Psalmist: Thou hast anointed my head with oil (Ps. 23:5). As if it were openly said: My mind being parched in its own thoughts, Thou hast watered with the unction of charity. The head, therefore, is moved, when, being touched by the dread of truth, the mind is shaken from its insensibility. Let the parents come, therefore, to the feast, and the torpor being shaken off let them move the head, that is, they who had been joined to our Redeemer in the flesh, let them at length perceive the refreshment of the word in faith, and let them lose the hardness of their former insensibility. Whence it is well said by Habakkuk: His feet stood, and the earth was moved (Hab. 3:6). For when the Lord stands the earth is doubtless moved, because when 1155 He impresses the footsteps of His fear upon our heart, every earthly thought in us trembles. In this place, therefore, to move the head is to shake off the immobility of the mind, and to approach to the knowledge of faith by the steps of belief.

27. How great a consolation to the Church from their conversion. What those who are con-

verted ought to offer to Christ.---But because holy Church is now affected by the aversion of the Hebrews, and then is relieved by their conversion, it is rightly subjoined [Vet. XI]: And they comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him. They comfort Christ, namely, they comfort the Church, who repent from the error of their former infidelity, and desert the perverseness of life, through which they had resisted those teaching right things. For is it not a heavy grief to preach unfruitfully to hard hearts, to take labor in showing the truth, but to find no fruit of labor from the conversion of the hearers? But on the contrary, the great consolation of preachers is the subsequent progress of the hearers. For the relief of the teacher is the change of the one who profits. And it is to be noted that they would not comfort him when placed in the scourge, but they come to comfort him after the scourge, because namely in the time of His passion the Hebrews, despising the predicaments of faith, disdained to believe Him God whom they had proved to be man from His death. Whence through the Psalmist the Lord says: I looked for some to have pity on me together with me, and there was none; and for one to comfort me, and I found none (Ps. 69:20). For He in no way found one comforting Him in His passion, because in the contempt of death He bore even those very enemies for whom He came to death. After the scourges, therefore, the kindred come to consolation, because in His members the Lord suffers now also; but in the last time all the Israelites run together to the

faith, the preaching of Elias being known, and they return to His protection whom they had fled, and then that excellent feast is celebrated by the manifold gathering together of peoples. Then after the scourges Job is shown as it were healthy, when after His passion and resurrection the Lord is known by the certainty of faith to live immortal in the heavens by those who are converted and believe. Then Job is seen as it were remunerated, when in the power of His majesty He is believed as He is God, and they who before had resisted are seen to be subjected to His faith. In the end of the world, therefore, let the believing Hebrews come together, and let them pay the vows of their offerings to the redeemer of the human race in the power of His divinity as if to healthy Job [Vet. XII]. Whence also it is well subjoined: And every man gave him one sheep, and one golden earring. What is designated by the sheep but innocence, what by the earring but obedience? For by the sheep a simple mind, but by the earring a hearing adorned with the grace of humility is expressed.

[Rec. X.] 28. Commendation of obedience. Obedience must be kept even unto death.

But because a favorable opportunity has presented itself to show the virtue of obedience, it is pleasing to discuss this a little more vigilantly and carefully, and to demonstrate how great its merit is. For obedience is the only virtue that inserts the other virtues into the mind, and guards them once inserted. Hence the first man also received a precept to keep (Gen. II, 1), to which if he had willed to subject himself in obedience, he

would have reached eternal blessedness without labor. Hence Samuel says: Obedience is better than victims, and to hearken rather than to offer the fat of rams, because it is as the sin of soothsaying to resist, and as the crime of idolatry to refuse to acquiesce (I Sam. XV, 22). Obedience is rightly preferred to victims (8, q. 1. can. sciendum, § Obedientia), because by victims the flesh of another, but by obedience the own will is slaughtered. Therefore, a person pleases God the more quickly, the more he immolates himself with the sword of the precept before His eyes, having repressed the pride of his own judgment. On the contrary, disobedience is called the sin of soothsaying, so that it may be shown how great a virtue obedience is. Therefore, it is better shown from the opposite what is thought of its praise. For if to resist is as the sin of soothsaying, and to refuse to acquiesce as the crime of idolatry, it is the only virtue that possesses the merit of faith, without which anyone is proved to be unfaithful, even if he seems to be faithful. Hence it is said through Solomon in the demonstration of obedience: An obedient man speaketh victories (Prov. XXI, 28). For an obedient man speaks victories, because while we are humbly subjected to another's voice, we overcome ourselves in our heart. Hence in the Gospel the Truth says: Him that cometh to me I will not cast out, because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me (John VI, 37). For what? if He did His own will, would He have repulsed those who come to Him? But who does

not know that the will of the Son does not differ from the will of the Father? But because the first man, because he willed to do his own will, went out from the joy of paradise (Gen. III, 24), the second, coming for the redemption of men, while He shows that He does the will of the Father and not His own, taught us to remain within. Therefore, when He does not His own will but the Father's, He does not cast out those who come to Him, because while by His example He subjects us to obedience, He closes the way of egress for us. Hence again He says: I can of mine own self do nothing, but as I hear I judge (John V, 30). For obedience even unto death is enjoined upon us. But He, if He judges as He hears, then also obeys when He comes as Judge. Lest therefore obedience should appear laborious to us even unto the end of the present life, our Redeemer indicates that He keeps this even when He comes as Judge. What wonder then if a sinful man subjects himself to obedience in the brevity of the present life, when the Mediator between God and men does not relinquish this even when He rewards the obedient (11, q. 3, c. Quid ergo)?

[Vet. XIII.] 19. Evil must never be done through obedience, but good must sometimes be intermitted.

But it must be known that evil must never be done through obedience, but sometimes the good which is being done must be intermitted through obedience. For the tree in paradise was not an evil thing, which God forbade man to touch (Gen. II). But that man, being well created,

might grow better through the merit of obedience, it was fitting that he should be prohibited even from a good thing, so that what he did might be more truly a virtue, the more humbly he showed himself subject to his Author even by ceasing from a good thing. But it must be noted that it is said there: Of every tree of paradise eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil touch not (Ibid., 16). For he who forbids those subject to him from any one good thing, must necessarily grant many things, lest the mind of the obedient perish utterly, if it fasts being repulsed entirely from all good things. Moreover, the Lord granted all the trees of paradise for food when He prohibited from one, so that He might the more easily restrain His creature, whom He did not wish to be extinguished but to be advanced, from one, the more widely He relaxed for all.

30. When obedience is of no merit, when of the least.

But because sometimes the prosperous things of this world are commanded to us, but sometimes the adverse, it must be known above all that obedience sometimes, if it has something of its own, is nothing; but sometimes, if it has nothing of its own, is the least (8, q. 1, c. Sciendum). For when the success of this world is commanded, when a superior place is enjoined, he who obeys to receive these things evacuates the virtue of obedience for himself, if he pants for these things also from his own desire. For he does not direct himself under obedience who,

for the sake of receiving the prosperity of this life, serves the lust of his own ambition. Again, when the contempt of the world is commanded, when reproaches and insults are enjoined to be attained, unless the mind seeks these from itself, it diminishes the merit of obedience for itself, because it descends unwillingly and reluctantly to those things which are despised in this life. For obedience is led to detriments when the mind by no means, even in some part of its own vows, accompanies the undertaking of the reproaches of this world. Therefore, obedience ought to have something of its own in adversity, and again in prosperity it ought by all means to have nothing of its own, so that in adversity it may be the more glorious the more it is joined to the divine order even from desire, and in prosperity it may be the more true the more that glory itself which it receives from God is entirely separated from the mind.

31. Prosperous things are to be undergone from command alone, but adverse things also from devotion, as we are taught by the example of Moses and Paul.

But we show this weight of virtue better if we recall the deeds of two men of the heavenly country. For Moses, when he was feeding sheep in the desert, was called by the Lord through an angel speaking in the fire, that he might preside over the whole multitude of the Israelites to be delivered (Exod. III). But because he stood humble in mind within himself, he was immediately terrified by the offered glory of so great a rule, and

soon recurred to the protection of infirmity, saying: I beseech thee, Lord, I am not eloquent; from yesterday and the day before yesterday since thou hast begun to speak to thy servant, I have become of a slower and more impeded tongue (Ibid. IV, 10). And, having postponed himself, he asks for another, saying: Send whom thou wilt send (Ibid. 13). Behold, he speaks with the Author of the tongue, and lest he should undertake the power of so great a rule, he causes himself to be tongueless. Paul also had been admonished by God that he ought to have ascended to Jerusalem, as he himself says to the Galatians: Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem, having taken Barnabas and Titus; but I went up according to revelation (Galat. II, 1). And in the journey, when he had found the prophet Agabus, he heard how much adversity awaited him in Jerusalem (Acts XXI). For it is written that the same Agabus, inserting Paul's girdle into his own feet, said: The man whose girdle this is they shall thus bind in Jerusalem (Ibid., 11). Moreover, it is answered by Paul immediately: I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of Jesus, for neither do I make my soul more precious than myself (Ibid., 13). Therefore, going to Jerusalem by the precept of revelation, he knows the adverse things, and yet he willingly seeks these; he hears what he should fear, but he pants more ardently for these. Moses therefore has nothing of his own toward prosperous things, because he resists with prayers lest he be preferred to the Israelite people. Paul is led to

adverse things even from his own vow, because he perceives the knowledge of imminent evils, but by the devotion of the spirit he also burns for sharper things. The former willed to decline the glory of present power at God's command; the latter, God disposing harsh and hard things, studied to prepare himself for graver things. Therefore, by the preceding unbroken virtue of both leaders we are instructed that if we strive truly to apprehend the palm of obedience, we should serve in the prosperity of this world from command alone, but in adverse things also from devotion.

32. Obedience is the ornament of innocence.

It is to be noted that in this place the sheep is offered with the earring, and the earring with the sheep, because surely the ornament of obedience is always joined to innocent minds; as the Lord attests, who says: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (John X, 27). Therefore, no one offered an earring to blessed Job without a sheep, nor a sheep without an earring, because surely he does not obey his Redeemer who is not innocent; and he cannot be innocent who contemns to obey. Because, however, that obedience is to be kept not by servile fear but by the affect of charity, not by the terror of punishment but by the love of justice, all who come to the feast are said to have offered a golden earring, so that clearly in that obedience which is exhibited, charity may shine forth, which may transcend all other virtues like gold transcends other metals.

33. There can be no innocence or obedience except in the one true Church.

But because there can be no innocence, no true obedience in the multiple divisions of heretics, let those who come to the knowledge of faith offer a sheep, but one; let them offer an earring, but one; that is, let such come as may persist innocent and obedient in the unity of the holy Church. For one cannot be divided into numbers, because even this one which we say is not a number. Therefore let them offer a sheep, but one; let them offer an earring, but one; that is, coming to the holy Church with innocence and obedience, let them bring that mind which the schisms of sects may not divide.

[Vet. XV.] 34. How great a joy will be in the Church concerning the conversion of the Jews, and the feast to be celebrated at some time.

It is pleasing to open the eyes of faith, and to contemplate that final feast of the holy Church concerning the reception of the Israelite people. To which feast surely that great Elias, coming as the inviter of the banqueters, is applied; and then neighbors, then acquaintances come with gifts to him whom they contemned shortly before when he was placed in the scourge. For as the day of judgment approaches, whether by the voices of the precursor or by certain erupting signs, the power of the coming Lord already shines through to them in some way. While they hasten to prevent His wrath, they accelerate the time of their conversion. Moreover, having been converted, they come with gifts, because him whom

shortly before they derided in the Passion, they then venerate by offering works of virtues as gifts, completing undoubtedly by this offering of theirs that which we see already done in great part, and still believe to be perfectly done: The daughters of Tyre shall adore him with gifts (Psalm XLIV, 13). For then the daughters of Tyre adore him more fully with gifts, when the minds of the Israelites, now subject to the desires of this world, bring the hosts of their confession to Him whom in their pride they once denied, having at length known Him. And although in those same times when the Antichrist approaches, the life of the faithful may appear to be of lesser virtue in some measure, although in the conflict with that lost man a grave fear may also constrain the hearts of the strong: nevertheless, being strengthened by the preaching of Elias, not only do all the faithful persist in the solidity of the holy Church, but, as we said above, many from the infidels are also converted to the knowledge of faith; so that the remnants of the Israelite nation, which had been funditus rejected before, concur to the bosom of the mother Church with all pious devotion.

CHAPTER XV

[Vet. XVI].

VERSE 12. And the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.

35. God will bless the latter end of the Church with a multiple collection of souls.

We believe these things were done historically, we hope they are to be done mystically. For Job is blessed more in his latter end than in his beginning, because as much as pertains to the reception of the Israelite people, as the end of the present world presses, the Lord consoles the sorrow of the holy Church by a multiple collection of souls. For it shall be enriched the more opulently, the more clearly it becomes known that temporality presses toward the end of the present life. For the Psalmist had seen the preachers of the holy Church enriched by the blessing of the extreme time when he said: They shall still be multiplied in a fruitful old age, and shall be well suffering, that they may announce (Psalm XCI, 15). They are multiplied, clearly, in a fruitful old age, because when their life is deferred, their strength is always produced for the better, and the gains of their merits grow for them through the increase of times. Moreover, they are well suffering that they may announce, because preaching heavenly things, they tolerate adverse things the more robustly, the more they report the gains of souls more opulently through their tolerance. It follows:

CHAPTER XVI

[Rec. XI].

VERSES 12, 13. And he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses; and he had seven sons and three daughters.

36. In the doubled flocks and herds of Job, the aggregated university of the faithful is designated: of the innocent, of those once proud in vices, of those subject to the yoke of the law, and of the Gentiles.

The preface of the same history shows that he had seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses before the trial of the stroke; which having been lost through the scourge, are now restored twofold. But the sons were returned in the same number as they were lost. For he had seven sons and three daughters, but he is described now as having received seven sons and three daughters, so that those who had been extinguished might be shown to live. For while it is said: The Lord added all things that had been Job's twofold (Job I), and yet He restored to him as many sons as he had lost, He also added children twofold, since He restored ten to him afterward in the flesh, but reserved ten who had been lost in the hidden life of souls [Vet. XVII]. If any one, however, in the aforesaid animals, having postponed the stalk of history, desires to be fed by the fruit of mysteries as an intellectual animal, clearly, it is necessary that he acknowledge what we feel. For we can understand that in these animals the aggregated university of the faithful is designated. Hence it is that it is said through the Psalmist to the Father concerning the Son: Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, sheep and oxen all of them, moreover and the beasts of the field (Psalm VIII, 8). Hence it is that the same

prophet, seeing all the simple inhabit the holy Church, says: Thy animals shall dwell in it (Psalm LXVII, 11).

37. What then do we receive in the sheep but the innocent, what in the camels but those who pass over the evils of others with the tortuous mass of exuberant vices, what in the yoked oxen but the Israelites subject to the law, what in the asses but the simple minds of the Gentiles? For because all the innocent are designated by the name of sheep, the Psalmist witnesses, who says: But we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture (Psalm XCIV, 7). For they who neglect to keep innocence are not satiated by that refreshment of the internal pasture.

38. By the name of the camel sometimes the Lord is expressed in sacred elocution, sometimes the pride of the Gentiles, as if tortuous with a swelling from above. For because the camel spontaneously humbles itself to receive burdens, it designates not undeservedly the grace of our Redeemer, who in that he deigned to receive the burdens of our infirmity, spontaneously descended from the height of his power. Hence also He says through the Gospel: I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again (John X, 18), and no man taketh it from me. And hence again He says: It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. XIX, 24). For what does He sign by the name of the rich man but any elated person, and what by the appellation of the camel but His own conde-

scension? For the camel passed through the eye of a needle when our same Redeemer entered through the straits of the Passion even unto the undertaking of death. Which Passion was like a needle, because it pierced the body with pain. Moreover, the camel more easily passes through the eye of a needle than the rich man enters the kingdom of heaven, because unless He first, receiving the burdens of our infirmity, showed us the eye of humility through His Passion, our proud rigidity would by no means incline itself to His humility. Again, by the name of the camel the tortuous and vice-filled Gentility is designated, as it is said through Moses that Rebecca, the day having already declined, beheld Isaac going out into the field sitting upon a camel, and immediately descended from the camel, and covered herself with a cloak, being ashamed at the vision of him (Gen. XXIV, 64). For whom else did Isaac designate, in that the day having already declined he had gone out into the field, but him who at the extreme time of this world, coming as if at the end of the day, went out as it were into the field? because since He is invisible, He showed Himself visible in this world. Whom Rebecca sitting on a camel beheld, because the Church coming from the Gentiles, while she was still leaning on vices, and not yet adhering to spiritual but to animal motions, attended to Him. But immediately she descended from the camel, because she deserted the vices by which she had been previously proudly elated, and she also took care to cover herself with a cloak, because, having seen the

Lord, she was ashamed of the infirmity of her action, and she who was previously carried free on the camel, descending afterward is covered ashamed. Hence to the same Church converted from her prior elation it is said by the apostolic voice, as if to Rebecca descending from the camel and drawing a cloak over herself: What fruit had you then in those things, in which you are now ashamed (Rom. VI, 21)?

[Vet. XVIII.] 39. In the oxen, indeed, sometimes the dementia of the luxurious, sometimes the laborious fortitude of preachers, sometimes the humility of the Israelites is expressed. For because the dementia of the luxurious is designated by the name of the ox through comparison, Solomon indicates, who when he had premised the petulance of a badly persuading woman, added: And immediately he followeth her, as an ox led to the victim (Prov. VII, 22). Again, because the labor of the preacher is expressed by the name of the ox; the words of the law witness, which say: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn (Deut. XXV, 4). As if he should say openly: Thou shalt not prohibit the preachers of the word from the perception of their stipends. Again, because the Israelite people are figured by the name of the ox, the prophet asserts, who denouncing the advent of the Redeemer says: The ox hath known his owner, and the ass his Lord's crib (Isai. I, 3), clearly signing by the ox the Israelite people tamed by the yoke of the law, but by the ass indicating the Gentile

people, given up to pleasures, and more heavily brute.

40. By the name of asses and she-asses also, sometimes the petulance of the luxurious, sometimes the meekness of the simple, but sometimes, as we said before, the foolishness of the Gentiles is designated. For that the petulance of the luxurious is expressed by the appellation of asses through comparison is openly declared when it is said through the prophet: Whose flesh is as the flesh of asses (Ezek. XXIII, 20). Again, because the life of the simple is figured by the name of she-asses, our Redeemer, when He went to Jerusalem, is remembered to have sat upon an ass. For Jerusalem is called the vision of peace. What then does it sign that the Lord, by sitting, leads the ass to Jerusalem, but that while He possesses simple minds by presiding over them, He leads them even to the vision of peace by His sacred session? Again, because the foolishness of the Gentiles is designated by the name of asses, the prophet witnesses, saying: Blessed are ye that sow upon all waters, sending in the foot of the ox and the ass (Isai. XXXII, 20). For to sow upon all waters is to preach the fruitful words of life to all peoples. Moreover, to send in the foot of the ox and the ass is to bind the ways of the Israelite and Gentile people through the chains of celestial precepts.

[Vet. XIX.] 41. By the letter of Sacred Scripture past things are related, and future things are predicted.

Therefore, the truth of the letter being preserved, we believe not undeservedly that the peoples of the holy Church are designated under the name of all these animals of blessed Job, so that all those things which are written, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit wonderfully ordering all things, may both relate past things to us and predict future things. Let us acknowledge, therefore, in the sheep the faithful and innocent peoples from Judea, long since satiated by the pastures of the law. Let us acknowledge in the camels the simple ones coming from gentility to the faith, who previously under a sacrilegious rite, as if with a certain deformity of limbs, were shown very foul, clearly by the filthiness of vices. And because often, as we said before, the sacred elocutions take care to repeat what they affirm, the Israelites can again be received in the oxen, as if worn by the yoke of the law; in the asses, however, as was said, the Gentile peoples are designated, who while they inclined themselves to the worship of stones, with a mind not reluctant, as if with a back foolishly subjected, served any idols with a brute sense. Therefore the holy Church, which in her beginnings was pressed by innumerable temptations, and lost either the Israelite people or many from the Gentiles, clearly those whom she could not gain, receives twofold in the end, because the number of the faithful from both nations grows more multiple in her. Also the preachers can be understood through the yoked oxen. Hence when the Lord sent them to announce, as the Gospel witnesses (Mark VI,

7), He is described to have sent them two by two, so that because there are either two precepts of charity, or because a society cannot be had between fewer than two, the holy preachers might know from the very quality of their mission how much they should love the concord of society. Through the she-asses, as we said before, the minds of the simple can be designated. Moreover, the holy Church receives twofold oxen and asses, because the holy preachers, who, pressed by fear, had previously been silent in her temptation, and the minds of the simple, which, overcome by terrors, feared to confess her truth, now exert their voices so much more robustly in the confession of the truth, the more weakly they feared before.

42. Latent mysteries in diverse numbers, and in the names of the three daughters of Job.

These things we have said briefly in the signification of the Church: which things, how they serve the Head of the same holy Church, we remember to have said more widely in the beginning of this work (Preface, num. 14). He therefore who strives to be more fully satisfied concerning these, let him deign to read the second book of this work (Especially num. 43). Now indeed if we are asked that we should also discuss the number itself of the animals, why a thousand yoke of oxen, or a thousand she-asses, and six thousand camels, and fourteen thousand sheep are numbered, we can say briefly that in secular science the millenary number is therefore held perfect, because it returns the solid square of the denary number. For ten lead ten times become

a hundred, which is already a square figure, but flat. That however it may rise into height and become solid, again a hundred are multiplied ten times, and they are a thousand. Moreover, the senary number is therefore perfect, because it is the first in numbers to be completed by its parts, that is, by its sixth part, and its third, and its half, which are one, and two, and three, which lead into a sum become six. Nor is another found before the senary number which, while it is divided in its parts, its whole sum may be completed. [Vet. XX, Rec. XII.] But because we transcend all these by advancing through the height of Sacred Scripture, there we find wherefore the senary, there the septenary, there the denary, there the millenary is perfect. For the senary number is perfect in Sacred Scripture because in the origin of the world the Lord fulfilled on the sixth day the works which He began on the first day (Gen. II, 2). The septenary is perfect in it because every good work is done by the seven virtues through the Spirit, so that both faith and works may be consummated together. The denary number is perfect in it because the law is concluded in ten precepts, and every fault is restrained by no more than ten words, and, Truth narrating, the operators of the vineyard are remunerated with a denarius (Matt. XX, 10, 11). For in the denarius three are joined to seven. Moreover man, who consists of soul and body, is contained in seven qualities. For he flourishes in three spiritually, and in four corporally. For in the love of God he is spiritually excited in three qualities, when it is

said to him through the law: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength (Matt. XXII, 37). Corporally, indeed, he is contained in four qualities, because clearly he is composed of hot and cold, moist and dry matter. Therefore man, who consists of seven qualities, is said to be remunerated with a denarius, because in that perception of the supernal country our seven are joined to the eternal three, so that man may receive the contemplation of the Trinity, and live consummated from the remuneration of work as if with a certain denarius. Or certainly that there are seven virtues by which we labor in this life, and while to them the contemplation of the Trinity is returned in remuneration, the life of the laborers is remunerated with a denarius. But every perfect person receives the denarius even in this life, while he joins hope, faith, and charity to the same seven virtues. The millenary number also is received as perfect in sacred elocution, because by its appellation universality is designated. Hence it is written: Of the word which he commanded to a thousand generations (Psalm CIV, 8). For since it is by no means to be believed that the world is extended to a hundred generations, what else is figured by a thousand generations but the university of generations? Blessed Job, therefore, received fourteen thousand sheep. For because in the holy Church the perfection of virtues is lead to both sexes, the septenary number is doubled in her. And six thousand camels, because they who formerly perished from that filthiness of their

vices receive the plenitude of work in her. He also received a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses, because He assumes the Israelites and the Gentiles, the learned and the simple, after the falls of temptations into the height of perfection. [Rec. XIII.] He also received seven sons and three daughters, because to the minds of those whom He had begotten by the seven virtues He joins hope, faith, and charity to the sum of perfection, so that He may the more truly rejoice in His offspring, the more He weighs that nothing of virtue is lacking to His faithful. [Vet. XXI.] But because we run through these succinctly, let us now also intend to investigating the names of the daughters themselves. It follows:

CHAPTER XVII.

VERSE 14. And he called the name of one Day, and the name of the second Cassia, and the name of the third Horn of Stibium.

43. These names, because they are taken from virtues, the interpreter appropriately took care not to put them as they are found in the Arabic speech, but to demonstrate them more openly turned into Latin elocution. For who does not know that Dies or Casia are Latin words? But in Cornustibii (although it is not called cornus, but cornu, nor the pipe of singers called Tibium, but tibia), yet in the Latin language, the gender of the word being by no means guarded, he preferred, I believe, to produce the thing, and to persist in the property of that language from which he was transferring. Or because through horn and pipe

he composed one word from both, he called it lawfully by what gender he willed, both words being transfused through one part of speech into the Latin language. [Vet. XXII.] What is it then that the first daughter of blessed Job is called Day, the second Cassia, but the third is remembered to have been called Horn of Stibium, but that the universal human race, which is chosen by the benignity of the Creator and the mercy of the same Redeemer, is designated by these names? For man shone as if day from his condition, because his Author besprinkled him with the splendor of innate innocence. But having spontaneously lapsed to the darkness of sin, because he deserted the light of truth, he hid himself as if in the night of error, because he is said elsewhere to have followed the shadow. But because the largess of His goodness was not lacking to our Author, He also recalled from error him whom He previously powerfully created for justice, by more powerfully redeeming him afterward even against the darkness of our iniquity. To whom because after his fall that pristine firmness of his condition was lacking, He propped him up against the internal wars of repugnant corruption by the multiple virtues of His gifts. Which virtues surely, of those who advance in the notice of other men, fragrant as if with the sweetness of odors. For hence it is that it is said through Paul: We are the good odor of Christ to God (II Cor. II, 15). Hence it is that the holy Church, having smelled a certain fragrance of sweetness in her elect, speaks in the Song of Songs, saying: While the king is in his reclining,

my spikenard gave its odor (Cant. I, 11). As if she should say openly: As long as the king is hidden from my sights within himself in the rest of the heavenly secret, the life of the elect is exercised by the wondrous odors of virtues, so that where she does not yet see him whom she appetites, she may burn more ardently through desire. For the king being placed in his reclining, the spikenard gives odor, while, the Lord resting in His beatitude, the virtue of the saints in the Church administers to us the grace of great sweetness. Because therefore the human race both shone when created with the light of innocence, and when redeemed besprinkled the odor of sweetness by the exercise of good works, the first daughter is rightly named Dies, and the second not incongruously Casia. Moreover, she is well called Casia, who is dilated in so great an odor of sublime life. For in its very origin in which the just man had been created, he did not need as many virtues as are now necessary, because if he had willed to stand as he was created, he could have overcome the enemy placed outside without difficulty. But after the adversary once broke into the internal parts through the assent of man, he is now ejected more laboriously as victor, who while yet impugning would be repelled without labor.

44. We need many virtues, which would not have been necessary in paradise.

For many things are now to be exhibited which were not necessary in paradise. For now there is need of the virtue of patience, of the

laborious erudition of doctrine, of the castigation of the body, of the assiduity of prayer, of the confession of faults, of the inundation of tears; of all which surely he who was created in good did not need, because he perceived the good of health from his very condition. For to a sick man a bitter cup is reached, that he may be recalled to the state of health, the disease being removed. But to a healthy man it is by no means enjoined what he should receive that he may recover, but from what things he should beware lest he languish. Now therefore we use greater studies, since we by no means preserve health had, but take care to repair it taken away. And because all these efforts of our reparation are powerful within the holy Church with great reputations, the name of the second daughter redolent like cassia from merit, so that as the first daughter existed as if day through the dignity of condition, the second may be cassia through the fragrance of fortitude from the grace of redemption. [Vet. XXIII.] Hence it is said through the Prophet also to the same coming Redeemer: Myrrh, and gutta, and cassia from thy garments from the ivory steps, from which the daughters of kings have delighted thee in thy honor (Psalm XLIV, 9). For what is designated by the name of myrrh, gutta, and cassia, but the sweetness of virtues? What by the ivory steps but the ascent of those who advance, shining with great fortitude? The coming Redeemer, therefore, uses myrrh, gutta, and cassia in His garment, because from His elect, with whom He mercifully clothes Himself, He sprinkles the fragrance of

the virtue of myrrh. In whom that odor is lead by ivory steps, because in them the reputation of virtues is generated not from the showing of simulation, but from the ascent of true and solid work. Moreover, it is well added: From which the daughters of kings have delighted thee in thy honor. For holy souls brought forth to the knowledge of truth by the ancient fathers delight their Redeemer in His honor, because they vindicate nothing to their own praise from that which they do well. But because in the third order the human race, renewed also by the resurrection of the flesh, is assumed in that concert of eternal praise, the third daughter is called Cornustibii. For what is expressed through Cornustibii but the song of those who rejoice? For there that is truly fulfilled which is now said through the Prophet: Sing to the Lord a new song (Psalm CXLIX, 1). There it is truly fulfilled, where the song of the praise of God will be sung no longer from faith, but from the species contemplated. There our Creator receives from us the true songs of His praises, who made the human race both by creating it Day, and by redeeming it Cassia, and by assuming it Horn of Stibium. For we who were light when created, and now are redeemed as Cassia, will be at some time Horn of Stibium, assumed in the exultation of eternal praise. But before the bride reaches the marriage chamber, she rejects from herself all filthiness of life, and preparing herself for the love of the bridegroom, she adorns and decks herself through the species of virtues. For she studies to please by the judgment of the internal Arbiter,

and, raised up by internal desires, to transcend the foul manners of human conversation. Hence it is well added concerning the same daughters of blessed Job:

CAPUT XVIII

[Rec. XIV].

VERS. 15.---But there were not found women so beautiful as the daughters of Job, in all the earth.

45. The beauty of the elect.---For the souls of the elect transcend the whole human race, which lives upon the earth according to man, in the comeliness of their beauty; and by how much the more they despise themselves by afflicting themselves outwardly, by so much the more truly do they compose themselves within. For hence it is that it is said to the holy Church, which is adorned with the beauty of the elect, through the Psalmist: The King has desired thy beauty (Psalm XLIV, 12). Concerning which it is added a little after: All her glory, the daughter of kings, is from within (Ibid., 14). For if she sought glory without, she would not have within the beauty which the King would desire. [Vet. XXIV.] In which indeed, although many shine with the comeliness of virtues, and by the very perfection of living transcend the merits of others, yet some, because they do not suffice to attain higher things, conscious of their own infirmity, are contained in the bosom of her piety. Who, as far as they prevail, avoid evils, although as far as they desire higher

things, they do not fulfill good. Whom nevertheless the Lord benignly receives, and admits them to Himself according to the measure of worthy retribution. Whence also it follows:

CAPUT XIX.

IBID.---And their father gave them inheritance among their brothers.

46. Christ admits among the strong and perfect, the weak and humble to the lot of the heavenly inheritance.---They therefore are mentioned as beautiful from the merit of the perfect, and they also, as if from the type of the imperfect, receive as it were as weak an inheritance among their brothers. For the custom of the old life did not have it that women should receive an inheritance among males, because the severity of the law choosing strong things, contemning weak things, studied to ordain strict rather than benign things. 1166 But our pious Redeemer coming, let no one conscious of his own infirmity despair of obtaining the inheritance of the heavenly patrimony. For our Father has granted the rights of succession even to women among males, because He admits among the strong and perfect, the weak and humble to the lot of the heavenly inheritance. Whence Truth itself says in the Gospel: In my Father's house are many mansions (John XIV, 2). For with the Father there are many mansions, because in that life of beatitude, not unequal, each one according to unequal merit perceives an unequal place, but does not feel the losses of that same inequality, because as much as he

has perceived suffices for him. Sisters therefore come to the inheritance with brothers, because the weak are admitted thither with the strong, so that if anyone through imperfection will not be the highest, yet through humility he may not be a stranger to the lot of the inheritance. Which mansions Paul well insinuates as distributed to each one according to merits, when he says: There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory (I Cor. XV, 41). It follows:

CAPUT XX

[Rec. XV].

VERS. 16.---And Job lived after these scourges a hundred and forty years; and he saw his sons, and his sons' sons even to the fourth generation; and he died an old man, and full of days.

47. Who are called full of days in the sacred writings. Job restored to his former state, with things even increased, is a type of the Church.--- In sacred Scripture "full of days" is not easily put, unless of him whose life is praised through the same scripture. For he is void of days who, however much he may have lived, has consumed the times of his age in vanity. But on the contrary, he is called full of days to whom his days by no means pass away by perishing, but from the daily reward of good work are reserved with the just Judge even after they have been passed.

[Vet. XXV.] 48. But because there are those who desire to interpret these things also in a type of the holy Church, whose wishes are all the more to be obeyed as their spiritual understanding is to be rejoiced in, if we multiply fourteen by ten, we arrive at the number one hundred and forty. And rightly the life of the holy Church is computed multiplied by ten and four, because, keeping both Testaments, and living both according to the Decalogue of the law and according to the four books of the Gospel, she is extended to the summit of perfection. Whence also the apostle Paul, although he wrote fifteen Epistles, yet the holy Church holds no more than fourteen, that he might show by the very number of the Epistles that the excellent teacher had searched into the secrets of the Law and the Gospel. Moreover, blessed Job is well said to live after the scourges, because the holy Church also is first struck by the scourge of discipline, and afterwards is strengthened by the perfection of life. Who also beholds her sons and her sons' sons even to the fourth generation, because in this age which revolves in the four annual seasons, she contemplates offspring daily born to her through the mouths of preachers until the end of the world. Nor does it abhor from truth that we say times are designated by generations. For what is each succession but a certain offshoot of the race? And when the butler of the king of Egypt had seen a dream that he brought forth three offshoots (Genesis XL, 12), Joseph, gifted in the solution of dreams, declares that three offshoots designate three days.

If therefore the space of three days is expressed by three offshoots, why should not also the four annual seasons be figured by four generations? The holy Church therefore sees her sons when she beholds the first offspring of the faithful. She sees the sons of her sons when she knows that sons are also born to the faith from those same faithful. Who also dies an old woman and full of days, because, light following from the reward of daily works, the weight of corruption being laid down, she is changed to the incorruption of the spiritual country. Namely, she dies full of days for whom the gliding years do not pass away, but are solidified by the retribution of standing acts. She dies full of days who through these passing times works that which does not pass. Whence it is said also to the apostles: Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life (John VI, 27). The holy Church therefore does not lose her days, even when she leaves the present life, because in her elect she finds their light so much the more manifoldly, by how much the more cautiously and solicitously she now guards herself in them from every temptation. The Church does not lose her days, because she does not neglect vigilantly to weigh herself daily in this life, and she does not grow torpid with any sloth toward all things which she may be able to do rightly. For hence it is that it is said of her through Solomon: She considereth the paths of her house, and eateth not the bread of idleness (Proverbs XXXI, 27). For she considereth the paths of her house,

because she subtly investigates all the thoughts of her conscience. She eateth not the bread of idleness, because that which she has perceived of sacred eloquence by understanding, she shows by works, exhibiting it before the eyes of the eternal Judge. Moreover, she is said to die, because when the contemplation of eternity shall have absorbed her, she is fundamentally extinguished from this vicissitude of her mutability, so that in her now nothing at all may live which may in any way hinder the sharpness of internal vision. For then she beholds internal things so much the more truly, as she more fully falls to all external things. Let us believe therefore that this death, this fullness of days, was both done in blessed Job, namely in one member of the Church, and let us hope it is to be done in the whole Church together, so that the truth of the thing done may be so held, that the prophecy of the thing to be done may not be made void. For the good things which we know of the life of the saints, if they lack truth, are nothing; if they have no mysteries, they are very small. Let therefore the life of the good, which is described through the Holy Spirit, both shine to us through spiritual understanding, and yet let the sense not recede from the faith of history, so that the mind may remain so much the more fixed in its understanding, as hope toward future things and faith toward past things bind it, constituted as it were in a certain middle.

[Vet. XXVI, Rec. XVI.] 49. Conclusion of the whole work. How it is to be feared lest they who speak of God, either speak evil things incau-

tiously, or good things not well. To the intention of pleasing God, the intention of human praise interposes itself. This work being completed, therefore, I see that I must return to myself.

1168 For our mind, even when it endeavors to speak rightly, is much scattered outside itself. For while words are being thought how they may be brought forth, because they draw it from within, they diminish the integrity of the soul. Therefore one must return from the public of speaking to the court of the heart, that as if in a certain council of consultation I may convoke the thoughts of my mind to discern myself, so that there I may see lest I have either incautiously said evil things, or good things not well. For then a good thing is well said, when he who speaks desires to please Him alone from whom he received it, through that which he speaks. And indeed, although I do not find that I have said any evil things, yet I do not defend that I have said none at all. But if I have said any good things, receiving them from God, I profess that I have said them less well through my own fault. For returning to myself within, the leaves of words being postponed, the branches of sentences being postponed, while I subtly inspect the very root of my intention, I know indeed that I wished to please God from it above all, but to that same intention by which I study to please God, stealthily, I know not how, the intention of human praise interposes itself. Which when I already discern later and slowly, I find myself doing otherwise what I know I began otherwise. For thus often our intention, while it

is begun rightly before the eyes of God, being secretly subjoined, and as it were catching it on the way, the intention of human praise follows it, just as food indeed is taken for necessity, but in the eating itself, while gluttony stealthily creeps in, the delight of eating is mingled. Whence it frequently happens that the refreshment of the body, which we began for the sake of health, we complete for the sake of pleasure. It must be confessed, therefore, that our right intention, which desires to please God alone, is sometimes accompanied by an intention less right, which seeks to please men by the gifts of God, by lying in wait. But if we are strictly discussed concerning these things by God, what place of salvation remains among these, when both our evil things are pure evils, and the good things which we believe we have can by no means be pure goods? But I believe this is worth my labor, that to fraternal ears I unhesitatingly open everything which I secretly reprehend in myself. For because in expounding I did not conceal what I felt, in confessing I do not hide what I suffer. Through the exposition I have made manifest gifts, through the confession I detect wounds. And because in this so great human race, neither little ones are lacking who ought to be instructed by my words, nor great ones are lacking who may be able to have pity on my known infirmity, through both of these I confer care as much as I can on some brothers, and hope from others. To those I have told by expounding what they should do, to these I open by confessing that they should spare. To those I

do not withdraw the medicines of words, to these I do not hide the laceration of wounds. Therefore I pray that whoever shall read these things, may bestow upon me the solace of his prayer before the strict Judge, and may wash away with tears everything sordid he finds in me. Moreover, the virtue of prayer and of exposition being brought together, my reader surpasses me in recompense, if when he receives words through me, he returns tears for me.