ODO OF CLUNY

The Life of Saint Gerald of Aurillac

Vita S. Geraldi

SABBATISMUS

Odo of Cluny (c. 879–942)
Vita S. Geraldi · The Life of Saint Gerald of Aurillac

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Auctoris epistola nuncupatoria

Affectu recolendo pro suis meritis domno AYMONI abbati, conservus fratrum ODO perpetuam salutem in Christo.

Libellum, venerabilis pater, quem de conversatione et miraculis beati hominis Geraldi, me, qualitercunque possim, dictare tam imperiose nuper suaseras, jam, licet tremens, aggredior. Nam, etsi faciendo praesumptionem, quasi meis viribus excedens, timeo; et non faciendo, contumaciam, quasi inobediens, pertimesco. De obedientia vero et bonitate Christi confisus, aggrediens, te quaeso, ut ejusdem Christi clementiam implores, quatenus pro amore ipsius famuli sui Geraldi, relationem sic modificare dignetur, ut homini, quem glorificare disposuit, non sit ex toto indigna, nec mihi transgressionis causa. Ad quam videlicet transgressionem evadendam, nonnulla, de quibus tu forte causaberis, praetereo; sola illa quae mihi sunt vulgata, cum et tu coram adesses certis auctoribus contexens.

Vale.

The Author's Dedicatory Letter

To the lord Abbot Aymo, to be remembered with affection for his merits, Odo, fellow servant of the brethren, wishes everlasting salvation in Christ.

The little book on the life and miracles of the blessed man Gerald, venerable father, which you lately urged me so imperiously to compose as best I could, I now take in hand, though trembling. For if I do it, I fear presumption, as one who goes beyond his strength; and if I do not, I dread contumacy, as one who disobeys. Trusting, then, in obedience and in the goodness of Christ, I set about it, and I beg you to implore the clemency of that same Christ that, for love of his servant Gerald, he may deign so to temper the account that it be not wholly unworthy of the man whom he has resolved to glorify, nor a cause of transgression for me. To escape that transgression I pass over a number of things for which you may perhaps reproach me, and weave together only what was made known to me by trustworthy witnesses, when you too were present.

Farewell.

Praefatio

Plerique dubitare solent, utrum vera sint quae de beato Geraldo referuntur. Inter quos nonnulli penitus non verum, sed phantasticum putant. Alii quoque velut excusationes in peccatis quaerentes, indiscrete hunc extollunt, dicentes videlicet quia Geraldus potens et dives fuit, et cum deliciis vixit, et utique sanctus est. Qui nimirum suam voluptuosam vitam ejus nituntur exemplo excusare. His ergo nobis visum est aliquantulum, prout possumus respondendum. Nam et nos dudum audita miraculorum fama, nihilominus de his dubitabamus: ob hoc maxime quod in quibusdam locis nescio per quos rumores solent vulgares conventus noviter fieri, paulatimque velut res vana cessari. Sed cum causa insisteret, ut Tutelensis coenobii fraternitatem inviseremus, ad sepulcrum ipsius intendere libuit. Tunc vero accitis quatuor ex his, quos ipse nutrierat, Hugone videlicet monacho, Hildeberto sacerdote, Wilardo quoque, et alio Hildeberto nobilibus laicis, sed et aliis quampluribus, de moribus et qualitate vitae ejus hactenus disquisivimus: nunc simul, nunc semotim, quid singuli dicerent, vel si in dicendo sibi concordarent, certatim inspeximus, tacite expendentes, si talis vita ejus esset, cui forte miracula convenissent. Comperto autem quam religiose vixerit, et quod hunc Deus in sua gratia pluribus indiciis esse monstraverit, jam de ejus sanctitate dubitare nequivimus. Magis miramur, quod in hac nostra aetate, cum jam charitas pene tota refrigescit, instante antichristi tempore, sanctorum miracula cessare debeat. Sed nimirum suae promissionis est memor, quia per Jeremiam dicit: Non desinam benefacere populo meo. De hoc autem ejus benefacto testatur Apostolus, dicens quia Deus in nullo saeculo sine testimonio semetipsum relinquens, benefaciens corda hominum laetitia implet. Si ergo divinae benignitati ejus placet, ut qui fecit cum patribus mirabilia, nostris quoque glorificetur temporibus, increduli nequaquam esse debemus. Quod autem et in isto tempore, et per modernum hominem haec divina dispensatio gerit, hoc nimirum esse videtur, quia jam cuncta sanctorum retro facta vel dicta, quasi mortuus a corde recesserunt. Et cum vir iste Domini, sicut in diebus Noe repertus est, qui secundum legem vixerit, hunc ipsum Deus ad testimonium intuentibus ingerit, ut videntes quod juste et pie vixerit, ad ejus imitationem, tanquam de proximo resplendentem acies cordis evigilet. Nec observantia mandatorum Dei gravis aut impossibilis aestimetur, quoniam quidem haec a laico et potente homine observata videtur.

Preface

Many are wont to doubt whether the things told of blessed Gerald are true. Some of them think it not true at all, but a mere fancy. Others, as though seeking excuses for their sins, extol him without discernment, saying, that is, that Gerald was powerful and rich, and lived in comfort, and is a saint all the same. These, no doubt, are trying to excuse their own life of pleasure by his example. It has seemed good to us, then, to answer them a little, as far as we are able. For we too, though we had long since heard the report of his miracles, nonetheless doubted them, chiefly because in certain places, through rumours spread by I know not whom, popular gatherings are apt to spring up of a sudden and little by little to die away as an empty thing. But when business obliged us to visit the brethren of the monastery of Tulle, we were glad to turn aside to his tomb. Then we called four of those whom he had brought up, namely Hugh the monk, Hildebert the priest, and Willard and another Hildebert, noble laymen, and many others besides, and inquired into his ways and the manner of his life: now together, now apart, we eagerly examined what each one said and whether they agreed with one another in the telling, silently weighing whether his life had been such as miracles might fitly accompany. And when we had learnt how devoutly he had lived, and that God had shown by many signs that he was in his grace, we could no longer doubt his holiness. We wonder rather why, in this age of ours, when charity has almost wholly grown cold and the time of Antichrist is at hand, the miracles of the saints should have to cease. But he is surely mindful of his promise, for he says through Jeremiah: I will not cease to do good to my people (Jer 32:40). And to this kindness of his the Apostle bears witness, saying that God, in no age leaving himself without witness, doing good, fills the hearts of men with gladness (Acts 14:17). If, then, it pleases his divine goodness that he who did wonders with the fathers should be glorified in our times also, we ought by no means to be unbelieving. That this divine dispensation works both in this present time and through a man of our own day seems truly to be because all the deeds and sayings of the saints of old have by now faded from the heart like one dead (Ps 31:13). And since this man of the Lord has been found, as in the days of Noah, one who lived according to the law, God sets this very man before the eyes of beholders as a witness, so that, seeing how justly and devoutly he lived, the eye of their heart may awaken to imitate him, shining as he does close at hand. Nor let the keeping of God's commandments be thought burdensome or impossible, since we see that they were kept by a layman and a man of power.

Nihil autem mentis ignaviam deterius nutrit, quam hoc quod boni vel mali operis retributio, quae post hanc vitam restat, in praesenti non recogitatur. Quo contra monet nos Scriptura, ut in omnibus operibus nostris memoremus novissima nostra. Deus igitur famulum suum, quem in coelis remunerat, etiam in terris, coram suis contemptoribus exaltat: ut per hoc quod foris agitur, interius Dei contemptores videant, quia vanus non est qui servit Deo, sed sicut ipse testatur, qui glorificant eum, glorificabit eos, et qui contemnunt eum, eruit ignobiles. Quoniam vero hunc Dei hominem in exemplo potentibus datum credimus, viderint ipsi qualiter eum, sicut e vicino, et de suo ordine sibi praelatum imitentur: ne forte sicut regina Austri Judaeos, sic iste in judicio condemnet eos. Nos autem de ejus actibus occasionem sumentes, aliquid ad eosdem potentes commonendos, ubi se opportunitas praebuerit, sicut rogastis, annectimus. Siquidem et domnus Turpio episcopus, et dilectissimus mihi ac venerabilis abbas Aymo, cum aliis quampluribus multa vi precum me coegerunt, ut haec aggrederer. Cum quidem veram inertiae praetendissem excusationem, male se dixerunt, ut haec aggressi potius stylo proderentur. At ego perpendens quod humili quoque homini pomposa relatio minus congruat, fidem vero dictis testium adhibui. Qui signa quidem quae vulgus magni pendet, non multa retulerunt, sed disciplinatum vivendi modum, et opera misericordiae quae Deo magis placent, non pauca. Nam Rex in judicio multis qui prophetaverunt, et multis qui digna fecerunt, dicet: Nescio vos. Qui vero justitiam operantur, in qua Geraldus quam maxime excrevit, aduturi sunt: Venite, benedicti Patris mei. Et revera qualia sunt gesta per quae Job, David, et Tobias, et alii quamplures beatificantur, non ista quae Geraldus egisse comprobatur. His ergo ita consideratis, credere mihi persuasum est, quod Geraldus sanctorum consortio dignus sit, per quem etiam coelestis remunerator miracula dignetur operari. Sed hanc apologeticam praefationem texentes, diu locuti; jam ad initium loquendi in Christi nomine veniamus.

Liber primus

I.

Vir igitur Domini Geraldus ea parte Galliarum, quae ab antiquis Celtica vocatur, oriundus fuit; territorio videlicet, quod est Arvernensi atque Caturcensi, nec non etiam Albiensi conterminum, oppido vel villa Aureliaco, patre Geraldo, matre vero Adaltrude progenitus. Carnis nobilitate tam excellenter illustris, ut inter Gallicanas familias ejus prosapia, tam rebus, quam probitate morum, generosior videretur. Fertur enim quod parentes illius modestiam atque religionem veluti quadam haereditaria dote sibi tenuerint.

Nothing feeds sloth of mind worse than this: that the reward of good or evil works which awaits us after this life is not called to mind in the present. Against this Scripture warns us to remember our last end in all our works (Sir 7:36). God, therefore, exalts on earth too, before those who despise him, the servant whom he rewards in heaven, so that by what is done outwardly the despisers of God may see inwardly that he is not in vain who serves God (Mal 3:14), but that, as he himself testifies, those who glorify him he will glorify, and those who despise him shall be brought to dishonour (1 Sam 2:30). And since we believe that this man of God has been given as an example to the powerful, let them see to it how they imitate him, one who stands close beside them, raised up from their own order and set before them, lest perhaps, as the queen of the South the Jews, so he should condemn them at the judgement (Mt 12:42). For our part, taking occasion from his deeds, we add here and there, where opportunity offers, something to admonish these same powerful men, as you asked. For the lord Bishop Turpio and the venerable Abbot Aymo, most dear to me, with many others, compelled me by great force of entreaty to undertake this. And when I pleaded the true excuse of my want of skill, they declared that this would be ill done, and that these things should rather be taken in hand and set forth in writing. But I, weighing that a showy narrative ill befits a man who was humble, have kept faithfully to what the witnesses said. They told of few of the signs that the crowd sets great store by, but of no few things about his disciplined manner of life and the works of mercy, which please God more. For at the judgement the King will say to many who prophesied, and to many who did worthy deeds: I know you not (Mt 25:12). But those who work justice, in which Gerald grew to the very highest degree, shall hear: Come, you blessed of my Father (Mt 25:34). And truly, what sort of deeds are those by which Job, David, Tobias and many others are called blessed, if not such as Gerald is proved to have done? Having weighed these things, then, I am persuaded to believe that Gerald is worthy of the fellowship of the saints, and that through him the heavenly Rewarder deigns also to work miracles. But in weaving this apologetic preface we have spoken at length; let us now, in the name of Christ, come to the beginning of our tale.

Book One

I

Gerald, then, the man of the Lord, came from that part of Gaul which the ancients called Celtica, from the territory, namely, that borders on the Auvergne, the Quercy and the Albigeois; he was born in the town or estate of Aurillac, of Gerald his father and Adaltrude his mother. He was so outstandingly illustrious in nobility of blood that his lineage seemed among the noblest of the families of Gaul, as much in wealth as in uprightness of life. For it is said that his forebears held modesty and religion as a kind of hereditary dowry.

Cujus rei duo testes ex eadem stirpe emergentes existunt, ad hoc astruendum satis idonei: sanctus videlicet Caesarius Arelatensis episcopus et beatus Aredius abbas. Et quia Dominus in generatione justa, generatio vero Geraldi quaerentium est Dominum: consequens est ut generatio rectorum benedicatur. Sane quantum locupletes iidem fuerint, vel praedia mancipiis referta testantur, quae circumquaque diffusa eidem Geraldo jure successionis obvenerunt. Sed decus mentis quod ex parentibus hauserat, in ipso multipliciter auctum refulsit. Quadam enim gratia genitores ejus clariores sunt, qui prolem tam felicem gignere meruerunt.

II.

Pater quippe ipsius in ipso conjugio sese castificari tantopere studebat, ut semoto frequenter a conjuge toro, solus accubitaret, velut ad tempus, juxta Apostolum, orationi vacans. Quadam vero nocte monitus in somnis perhibetur, quatenus uxorem cognosceret, quia filium generaturus esset. Aiunt enim quod ei missum sit, ut illum nomine suo Geraldum vocaret. Dictum quoque quoniam futurus magni meriti foret. Excitus autem congratulabatur visioni. Dehinc iterum soporatus videbatur illi, ut de pollice pedis ejus dextri quaedam virgula nasceretur, quae paulatim in magnam arborem succrescebat, ac subinde frondibus diffusis universim [sensim] spatiabatur. Tum ille quasi operarios vocans, jubebat furcarum vel perticarum adminicula supponi. Et cum illa vehementer grandesceret, nullum tamen pondus in pollice sentiebat. Siquidem somniorum visiones non semper sunt inanes. Et si somno fides adhibenda est, videtur haec visio rerum effectui convenire futurarum. Cognovit itaque uxorem, quae juxta condictum visionis puerum concepit. Sed fortasse de hoc quasi de somnio dubitari potest. Aliud tum virtutis indicium evidenter secutum est.

III.

Genitrix ejus cum esset vicina partui, nono videlicet die priusquam nasceretur, contigit ut cum suo viro vigilanti vigilans ipsa jaceret. Et dum nescio quid vicissim sermocinarentur, infans emisit vocem quam ambo audierunt. Cumque attoniti, quidnam esset obstupescerent, neque ignorare poterant, quod illa vox in alvo matris sonuerit, vocat pater cubiculariam, et quonam ille vagitus increpuerit, adhibito lumine jubet disquiri. Cum illa nullum omnino infantem adesse, qui vocem illam ediderit similiter attonita protestaretur, infans iterum secundo sonuit.

Of this there are two witnesses sprung from the same stock, well fitted to prove it: Saint Caesarius, bishop of Arles, and blessed Aredius the abbot. And since the Lord is in the just generation (Ps 14:5), and Gerald's generation is of those that seek the Lord (Ps 24:6), it follows that the generation of the upright shall be blessed (Ps 112:2). How rich they were is shown by the estates full of serfs, spread far and wide, which came to this same Gerald by right of succession. But the beauty of mind he had drawn from his parents shone forth in him many times increased. For by a certain grace his parents are the more renowned for having deserved to beget so happy an offspring.

II

His father, indeed, strove so earnestly to keep himself chaste within marriage itself that he often withdrew from his wife's bed and lay alone, giving himself for a time, as the Apostle says, to prayer (1 Cor 7:5). One night, it is said, he was warned in his sleep to know his wife, for he was to beget a son. For they say that word was sent him to call the child Gerald, by his own name. He was told, too, that the child would be a man of great merit. On waking, he rejoiced at the vision. Then, when he had fallen asleep again, it seemed to him that from the big toe of his right foot a little shoot sprang up, which grew little by little into a great tree, and presently, spreading its leaves, stretched out on every side. Then, as though calling workmen, he bade them set props of forked stakes and poles beneath it. And though it grew exceedingly great, he felt no weight at all on his toe. Visions in dreams, indeed, are not always empty. And if faith may be given to a dream, this vision seems to agree with the fulfilment of things to come. He knew his wife, therefore, and she conceived a boy, as the vision had foretold. But perhaps this may be doubted, as being a dream. Then there followed another sign of power, plain to all.

III

When his mother was near her time, nine days, that is, before he was born, it happened that she lay awake beside her husband, who was awake too. And while they were talking together of I know not what, the infant uttered a cry which both of them heard. Astonished, and wondering what it could be, though they could not fail to know that the voice had sounded in the mother's womb, the father called the chambermaid and bade her bring a light and search for where the wailing had come from. When she, equally astonished, declared that there was no infant there at all who could have uttered that cry, the child sounded a second time.

Et post modicum intervallum, sonuit etiam tertio, videlicet sicut recens natus vagire solet. Ter igitur in ventre matris auditus est, quod profecto tam mirum est, quam et contra naturae modum constat accidisse. Et quia non casu, sed disponente rerum ordinatore Deo factum est, forte vox illa jam praesagabat [praesagiebat], quod in hujus mortalitatis clausura vitales actus erat habiturus. Nam sicut partus in alvo matris degens, vivit quidem, sed nullum sensum habet, sic omne genus humanum in hac vita post reatum primi hominis, velut inter angustias uteri clausum tenetur, ubi licet per fidem in spe gloriae filiorum Dei vivat, tamen nihil spirituale [sensuale] sicut est videre, neque efficaciam sensuum qualem primus homo ante peccatum habuit, vel sancti post hanc vitam accipiunt, nullatenus nisi languide, et aegre exercet. Geraldus igitur in matris utero bene sonuit, quoniam ultra communem aliorum vigorem in fide sanctae Trinitatis exercens, felicem famam, qua erat orbem repleturus, per illam voculam significavit.

IV.

Natus vero, et ablactatus, cum ad illam aetatulam pervenisset in qua solet in parvulos morum qualitas explorari, quaedam placens indoles in eos subrutilabat, per quam diligenter inspicientes, virum hunc virtutis futurum esse conjiciebat. Nam in prima aetate, ut saepe videmus, incitamentis corruptae naturae, solent parvuli irasci, et invidere, et velle ulcisci, vel alia hujusmodi attentare. At in puero Geraldo dulcedo quaedam animi cum verecundia, quae multum honestat adolescentiam, ipsos infantiles actus decorabat. Qui divina providente gratia studiis litterarum applicatus est, ea tantum parentum voluntate, ut decurso psalterio, mox saecularibus exercitiis, sicut nobilibus pueris mos est, erudiretur. Scilicet ut Molossos ageret, arcista fieret. cappos et accipitres competenti jactu emittere consuesceret. Sed ne inani studio deditus, tempus ad discendum litteras congruum in vacuo transiret, divino nutu dispositum est, ut diutius aegrotaret. Tali equidem infirmitatis languore, ut a saeculari exercitio retraheretur, sed ad discendi studium non impediretur. Siquidem minutis jugiter pustulis ita replebatur, ut per longum tempus protractae, jam non putarentur posse sanari. Qua de causa genitor ejus cum matre decernit, ut litterarum studiis arctius applicaretur. Quo videlicet, si usibus saeculi minus esset aptus, ad ecclesiasticum officium redderetur accommodus. Hac igitur occasione factum est, ut non modo cantum disceret, quin etiam et grammaticam praelibaret. Quod ei postea multum profuit, cum acies ingenii per illud exercitium elimata, ad omne quod vellet, acutior redderetur. Inerat autem illi vivax mentis sagacitas, et ad discendum quae vellet satis prompta.

And after a short interval it sounded a third time, just as a newborn babe is wont to cry. Three times, then, he was heard in his mother's womb, a thing as wonderful as it plainly was contrary to the course of nature. And since it happened not by chance but by the disposing of God, who orders all things, perhaps that voice already foretold that, though shut in by this mortality, he would perform the acts of true life. For as the unborn child dwelling in its mother's womb lives indeed but has no use of the senses, so the whole human race in this life, after the guilt of the first man, is kept shut up as in the narrow confines of the womb, where, although it lives by faith in the hope of the glory of the sons of God, it exercises nothing spiritual, such as seeing, nor any power of the senses such as the first man had before sin or the saints receive after this life, except feebly and with difficulty. Rightly, then, did Gerald sound in his mother's womb, since, exercising himself beyond the common vigour of others in faith in the Holy Trinity, he signified by that little voice the happy fame with which he was to fill the world.

IV

Once he was born and weaned, and had reached that tender age at which the character of children is usually tested, a certain pleasing disposition glowed in him, from which those who watched him carefully guessed that he would be a man of virtue. For in early childhood, as we often see, children, spurred by corrupt nature, are apt to grow angry, to envy, to want revenge, or to attempt other things of the kind. But in the boy Gerald a certain sweetness of spirit, together with the modesty that so greatly adorns youth, graced even his childish doings. By the providence of divine grace he was set to the study of letters, though his parents intended only that, once he had gone through the psalter, he should at once be trained in worldly exercises, as is the custom with noble boys. That is, that he should run Molossian hounds, become an archer, and learn to loose falcons and hawks with a proper cast. But lest, given over to an idle pursuit, he should let the time suited to learning letters pass in vain, it was arranged by the will of God that he should be ill for a long while. His illness, moreover, was of such a kind as to draw him away from worldly exercise but not to hinder his eagerness to learn. For he was so continually covered with small pustules that, as they dragged on for a long time, it was thought they could never be cured. For this reason his father, together with his mother, decided that he should be applied more closely to the study of letters. So that, if he proved less fit for the uses of the world, he might be made suitable for the service of the Church. So it came about on this occasion that he not only learnt chant but also had a first taste of grammar. This profited him much afterwards, for the edge of his mind, sharpened by that exercise, was made keener for whatever he wished. He had, moreover, a lively shrewdness of mind, quick enough to learn whatever he wished.

V.

Transmissa pueritia cum jam adolesceret membrorum robur nocivum corporis consumpsit humorem. Tam velox autem factus est, ut equorum terga facili saltu transvolaret. Et quia viribus corporis fortiter agiliscebat, armatam militiam assuescere quaerebatur. Sed jam dulce scripturarum adolescentis animum subarraverat, ad cujus studium affectuosius anhelabat. Ob hoc licet militaribus emineret officiis, delectatione tamen litterarum illectus; in illis voluntaria pigritia lentulus, in hujus sedulitate erat assuetus. Credo jam sentiscebat quia, juxta Scripturae testimonium, melior est sapientia quam vires, et nihil est locupletius illa. Et quoniam facile videtur ab his qui diligunt eam, mentem ejusdem adolescentis praeoccupabat, ut ei se prior ostenderet, ut esset dulcis allocutio cogitationis ejus. Nullo igitur impedimento Geraldus poterat occupari, quin ad amorem discendi recurreret. Unde factum est, ut propemodum pleniter Scripturarum seriem disceret, atque multos clericorum quantumlibet sciolos in ejus cognitione praeiret.

VI.

Decedentibus autem parentibus cum ejus dominio potestas omnis deveniret, non ut solent adolescentes, qui in matura dominatione superbiunt, Geraldus intumuit, nec incoeptam cordis modestiam immutavit. Dominandi potestas grandescebat, sed mens humilis nequaquam insolescebat. Pro disponendis vero atque tuendis rebus, quas, ut diximus, haereditario jure sibi vindicaverat, occupari cogebatur, et ab illa cordis dulcedine, quam aliquatenus jam praegustaverat, ad amaritudines terreni negotii foras exire. Hoc sui cordis secretum deserere aegre ferebat, mox tamen ut possibile erat, ad illud recurrebat. Sed dum ab alto contemplationis quasi ruere per terrenam occupationem videretur, sicut ibici mos est, ut ruens in suis cornibus se recipiat, ne moriatur; ita ad amorem divinum, vel Scripturae sanctae meditationem recurrens, internae mortis ruinam evadebat: illo nimirum Davidico spiritu jam, ut reor afflatus, quo ille fervens non dabat somnum oculis, donec actionibus diurnis exoccupatus, locum Domino in seipso inveniret, in quo sub lingua sua secretim exsultans, quam dulcis est Dominus degustaret.

V

When boyhood was past and he was growing into youth, the strength of his limbs consumed the harmful humour of his body. And he became so agile that he could vault over horses' backs with an easy leap. And since he was growing strong and nimble in body, it was sought to accustom him to armed service. But by now the sweetness of the Scriptures had taken the young man's mind as its pledge, and he longed for their study with deeper affection. So, although he excelled in the exercises of arms, he was drawn nonetheless by delight in letters: in the former he was slow with a willing sluggishness, in the diligent pursuit of the latter he was well practised. I believe he already perceived that, as Scripture testifies, wisdom is better than strength (Wis 6:1), and nothing is richer than she (Wis 8:5). And since she is easily seen by those who love her, she took possession of the young man's mind beforehand, showing herself to him first (Wis 6:12–13), so as to be the sweet converse of his thoughts. No hindrance, then, could so occupy Gerald that he did not run back to the love of learning. Hence it came about that he learnt almost the whole course of the Scriptures, and surpassed in his knowledge of them many clerics, however well-read.

VI

When his parents died and all power came into his hands, Gerald did not grow puffed up, as young men are wont who grow proud in an early lordship, nor did he change the modesty of heart he had begun. His power as lord grew, but his humble mind in no way grew insolent. But he was compelled to busy himself with ordering and defending the possessions which, as we have said, he had claimed by hereditary right, and to go out from that sweetness of heart which he had already in some measure tasted into the bitterness of earthly business. He bore it ill to leave this secret place of his heart, yet as soon as it was possible he hurried back to it. But when he seemed, as it were, to fall from the height of contemplation through earthly business, then, as is the way of the ibex, which in falling catches itself on its horns lest it die, so he, running back to the love of God or to the meditation of Holy Scripture, escaped the ruin of inward death: breathed upon already, I think, by that spirit of David with which David in his fervour gave no sleep to his eyes until, freed from the day's affairs, he should find a place for the Lord within himself (Ps 132:4–5), where, exulting secretly under his tongue, he might taste how sweet the Lord is (Ps 34:9).

Forte juxta illud Job rivos olei huic petra Christus fundebat, ne aquae multae possent exstinguere in eo lucernam charitatis. Et ad istam cordis refectionem defixus quidem inhiabat, sed domesticis tamen, et familiaribus exigebatur, ut otia contereret, et aliorum sese utilitatibus impenderet.

VII.

Mordaces igitur curas propter querimonias reclamantium invitus admittebat. Causabantur enim sui querelosa voce dicentes: Cur potens vir ab infimis personis quae res suas populabantur, violentias pateretur; addentes, quia dum explorarent quod ille se nollet ulcisci, quidquid illius juris esset mordacius devastarent: Sanctius et honestius esse, ut jus armatae militiae recognosceret, in hostes ferrum stringeret, violentorum audaciam frenaret; satius esse temerarios vi bellica premi, quam pagenses et inermes ab eisdem injuste opprimi. Quod Geraldus audiens, non assultu, sed ratione cohortatus, ad miserandum et subveniendum flectebatur. Totumque se divinae dispositioni ac misericordiae committens, tractabat qualiter pupillos et viduas juxta apostolicum praeceptum visitaret, ut se ab hoc saeculo immaculatum custodiret.

VIII.

Igitur ad insolentiam violentorum reprimendam se jam exercebat, id inprimis certatim observans, ut hostibus pacem, facillimamque reconciliationem promitteret. Quod utique studebat, ut vel in bono malum vinceret, vel si illi dissiderent, jam ante Dei oculos suae parti justitia plenius favisset. Et aliquando quidem mulcebat eos, et in pacem reducebat. Cum vero in ex plebilis malitia quorumdam pacificum hominem irrideret; jam tunc cordis acrimoniam exerens, conterebat molas iniqui, ut de dentibus eorum, juxta illud Job, auferret praedam. Non tamen, ut plerisque moris est, ulciscendi libidine percitus, aut vulgaris amore laudis illectus, sed pauperum dilectione, qui seipsos tueri nequibant infervens. Agebat autem hoc ne forte si inerti patientia torpuisset, praeceptum de cura pauperum neglexisse videretur. Jubet enim eripi pauperem, et de manu peccatoris egenum liberari. Jure igitur non dabat cornu peccatori. Aliquoties autem cum inevitabilis ei praeliandi necessitas incumberet, suis imperiosa voce praecepit, mucronibus gladiorum retroactis, hastas inantea dirigentes pugnarent.

Perhaps, as in that saying of Job, the rock, Christ, poured out for him streams of oil (Job 29:6), lest many waters should be able to quench the lamp of charity in him (Song 8:7). And he longed with fixed desire for this refreshment of the heart, but his household and his intimates pressed him to break off his leisure and spend himself for the good of others.

VII

So he admitted, against his will, gnawing cares because of the complaints of those who cried out to him. For his men complained, saying in querulous tones: "Why should a powerful man suffer violence from the lowest of persons, who are plundering his goods?" And they added that, since these had found out that he would not avenge himself, they laid waste the more savagely all that was his; that it was holier and more honourable for him to acknowledge the right of armed force, to draw the sword against his enemies and to curb the boldness of the violent; that it was better for the reckless to be put down by force of arms than for the country folk and the unarmed to be unjustly oppressed by them. Hearing this, Gerald, urged on not by impulse but by reason, was moved to pity and to help. And, committing himself wholly to God's ordering and mercy, he considered how he might visit the orphans and widows, according to the Apostle's precept, and so keep himself unspotted from this world (Jas 1:27).

VIII

So he now set himself to curb the insolence of the violent, taking care above all to offer his enemies peace and the readiest reconciliation. He strove for this so that either he might overcome evil with good or, if they refused, justice would already have taken his side more fully before the eyes of God. And sometimes, indeed, he would soften them and bring them back to peace. But when the insatiable malice of some mocked the peaceable man, then, putting forth the sharpness of his heart, he broke the jaws of the wicked, so as to snatch the prey from their teeth, according to that saying of Job (Job 29:17). Yet he did this not, as is the way of many, spurred by a lust for revenge or enticed by love of popular praise, but burning with love for the poor, who could not defend themselves. And he acted so lest, if he grew torpid in an idle patience, he should seem to have neglected the precept concerning the care of the poor. For it commands that the poor be rescued, and the needy delivered from the hand of the sinner (Ps 82:4). Rightly, then, he would not lend his horn to the sinner. Sometimes, however, when an unavoidable need to fight pressed upon him, he commanded his men in a voice of authority to fight with the points of their swords turned back and their spears held reversed before them.

Ridiculum hoc hostibus foret, nisi Geraldus vi divina roboratus, mox eisdem hostibus intolerabilis esset. Quod etiam suis valde videbatur ineptum ni experimento probassent, quod Geraldus, quem pietas in ipso praeliandi articulo vincebat invincibilis semper esset. Cum ergo viderent quod novo praeliandi genere mista pietate triumpharet, irrisionem vertebant in admirationem. Etiam victoriae securi, servabant alacres quod jubebat. Non enim auditum est aliquando quod vel eum, vel milites ejus, qui sub illius fidelitate pugnaverunt, eventus victoriae fefellisset. Sed et hoc certum constat, quod nec ipse quemlibet unquam vulneraverit, nec prorsus ab aliquo vulneratus est. Christus namque erat, ut scriptum est, in latere ejus, qui cordis ejus oculum inspiciens, pervidebat quod pro ejus amore tam beneficus erat, ut non hostes ipsos vellet appetere, sed solam in eis audaciam dementare. Nemo sane moveatur, quod homo justus usum praeliandi, qui incongruus religioni videtur, aliquando habuerit. Quisquis ille est, si justa lance causam discreverit, ne in hac quidem parte gloriam Geraldi probabit obfuscandam. Nonnulli namque Patrum cum et sanctissimi et patientissimi fuerint justitiae tamen causa exigente viriliter in adversariis arma corripiebant: ut Abraham, qui pro eruendo nepote ingentem hostium multitudinem fudit. Et rex David, qui etiam contra filium legiones direxit. Geraldus non aliena pervadendo, sed sua, quin potius suorum jura tuendo confligebat. Non nesciens rhinocerotem, id est, quemlibet potentem, loro religatum, ut glebas vallium, id est, humilium oppressores confringat. Neque, ut ait Apostolus, judex sine causa gladium portat; vindex enim Dei est. Licuit igitur laico homini in ordine pugnatorum posito gladium portare, ut inerme vulgus velut innocuum pecus a lupis, ut scriptum est, vespertinis defensaret. Et quos ecclesiastica censura subigere nequit, aut bellico jure, aut vi judiciaria compesceret. Non igitur obscurat ejus gloriam, quod pro causa Dei pugnavit, pro quo pugnat orbis terrarum contra insensatos; quin potius ad laudem ejus proficit, quod semper sine fraude vel insidiarum interventu palam vicerit, et tamen ita protectus a Deo sit, ut gladium suum, sicut supra diximus, nunquam humano sanguine cruentaverit. Porro autem, qui exemplo ejus adversus inimicos arma sumpserit, ejus quoque exemplo non propriam commoditatem, sed communem quaerat. Videas namque nonnullos qui pro amore laudis aut lucri, sese periculis audenter objiciunt, mala mundi pro mundo libenter sustinent: cujus dum amaritudines occurrunt ejus gaudia, ut ita dixerim, quaerentes perdunt. Sed istorum alia res est. Opus vero Geraldi lucidum est, quoniam de simplicitate cordis metitur.

IX.

This would have been laughable to the enemy, had not Gerald, strengthened by the power of God, at once become unbearable to those same enemies. It would have seemed very foolish to his own men too, had they not learnt by experience that Gerald, whom compassion overcame in the very moment of battle, was always unconquerable. So, when they saw that he triumphed by a new kind of warfare mingled with compassion, they turned their mockery into wonder. Sure of victory, too, they eagerly kept to what he commanded. For it was never heard that the fortune of victory failed either him or the soldiers who fought under his allegiance. And this too is quite certain: that he himself never wounded anyone, nor was he ever wounded by anyone. For Christ was, as it is written, at his side, who, looking into the eye of his heart, saw plainly that for love of him he was so kindly that he did not wish to strike at the enemies themselves, but only to bring their boldness to nothing. Let no one be troubled, then, that a just man sometimes made use of fighting, which seems unbecoming to religion. Whoever he may be, if he judges the case with an even balance, he will find that not even in this respect is Gerald's glory to be darkened. For some of the Fathers, though they were most holy and most patient, nevertheless, when the cause of justice required it, manfully took up arms against their adversaries: such as Abraham, who to rescue his nephew routed a huge multitude of enemies. And King David, who sent his legions even against his own son. Gerald fought not by invading what belonged to others, but by defending what was his own, or rather the rights of his people. He was not unaware that the rhinoceros, that is, any powerful man, is bound with a thong so that he may break the clods of the valleys (Job 39:10), that is, the oppressors of the lowly. Nor, as the Apostle says, does the judge bear the sword without cause; for he is God's avenger (Rom 13:4). It was lawful, then, for a layman placed in the order of fighting men to bear the sword, so as to defend the unarmed people, as a harmless flock, from the evening wolves, as it is written. And so restrain, either by the law of war or by the power of the courts, those whom the censure of the Church cannot bring to heel. It does not darken his glory, then, that he fought for the cause of God, for whom the whole world fights against the senseless (Wis 5:20); rather it adds to his praise that he always conquered openly, without deceit or the help of ambushes, and yet was so protected by God that, as we said above, he never stained his sword with human blood. Moreover, whoever takes up arms against his enemies by his example, let him by his example also seek not his own advantage but the common good. For you may see some who for love of praise or gain boldly throw themselves into dangers and gladly bear the evils of the world for the world's sake: and when its bitterness befalls them, they lose, so to speak, the very joys they were seeking. But theirs is another matter. Gerald's work, however, is full of light, for it is measured by simplicity of heart.

IX

Exploraverat antiquus deceptor mores adolescentis, et nescio quid divinum in eo commentatus, in invidiam exardescebat, et ob id quantis poterat tentationum fraudibus hunc obruere satagebat. Sed ille jam didicerat ad gremium divinae pietatis orando confugere, et illius commenta per Christi gratiam refutare. Hostis autem inexplebiliter invidus, cum experimento probasset, quod in eo per delectationem carnis regnare nequivisset, bellorum, ut supra diximus, turbines ei per improbos concitabat, ut arcem pietatis per illos in corde ejus oppugnaret, ad quam per seipsum irrumpere nequaquam valebat. Contra castitatem vero, ut ad ejus juveniora redeamus, quam isdem virgunculus certatim diligebat, versutissimus hostis acerrime succendebatur. Novum namque et inusitatum illi erat, quod aliquis juvenculus naufragium pudoris tutus evasisset. Libidinem igitur, quae ad decipiendum genus hominum, vel maxima, vel prima est ejus virtus, instanter illi suggerebat. Quam cum ille penitus refutaret, torquebatur hostis; quod nec ad fores quidem cordis illius hanc intromittere posset. Veternosam ob hoc repetit fraudem, et ad instrumentum deceptionis, quo vel Adam, vel posteri ejus maxime decipi solent, ad mulierem dico, recurrit. Quamdam enim juvenculam ejus oculis, ut fertur, ingessit. Qui dum in ea colorem nitidulae cutis incautus attendere mox in delectatione illius mollescere coepit. O si protinus intellectu conspexisset quid sub cute latebat! quia nimirum nihil carnis pulchrum est, nisi fucus pellis. Avertit ille oculos, sed species per ipsos cordi impressa remansit. Itaque angebatur, illiciebatur, et caeco igni adurebatur. Tandem victus mittit ad matrem puellae, qui se nuntiat nocte venturum. Secutus ille nuntium, violenter ad interitum animae festinabat. Interim vero, sicut solent captivi inter vincula, pristinae libertatis gementes memorari, suspirat Geraldus, et consuetam divinae dilectionis dulcedinem recolebat. Et licet aegro affectu, rogabat Deum, ne se illa tentatio penitus absorberet. Venitur ad condictum, intrat hospitium puella, quia frigus erat, stetit in facie juxta focum: Geraldum vero jam divina gratia respexerat. Cui tam deformis eadem puella mox visa est, ut non crederet eam esse quam viderat, donec pater ejus ipsam esse assereret. At ille intelligens id non sine divino nutu fieri, quod eadem juvencula non eamdem venustatem in ejus oculis haberet, mox ad Christi misericordiam se recollegit, et profunde suspirans concitus equum ascendit, et nil cunctatus, gratias agens Deo, raptim abire properavit. Nimius algor frigoris tunc forte ingruerat, cui se tota nocte torreri permisit, ut scilicet parvae delectationis teporem glacialis asperitas puniret. Jubet autem protinus patri, ut hanc nuptui traderet.

The ancient deceiver had spied out the young man's ways, and, guessing that there was something divine in him, he burned with envy, and for that reason strove with all the deceits of temptation he could to overwhelm him. But he had already learnt to flee in prayer to the bosom of God's mercy, and through the grace of Christ to refute the other's devices. And the enemy, insatiably envious, having found by experience that he could not reign in him through the pleasure of the flesh, stirred up against him, as we said above, whirlwinds of war through wicked men, so as to assail through them the citadel of piety in his heart, which by himself he could in no way break into. But against his chastity, to return to his younger years, which the young lad loved with zeal, the most cunning enemy was fiercely inflamed. For it was a new and unwonted thing to him that any youth should escape unharmed the shipwreck of purity. So he pressed upon him insistently with lust, which is either the greatest or the first of his powers for deceiving the human race. And when he rejected it utterly, the enemy was in torment, because he could not even bring it to the door of his heart. For this reason he went back to his age-old deceit and had recourse to the instrument of deception by which Adam and his posterity are most often deceived: to woman, I mean. For he thrust before his eyes, it is said, a certain young girl. And as he unwarily gazed at the colour of her fair skin, he soon began to soften in delight of her. Oh, if only he had at once seen with his understanding what lay hidden beneath the skin! For surely nothing of the flesh is beautiful but the paint of the hide. He turned away his eyes, but the image they had pressed upon his heart remained. And so he was in anguish, he was enticed, and he was scorched by a hidden fire. At length, overcome, he sent to the girl's mother someone to announce that he would come by night. Following after the messenger, he was hastening headlong to the ruin of his soul. Meanwhile, as captives in their chains are wont to remember their former freedom with groans, Gerald sighed, and called to mind the familiar sweetness of the love of God. And though with a sick desire, he prayed God that this temptation might not swallow him up altogether. He came to the appointed place; the girl entered the house, and, because it was cold, stood facing him by the fire: but the grace of God had already looked upon Gerald. To him that same girl at once appeared so ugly that he would not believe she was the one he had seen, until her father declared that it was she. Then he, understanding that it was not without the will of God that the girl no longer had the same beauty in his eyes, at once gathered himself back to the mercy of Christ, and, sighing deeply, quickly mounted his horse and without delay, giving thanks to God, made haste to be gone. A bitter cold had happened to set in, and he let himself be frozen in it the whole night, so that the icy harshness might punish the warmth of a small pleasure. And at once he ordered the father to give her in marriage.

Quam et libertate donavit, et quoddam praediolum jure testamentario concessit. Fortassis autem fragilitatem suam suspectus, ejus accelerari nuptias fecit. Quapropter eleemosynae causa, et dote libertatis donavit, ne illius matrimonium tardaretur. Verum tu cedrus Paradisi futurus quomodo sic agitari potuisti? Certe ut disceres qualis ex teipso esses. Nam et ille tuus patronus, apostolorum videlicet princeps, cui postea et teipsum, et omnia tua commisisti, non se satis cognosceret, nisi tentationis articulus obrepsisset. Nunc vero tu expertus qualis homo per se, qualis per Dei gratiam sit, compati supplicum tuorum fragilitati ne dedigneris. Noverimus autem quia non est inconsuetum sanctis tentari. Insertis enim corruptae naturae vitiis nascuntur, scilicet ut sicubi certent, certantes vincant, vincentes coronentur. Interest autem quis delectationem vitii recipiens succumbat, aut quis eidem repugnans vincat, ac delectatione virtutum potius mentem occupans, venenum pravae delectationis, quod ad horam forte insumpserit, antidoto piae supplicationis a se repellat. At adolescens hic periculi experimento discretior, sicut aliquis in lubrico post impactionem pedis, cautius incedebat, satis cavens ut cordi ejus nihil oculi nuntiarent, unde mors ad ejus animam per fenestras eorum subintraret.

X.

Caeterum dulcis Dominus ac rectus, qui servum suum Geraldum a stupro, pietatis dulcedine servavit, punire eum pro concupiscentia, rectitudinis censura non omisit. Elapso quippe non multorum dierum tempore, per unum et eo amplius annum glaucomate caecicatis reum suum contrivit, ut oculi qui illicita viderant, nec licita quidem ad tempus videre possent. Cum quidem nec in palpebris, nec in prunulis ejus, perpera quaelibet appareret. Noverant familiares caecitatem, et hanc extraneis perspicaces pupillae summo studio dissimulabant. Ille vero sub manu ferientis Domini sese humilians, tanquam ad ejus flagella paratus tacebat. Medicinam sane corpoream nec refutabat, neque urgenter quaerebat, praestolans patienter, quando vel qualiter Dominus suus expleta feriendi voluntate verbera submovere voluisset. Noverat enim quod omnis filius flagellatur. Internus vero arbiter etiam minimas in electis suis maculas nunc purgat, ne sit in eis quod postmodum oculos ejus offendat. Et ob id flagellum hoc eidem intulit, quo mens juvenilis et de praeterito purgaretur, et in futuro defaecatior servaretur. Cum ergo Deus explesset in eo voluntatem suam, flagellum dimovit, et lucem ejus oculis reparavit.

He gave her her freedom, and granted her a small estate by deed. Perhaps, distrustful of his own frailty, he had her marriage hastened. That is why, by way of alms, he endowed her with her freedom as a dowry, so that her marriage should not be delayed. But you, who were to be a cedar of Paradise, how could you be so shaken? Surely so that you might learn what you were of yourself. For that patron of yours too, the prince of the apostles, to whom you afterwards committed both yourself and all you had, would not have known himself well enough had not the moment of temptation stolen upon him. But now that you have learnt what a man is by himself and what he is by the grace of God, do not disdain to have compassion on the frailty of those who call upon you. Let us know, then, that it is nothing unusual for saints to be tempted. For they are born with the vices of corrupt nature grafted into them, so that, wherever they strive, striving they may conquer, and conquering they may be crowned. But it makes all the difference whether a man takes in the pleasure of vice and succumbs, or resists it and conquers, filling his mind rather with delight in the virtues, and drives from him by the antidote of devout prayer the poison of wicked pleasure which he may have swallowed for an hour. And this young man, made wiser by the experience of danger, like someone on slippery ground after a stumble, walked more warily, taking good care that his eyes should report nothing to his heart by which death might creep in to his soul through their windows (Jer 9:20).

X

But the Lord, sweet and upright (Ps 25:8), who had saved his servant Gerald from fornication by the sweetness of his mercy, did not fail, by the judgement of his justice, to punish him for his desire. For when no great number of days had passed, he struck his culprit with the blindness of a cataract for a year and more, so that the eyes which had looked on what was unlawful could not, for a time, see even what was lawful. And yet no defect at all appeared either on his eyelids or in his pupils. His household knew of the blindness, and his pupils, clear to look at, hid it from strangers with the greatest care. But he, humbling himself under the hand of the Lord who struck him, kept silent, as one ready for his scourges. He did not, indeed, refuse bodily medicine, nor did he seek it urgently, but waited patiently for when or how his Lord, having fulfilled his will to strike, would be pleased to take away the blows. For he knew that every son is scourged (Heb 12:6). The inward Judge cleanses even the smallest stains in his elect here and now, lest there be anything in them afterwards to offend his eyes. And for that reason he brought this scourge upon him, so that his youthful mind might be both cleansed of the past and kept purer for the future. So when God had fulfilled his will in him, he removed the scourge and restored the light to his eyes.

XI.

Jam vero ille, quasi excoctis per afflictionem sensibus, vitam satis honestam ducebat, et medioximum discretionis callem in neutra parte pronior agebat. Scilicet ut saeculari negotio sua munia non fraudaret, nec a religionis cultu terrena se occupatione tricaret: honestiores viros sibi familiarius adjungebat, et clericos melioris famae, cum quibus domi vel foris divinum officium, aut simul, aut viritim exercebat. Venerat Dominica dies, et ille necesse habebat ad quoddam placitum ex condictu venire, quo scilicet nobiles quidam viri conventuri erant. Quos ne tardius veniens demorari videretur, manicare studuit, et priusquam illucesceret proficisci. Cavebat quippe in hoc turgidum fastum, ne se cuiquam tardum aut difficilem praestaret, ut moris est nunc quibusdam, qui velut de thalamo procedentes, prius ebrietati se mancipant quam amicis praestent, contra illud Scripturae dicentis: Vae terrae cujus principes mane comedunt. Atqui Geraldus non ita. Valde enim indigne ducebat, ut qui multis praelatus erat et dominus, vitiorum dominationi fieret servus. Jejunus ibat ad placitum, ne mersa sobrietate rationis judicio caruisset. Inquirebat autem quid Christi, quid pacis, quod commune bonum praeferret. Post nocturnas autem laudes si quolibet proficiscendum erat, missarum subsequebatur solemnitas: ita divinae clementiae se suosque committens abibat. Praedicta sane Dominica, quoniam necesse fuerat ante auroram proficiscere [proficisci], missam praeterierat: quam scilicet expleto placito cum speraret audire, nusquam possibile fuit. Moestus igitur admodum discurrebat, quaerens ubi aliqua spes reperiendi fuisset. Cum vero nequidquam, advocat clericos qui tum forte aderant, et cum his omnes psalmistanos milites, dicens: Mea proprie culpa est, quod haec sancta dies in vanum nobis transiet. Sed est quod ad laudem Dei faciamus, ne diem sanctam inaniter expendisse videamur. Dixerat haec, et psalterium a capite, nil mortale sonans, cum eisdem percucurrit. Ex hoc jam sibi consuetudinem statuit ut psalterium pene quotidie recitaret. Quo videlicet decurso, velut spiritaliter epulatus, gaudere videbatur, ut solet aliquis ambitione exsatiata laetari.

XII.

XI

From then on, his senses refined, as it were, by affliction, he led a very honourable life, and kept to the middle path of discretion, leaning to neither side. That is, so that he should neither defraud worldly business of its due nor entangle himself in earthly occupation to the neglect of religion, he joined to himself as close companions the more honourable men and clerics of better repute, with whom, at home or abroad, he performed the divine office, either together or each on his own. A Sunday had come, and he had to attend a court by appointment, at which certain noblemen were to meet. So that he should not seem to keep them waiting by coming late, he took care to rise early and to set out before daybreak. For in this he guarded against swollen pride, lest he should show himself slow or difficult to anyone, as is now the way with some who, coming forth as from their bridal chamber, give themselves up to drunkenness before they attend to their friends, against that saying of Scripture: Woe to the land whose princes eat in the morning (Eccl 10:16). But not so Gerald. For he thought it most unworthy that one who was set over many and was their lord should become a slave to the lordship of vices. He went fasting to the court, lest, with his sobriety drowned, he should lack the judgement of reason. And he would ask what was of Christ, what was for peace, and what favoured the common good. If he had to set out anywhere after the night Office of Lauds, the solemnity of Mass followed; and so, committing himself and his men to the mercy of God, he would depart. On that Sunday, however, since he had had to set out before dawn, he had missed Mass; and when he hoped to hear it once the court was over, it proved nowhere possible. So, very sorrowful, he went hither and thither, looking for any place where there might be some hope of finding one. But when it was all in vain, he called the clerics who happened to be there, and with them all the knights who knew the psalms, and said: "It is my own fault that this holy day is passing in vain for us. But there is something we can do to the praise of God, so that we may not seem to have spent the holy day to no purpose." So he spoke, and with them he ran through the psalter from the beginning, uttering nothing mortal. From then on he made it his custom to recite the psalter almost every day. And when he had gone through it, as though he had feasted spiritually, he seemed to rejoice, as a man is wont to be glad when his ambition is satisfied.

XII

Manupretium videtur, si de corporis ejus habitudine quaedam proferamus. Nam licet caro non prosit, licet fallax gratia sit pulchritudo, tamen quia libidinis atque superbiae fomes esse quibusdam solet, laudandum est in hoc viro quod et venustus fuit, et se nec libidinis coeno foedavit. Geraldus igitur staturae mediocris, et totus, ut dicitur, euphormis, id est bene formatus. Et cum unumquodque membrum sua pulchritudo compsisset, collum tamen ita candidulum, et quasi ad normam videndi decusatum habebat, ut vix aliud tam gratiosum vidisse te putares. Elegantiam sane corporis venustas animi decorabat. Unde in frontispicio ejus cordis habitudo subrutilabat. Hoc et Scriptura testatur, dicens quod risus dentium, et occursus faciei, qualitatem interioris hominis demonstrat. Gustaverat jam quoniam dulcis est Dominus, et sponsi coelestis quoniam suavis amplexus; et idcirco pulchram animae speciem non patiebatur in oculis ejusdem sponsi delectatione carnis illecebrari. Solebant sui collum ejus laetantes deosculari, nec tamen indignabatur illis, quoniam superbia, quae semper intrectabilis est, sedem sibi vindicare non poterat. Erat praeterea corporis pernicitate multum velox, et virium robore validus. Quod idcirco fit commemorandum ut appareat quoniam laudabilis est qui, materiam superbiendi habens, sese in humilitate depresserit. E contra, quoniam vituperabiles, qui parum vel nil horum habentes intumescunt. Postquam vero mentalibus se studiis plenius applicavit, illa corporis agilitas prorsus emarcuit. Tum praeterea gratissimus erat alloquio communi, et in tractandis ac disponendis rebus acumine consilii profundus. Et quanquam scurrilitatis verba caveret, seria tamen ita proferebat, ut etiam suis in hoc placeret. Nec in proferendis minis erat nimis dicax, nec in reservandis injuriis tenax. Sed neque ad beneficia quaelibet danda facilis, neque ad haec [nec ab his] quae dederat auferenda mutabilis. Quod vero affirmative diceret, hoc indubitanter explebat, nisi forte peccatum esse dignosceret.

XIII.

Studebat autem ita sobrietati, ut non solum se, sed etiam suos a temulentia custodiret. Nam convivae ejus, neque voraces erant, neque bibaces. Neque enim vel hospites unquam ad bibendum cogebat, neque numerosius quam omnes caeteri convivae, potum hauribat. Itaque sic temperabat convivium, ut ab eo nec temulenti surgerent, nec subtristes. Et cum hospites, ad quorum humanitatem se totum impendebat, reficere nonnunquam mane fecisset, ipse tamen non ante horam diei tertiam, vel in jejunio aute nonam reficiebat.

It seems worth the labour to set down something about the appearance of his body. For although the flesh profits nothing (Jn 6:63), although grace is deceitful and beauty vain (Prov 31:30), yet since these are apt to be kindling for lust and pride in some, it is to be praised in this man that he was handsome and yet did not soil himself in the mire of lust. Gerald, then, was of middle height, and, as they say, wholly euphormis, that is, well formed. And though each of his limbs was graced with its own beauty, his neck was so white and so perfectly shaped, as if to a rule, that you would think you had scarcely seen anything so comely. The beauty of his soul adorned the elegance of his body. So the disposition of his heart shone out upon his countenance. Scripture too bears witness to this, saying that the laughter of the teeth and the bearing of the face show the quality of the inner man (Sir 19:30). He had already tasted how sweet the Lord is, and how gentle the embrace of the heavenly Bridegroom; and for that reason he would not suffer the fair form of his soul to be defiled in the eyes of that Bridegroom by the allurement of the flesh. His people would joyfully kiss his neck, and yet he did not take it ill of them, for pride, which is always unapproachable, could find no seat in him. He was, besides, very swift in the nimbleness of his body and powerful in the strength of his limbs. This is worth recalling so that it may be seen how praiseworthy is the man who, having matter for pride, has kept himself low in humility. And, by contrast, how blameworthy are those who swell up while having little or nothing of these things. But after he applied himself more fully to the pursuits of the mind, that agility of body withered away altogether. He was, moreover, most pleasant in ordinary conversation, and deep in the acuteness of his counsel in handling and ordering affairs. And though he avoided buffoonery in his speech, he spoke of serious things in such a way that in this too he pleased his people. He was neither too free with threats nor tenacious in nursing injuries. But neither was he quick to grant favours of any kind, nor fickle in taking back those he had granted. And whatever he affirmed, he carried out without fail, unless perhaps he perceived that it was a sin.

XIII

He was so devoted to sobriety that he kept not only himself but his people too from drunkenness. For his table companions were neither gluttons nor drinkers. He never pressed even his guests to drink, nor did he himself take more draughts than all the other guests. So he ordered the meal that no one rose from it either drunk or downcast. And though he sometimes had his guests, to whose kindly entertainment he gave himself wholly, served a meal in the morning, he himself did not eat before the third hour of the day, or, on fast days, before the ninth.

Illud Scripturae praeceptum observabat beatus princeps, qui in tempore suo comedit ad reficiendum et non ad luxuriam. Quid enim ille convenientius observaret quam ebrietatem, quae praeter hoc quod mors animae est, et a regno Dei, teste Apostolo, sicut homicidium, excludit, etiam corpori multum noxia probatur. Inde enim virium debilitas, inde membrorum tremor, inde sensuum enervitas, inde senectus intempestiva conqueritur. Visus, loquela, vultus dehonestatus, et omne religionis decus depravatur. Nemo quippe valet simul vino et Spiritu sancto repleri, et nullo pacto Jerusalem ab igne fornicationis valet tueri, si principem coquorum Nabuzardan ab ejus obsidione noluerit arcere.

XIV.

Semper sedilia pauperibus coram se parabantur, et aliquoties mensae apponebantur eis, ut per seipsum videret quid vel quantum ad refectionem eis daretur. Nec certus recipiendi numerus tenebatur, sed cum forte plures adessent, quorum personae duntaxat aptae ad recipiendum viderentur, plures ad eum introducebantur. Nullus vero unquam ab ostio sine datu eleemosynae excludebatur. Ministri procurabant, ut ad manum semper haberet fercula, quae ipse eis daret. Potus quoque afferebatur, quem inspectum ac praegustatum transmittebat, ut ipsi primo biberent, quibus et sui panis medietatem dabat. In his utique Christum se suscipere credens, et ipsum reverenter in his honorans, hunc ad se per ipsos intromittebat, cujus refrigerium est, juxta prophetam, reficere lassum. Quam susceptionem mercedis male sibimet illi imminuunt, qui licet foras eleemosynam transmittant, pauperes tamen ad se non introducunt. Nam Christum, qui dicit: Hospes eram, et collegistis me, ita a suis domibus excludere videntur. Ut autem Pharisaeorum justitiam, juxta praeceptum Domini, praeiret, nonam partem de redditibus agrorum reponi seorsum faciebat. Inde in quibusdam suis domibus pauperes alebantur: hinc eis indumenta vel calceamenta praebebantur. Obviantibus sibi nummos, quos ad hoc ipse ferebat, aut per se, aut per credulum ministrum clam jugiter ministrabat. Aliquoties cum pro aliquo homine nummi erogarentur, ipse cum indigentibus accipiebat, gaudens et exoptans pauperibus assimilari; quos tamen statim dabat, multam divini officii functionem pro accepto munusculo recompensans.

XV.

The blessed prince kept that precept of Scripture, as one who eats in due season, for refreshment and not for riotousness (Eccl 10:17). For what more fitting thing could he guard against than drunkenness, which, besides being the death of the soul and shutting men out of the kingdom of God, as the Apostle testifies, like murder, is also shown to be very harmful to the body? Hence the complaints of failing strength, trembling limbs, dulled senses and untimely old age. Sight, speech and countenance are disgraced, and every grace of religion is corrupted. No one, indeed, can be filled at once with wine and with the Holy Spirit, and no one can by any means guard Jerusalem from the fire of fornication if he will not keep Nebuzaradan, the chief of the cooks, from besieging it.

XIV

Seats were always set before him for the poor, and sometimes tables were set for them, so that he might see for himself what and how much was given them for their meal. Nor was any fixed number kept of those to be received, but when more happened to be present whose persons seemed fit to be received, more were brought in to him. No one was ever turned away from the door without being given alms. His servants saw to it that he always had dishes at hand which he himself might give them. Drink too was brought, which he looked at and tasted and then sent on, so that they might drink first; and to them he also gave half of his own bread. Believing that in them he received Christ, and reverently honouring him in them, through them he brought in to himself the One whose refreshment, according to the prophet, is to refresh the weary (Is 28:12). This reward for hospitality is foolishly diminished by those who, though they send alms out of doors, do not bring the poor in to themselves. For in this way they seem to shut out of their houses Christ, who says: I was a stranger and you took me in (Mt 25:35). And so that his justice might exceed that of the Pharisees, according to the Lord's command, he had a ninth part of the revenues of his lands set aside. From it the poor were fed in some of his houses; from it they were given clothing and shoes. To those who met him on the way he constantly gave, secretly, either himself or through a trusted servant, the coins he carried for this purpose. Sometimes, when coins were being given out on someone's behalf, he took them himself along with the needy, rejoicing and longing to be made like the poor; but he gave them away at once, repaying the little gift he had received with much performance of the divine office.

XV

Refectionis tempore, ingens illi reverentia servabatur. Non ibi loquacitas aut scurrilitas praevalebat, sed vel necessarii, vel honesti sermones, vel certe divini eloquii dicebantur. Per omne enim tempus semel in die prandebat, nisi forte aestivis diebus, cum prosius * aliquid, aut crudum coenaret. Ad ejus mensam primo diutius legebatur; sed ut saecularibus condescenderet, lectionem interdum suspendens, quaerebat a clericis quid in ea diceretur: ab ipsis tamen quos posse noverat respondere. Siquidem nobiles clericos nutriebat, quibus et morum honestas, et eruditio sensus certatim adhibebatur. Pubescentibus enim austeriorem se praebebat, dicens quod illius aetatis tempus valde sit periculosum, quando quilibet adolescens maternae vocis similitudinem, vel faciei deponens, paternam incipit assumere vocem vel vultum; et qui se tunc servare studeret, facile dehinc carnis incentiva superaret. Cum ergo illi quos de lectione requirebat, illum rogarent ut ipse potius loqueretur, tandem solebat proferre quod ei non pomposa dissertatio, sed docta simplicitas ministrabat. Interim vero cum e vestigio non deessent, qui facetias quasdam, ut assolet, aut jocularitates moverent, non eas mordaci indignatione, sed quasi itidem jocando compescebat. Nunquam tamen vanitatem coram se protrahi sinebat. Noverat enim quod omnibus in commune Christianis jubeatur ut unusquisque cum silentio suum panem manducet. In refectionis autem fine lectionem semper lector iterabat. Ita Geraldus vel de Deo loquens, vel Deo sibi per lectionem loquente, maximum refectionis tempus expendebat. Viderint illi hoc ejus exemplum qui, contra redargutionem prophetae, citharam et lyram ludendo habent in conviviis suis. Gaudent lusibus, et exsultant ad vocem organi. Opus Domini non respiciunt, quoniam inter voces perstrepentium nec saltem clamorem pauperis audiunt. Quid enim? Verum est quod Christus veritas dixit, quod scilicet, ex abundantia cordis os loquitur. Isti qui semper de saecularibus, et vel parum, vel raro de Deo loquuntur, palam est quid amplius ament, vel quid in cordibus eorum abundet. Qui utinam sicut Geraldus novissima providerent, et sive manducarent, sive biberent, omnia, juxta praeceptum Apostoli, ad laudem Dei facerent. Tribus feriis in hebdomada, et omni tempore quod abstinentiae dicatum est, a carnibus abstinebat. Si tamen in eisdem feriis festivitas annualis evenisset, abstinentiam ita solvebat, ut in qualibet absoluta feria ad vicem illius quam solverat, itidem abstineret; cum et unum pauperem extra solitos obtentu illius festivitatis reficeceret.

At mealtimes great reverence was kept in his presence. Chatter and buffoonery did not prevail there, but talk was either of needful or of honourable things, or indeed of the divine word. For at all seasons he dined once a day, unless perhaps on summer days, when he would take something light or uncooked in the evening. At his table there was first a long reading; but, to come down to the level of the laymen, he would sometimes break off the reading and ask the clerics what was being said in it, though only those whom he knew to be able to answer. For he brought up noble clerics, on whom both uprightness of conduct and the training of the mind were zealously bestowed. With those reaching manhood he showed himself the more severe, saying that the time of that age is very dangerous, when a youth puts off the likeness of his mother's voice or face and begins to take on his father's voice and look; and that whoever strove to keep himself pure then would easily overcome the incitements of the flesh thereafter. So when those whom he questioned about the reading asked him rather to speak himself, he would at length bring forth what no pompous discourse, but a learned simplicity, supplied him. Meanwhile, since there were never lacking those who at once began some witticisms or jests, as usually happens, he checked them not with biting indignation but as if jesting in turn. Yet he never allowed idle talk to be drawn out in his presence. For he knew that all Christians alike are commanded each to eat his own bread in silence (2 Thess 3:12). And at the end of the meal the reader always took up the reading again. So Gerald spent most of the mealtime either speaking of God or with God speaking to him through the reading. Let them take note of this example of his who, against the prophet's rebuke, have the harp and the lyre played at their feasts (Is 5:12). They delight in sports, and rejoice at the sound of the organ (Job 21:12). They regard not the work of the Lord (Is 5:12), for amid the voices of the revellers they do not even hear the cry of the poor. What then? True is what Christ, who is the Truth, said: that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Mt 12:34). As for those who always talk of worldly things and of God little or seldom, it is plain what they love more, or what abounds in their hearts. Would that, like Gerald, they took thought for their last end, and whether they ate or drank, did all things, according to the Apostle's precept, to the praise of God (1 Cor 10:31). On three days of the week, and throughout every season dedicated to abstinence, he abstained from meat. If, however, a yearly feast fell on one of those days, he relaxed the abstinence in such a way that on some free day he abstained in place of the one he had relaxed, and, on account of that feast, also fed one poor man beyond the usual number.

Sin vero jejunium die Dominica evenisset, nequaquam illud solvebat, nec sub hac occasione praeteribat, sed praecedenti sabbato solemnitatem jejunii persolvebat. Sin vero talis ejus sancto homini videretur incongruus, noverit ille quem hoc forte movet, quod omnia munda sint mundis, id est, sine concupiscentiae vitio comedentibus. Et qui non qualitatem cibi, sed necessitatem, vel appetitum quo sumitur, internus judex attendit. Quod Elias propheta et Esau suo probant exemplo. Licuit igitur homini laico, praesertim tam justo, licitis uti; quod non licet eis quibus id sua professio contradicit. Nam illa paradisi arbor non idcirco mortem intulit, quod mala esset sed quod super interdictum fuit praesumpta.

XVI.

Porro vestibus laneis, aut lineis, non isto modo quo nunc a filiis Belial praesumptum et excogitatum est, qui utique sine jugo sunt, sed antiquo more semper usus est, ita duntaxat contextis, ut nec affectata pompa redolerent, nec plebeia rusticitate notarentur. Sericinis vero vel pretiosis, nec obtentu quidem cujuslibet festivitatis, nec alicujus praesentia marchionis, plus solito se comere studuit. Reminiculum illud quo solet ensis renibus astringi, per viginti annos, si tandiu durare posset, non mutare aut renovare curabat. Quid dicam de balteo vel ambitiosis cinctoriis, aut fibula, de equorum phaleris, quandoquidem ille non solum portare aurum, sed nec habere quidem pateretur? Non enim putavit aurum robur suum, neque in multitudine divitiarum, sed in Deo gloriatus est. Ut religionis solent etiam professores, qui ad excolendum corporis cultum, inverecundo et infatigabili studio sollicitantur: id toto nisu affectantes, ut reverentiam, quam sibi moribus tollunt, vestis pretiosae saltem obtentu ab intuentibus emendicent. Quibus utique expediret ut ad cultum animae, quae jugiter pulchrescere poterat, potius vacarent.

XVII.

Erat autem pauperibus et injuriam passis liber ad eum semper accessus, nec ad causam suam ei commendandam deferre munusculum aliquod indigebant. Plus quippe oculis ejus unusquisque suam necessitatem plenius allegabat, quanto illum arctius indigentem vidisset. Jam vero benignitas ejus non solum vicinis, sed etiam longinquis regionibus resonabat. Et quia noverant omnes quam beneficus erga omnes esset, multi per eum suas necessitates expediebant. Nec dedignabatur aut per se aut per suos pauperum negotiis interesse, et, ut potis erat, suffragium praebere.

But if a fast fell on a Sunday, he by no means relaxed it, nor let it go by on that pretext, but kept the solemn fast on the Saturday before. And if such a diet seems unfitting for a holy man, let him whom this perhaps troubles know that to the clean all things are clean (Titus 1:15), that is, to those who eat without the vice of concupiscence. And that the inward Judge looks not to the kind of food but to the need, or the appetite, with which it is taken. This the prophet Elijah and Esau prove by their example. It was lawful, then, for a layman, especially one so just, to use what was lawful; which is not lawful for those whose profession forbids it. For that tree of Paradise brought death not because it was bad, but because it was presumed upon against a prohibition.

XVI

As for clothing, he always wore wool or linen, not in the fashion that has now been presumed upon and devised by the sons of Belial, who are indeed without a yoke, but in the old way, woven only so that it neither smacked of studied display nor was marked by common rusticity. With silks or costly garments he never took care to adorn himself more than usual, not even for the sake of some feast or in the presence of some marquis. The strap by which the sword is usually bound to the loins he did not trouble to change or renew for twenty years, if it could last so long. What shall I say of baldrics or showy belts, or brooches, or the trappings of horses, since he would suffer not only not to wear gold but not even to own it? For he did not think gold his strength (Job 31:24), nor did he glory in the multitude of riches (Ps 49:7), but in God. Unlike even some professed religious, who are anxious with shameless and untiring zeal to adorn the body, striving with all their might to beg from onlookers, at least by the show of costly clothing, the reverence they rob themselves of by their conduct. It would surely profit them rather to give their time to adorning the soul, which could grow ever more beautiful.

XVII

The poor and those who had suffered wrong always had free access to him, and they had no need to bring him any little gift to commend their cause to him. Indeed, the more needy he saw each one to be, the more fully did his need plead with Gerald's eyes. By now his kindness was spoken of not only in neighbouring but in distant regions too. And because all knew how kindly he was towards everyone, many settled their needs through him. Nor did he disdain, either in person or through his men, to take part in the affairs of the poor and to lend them his support as far as he could.

Saepe enim cum inter discordes dura grassari bella cognovisset, die qua ventilanda erat causa, faciebat pro eis missas celebrari. Et quibus non occurrebat humanitus subvenire, divinum illis imprecabatur auxilium. Neque hoc patiebatur, ut quilibet senior beneficia a suo vasso pro qualibet animi commotione posset auferre; sed, deducta ad medium causa, partim prece, partim imperio, commotionem exasperati animi reprimebat. Rectitudinis ejus vigorem hac una re tantum putares acclivem. Quoties pauper apud potentiorem forte obnoxius teneretur, instabat, ut imbecilliorem ita sustentaret, quatenus fortiorem sine laesione fregisset. Caeterum, veraciter justitiam esuriens, hanc non solum in suis, sed etiam in extraneis laedi non patiebatur.

XVIII.

Justitiae sitis, ut esuries, ordinatim in eo flagrabat. Non enim aut simplicitas aut benignitas asperitatem zeli deserebat, aut asperitas zeli simplicitatis benignitatem. Nimirum ut de Job dicitur, quod simplex erat et rectus, et iste vir, quamvis pauperibus multum consuleret, tamen ad puniendum reos non usquequaque dormitavit: videlicet non ignorans quibusdam divinitus esse datum, ut crimen quod impunitum remanere non potest, temporali supplicio luant. Unde et rex David moriens Joab et Semei jubet puniri. Quamdam silvam latrones occupaverant, qui rapinas et caedes transeuntibus atque vicinis inferebant. Quod Geraldus audiens, ad capiendum eos protinus direxit. Ac tum forte rusticanus quidam ad eos metu cogente venerat. Milites vero qui eos comprehenderunt, timentes ne forte domnus Geraldus aut eos dimisisset, aut cur eos impunitos sibi ostenderent inculpasset, oculos omnium protinus avulserunt. Qua occasione factum est ut ille rusticanus una caecaretur. Qui dehinc in Tolosanum pagum recessit. Longo post tempore, cum de eo domnus Geraldus audisset quia latronum socius non fuerit, valde contristatus est, requirens vel si viveret, vel quo isset. Comperto autem quod ad Tolosanam provinciam discessisset, centum solidos, ut aiunt, ei transmisit, jubens portitori ut ejus vice veniam ab eo postularet.

XIX.

Often, when he knew that hard quarrels were raging between men at odds, on the day their case was to be tried he had Masses celebrated for them. And for those whom he could not help by human means he called down the help of God. Nor would he suffer any lord to take away fiefs from his vassal on account of some fit of temper; but, bringing the case into the open, partly by entreaty, partly by command, he would calm the agitation of the angered mind. In this one thing alone might you have thought that the firmness of his justice leaned to one side. Whenever a poor man happened to be held liable to a more powerful one, he would press to sustain the weaker in such a way as to break the stronger without harming him. For, truly hungering after justice (Mt 5:6), he would not suffer it to be violated, whether among his own people or among strangers.

XVIII

The thirst for justice, like the hunger, burned in him in due measure. For neither did simplicity or kindness abandon the sternness of zeal, nor the sternness of zeal the kindness of simplicity. Just as it is said of Job that he was simple and upright (Job 1:1), so this man, though he cared much for the poor, was yet by no means drowsy in punishing the guilty, knowing well that it is granted by God to some to atone with a temporal punishment for a crime that cannot remain unpunished. So King David too, on his deathbed, ordered Joab and Shimei to be punished. Robbers had taken over a certain forest and were robbing and murdering travellers and neighbours. When Gerald heard of it, he at once sent men to capture them. And it happened that a certain countryman had just then come to them, driven by fear. But the soldiers who caught them, fearing that the lord Gerald might either let them go or blame them for bringing them before him unpunished, at once put out the eyes of them all. And so it came about that the countryman was blinded along with them. He afterwards withdrew to the Toulouse country. A long time afterwards, when the lord Gerald heard of him that he had not been a companion of the robbers, he was greatly grieved, and asked whether he was alive and where he had gone. And when he learnt that he had gone to the province of Toulouse, he sent him, so they say, a hundred shillings, bidding the bearer ask his pardon on his behalf.

XIX

Itidem quam clementer consolaretur afflictos, aut quantum saepe misereretur obnoxiis, hoc liqueat exemplo. Quemdam presbyterum ita vicini sui crescente litigio contriverant, ut ejus oculos eruerent. Quem scilicet senior verbis multum consolatus est, suadens illi patientiam. Sed ne verborum consolatio exilis videretur, quamdam sui juris ecclesiam, facto solemniter testamento, eidem contradidit. Aliquantulum tempus fluxerat, et unus ex his qui presbytero vim intulerant, ab officialibus comprehensus est, et in carcere clausus. Quod et seniori tanquam inde gavisuro protinus nuntiatum est. Qui statim quasi desiderio puniendi festinans, tetendit ad carceris locum. Aliae vero causae emerserant, quas necesse erat in crastinum expedire. Sub hac ergo occasione jubet reum usque tunc demorari. Sero autem cum officiales ad sua discessissent, praecepit clam custodi, quatenus eum cibo ac potu reficeret. Et quia discalceatus erat, datis calceamentis aufugere permisisset. In crastinum vero mallensibus undique ad seniorem confluentibus jubet reum adduci. Quidam vero quos custos carceris pro seipso paraverat, trementes indicant reum aufugisse. At ille volens factum celare, quasi minabatur custodi. Sed mox itidem: Bene, inquit, actum est, quoniam presbyter jam eis noxam indulserat.

XX.

Item duo vinculati, quos apud eum reatus ingens obnoxiaverat, eidem fuerant praesentati. Instabant vero accusatores, ut suspendio eos juberet protinus interire. Ille vero dissimulabat, quoniam eos palam liberare nolebat. Sic enim in quolibet pietatis opere se modificabat, ut ipsa ejus pietas non nimia videri posset. Respiciens ergo accusatores: Si, inquit, ut dicitis, mori debent, prius juxta vulgarem sententiam reficiamus eos. Tunc cibum et potum jussit eis afferri, et ad comedendum disligari. Cumque refecti fuissent, dedit eis cultellum suum, dicens: Ite et vos ipsi, afferte vimen, quo suspendi debeatis. Non longe autem erat silva, quae stirpibus densata succreverat. Quam illi intrantes, et quasi vimen quaerentes, paulatim remotiora penetrantes, subito disparuerunt, et ita mortis articulum evaserunt. Hi vero qui aderant, assensum ejus intelligentes, eos perscrutari inter fruteta non audebant. Quantum vero ex aequalitate personarum conjici potest, personas illas reorum qui se in malum destinaverat, aut damnis coercebat, aut charactere adustionis inurebat. Illas autem personas, quae non per consuetam malitiam, sed qualibet, malum aliquod perpetrassent, indemens dimittebat. Nunquam tamen auditum est ut se praesente quilibet aut morte punitus sit, aut truncatus membris.

Likewise, how gently he consoled the afflicted, or how often he took pity on the guilty, let this example make clear. As a quarrel grew, his neighbours had so maltreated a certain priest that they put out his eyes. The lord consoled him much with words, urging him to patience. But lest consolation in words should seem meagre, he made over to him, by solemn deed, a church of his own. Some little time had passed, and one of those who had done violence to the priest was seized by the officials and shut up in prison. And this was at once reported to the lord, as to one who would be glad of it. He at once made for the prison, as though hastening with the desire to punish. But other cases had arisen which had to be settled the next day. On this pretext, then, he ordered the culprit to be held until then. But in the evening, when the officials had gone home, he secretly ordered the gaoler to refresh him with food and drink. And, since he was barefoot, to give him shoes and let him escape. The next day, when the people of the court were flocking to the lord from every side, he ordered the culprit to be brought. Certain men whom the gaoler had prepared to speak for him reported, trembling, that the culprit had escaped. And he, wishing to conceal what he had done, made as if to threaten the gaoler. But presently he said likewise: "It is well done, since the priest had already forgiven them the injury."

XX

Again, two men in chains, whom a great crime had made answerable before him, had been brought to him. The accusers pressed him to order them to be put to death at once by hanging. But he dissembled, since he did not wish to free them openly. For in every work of mercy he so tempered himself that his very mercy could not seem excessive. So, looking round at the accusers, he said: "If, as you say, they must die, let us first, as the common saying goes, give them a meal." Then he ordered food and drink to be brought them and their bonds loosed so that they could eat. And when they had eaten, he gave them his knife, saying: "Go and fetch, yourselves, the withy from which you are to be hanged." Not far off was a wood grown thick with undergrowth. They went into it and, as if looking for a withy, made their way little by little deeper in, suddenly disappeared, and so escaped the hour of death. Those who were present, understanding that he had consented, did not dare to search for them among the thickets. As far as can be gathered from his even-handedness towards persons, those offenders who had set themselves on a course of evil he either restrained with fines or branded with a burning mark. But those who had committed some wrong not out of habitual malice but in some other way he let go unharmed. Yet it was never heard that anyone in his presence was punished with death or with the loss of a limb.

XXI.

Sane de pluribus gestis ejus pauca quaedam et singula commemoramus, quae ad ostendendum quosdam pietatis actus nobis videlicet compertos, sufficere possunt. Ob hoc etiam et minima quaelibet inserimus, per quae grande ejus valeat studium demonstrari, ut est videlicet illud: Dum per aggerem publicum aliquando graderetur, in agello viae contiguo quaedam rusticana mulier aratrum ducebat. Quam requirit cur opus virile mulier agere praesumpsisset. Respondit virum suum diutius jam languere, tempus sationis praeterire, se solam esse, nullumque qui sibi subveniat habere. Cum quidem ille calamitatem ejus miseratus, tantos ei nummos dari jubet, quanti dies sationis superesse videbantur, quatenus per singulos dies agricolam sibi conduceret, et ipsa dehinc a virili opere cessaret. Omne fucatum, ut ait Ambrosius, refugit natura, et auctor ejus Deus quod contra illam est abhorret. Haec ergo res per se quidem exigua est, sed affectus recti hominis naturae legibus conveniens eam grandescere facit.

XXII.

Cum itidem alias viam carperet, haud eminus cicer quidam rusticanus metebat. Cum juvenes, qui seniorem praeibant, inde sumentes manditarent, haec ille conspicatus, emisit equum et ad hominem concitus venit, quaerens si cicer pueri abstulissent. At ille: Ego, inquit, domine, gratis dedi. Et senior: Bene, inquit, faciat tibi Deus.

XXIII.

Tale est quod alia vice, cum ministri ejus convivium sub umbra cerasorum pararent, ramusculos baccis jam maturis dependentes, quos antequam ille veniret, iidem ministri confregerant, a reclamante rusticano argenti pretio comparavit. Forte dicet aliquis quod haec relatu indigna sunt: sed nos timorati hominis mentem per haec exigua demonstramus, ut ex obliquo intelligatur quoniam qui modica non spernebat, paulatim decidere in majora non poterat. An non affectus viduae per duo minuta comprobatus a Domino est?

XXIV.

XXI

We record, indeed, only a few of his many deeds, one by one, such as may suffice to show certain acts of his mercy that have come to our knowledge. For this reason we put in even the smallest things, by which his great zeal may be shown; such as this: once, as he was going along the public highway, a countrywoman was driving a plough in a little field next to the road. He asked her why she, a woman, had presumed to do a man's work. She answered that her husband had long been sick, that the time for sowing was passing, that she was alone and had no one to help her. Pitying her misfortune, he ordered her to be given as many coins as there seemed to be days of sowing left, so that she might hire a labourer for each day and herself give up a man's work from then on. Nature, as Ambrose says, shrinks from everything counterfeit, and God, her author, abhors what is against her. This thing, then, is small in itself, but the feeling of an upright man, in harmony with the laws of nature, makes it grow great.

XXII

Likewise, when he was on a journey another time, a countryman was harvesting chickpeas not far off. When the young men who rode ahead of the lord took some and munched them, he, seeing it, spurred his horse and came quickly to the man, asking whether the lads had taken the chickpeas. And he said: "I gave them freely, my lord." And the lord said: "May God do good to you."

XXIII

Of the same kind is what happened another time, when his servants were preparing a meal under the shade of some cherry trees: the little branches hanging with ripe fruit, which those servants had broken off before he came, he paid for in silver to the countryman who protested. Someone will perhaps say that these things are unworthy of being told; but by these small things we are showing the mind of a God-fearing man, so that it may be understood indirectly that one who did not despise small things could not fall little by little into greater ones (Sir 19:1). Was not the widow's love proved by the Lord through her two mites?

XXIV

Erga ipsos vero qui juris ejus erant, tam beneficus, tamque erat pacificus ut mirum considerantibus esset. Nam frequenter improperabant et quod mollis esset et timidus, qui se laedi ab infimis personis, tanquam impotens, permisisset. Nec facillime tamen, sicut domini solent irasci, contra improperantes vel leviter indignabatur. Aliquando enim non paucos ex ruricolis obvios habuit, qui, derelictis coloniis suis, in aliam provinciam transmigrabant. Quos cum recognovisset, et quonam cum sua supellectile tenderent, inquisisset, responderunt quod injuriati fuissent ab eo, cum ipse beneficiaverat eos. Milites vero qui obambulabant principi, suadebant ut eos verberari juberet, et ad domunculas, unde discesserant, redire compelleret. Sed ille noluit. Quippe qui noverat suum, et illorum Dominum esse unum in coelis, et qui magis consueverat, juxta Apostolum, remittere minas, qui potentiae suae manum non levare super pupillum soleret. Ergo permisit eos abire, quo sibi commodius putarent, et dedit licentiam conversandi. Hoc vero, quod non sine mea verecundia quemdam nuper garrientem audivi, scilicet quod debitum wadii nequaquam debitori relaxare solitus erat, omnino falsum est, sicut illi testantur qui saepe viderunt, quod non solum augmentum wadii, sed etiam capitale debitum relaxabat.

XXV.

Siquidem sui pagenses, vel clerici, qui illum sicut patrem affectuose diligebant, frequenter ei tortulas cerae deferebant, quas ille veluti grandia munera, multas gratias referens accipiebat. Nec tamen ex eadem cera quidquam ad suum usum ardere permittebat, sed coram altari, vel sanctis pignoribus, quae perinde secum deferri faciebat, totam in luminaribus succendi praecipiebat. Cubiculari vero cum forte cera aliunde ad ejus obsequium praeparata deesset, betulinas cortices, vel abiegnas taedas ante eum, et in ministeriis suis praeparabant. Sed cum ille tanto studio cavebat, ne muneribus quae sibi gratis dabantur privati uterentur, quomodo consequens esset, ut exactiones wadiorum sine indulgentia exegisset? Quin potius, quae sibi jure debebantur, frequenter ultro debitoribus relaxabat. Minas quoque, juxta Apostoli praeceptum, servis remittebat. Nam et fraudem interdum patiebatur, et rapinam bonorum suorum, ut dicit idem Apostolus, suscipiebat.

XXVI.

Towards those who were under his rule he was so kindly and so peaceable that it was a wonder to those who considered it. For they often reproached him with being soft and timid, since he let himself be wronged by the lowest of persons, as if he were powerless. Yet he did not, as lords are wont to be quick to anger, grow even slightly indignant against those who reproached him. Once he met a good number of country people who had left their holdings and were moving to another province. When he recognized them and asked where they were going with their belongings, they answered that they had been wronged by the man to whom he himself had granted them in fief. The soldiers who rode about the prince urged him to order them to be flogged and forced to go back to the cottages they had left. But he would not. For he knew that his Lord and theirs was one in heaven, and he was used rather, according to the Apostle, to forbear threatening (Eph 6:9), as one who would not lift up the hand of his power against the fatherless (Job 31:21). So he let them go wherever they thought it best for them, and gave them leave to settle there. As for what I lately heard, not without shame, from a certain chatterer, namely that he would never remit to a debtor what was owed on a pledge, it is wholly false, as those testify who often saw him remit not only the increase on the pledge but even the principal of the debt.

XXV

His country people and the clerics, who loved him tenderly as a father, would often bring him little cakes of wax, which he received as though they were great gifts, giving many thanks. Yet he did not allow any of that wax to be burnt for his own use, but ordered it all to be lit as candles before the altar, or before the holy relics, which he likewise had carried with him. And when wax prepared from elsewhere for his service happened to be lacking, the chamberlains set strips of birch bark or pine torches before him and for their own duties. But since he took such care that gifts given to him freely should not be used for private purposes, how could it follow that he would have exacted payments on pledges without indulgence? On the contrary, he often of his own accord remitted to his debtors what was owed him by right. He also, according to the Apostle's precept, forbore threatening his servants (Eph 6:9). For he sometimes suffered fraud, and, as the same Apostle says, accepted the plundering of his goods (Heb 10:34).

XXVI

Sed ut hoc exemplo comprobetur: fur aliquando tentorium ejus noctu ingressus est: cum quidem cereus de more coram lecto illius arderet, ac tum forte senior vigilabat. Solebat enim in stratu suo, dilectione Christi atque dulcedine pasci, per studium orationis. At vero fur ille curioso visu cuncta percurrens, explorabat si quid forte videret quod asportare valeret. Pulvillum forte respicit, quod sericam tecam habebat. Tetendit manum et ipsum sibi trahebat. Tum senior: Quis, inquit, es tu? Extimuit latro, et stupidus haesitabat. Tum ille: Fac, ait, quod facis, et caute discede, ne forte aliquis sentiat. Ita latroni persuasit, ut licenter cum furto discederet. Quis alius praeter Geraldum hoc ita faceret? Certe mihi videtur, quod id magis admiratione dignum sit, quam si furem rigescere in saxi duritiam fecisset.

XXVII.

Quantopere autem illud cavere studuerit quod Apostolus jubet: Ne circumvenias in negotio fratrem tuum, itidem praesenti patebit exemplo. Cum aliquando ab urbe Roma rediens, Papiam praeteriret, haud procul castrametatus est. Quod Venetii, vel alii quamplures illico cognoscentes, ad eum protinus exierunt. Jam enim per omne illud iter satis nobilissimus erat, et religionis atque largitatis causa apud omnes famosus. Cum ergo negotiatores, ut eis mos est, inter papiliones cursitarent, et si quispiam vellet aliquid emere, disquisissent, honestiores quidam ad senioris tentorium pervenerunt, et ministros interrogabant, si forte domnus comes (sic enim omnes appellabant eum) vel pallia, vel pigmentorum species emi juberet. Tum vero ipse vocans eos ad se: Quod, inquit, placuit, Romae licitatus sum; sed plane velim dicatis utrum bene negotiatus sim. Tunc jubet empta pallia coram afferri. Erat autem unum ex his pretiosissimum. Quod Venetius intuens, quaerit quidnam pro eo datum sit. Cumque summam pretii cognovisset: Vere, inquit, si Constantinopoli esset, etiam plus ibi valeret. Quo audito senior extimuit, quasi grande facinus exhorrescens. Cum vero dehinc quosdam Romeos sibi notos obviam reperisset, tot solidos eis commendavit, quot Venetius ultra datum pretium dixerat pallium valere, dans indicium ubi venditorem pallii reperissent. Verum cum in aliis peccati speciebus soleant homines compungi, atque de emendatione meditari, aut raro, aut certe, nec raro videas, qui praeter Geraldum in ista peccandi specie se doleat deliquisse. Sed nimirum ille noverat, quia Deus per omne peccatum offenditur, et eum quem toto corde diligebat, offendere nec in minimis volebat.

XXVIII.

Let this be proved by an example: once a thief entered his tent by night, when a candle was burning by his bed as usual, and the lord happened to be awake. For he was wont, on his bed, to feed on the love and sweetness of Christ in the exercise of prayer. The thief, running his curious eye over everything, was looking to see whether he could spot anything he might carry off. His eye happened to fall on a cushion which had a silk cover. He stretched out his hand and was drawing it towards him. Then the lord said: "Who are you?" The robber took fright and hesitated, dumbfounded. Then he said: "Do what you are doing, and go away carefully, lest anyone notice." So he persuaded the robber to go off freely with his theft. Who but Gerald would have done such a thing in such a way? It certainly seems to me that this is more worthy of wonder than if he had made the thief stiffen into hard stone.

XXVII

How earnestly he strove to keep what the Apostle commands, Do not defraud your brother in business (1 Thess 4:6), will likewise be clear from the following example. Once, returning from the city of Rome, as he passed by Pavia, he pitched camp not far off. The Venetians and many others, learning of it at once, came out to him straightaway. For by now he was very well known all along that road, and famous with everyone for his religion and his generosity. So, while the merchants, as is their way, were running about among the tents and asking whether anyone wished to buy anything, some of the more respectable came to the lord's tent and asked his servants whether perhaps the lord count (for so everyone called him) would order cloths or spices to be bought. Then he called them to him and said: "What pleased me I bought in Rome; but I should very much like you to tell me whether I made a good bargain." Then he ordered the cloths he had bought to be brought out before them. One of them was very precious. A Venetian, looking at it, asked what had been given for it. And when he learnt the sum paid, he said: "Truly, if it were at Constantinople, it would be worth even more there." When he heard this the lord was afraid, shuddering as at a great crime. And afterwards, when he met some Rome-farers whom he knew, he entrusted to them as many shillings as the Venetian had said the cloth was worth above the price paid, giving them directions where to find the seller of the cloth. Truly, though men are wont to feel compunction for other kinds of sin and to think of amendment, rarely, or rather not even rarely, will you see anyone besides Gerald grieve that he has offended in this kind of sin. But he surely knew that God is offended by every sin, and he would not offend, even in the least things, the One whom he loved with his whole heart.

XXVIII

At vero non immemor quia Christianorum justitia debet justitiam Pharisaeorum supergredi, cum universae fruges ejus rectissime decimarentur, nonas etiam jubebat seorsum recondi, quae in diversis pauperum necessitatibus dispensarentur. Inde cum necessitas exegisset, supervenientibus diverso tempore pauperibus vestimenta emebantur. Praeterea nummos indesinenter secum ferebat, quos obviantibus egenis latenter, quantum poterat, vel per se, vel per quemlibet causae istius conscium dabat. Et cum illi reditus agrorum ac vinearum satis abundarent, nunquam tamen auditum est, quod villici ejus aliquid accommodassent; sed neque ipse praedium aliquando comparavit, praeter unum agellum, qui suae cuidam possessioni forte insitus erat: cum soleant divites quique in hoc vehementer inardescere, terribilem prophetae comminationem obliti, qua dicit: Vae qui conjungitis domum ad domum, et agrum agro copulatis. Geraldus namque, juxta praeceptum Evangelii, contentus erat stipendiis suis. Et sicut ille neminem concutiebat, neque calumniam faciebat, sic et rerum dispositor Dominus, ea quae juris illius erant, ab impiis et pervasoribus tuta servabat. Etenim tanta praediorum loca per diversas provincias sub ditione sua tenebat, ut ipsis locis, quibus plenus erat, veraciter locuples diceretur. Nec tamen multitudo locorum extollebat eum, quoniam nihil, ut Psalmista dicit, a Domino volebat supra terram. Qui nimirum haec omnia adjiciebat illi, quia regnum Dei, quod primum est, ipse quaerebat ab eo. Tantum utique, Deo largiente, succreverat, tamque protectus, et tam immunis persisterat, ut ei convenire videatur illud Job: Tu vallasti eum, et possessio ejus crevit in terra.

XXIX.

Sane ut pateat qualiter in bono malum vincere consueverat, juxta apostolicum praeceptum, hoc ejus factum sub exemplo commemoretur. Cum dehinc ad portum Placentinum venisset, quidam clericus, qui portui praeerat, supervenit. Nam, sicut illic mos est, lucrosum nimis naulum a Romeis exspectabat. Qui nescio qua causa felle commotus, verba indignationis rotabat, ita ut episcopum Rotenensis provinciae, sed et alios nobiles viros injuriosis exprobrationibus lacessiret. Forte vir Domini de contra stans, seditionem moveri metuens, conviatores compescuit, ne dure quidquam respondissent.

Not forgetting that the justice of Christians must surpass the justice of the Pharisees, when all his harvests had been most exactly tithed he ordered a ninth part as well to be stored separately, to be spent on the various needs of the poor. From it, when need required, clothes were bought for the poor who came at various times. Besides this he constantly carried coins with him, which he gave as secretly as he could to the needy who met him, either himself or through someone who was in the secret. And though the revenues of his fields and vineyards were abundant enough, it was never heard that his stewards had lent out anything at interest; nor did he himself ever buy an estate, except one small field that happened to lie within one of his own properties: whereas all rich men are wont to burn fiercely for this, forgetting the prophet's terrible threat, where he says: Woe to you who join house to house and lay field to field (Is 5:8). For Gerald, according to the precept of the Gospel, was content with his wages. And as he did violence to no one, nor accused anyone falsely (Lk 3:14), so the Lord, who disposes all things, kept what was his safe from the wicked and from usurpers. For he held so many estates under his rule in various provinces that, from the very places of which he had his fill, he might truly be called rich. Yet the number of his estates did not make him proud, since, as the Psalmist says, he desired nothing upon earth from the Lord (Ps 73:25). And the Lord surely added all these things to him, because he sought from him the kingdom of God, which comes first (Mt 6:33). So greatly, indeed, had he prospered by the gift of God, and so protected and unharmed had he remained, that the words of Job seem to fit him: You have hedged him round, and his possession has increased in the land (Job 1:10).

XXIX

That it may be clear how he was wont to overcome evil with good, according to the Apostle's precept (Rom 12:21), let this deed of his be recorded as an example. When, on the way back, he had come to the crossing at Piacenza, a certain cleric who was in charge of the crossing came up. For, as is the custom there, he expected a very profitable fare from the Rome-farers. He, stirred to bile for some reason or other, was hurling words of indignation, so that he assailed the bishop of Rodez and other noblemen too with insulting reproaches. The man of the Lord happened to be standing opposite, and, fearing that a quarrel would break out, restrained his fellow travellers from making any harsh reply.

Clericum vero blando sermone fregit, et quaedam munuscula ei dedit. At ille videns quam facili sermone et episcopum et caeteros a respondendis injuriis compescuisset, se autem quam leniter ad mentem reduxisset, quaesivit ab eo quisnam esset. Cum ille se Aquitanum et mediocrem personam esse responderet, clericus eum tam vultu quam eloquio considerans, ad ejus gratiam se totum inflexit, et quidquid de naulo debebatur, cunctis de illius comitatu remisit, et tam ipsius quam aliorum flascones et utres vino implevit. Habebat enim isdem senior divinitus hoc donum, ut tam ipse quam sermo ejus gratiosus esset. Et non solum quibuslibet aliis personis, sed etiam ipsis magnatibus. Quin et regibus semper charus, et reverendus erat.

XXX.

Merito quippe diligebatur ab omnibus, quoniam ipse cunctos diligebat. Referamus plane quid de quodam fugitivo, quasi de amico fecerit. Nam in eodem itinere fugitivum eumdem reperit, qui ante aliquot annos ab ejus municipio discesserat. Qui apud illas personas cum quibus habitabat, magnus etiam et locuples habebatur. Hunc itaque ministri domni Geraldi reperientes, ad eum trementem et pavidum adduxerunt. At ille seorsum inquisivit ab eo qualiter se ageret. Et cum didicisset ab eo, quod in eodem loco non parum honorabilis haberetur: Nec ego, inquit, te dehonestabo. Tunc praecepit suis, ne quis proderet qualis in sua regione fuisset. Tum vero videntibus vicinis suis, ei quaedam munuscula tribuit, et in eloquio vel convivio satis eminenter honoravit, et eum in pace dimisit. Quis hoc praeter Geraldum faceret? Sed hoc ille fecit, qui non avaritiae servus erat, sed misericordiae se totum dicaverat.

XXXI.

Item in eodem itinere, quidam vir de parte Bituricensi, non longe a Roma sibi coxam fregerat. Qui relictus a suis, cum conjuge solus remansit. Quem Bonifacius quidam ex militibus domni Geraldi casu reperit, et necessitatem illius audiens, ad eumdem domnum Geraldum hunc adducens: En, inquit, domine mi, juxta tuum desiderium reperi, quod tibi placiturum praesento: ecce homo indigens solatio. Quem dehinc vir Domini in tuitione sua gaudens suscepit, et usque Brivatensem vicum sufficienter sustentatum deduxit. Tunc insuper ei decem solidos praebuit, quibus subsidium usque ad suos habere posset. Haec et hujusmodi facta testantur miserendi affectum, quem ei divina inspiratio largiter inspirabat.

XXXII.

The cleric he broke down with gentle speech, and gave him some little gifts. And he, seeing how easily with a word he had restrained both the bishop and the rest from answering the insults, and how gently he had brought himself back to his senses, asked him who he was. When he answered that he was an Aquitanian and a person of no great account, the cleric, considering him both in his looks and in his speech, turned wholly to his favour, remitted to everyone in his company whatever was owed for the fare, and filled both his flasks and wineskins and those of the others with wine. For the lord had this gift from God, that both he and his speech were full of grace. And not only to ordinary persons, but to the great themselves. Indeed, he was always dear to kings and held in reverence by them.

XXX

And rightly was he loved by all, since he himself loved everyone. Let us tell, then, what he did with a certain runaway, as though with a friend. For on that same journey he came upon this runaway, who some years before had left his town. Among the people with whom he was living he was even held to be a great and wealthy man. The lord Gerald's servants found him and brought him, trembling and fearful, before their master. But he asked him apart how he was faring. And when he learnt from him that he was held in no small honour in that place, he said: "Nor will I dishonour you." Then he ordered his men that no one should reveal what the man had been in his own country. Then, in the sight of the man's neighbours, he gave him some little gifts, honoured him very markedly in conversation and at table, and sent him away in peace. Who but Gerald would do this? But he did it who was no slave of avarice, but had given himself wholly to mercy.

XXXI

Again, on the same journey, a man from the Bourges country had broken his hip not far from Rome. Abandoned by his companions, he was left alone with his wife. A certain Boniface, one of the lord Gerald's knights, found him by chance, and hearing of his need, brought him to the lord Gerald, saying: "See, my lord, I have found, as you desire, something I bring you that will please you: here is a man in need of help." The man of the Lord received him gladly into his protection, and brought him, well provided for, as far as the town of Brioude. Then he gave him ten shillings besides, so that he might have support until he reached his own people. These deeds and others like them bear witness to the compassion which divine inspiration bountifully breathed into him.

XXXII

Verum noverimus, quia necesse est, ut messis triticea cum lolio crescat, et granum frumenti palea superior interim premat: et ob hoc oportuit ut justum Abel malitiosus Cain ad patientiam exercuisset. Geraldus quoque, sicut Job, frater draconum et socius struthionum fuisse monstretur, frequenter a quibusdam provinciarum lacessitus est. Nam reipublicae statu jam nimis turbato regales vassos insolentia marchionum sibi subjugaverat. Jam itaque multarum causarum experimentis probatum fuerat, quod, ut scriptum est, omnipotens erat contra hostes Geraldi. Quibus videlicet ita insuperabilis videbatur, ut malum, quod ei perstruere molirentur, in ipsos potius redundaret, ut scriptum est: Qui fodit foveam proximo suo, ipse prior incidet in ea. Wilelmus plane dux Aquitanorum, vir bonus, et per multa laudabilis, cum tandem vehementer invaluisset, non minis quidem, sed precibus agebat, ut Geraldus a regia militia discedens, sese eidem commendaret. Sed ille favore comitis nuper usurpato, nequaquam consensit. Nepotem tamen suum nomine Rainaldum eidem cum ingenti militum numero commendavit. Sed et isdem Wilelmus nullatenus illi indignatus est, quippe non immemor, quia pater suus Bernardus ipsum adhuc adolescentem eidem domno Geraldo amoris causa commendavit. Et ideo dulci admodum contubernio, et ingenti veneratione semper eum excolebat. Cum vero causa instabat, ad ejus colloquium veniebat. Nonnunquam autem gratiosi hominis Wilelmus suavitate delectatus, vi precum exigebat, ut secum diutius commoraretur. Et frequenter in agendis progressus, longius secum ire faciebat.

XXXIII.

Factum est quadam vice, cum ita res exigeret, ut in quamdam regionem qua hostiliter ierat, longum tempus cum eo expendisset. Interim vero omne stipendium, quod in sagmariis Geraldi delatum fuerat, paulatim defecit. Porro exercitus ad praedam versus, tanquam hostes Wilelmi persequens, totam regionem illam depopulabatur. Qua causa incolae sibi timentes, facultatibus expositis, fugiebant, nec inveniri poterat qui ministris ejus stipem vendidisset. Cum ergo nihil ad emendum reperissent, nec de praeda quidquam eis tangere licuisset, non modicam in illa expeditione penuriam sustinuit. Neque enim ab his qui praedabantur, quidquam suscipere patiebatur, ne forte cum eis participans socius peccati existeret. Sustinuit autem et amici comitatum, nec afflictus deseruit. Ridebant hoc nonnulli, quod aliis de praeda lascivientibus ipse cum suis indigeret. Multi quidem quibus erat sanior intellectus, illum beatificabant, altius gementes quod ad hunc imitandum idonei non essent. Denique ex hoc et deinceps, cognomentum hoc promeruit, ut ab omnibus in commune Geraldus ille Bonus appellaretur.

But let us know that the wheat harvest must needs grow with the darnel, and that for a while the chaff lies on top and weighs down the grain of wheat: and for this reason wicked Cain had to exercise the patience of just Abel. Gerald too, that he might be shown, like Job, to be a brother of dragons and a companion of ostriches (Job 30:29), was often harassed by certain men of the provinces. For the state of the commonwealth was by now so disordered that the insolence of the marquises had subjected the royal vassals to themselves. By now, then, it had been proved by experience in many cases that, as it is written, the Almighty was against Gerald's enemies. To them he seemed so unconquerable that the evil they schemed to build up against him rebounded rather upon themselves, as it is written: He who digs a pit for his neighbour shall fall into it first (Prov 26:27). William, duke of the Aquitanians, a good man and praiseworthy in many things, when at length he had grown very powerful, sought, not indeed with threats but with entreaties, that Gerald should leave the king's service and commend himself to him. But he, on the strength of the count's favour he had lately won, would by no means consent. He did, however, commend to him his nephew, Rainald by name, with a great number of knights. And William was by no means angry with him, for he did not forget that his father Bernard, out of love, had commended him to the lord Gerald while still a youth. And therefore he always cherished him with very sweet companionship and great veneration. When some matter pressed, he would come to confer with him. And sometimes William, delighted by the charm of this gracious man, would press him with entreaties to stay longer with him. And often, when setting out on some business, he made him go a long way with him.

XXXIII

It happened once, when matters required it, that Gerald spent a long time with him in a certain region into which William had marched as an enemy. Meanwhile all the provisions brought on Gerald's packhorses gradually ran out. And the army, turned to plunder, was laying waste the whole of that region, as if pursuing William's enemies. For this reason the inhabitants, fearing for themselves, abandoned their goods and fled, and no one could be found to sell provisions to his servants. So, since they found nothing to buy and were not allowed to touch anything of the plunder, he endured no small want on that expedition. For he would not allow anything to be accepted from those who were plundering, lest by sharing with them he should become a partner in their sin. Yet he bore with his friend's company, and did not desert him for all his hardship. Some laughed at this, that while others ran riot with the plunder, he and his men went in want. But many who had sounder understanding called him blessed, groaning deeply that they were not fit to imitate him. And so from that time on he earned this surname, that he was called by everyone alike Gerald the Good.

XXXIV.

Tanti autem apud eumdem Wilelmum habitus est, ut ei sororem suam in conjugio dare vellet, Ermengardi matre quamprimum id cupiente, quae virum hunc pio diligebat affectu. Sed Christus virginis filius castitatis amorem illi dudum indulcaverat, quam ab ineunte aetate ita complexus est, ut nec intuitu quidem tam excellentis copulae pateretur ab ea divelli. Quantopere enim carnis obscoenitatem exhorruerit, per hoc animadverti potest, quod nocturnam illusionem sine moerore nullatenus incurrebat. Quoties namque illud humanitatis infortunium dormienti contigisset, consecretalis cubicularius afferebat ei seorsum, in competenti videlicet loco, vestes mutatorias, ad hoc semper paratas, et tomentum, et vas aquae. Quo illo intrante, non enim patiebatur se nudum videri, mox ille minister clauso ostio recedebat. Ita cultor internae puritatis corporis inquinationem refugiebat, ut ipsam solam, quae dormienti acciderat, non solum balneis, quin etiam lacrymis abluerit. Stultum forte videbatur hoc ejus factum, sed illis plane quorum coenosa mens vitiorum sordes exhalat. Qui cum se vel naturaliter, vel voluntarie sordident, immunditias tamen suas abluere per se dedignantur. At vero Geraldus scriptum noverat: Omni custodia serva cor tuum. Et item: Qui modica spernit, paulatim decidet. Velim sane perpendas quanti habendum sit, quod inter mundanas opes, et in fastigio terreno positus, castitatem servavit. Quid magnificentius faceret? Nihil amplius aut excellentius requiras. Nam, sicut beatus Martinus perhibet, nihil virginitati est comparandum.

XXXV.

Unde et Ademarus comes vehementer instabat, ut eum suae ditioni subdidisset, quod nullo equidem pacto extorquere potuit. Non solum quippe eidem Ademaro, sed nec Wilelmo quidem duci, qui tunc majore rerum affluentia potiebatur, se commendare assensus est, Credo Mardocheum vir iste meditabatur, qui superbo Aman se submittere, honoremque regibus a Deo collatum praebere contempsit. Verum cum in amicitia Wilelmi devictus pacem habere videretur, ut homini in Christo viventi persecutio non deesset, praedictum comitem Ademarum illi Satanas instigavit.

XXXIV

He was held in such esteem by this same William that he wished to give him his sister in marriage, his mother Ermengard desiring it very much, for she loved this man with a devout affection. But Christ, the Son of the Virgin, had long since made the love of chastity sweet to him, and he had embraced it from his earliest years so closely that he would not suffer himself to be torn from it even in view of so excellent a match. How greatly he abhorred the uncleanness of the flesh may be seen from this, that he never suffered a nocturnal illusion without grief. For whenever that misfortune of human nature befell him in his sleep, a chamberlain who was in his confidence would bring him apart, in a suitable place, a change of clothes always kept ready for this, a towel and a vessel of water. When he came in (for he would not suffer himself to be seen naked), the servant at once withdrew and shut the door. So did this lover of inward purity shun defilement of the body that this alone, which befell him in his sleep, he washed away not only with baths but even with tears. This conduct of his might seem foolish, but plainly only to those whose miry mind breathes out the filth of vice. Who, though they defile themselves either by nature or by will, yet disdain to wash away their uncleanness themselves. But Gerald knew that it is written: Keep your heart with all watchfulness (Prov 4:23). And again: He who despises small things shall fall little by little (Sir 19:1). I would have you weigh, then, how highly it is to be esteemed that, amid the riches of the world and set on an earthly height, he kept his chastity. What could he do that was more magnificent? You need seek nothing greater or more excellent. For, as blessed Martin declares, nothing is to be compared with virginity.

XXXV

Count Adhemar too pressed him hard to submit to his lordship, which he could by no means extort from him. For he would not consent to commend himself not only to this Adhemar but not even to Duke William, who at that time enjoyed the greater abundance of wealth. I believe this man had Mordecai in mind, who scorned to submit himself to proud Haman and to pay him the honour given by God to kings. But when, bound in friendship with William, he seemed to have peace, Satan, so that persecution should not be lacking to a man living in Christ, stirred up against him the aforesaid Count Adhemar.

Quem profecto multis et variis tentationibus appetitum sibi subjugare non potuit. Aliquando quippe contigit ut in prato cum paucis militibus mansitaret nocte, cum equidem Ademarus misso exploratore pro certo rescivit et ubi et cum quantis esset. Gavisus plurimum quod occasionem opportunam ad eum comprehendendum reperisset, armatorum cuneum collegit, et ad locum aciem direxit. Porro Geraldus in parte ipsius prati decumbens, ut fertur, cum suis omnibus dormiebat. Sed ille qui custodit Israel, nequaquam innocenti viro dormitabat. Si quidem, ut de Jeremia propheta scribitur, uia Dominus celavit eum: ita et hunc divinitus abscondit, ut cum omne pratum per gyrum discurrissent, et per medium regyrassent, nequaquam eum reperire potuerint. Tum vero Ademarus adnisu frustrato, dolens impietatem suam esse delusam, recessit. Justus vero, ut scriptum est, mundis manibus addidit fortitudinem laudis in Domino.

XXXVI.

Quoniam itidem ejus castellum satellites Ademari comitis occupaverunt. Quo Geraldus audito, paucos milites, qui tunc sibi forte aderant, secum duxit, et ad oppidum festinavit. Ademarus vero cum valida exercitus manu, oppidi pervasores subsequi parabat. Sed cum non longe essent, quod ad obsidendum castrum Geraldus praecurrerat, volantem exercitum retinuit, dicens: Explorandum nobis est quanam Geraldus pugnatorum multitudine valletur, qui nos ad obsidendum oppidum ausus est praevenire. Neque enim se in hoc periculo praecipitasset, nisi quorumlibet rusticorum auxilio septus esset. Dixerat haec, et pernices equites ad hoc explorandum direxit. Nox vero tum ingruerat: nec cunctati exploratores festinant, et quaenam sint castra Geraldi sollicite rimantur. Ut autem in nocte solet fieri, lapides albicantes eminus sub incerto visu conspicati, obsidentium tentoria putaverunt. Qui protinus exsangues et perterriti ad Ademarum recurrunt, ac ingentem castrorum multitudinem se vidisse fatentur. Redierant enim per quamdam matronam, cui idipsum retulerunt, per quam et hoc ipsum, quod illis exploratoribus visum fuerat, postea viro Dei innotuit. Ademarus itaque cum exercitu suo divino nutu labefactatus, ad sua remeavit. In crastinum vero pervasores castelli, cognito quod Ademarus eisdem minime adesset, pacem a Geraldo requirunt, poscentes ut eosdem sine ignominia recedere permisisset. Et id quidem vir Dei Geraldus illico indulsit. Sed milites animo concitati aegre ferebant, si vel armis non spoliarentur. Invaluit tamen pietas Geraldi, et illos stare coegit, hostibus vero per angiportum fugientibus aditum permisit.

Though he assailed him with many and various trials, he could not bring him into subjection. For it happened once that he was spending the night in a meadow with a few knights, when Adhemar, sending a scout, learnt for certain where he was and with how many. Rejoicing greatly at having found so fit an occasion to seize him, he gathered a troop of armed men and led his force to the place. Now Gerald, lying in one part of the meadow, was asleep, it is said, with all his men. But he who keeps Israel did by no means slumber for the innocent man (Ps 121:4). For as it is written of the prophet Jeremiah that the Lord hid him (Jer 36:26), so God hid this man too, so that though they rode all round the meadow and back again through the middle, they could by no means find him. Then Adhemar, his effort frustrated, withdrew, grieving that his wickedness had been mocked. But the just man, as it is written, with clean hands added strength (Job 17:9), the strength of praise in the Lord.

XXXVI

Likewise, Count Adhemar's henchmen seized a castle of his. When Gerald heard of it, he took with him the few knights who happened to be with him at the time and hastened to the town. Adhemar, for his part, was preparing to follow the invaders of the town with a strong band of troops. But when they were not far off, learning that Gerald had hurried ahead to besiege the castle, he held back his army, which was flying forward, saying: "We must find out with what multitude of fighters Gerald is fortified, since he has dared to forestall us in besieging the town. For he would not have thrown himself into this danger had he not been surrounded by the help of a crowd of countrymen." So he spoke, and sent swift horsemen to find this out. Night had now fallen: the scouts hastened without delay and carefully searched out what Gerald's camp might be. And, as usually happens at night, seeing from afar, with uncertain sight, some whitish stones, they took them for the tents of the besiegers. At once, pale and terrified, they ran back to Adhemar and declared that they had seen a huge multitude of camps. For they had come back by way of a certain lady, to whom they told the same thing; and through her this very thing that the scouts had seen became known afterwards to the man of God. So Adhemar, shaken by the will of God, went back home with his army. The next day the usurpers of the castle, learning that Adhemar would not come to their aid, asked Gerald for peace, begging him to let them withdraw without disgrace. And this the man of God Gerald granted at once. But his knights, roused in spirit, took it ill that they should not at least be stripped of their arms. Yet Gerald's mercy prevailed: he made them stand still, and allowed the enemy a way out as they fled through a narrow lane.

Quin etiam duos de suis armatos constituit, qui hinc inde stantes procurarent, ne aliquis de supellectili exeuntium quidquam rapere praesumpsisset. Ita Geraldus exturbatis absque sanguine hostibus triumphavit. Ita Christus more suo gloriosius militem suum ipsa adversitate nobilitavit.

XXXVII.

Godefredus ille Torennensis comes, quadam vice, collecto militum agmine, festinabat ut hunc virum Dei bellando lacessiret, aut quae erant juris illius devastaret. Contigit autem, ut ipso gladio quo se armaverat, ita vulneraretur, ut arreptum iter nequaquam explere posset. Qui tandem intelligens quod ob injuriam viri Dei vulneratus sit, a malitia sua cessavit, merito sibi illud Mosaicum convenire conspiciens: Fugiamus Israelem, Dominus enim pugnat pro eis contra nos.

XXXVIII.

Oppidum nihilominus, quod monasterio superimminet, frater praedicti Ademari clanculo irrepsit. Sed quia jam experimentis aliorum didicerat quod Geraldus, Deo pro se pugnante, semper hostibus praevaleret, non ausus est ibidem remorari. Tamen ablatis omnibus quae asportari poterant, concitus aufugit. Nec multum vero post, quibusdam honestis viris sese ob illius facinoris causam objurgantibus cuncta reddidit, et ad virum Dei veniens, indulgentiam pro sua temeritate postulavit. Jam enim apud omnes, qui se noverant, tantam reverentiam obtinebat, ut quisquis eum laesisset, quasi sacrilegium fecisset, non sibi in prosperum cedere certus esset. Sane quamvis filii tenebrarum et per ista quae commemoravimus, et per alia multa filium lucis inquietarent; ille tamen ubicunque poterat, pauperes tueri non omittebat. His enim qui se laedebant, tam facile ignoscebat, ut putares quod ille magis ignoscere quam illi vellent reconciliari. Durior illi causa pro pauperibus semper erat, quam anima ejus illis compatiebatur, faciliusque suam negligere causam poterat quam illorum. Ut enim peritissimus quidam medicus, qui forte vulneratus jacet, aliorum vulneribus mederi studeat: sic iste dum laederetur, tamen impotes tueri non omittebat.

XXXIX.

He even posted two of his men in arms, standing on either side, to see that no one presumed to snatch anything from the belongings of those who were leaving. So Gerald triumphed, driving out his enemies without bloodshed. So Christ, after his wont, ennobled his soldier the more gloriously by this very adversity.

XXXVII

Godfrey, the well-known count of Turenne, once gathered a band of knights and was hastening to attack this man of God in war or to lay waste what belonged to him. But it happened that he was wounded by the very sword with which he had armed himself, so that he could by no means complete the journey he had begun. At length, understanding that he had been wounded because of the wrong he meant to do the man of God, he gave up his malice, seeing that the words of Moses fitted him well: Let us flee from Israel, for the Lord fights for them against us (Ex 14:25).

XXXVIII

Likewise the brother of the aforesaid Adhemar stole secretly into the town which stands above the monastery. But because he had already learnt from the experience of others that Gerald, with God fighting for him, always prevailed over his enemies, he did not dare to stay there. Yet he carried off everything that could be taken away and fled in haste. Not long afterwards, when certain honourable men rebuked him for that crime, he gave everything back, and coming to the man of God, asked pardon for his rashness. For by now he was held in such reverence by all who knew him that whoever harmed him was sure, as though he had committed sacrilege, that it would not turn out well for him. And though the sons of darkness troubled the son of light both in the ways we have related and in many others, he never failed to protect the poor wherever he could. For he forgave those who harmed him so readily that you would think he was more willing to forgive than they were to be reconciled. The cause of the poor always weighed more heavily on him, for his soul suffered with them, and he could more easily neglect his own cause than theirs. For as some most skilful physician, lying wounded himself, may still strive to heal the wounds of others, so he, even while he was being harmed, did not fail to protect the powerless.

XXXIX

Suis siquidem inimicis ita insuperabilis erat, ut malum in eos potius redundaret, quod ei perstruere molirentur. Quod ex quibusdam superius relatis, et ex praesenti probatur exemplo. Frater Ademari comitis Adalelmus, praeter illam injuriam quam eidem domno Geraldo fecerat, cum Aureliacense castrum pervaserat, quam videlicet injuriam ipse libenter ei indulserat, adhuc tamen ejus malitia furebatur, et ad laesionem sancti viri pertinaciter instigabatur. Collecto itaque satellitum cuneo, castrum, quod tunc forte domnus Geraldus missarum solemniis intererat, irrumpere tentavit. Sed illi quidem qui forinsecus erant, illum in praeceps gradientem eminus conspicati, portam repente clauserunt. Facto autem strepitu in castro vociferantium, milites qui ad missam cum seniore erant, exsilire volebant. Quos ille sermonibus fregit, et donec opus Dei compleretur, nequaquam exire permisit. Interim vero satellites Adalelmi ambitum castelli pervagantes, septem equos tantum repererunt, quos et abegerunt. Et confestim incassum se irrupisse videntes, pudore acti, remeare coeperunt. Fertur autem quod vir Domini, retentis militibus, supra portam sumpto psalterio concitus ascenderit, et nescio quid e psalmis Domino decantaverit. Porro tyrannus, qui moerere cor justi fecerat, laetatus nequaquam redire permissus est. Mira dicturus sum, et pene incredibilia, nisi haec a teste satis idoneo perhiberentur. Nam de caballis eorum ferme sexaginta sub brevi spatio temporis exstincti sunt. Adelelmus autem post quartum decimum diem, tam terribiliter obiit, ut omne ubi jaceret, turbo vehemens discooperiret. Testatur hoc praesens Adalbertus [Madalbertus], ille videlicet monachus qui apud Lemovicas verbum Dei solet populo praedicare. Thesaurum quippe sancti Martialis Torennae custodiebat, qui pridem ob metum paganae gentis illic fuerat deportatus. Ablatores autem illi videntes quod acciderat, homini Dei suos equos remiserunt.

XL.

Nonnunquam invitus cogebatur potentiae suae vires exerere, et pravorum cervicem vi bellica curvare, sicut videlicet actum est de quodam pessimo homine, qui vocabatur Arlaldus. Is namque tenebat quoddam oppidulum, quod dicitur ad sanctum Serenum, ex quo scilicet, quasi lupus vespertinus egrediens, irruptiones faciebat in familiam domni Geraldi. Cum quidem ille sicut pacificus loquebatur ei qui oderat pacem, quin etiam quaedam munuscula tribuebat ei, et arma militaribus apta, quatenus ferinos ejus mores per beneficia deliniret.

To his enemies he was so unconquerable that the evil they schemed to build up against him rebounded rather upon themselves. This is proved by some of the things related above, and by the present example. Adalelm, brother of Count Adhemar, besides the wrong he had done the lord Gerald when he broke into the castle of Aurillac, a wrong which Gerald had willingly forgiven him, still raged in his malice and was stubbornly driven to harm the holy man. So, gathering a troop of henchmen, he tried to break into the castle where the lord Gerald happened at that time to be attending the solemnity of Mass. But those who were outside, seeing him from afar coming on headlong, suddenly shut the gate. And when a din of shouting arose in the castle, the knights who were at Mass with the lord wanted to rush out. But he checked them with his words, and would by no means let them go out until the work of God was finished. Meanwhile Adalelm's henchmen, roaming round the castle walls, found only seven horses, which they drove off. And soon, seeing that they had broken in to no purpose, they began, ashamed, to go back. It is said that the man of the Lord, keeping back his knights, took his psalter and hurried up above the gate, and sang to the Lord something or other from the psalms. And the tyrant who had made the heart of the just to mourn (Ezek 13:22) was by no means allowed to go home rejoicing. I am about to tell marvellous things, almost unbelievable, were they not attested by a quite reliable witness. For of their horses nearly sixty died within a short space of time. And Adalelm, after the fourteenth day, died so terribly that a violent whirlwind laid bare the whole place where he lay. Adalbert, who was present, bears witness to this, the monk who is wont to preach the word of God to the people at Limoges. He was keeping at Turenne the treasure of Saint Martial, which had been carried there some time before for fear of the pagans. And those who had taken the horses, seeing what had happened, sent them back to the man of God.

XL

Sometimes he was forced against his will to put forth the strength of his power and to bend the necks of the wicked by force of arms, as was done with a certain very evil man called Arlald. He held a little town called Saint-Serenus, from which, going out like an evening wolf, he made raids on the lord Gerald's people. Gerald, for his part, spoke peaceably to him who hated peace (Ps 120:7), and even gave him some little gifts, and arms fit for soldiers, so as to soften his savage ways by kindness.

Sed stultus homo ac brutus, hoc non pietati, sed ignaviae deputans, audacius in praedicta familia grassabatur. Tandem ergo Geraldus considerans quod stulti hominis vesania sine flagello frenai non poterat, collecto militum agmine, tetendit ad castellum. Atque incredibili victoriae proventu, bestiam illam sine cujuslibet interfectione de suo cubiculo protraxit. Cumque ante ipsum plenus confusione staret, non contumeliose, sed ratiocinando quantum oportuit eum alloquitur. Cum ille tremens verba humillima ac deprecatoria respondisset, vir Domini ad eum: En, inquit, expertus es quod tuis viribus adversum me consistere nequeas: cave igitur furere, cave ultra malitiam exercere, ne gravius ipsa in caput tuum redundet. Et teipsum, inquit, ita dimittam ut neque obsidem, neque aliquod juramentum a te suscipere curem. Sed neque de tua supellectile saltem pro compensatione praedae, quam exercere solitus es, quidquam auferre permitam. Ita coercitum dimisit hominem, et ille satis deinceps cavit, ne Geraldi familiam laedere praesumpsisset.

XLI.

Jam, ut supra dixeramus, cessabant ejus adversarii divino metu consternati. Nam licet ad exemplum Job, frater fuerit draconum et socius struthionum, bestiae tamen agri pacificae erant illi. Nam cum alodus ejus esset postomia, et deinceps latifundia ipsius ita sibi succederent, ut usque ad montem magnum Greonem, posset in eundo et redeundo, semper in propriis mansitare capellis, tamen non indigebat ut aliquam villam cuilibet potenti ad custodiendum commendasset, nisi unum solum praediolum quod dicitur Taladiciacus. Erat enim semotim inter pessimos vicinos longe a caeteris disparatum. De hoc officiales permiserunt invito et nolenti, quatenus illud cuidam Bernardo ad custodiendum commendaret. Quod equidem ille cum quadam hilaritate patienter ferebat, dicens: Bene mihi contigit ut discam quia bonum est confidere in Domino, quam in homine. Quod scilicet ob hoc libuit commemorare, ut hinc pateat, quia quoties Deus aliquid ad ejus probationem fieri permisit, ille non ad tristitiam, sed ad humilitatem id retulerit. Per quod etiam demonstratur, quod vir iste ex fide vixerit, qui cuncta divinae dispositioni subjacere cognoverit, et quod in terris nihil sine causa, ut scriptum est, fieri non ignoraverit.

XLII.

But the foolish and brutish man, putting this down not to mercy but to cowardice, raged the more boldly against those people. At length, then, Gerald, considering that the madness of the foolish man could not be curbed without the whip, gathered a band of knights and made for the castle. And by an unbelievable stroke of victory he dragged that beast from his chamber without anyone being killed. And when he stood before him full of confusion, he spoke to him not insultingly but reasoning with him as far as was fitting. When he, trembling, had answered in most humble and beseeching words, the man of the Lord said to him: "See, you have learnt that you cannot stand against me by your own strength: beware, then, of raging; beware of practising malice any further, lest it fall back more heavily upon your own head. And I will let you go," he said, "in such a way that I shall not trouble to take either a hostage or any oath from you. Nor will I allow anything to be taken from your belongings, not even in compensation for the plunder you are wont to carry off." So he let the man go, chastened, and from then on he took good care not to presume to harm Gerald's people.

XLI

By now, as we said above, his adversaries were ceasing, struck with the fear of God. For though, after the example of Job, he was a brother of dragons and a companion of ostriches, yet the beasts of the field were at peace with him (Job 5:23). For though his allodial land began at Postomia, and from there his great estates followed one upon another, so that as far as the great mountain Greo he could always lodge in his own chapels going and returning, yet he had no need to commend any estate to some powerful man for protection, except one small property called Taladiciacus. For it lay apart among very bad neighbours, far removed from the rest. For this one his officials made him, against his will and unwilling, commend it to a certain Bernard for protection. This he bore patiently, even with a certain cheerfulness, saying: "It has turned out well for me, that I may learn that it is good to trust in the Lord rather than in man (Ps 118:8)." We have been pleased to record this so that it may be clear from it that whenever God allowed anything to happen to test him, he turned it not to sadness but to humility. This also shows that this man lived by faith, since he knew that all things are subject to God's ordering, and was not unaware, as it is written, that nothing on earth happens without a cause (Job 5:6).

XLII

En quaedam de exterioribus gestis ejus, et communi conversatione digessimus, per quae videlicet facillime patet, quod vir iste justitiae cultor fuerit, et juxta apostolicum praeceptum, sobrie, et pie, et juste conversatus est. Cum igitur in justificationibus Domini sine querela se exercuerit, incredibile non debet videri, si ipse Dominus misericordiam suam cum eo magnificat. Quapropter suademus eis, quibus incredibile videtur omne quod nunc fama de eodem sancto viro dispergit, ut cautius ac diligentius causam ejus retractent. Nam si hoc obstare videtur, quod in saeculo potens fuit, considerandum est quod major et laudabilior virtus sit materiam superbiendi habuisse, et tamen potentiae culmen humiliter compressisse. Potestas enim non est nisi a Deo. Qui, juxta Scripturam, potentes non abjicit, cum ipse sit potens. Quamvis igitur saeculari gloria fastigiatus fuerit, non debet incredibile videri, si Deus illum glorificat, qui hunc in observantiam mandatorum ejus glorificavit. Annon potentes fuerunt et bellicosi rex David, Ezechias, et Josias? Modernis quoque temporibus de nonnullis auditum est, sicut de rege Anglorum Oswaldo, quos Deus per signa glorificat, qui scilicet in observantiam mandatorum ejus illum glorificare studuerunt. Denique in singulis hujus vitae aetatibus multa gerit divina dignatio, quae ad incitamentum conculcatae et oblitae religionis proficiant. Unde dicit Apostolus quia Deus nullum tempus sine sui testimonio relinquit. Quod etiam per ingratos aliquando fit, sicut equidem sub Moyse multa signa cum illis patrata sunt, de quibus scriptum est, quoniam non in pluribus eorum beneplacitum fuit Deo. Et nonnulla vix credibilia veraces et idonei testes asserunt, sicut beatus Hieronymus de quodam quondam violento et latrone, qui postea conversus ad Christum, solem ad explendum iter suum diu stare fecit, ac deinde clauso ostio ad discipulos corporaliter intravit. Si ergo Deus, qui cum patribus mirabilia fecit, etiam nostris temporibus ad ressuscitandum conculcatae religionis affectum, per hominem, qui sicut in diebus Noe, justus repertus est, signa dignatur operari, incredibile non debet videri. Sed ipse potius est glorificandus, qui nullum tempus sine testimonio bonitatis suae relinquens, suae promissionis memor, non desinit benefacere populo suo. De gestis autem ejusdem viri, quae egit, postquam cultui divinae servitutis, ex toto se cohaesit, quae dicenda sunt, sequenti libello reservantes, hic istum in Dei nomine terminemus.

See, we have set out something of his outward deeds and of his ordinary manner of life, from which it is very easy to see that this man was a lover of justice and, according to the Apostle's precept, lived soberly, devoutly and justly (Titus 2:12). Since, then, he walked blameless in the ordinances of the Lord (Lk 1:6), it ought not to seem incredible if the Lord himself magnifies his mercy with him. We therefore urge those to whom everything that rumour now spreads about this holy man seems incredible to examine his case again more carefully and diligently. For if it seems an obstacle that he was powerful in the world, it must be considered that it is a greater and more praiseworthy virtue to have had matter for pride and yet humbly to have kept down the height of power. For there is no power but from God (Rom 13:1). And he, according to Scripture, does not cast away the mighty, since he himself is mighty (Job 36:5). Although, then, he was raised high in worldly glory, it ought not to seem incredible if God glorifies him who glorified God by keeping his commandments. Were not King David, Hezekiah and Josiah men of power and of war? In more recent times too it has been heard of some, such as Oswald, king of the English, whom God glorifies by signs because they strove to glorify him by keeping his commandments. In short, in every age of this life the divine goodness does many things that serve to rouse a religion trodden down and forgotten. Hence the Apostle says that God leaves no age without witness to himself. This sometimes happens even through the ungrateful, as under Moses many signs were wrought among those of whom it is written that with most of them God was not well pleased (1 Cor 10:5). And truthful and reliable witnesses affirm some things that are scarcely believable, as blessed Jerome tells of a man who was once violent and a robber, who afterwards, converted to Christ, made the sun stand still for a long time so that he might finish his journey, and then entered bodily into the room of his disciples through a closed door. If, then, God, who did wonders with the fathers, deigns in our times also, to revive devotion to a religion trodden down, to work signs through a man who, as in the days of Noah, was found just, it ought not to seem incredible. Rather is he to be glorified who, leaving no age without witness to his goodness and mindful of his promise, does not cease to do good to his people (Jer 32:40). As for the deeds this man did after he had given himself wholly to the service of God, we keep what must be said of them for the following book, and here, in the name of God, let us end this one.

Praefatio in librum secundum

His qui de meritis domni Geraldi temere disputant satisfacere potest considerata et inspecta qualitas vitae ejus. Nam quasi in tribunali quodam residentes, decernunt utrum sanctus debeat esse annon; cum hoc divino judicio subjaceat, quo etiam per reprobos ad utilitatem bonorum signa plerumque fiunt. His ergo satisfaciat attestatio miraculorum, quae per eum, vel dum viveret, vel post ejus obitum Christus operari dignatur. Porro his qui gloriantur, dicentes, quod Geraldus potens fuit, et sanctus est, suademus ne sibi de hoc applaudant, quia nisi pauperes spiritu fuerint, et sicut ille, suam potentiam religione condierint, casa eorum parva esse non poterit. Imo comparatione ejus revincentur, potuisse quidem juste similiter vivere, sed noluisse; manducones vero et bibaces, ut de quibusdam religionis professoribus dicam, qui sibi excusationes in peccatis fingentes, inter pocula fateri solent quia Geraldus carnibus vescebatur, et sanctus est, sua professio manifeste revincit. Nam laico homini multa licent quae monacho non licent. Damnatus est Adam, non quod in paradiso mala arbor esset, sed ideo quod interdicto praesumpsit. Geraldus quippe licenter suo ordini concessis utebatur, quoniam et ab illicitis abstinebat, et cum pauperibus vescebatur. Noverat enim vinum ad sobrietatem creatum. Nam et Elias carne pastus est, et dignus fuit in paradiso transferri. Per concupiscentiam tamen, quae nonnullos instigat, Esau primogenita sua lentis edulio perdidit. Igitur alia res est Geraldi, alia istorum. At vero illi qui delirant, quod nec martyr, nec confessor valeat dici, sciant quod utrumque dici possit, non solum ille, sed etiam omnis, qui ut vitiis resistendo crucem portat, vel bona gerendo Deum glorificat. Deus equidem factis confitetur, testante Joanne: In hoc scimus quia cognoscimus eum, si mandata ejus observamus; factis quoque negatur, sicut Apostolus ait de quibusdam: Confitentur se nosse Deum, factis autem negant. Cum igitur confessor a confitendo vocetur, Deus autem factis aut negatur aut confitetur: Geraldus tanto rectius confessor dici potest, quanto justioribus factis Deum est confessus. Qui vero Judaizantes signa quaerunt, quid faciunt de Joanne Baptista, qui post nativitatem suam nullum signum legitur edidisse? Nam de isto licet miracula non omnimodis desint, id unum respondemus, quia dum non speravit in pecunia et thesauris, fecit, ut scriptum est, mirabilia in vita sua.

Preface to the Second Book

Those who argue rashly about the merits of the lord Gerald may be satisfied by considering and examining the quality of his life. For, sitting as it were on some tribunal, they decide whether he ought to be a saint or not; whereas this lies under the judgement of God, by which signs are often worked even through the reprobate for the benefit of the good. Let them be satisfied, then, by the testimony of the miracles which Christ deigns to work through him, both while he lived and after his death. As for those who glory in saying that Gerald was powerful and is a saint, we urge them not to applaud themselves for this, for unless they are poor in spirit (Mt 5:3) and, like him, have seasoned their power with religion, their house cannot be a lowly one. Rather, by comparison with him they will be convicted of having been able to live justly in the same way, but of not having wished to; and as for the gluttons and tipplers, to speak of certain professed religious, who, inventing excuses for their sins, are wont to declare over their cups that Gerald ate meat and is a saint, their own profession plainly convicts them. For many things are lawful for a layman that are not lawful for a monk. Adam was condemned not because the tree in Paradise was bad, but because he presumed against a prohibition. Gerald, indeed, lawfully used what was allowed to his order, since he both abstained from what was unlawful and ate with the poor. For he knew that wine was created for sobriety. For Elijah too was fed with meat, and was found worthy to be carried up into paradise. Yet through the concupiscence which drives some men, Esau lost his birthright for a dish of lentils. Gerald's case, then, is one thing, theirs another. And those who rave that he can be called neither martyr nor confessor, let them know that both can be said, not only of him but of everyone who either bears the cross by resisting vices or glorifies God by doing good. For God is confessed by deeds, as John testifies: By this we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments (1 Jn 2:3); and he is also denied by deeds, as the Apostle says of some: They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny him (Titus 1:16). Since, then, a confessor is so called from confessing, and God is either denied or confessed by deeds, Gerald can be called a confessor all the more rightly, the more just the deeds by which he confessed God. As for those who, like the Jews, seek signs, what do they make of John the Baptist, who, we read, worked no sign after his birth? For although miracles are by no means lacking in this man's case, we give this one answer: that since he did not put his hope in money and treasures, he did wonders in his life, as it is written (Sir 31:8–9).

Liber secundus

I.

Athleta coelestis militiae dudum in palestra mundanae conversationis agonizans, cuneos vitiorum viriliter debellavit. Tum vero verbum vitae continens in medio nationis pravae, quasi quaedam lucerna refulgebat. Et quoniam oportebat ut in abscondito tempestatis probaretur, malignus hostis hanc lucernam quantis poterat fraudibus, tam per se quam per satellites suos effocare tentabat. Sed nimirum sicut flamma flatibus agitata solet validius accendi, sic divini amoris igniculus, qui in pectore Geraldi a puero incaluit, nullo tentationis imbre valebat exstingui. Quin potius, maturescente jam aetate, quibuslibet vitiis paulatim compressis, quotidie seipso robustior virtutibus succrescebat. Jam in corde suo quasdam ascensiones disponebat, jam super altitudines terrae, juxta illud propheticum, eminebat. Cerneres auroram sanctitatis ejus in diem festum clarescere, cerneres lilium inter spinas crevisse, et quo vicinior maturitate fiebat, eo repansos virtutum flores diffusius expandisse. Ergo sicut in rerum vertice situs, in illa beatitudine superna mentis affectum defixerat. Et quoniam per coeleste desiderium intima lux illum irradiabat, mundanae concupiscentiae tenebras dijudicare valebat. An non tenebras dixerim terrenam concupiscentiam, per quam mundi amatores caecantur, ut diligant vanitatem? Sed Geraldus didicerat pretiosum separare a vili, et valde indignum ducebat terram lingere, qui vocatum se noverat ad coenam coelestis Agni. Super eos magis dolebat, qui per amicitiam mundi inimici Dei constituuntur. Et postquam gustaverat quam dulcis est Dominus, dedignabatur aquas furtivas, quae dulciores sunt, allambere. Plangebat eos potius qui, juxta beatum Job, cum clamore currunt rodere radicem juniperi, id est, cupiditatem punctionibus plenam. Mundialem itaque potentiam, quae sibi affatim suppetebat, mentis despectu calcaverat. Sed tamen, ut astuti est, cuncta ad utilitatem suam referre, cogitabat qualiter ea quae temporaliter possidebat, ita disponeret, ut ei perpetualiter profuissent.

II.

Igitur Gausbertum, venerabilem et laude dignum plane episcopum, cum aliis quibusdam honestis viris evocavit, et qua mentis cogitatione incitaretur, familiariter indicavit. Etenim domnus iste Gausbertus viro Dei charissimus erat, et pro communi sanctitate, mutuum sibi invicem contubernium praestabant. Exponit itaque praesentis vitae sibi inesse fastidium, et religionis habitum desiderare; Romam proficisci velle, et praedia sua beato Petro apostolorum principi jure testamentario delegare.

Book Two

I

The athlete of the heavenly army, long contending in the arena of worldly life, manfully overthrew the battalions of the vices. Then, holding fast the word of life in the midst of a perverse generation (Phil 2:15–16), he shone like a lamp. And since he was to be proved in the secret place of the storm (Ps 81:8), the malignant enemy tried with all the deceits he could, both by himself and through his henchmen, to put out this lamp. But just as a flame stirred by the wind usually burns the more strongly, so the little fire of divine love, which had been kindled in Gerald's breast from boyhood, could not be quenched by any shower of temptation. Rather, as his age now ripened and every vice was little by little subdued, he grew daily stronger than himself in the virtues. Already he was setting ascents in his heart (Ps 84:6); already he was rising, as in that word of the prophet, above the heights of the earth (Is 58:14). You could see the dawn of his holiness brightening into a festal day; you could see the lily grown among thorns (Song 2:2), and the nearer it came to ripeness, the more widely it spread its open flowers of virtue. So, as one set on the summit of things, he had fixed the affection of his mind on that heavenly blessedness. And since, through his heavenly longing, an inner light shone upon him, he was able to judge the darkness of worldly desire. Shall I not call earthly desire darkness, by which the lovers of the world are blinded so that they love vanity? But Gerald had learnt to separate the precious from the vile (Jer 15:19), and thought it most unworthy that one who knew himself called to the supper of the heavenly Lamb (Rev 19:9) should lick the dust. He grieved rather over those who through friendship with the world are made enemies of God (Jas 4:4). And after he had tasted how sweet the Lord is, he scorned to lap up the stolen waters, which are sweeter (Prov 9:17). He mourned rather for those who, as blessed Job says, run with clamour to gnaw the root of the juniper (Job 30:4), that is, the desire for gain, full of pricks. So worldly power, which was his in abundance, he had trodden underfoot in contempt of mind. But, as it is the part of a shrewd man to turn everything to his own profit, he considered how he might so dispose of what he possessed in time that it would profit him for ever.

II

So he called Gausbert, a venerable bishop and truly worthy of praise, with certain other honourable men, and told them in confidence what thought was stirring his mind. For this lord Gausbert was very dear to the man of God, and because of their common holiness they kept close company with one another. He explains, then, that he is weary of this present life and longs for the habit of religion; that he wishes to go to Rome and to make over his estates by deed to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles.

Cumque de hoc diu tractatum esset, vir Domini Gaus bertus altiori consilio causam inspiciens, tandem suasit in saeculari habitu sese specie tenus, pro communi salute provincialium retineret, res vero sicut vellet, beato Petro dicaret. At ille ne suae definitioni pertinacius inhaerens, inobedienter egisse videretur, assensus est. Memor tamen Apostoli dicentis, quia Judaeus qui confitens interpretatur, majus et melius in absconditio fiat, quam in palam, ita attonsus est ut hoc hominibus lateret, superno autem inspectori manifestum esset. Barbam sibi equidem cum novacula mutilavit, quam ad modum coronae, per caput suum ducens, de capillis quoque partem recidebat. Ut autem hoc penitus celaretur, quosdam ex cubiculariis, qui id noverant, sacramento constrinxit, ut quandiu viveret, nulla hoc ratione prodidissent. Denique per hoc sui factum, videtur duplicem sibi remunerationem conquisisse. Hinc etenim Dominica dilectione flagrans, conversionis opus Deo exhibuit; illinc amore proximorum plenus, se pro illorum utilitate in habitu, quem nollet, invitum stare coegit. Nam quale genus conversationis Deo poterat gratiosius exhibere, quam istud, in quo neque commune solatium negligeret, nec sibi quidquam de conversationis perfectione minueret? Quae nimirum conversatio tanto pretiosior exstitit, quanto et multis utilior, et soli Deo cognita fuit? Qui, ut scriptum est, consilium ejus direxit, ut quamvis Liae eum connubium subire fecerit, Rachelis tamen cupitis amplexibus non privaret.

III.

Ad celandam plane sui tonsuram facile reperit argumentum. Barbam quippe veluti onerosam recidebat, et quoniam ab occipitio capilli defluxerant; celabat in vertice coronam, quam, et tiaram jugiter ferens cooperiebat. Vestimentis autem pelliceis super vestibus lineis utebatur, quia genus istud indumenti solent clerici vicissim et laici in usum habere. Duas tamen pelliceas nunquam simul habebat. Sed cum novam necesse esset afferri, jubebat protinus vetustam dari. Ensis plane, cum equitaret, a quolibet solebat ante eum ferri, quem tamen ipse nunquam sua manu tangebat. Siquidem de balteo vel cinguli apparatu jamdudum crucem auream praeceperat fabricari. Sedere autem super phaleratum equum nunquam solebat. In his et hujusmodi satis apparebat quantopere mediocritati studens, suae potentiae cumulum despexerat.

IV.

And when this had been discussed at length, the man of the Lord, Gausbert, looking into the matter with deeper counsel, at last persuaded him to keep the secular habit in outward appearance, for the common welfare of the people of the province, but to dedicate his possessions to blessed Peter as he wished. And he, lest by clinging too stubbornly to his own resolve he should seem to have acted disobediently, consented. Yet, mindful of the Apostle, who says that the Jew, which is interpreted "one who confesses", is greater and better in secret than in the open (Rom 2:29), he was tonsured in such a way that it was hidden from men but manifest to the One who sees from above. He cut off his beard with a razor, and, drawing the razor round his head in the form of a crown, he also cut away part of his hair. And so that this should be completely concealed, he bound by oath some of the chamberlains who knew of it never on any account to reveal it as long as he lived. By this deed of his, then, he seems to have won for himself a double reward. For on the one hand, burning with love of the Lord, he offered God the work of conversion; on the other, full of love for his neighbours, he made himself, unwillingly, remain for their benefit in a habit he did not want. For what kind of life could he offer God more pleasingly than this, in which he neither neglected the common good nor lessened in any way the perfection of his own conversion? And was not this way of life the more precious, the more it was both useful to many and known to God alone? For God, as it is written, directed his counsel, so that, though he made him enter into marriage with Leah, he did not deprive him of the longed-for embraces of Rachel.

III

He easily found a device for hiding his tonsure. For he kept his beard cut short, as though it were a burden; and since the hair had fallen away from the back of his head, he hid the crown on the top, covering it by always wearing a cap. He wore garments of skins over his linen clothes, because clerics and laymen alike are wont to use that kind of garment. Yet he never had two fur garments at once. But when a new one had to be brought, he ordered the old one to be given away at once. When he rode, a sword was usually carried before him by someone, but he himself never touched it with his hand. For he had long since ordered a golden cross to be made from his sword-belt and the trappings of his girdle. He never used to sit on a horse with trappings. In these things and others like them it was plain enough how, striving for moderation, he had despised the height of his power.

IV

Postquam itaque divino cultui sese mancipavit per omnia, ut sua quoque Domino consecraret, Romam profectus est, et Aureliacum insigne praedium beato Petro apostolorum principi, facto solemniter testamento, delegavit, cum tantis videlicet appenditiis, quae monachis, quos ibidem congregare disposuerat, ad omne stipendium sufficere possent. Ardebat namque mens illius coenobialem illic habitationem stabilire, quo coenobitae cum sui ordinis abbate communem ducerent vitam. Censum quoque delegavit, qui ad urnam beati Petri annuatim redderetur. Itaque, ut animo ferventi conceperat, juxta condictum profectus est, et quod decreverat, Deo prosperante, peregit. Reversus autem lapidicinos et mactiones undecunque jussit aggregari, et ad construendam in honore beati Petri ecclesiam fundamentum praecepit aperiri. Sed Satanas, omnium bonorum invidus, nescio qua arte providentiam fefellit magistrorum. Fundamentum namque infirmiter locaverunt, et cum jam in expensa grandis nummorum summa esset profligata, parietesque nihilominus in altum porrecti, quadraminum compages subito dissutae corruerunt. Nec tamen vir iste nimis ob hoc contristatus est. Non enim, ut scriptum est, contristat justum quidquid ei acciderit. Vere confisus quoniam licet opus illud sub hac occasione retardaretur, merces tamen perditi operis nequaquam periret. Videns quod Dei judicio permissum sit ut haec jactura fieret, hoc tamen usitatum pene in omni actione semper est, ut quidquid placidius Deo exhibetur, difficilius peragatur. Et certe in rerum natura quod citius augmentum capit, citius ad defectum vergit: quod vero difficulter, diuturnius persistit.

V.

Quadragesimale tempus advenerat, cum in construendis aedificiis aer jam clementior arridebat. Geraldus quodam mane, consuetis orationibus expletis, exiit ab oppido quod eidem loco imminet. Paululum jam progressus, coepit visibus huc illucque porrectis considerare ubinam posset aptius ecclesiae fabrica fundari. Tandem elegit locum divina dispositione jam praescitum. Jubet igitur artifices rursus adesse, studium recalere, opus intermissum aperiri, coepto operi sagaciter instare, ecclesiam competenti granditudine, et arcuato schemate fabricare, quam pater ejus dudum in honore sancti Clementis construxerat. Nam, ut praedixeramus, isdem pater ejus religiosus fuit, utpote qui de pro sapia religiosorum descenderat.

VI.

So, after he had given himself over entirely to the service of God, that he might consecrate his possessions also to the Lord, he went to Rome, and by solemn deed made over his famous estate of Aurillac to blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, together with appurtenances great enough to supply every need of the monks whom he had resolved to gather there. For his mind burned to establish there a monastic dwelling, where monks might lead the common life with an abbot of their own order. He also assigned a rent to be paid every year to the shrine of blessed Peter. So, as he had conceived it in his fervent mind, he set out as arranged, and by God's favour accomplished what he had resolved. On his return he ordered stonecutters and masons to be gathered from everywhere, and commanded the foundations to be opened for building a church in honour of blessed Peter. But Satan, envious of all good, by I know not what art deceived the foresight of the master builders. For they laid the foundations weakly, and when a great sum of money had already been spent and the walls were raised high, the joints of the squared stones suddenly came apart and fell. Yet this man was not too greatly saddened by it. For, as it is written, whatever befalls the just man shall not sadden him (Prov 12:21). He trusted truly that, although the work was delayed on this account, the reward of the lost work would by no means be lost. He saw that by God's judgement this loss had been allowed to happen; and indeed it is almost always so in every undertaking, that whatever is offered more pleasingly to God is accomplished with greater difficulty. And certainly in the nature of things, what grows quickly declines quickly, but what grows with difficulty lasts longer.

V

Lent had come, when the milder air was already smiling on the work of building. One morning, when he had finished his usual prayers, Gerald went out from the town that stands above that place. When he had gone a little way, he began, casting his eyes this way and that, to consider where the fabric of the church might best be founded. At length he chose a place already foreknown by divine providence. He orders the craftsmen to come back, their zeal to be rekindled, the interrupted work to be opened up again and the work begun to be pressed on with skill, and the church which his father had once built in honour of Saint Clement to be rebuilt at a fitting size and in vaulted form. For, as we said before, his father was a devout man, as one descended from a devout lineage.

VI

Dum vero domus fabricam continuaret, animo semper volvebat qualiter posset reperire monachos qui bene morati essent, et locum sub regulari proposito incolere potuissent. Sed cum reperiendi raritas difficultatem intulisset, anxiabatur ille, et quidnam faceret nesciebat. Tum vero nobiles quosdam pueros ad Vabrense coenobium direxit. Nam tunc regularis observantiae fervor incalescebat, ut scilicet apud fraternitatem illam sub norma regulari iidem pueri imbuerentur. E quibus nunc usque superest unus, qui eodem beato Geraldo quae describimus, visa narrat, et manu scribit. Porro cum iidem pueri reverti juberentur, quia magistri defuerunt, mox puellari mollitia resoluti, rigorem disciplinae neglexerunt. Et ita contigit, ut res ad effectum non veniret: unum tamen eorum necessitate ductus caeteris praefecit. Sed cum ille dissolute viveret, vir Domini vehementer afficiebatur, quia illum corrigere non valebat, neque alium habere, quem loco illius subrogare posset. Cum ergo vel illum, vel complices ejus, corruptae vitae tramitem incedere vidisset, illud Davidicum, profunde suspirans, dicebat. O Domine, dissipa consilium Achitophel.

VII.

Nonnunquam vero in vocem plangoris erumpens super homines quos ad malum proclives videbat, pertaesus ingemiscebat, quasi querimoniam faciens, quod iidem homines pro amore mundi perirent, quod pietas deficeret, quod iniquitas inundaret, quod pene jam universi amitterent a corde innocentiam, ab ore veritatem. Nolebat autem jurgiis eorum se immiscere, sed orabat ut Deus omnipotens pacificaret omnes, praecipiens missarum solemnia celebrari, illud Ezechiae frequentius iterans: O Domine, fiat tantum pax et veritas in diebus meis; et illud: O quantum deficit sanctus! o quantum diminutae sunt veritates a filiis hominum!

VIII.

Desiderium sane quo ad coelestia flagrans terrena despexerat ita se posse consolari sperabat, si socios ejusdem sui desiderii reperisset. Proinde diu noctuque mens illius aestuabat, et de congregandis monachis affectum oblivisci non poterat, saepius cum domesticis et familiaribus inde colloquens. Tanto enim in id affectu agebatur, ut nonnunquam exclamaret: O si quis mihi daret ut sub tali pacto religiosos monachos invenirem! quo ego illis cuncta, quae possideo dedissem, et deinceps mendicando vitam hanc exegissem! Ad hoc enim pactum ineundum nihil prorsus morarer.

While he carried on with building the house, he was always turning over in his mind how he might find monks of good character who could inhabit the place under the rule. But since the scarcity of them made it hard to find any, he was anxious, and did not know what to do. Then he sent certain noble boys to the monastery of Vabres. For the fervour of regular observance was then growing warm there, so that among that brotherhood these boys might be formed under the rule. Of these one survives to this day, who tells what he saw with blessed Gerald, the things we are describing, and writes them down with his own hand. But when these boys were ordered to return, since they lacked masters, they soon went slack with a girlish softness and neglected the rigour of discipline. And so it came about that the plan did not take effect; yet, driven by necessity, he set one of them over the rest. But since that one lived a lax life, the man of the Lord was deeply distressed, because he could not correct him, nor had he anyone else to put in his place. So when he saw either him or his accomplices walking the path of a corrupt life, he would say, with a deep sigh, those words of David: O Lord, scatter the counsel of Ahithophel (2 Sam 15:34).

VII

Sometimes, too, breaking into a voice of lament over men whom he saw inclined to evil, he groaned in weariness, as if making complaint that these men were perishing for love of the world, that mercy was failing, that iniquity was overflowing, that almost all were now losing innocence from their hearts and truth from their lips. He would not, however, involve himself in their quarrels, but prayed that almighty God would bring them all to peace, ordering the solemnity of Mass to be celebrated, and often repeating those words of Hezekiah: O Lord, only let there be peace and truth in my days (Is 39:8); and that other: O how the holy man fails! O how truths are diminished among the sons of men! (Ps 12:2).

VIII

Burning for heavenly things, he had despised the earthly, and he hoped that his longing might find comfort if he could find companions in that same longing. Therefore his mind seethed day and night, and he could not forget his longing to gather monks, often speaking of it with his household and intimates. For he was driven to it with such longing that he would sometimes exclaim: "Oh, if only someone would grant me to find devout monks on these terms! I would give them everything I possess, and spend the rest of this life begging! For I would not delay a moment in entering into such a bargain."

Cum itidem aliquando familiares ei respondissent, dicentes: Nonne plures monachi in his regionibus reperiuntur, e quibus ad votum congregare potestis? At ille fortem nimis sententiam proferens: Si, inquit, monachi perfecti sunt, beatis angelis assimilantur: sin vero ad saeculare desiderium revertuntur, apostaticis angelis, qui suum domicilium non servaverunt, per suam utique apostasiam, jure comparantur. Fateor enim vobis, quoniam incomparabiliter melior est bonus laicus quam sui propositi transgressor monachus. Cumque ei subjunxissent: Quid ergo tanta beneficia, non solum vicinis, sed etiam longinquis coenobitis praestare consuevistis? At ille consueta humilitate facta sua despiciens: Ego, inquit, nihil facio. Si tamen, ut dicitis, aliquid facerem, certus sum quia verus est promissor qui calicem aquae frigidae pro suo nomine datum remunerare promisit. Viderint ipsi quales in oculis Dei sunt. Certe verum est, quia qui recipit justum in nomine justi, mercedem justi accipiet. Porro in his, et hujusmodi verbis ejus apparet, quod vitae praesentis delectationem fastidiret, quod coelesti desiderio flagraret, quod omnia sua relincuere vellet, si non defuissent quibus ea rationabiliter tradidisset. Verum est illud vulgare proverbium, quia voluntas pro opere computatur. Unde et ille qui fratrem odit, homicida esse perhibetur. Et Joannes Evangelista passionis calicem bibit, cum tamen in pace quievit. Si ergo voluntas pro opere computatur, nequaquam Geraldus abrenuntiatorum mercede privatur.

IX.

Invitus itaque tenebatur in saeculo. Et quamvis deessent socii cum quibus eidem saeculo abrenuntiaret, mirum tamen in modum in Dei opere totum se occupabat. Tantopere enim lectionibus audiendis, et vicissim orationibus, nunc cum aliis, nunc semotim erat intentus, ut mirum sit quomodo vel tantum studium in his habere potuerit, vel tantam psalmorum summam semper explere voluerit. Praesertim cum alias occupationes interdum expedisset. Non enim erat obstinatus, ut causis necessariis se nimium obsentaret: sed his pro opportunitate paululum intentus, mox ad degustatam psalmodiae dulcedinem sese concitus recolligebat. Quam reverenter sane in ecclesia staret, non satis referri potest, sed putares illum quasi divinum aliquid contemplari, atque illud propheticum attonito vultu imitari. Vivit Dominus, in cujus conspectu sto. Nam ut hoc sub exemplo pateat, festivus dies Dominicae Ascensionis advenerat, cum quidem ille Sollemniaco monasterio, ut est juris solemnis, celebraturus accucurrit.

Likewise, when once his intimates answered him, saying: "Are there not many monks to be found in these regions, from whom you could gather as many as you wish?" He uttered a very strong judgement: "If monks are perfect," he said, "they are like the blessed angels; but if they go back to worldly desire, they are rightly compared, by their apostasy, to the apostate angels, who did not keep their own dwelling (Jude 6). For I confess to you that a good layman is incomparably better than a monk who breaks his vows." And when they added: "Why, then, have you been accustomed to bestow such great benefits on monks not only nearby but far away?" He, despising his own deeds with his usual humility, said: "I do nothing. But if, as you say, I did something, I am sure that he is true to his promise who promised to reward a cup of cold water given in his name (Mt 10:42). Let them see to what they are in the eyes of God. Certainly it is true that he who receives a just man in the name of a just man shall receive the reward of a just man (Mt 10:41)." In these words of his and others like them it appears that he was weary of the delight of the present life, that he burned with heavenly longing, and that he would have left all he had, had there not been lacking those to whom he could reasonably hand it over. True is the common proverb, that the will is counted for the deed. Hence even he who hates his brother is declared to be a murderer (1 Jn 3:15). And John the Evangelist drank the chalice of the Passion, though he died in peace. If, then, the will is counted for the deed, Gerald is by no means deprived of the reward of those who renounce all.

IX

So he was held in the world against his will. And although he lacked companions with whom to renounce that same world, he nonetheless gave himself wholly, in a wonderful manner, to the work of God. For he was so intent on hearing readings, and on prayers in turn, now with others, now apart, that it is a wonder how he could have such zeal for these things, or how he was willing always to complete so great a number of psalms. All the more since at times he also had other business to dispatch. For he was not so stubborn as to hold himself too much aloof from necessary affairs; but, having given them a little attention as occasion required, he would soon gather himself back in haste to the sweetness of psalmody that he had tasted. How reverently he stood in church cannot be told well enough; you would have thought him to be contemplating something divine, and with rapt countenance to be following that word of the prophet: The Lord lives, in whose sight I stand (1 Kgs 17:1). To show this by an example: the feast of the Lord's Ascension had come, and he hastened to the monastery of Solignac to celebrate it as the solemnity requires.

Non enim patiebatur, tantae festivitatis officium, nisi festive [infestive] recenseri, neque, ut plerisque mos est, cursum celebrando decurtari. Cum igitur illuc venissent monachi, sicut tantae ac tali personae conveniebat, ei sedile et reclinatorium ornamentis constratum paraverunt. Ad quod cum ille post gyrata oratoria divertisset, fratres solemnizare coeperunt officium, ut moris est, in longum protelantes. Senior vero donec impletum esset, ita suspensus in contemplatione stetit, ut nec sederet, nec vel paululum in antipodium recubaret, ipsa corporis immobilitate mentis devotionem et constantiam demonstrans. At nos non ita, qui faciem Dei, velut in abscondito orantes, pomposa voce magis, quam simplici corde divinas laudes proferimus. Et cum debeat voci mentis intelligentia convenire, nos facimus currere vocem post levitatem mentis. Geraldus vero apostolicum illud recogitans: Deo autem manifesti sumus, sic se agebat, tanquam in conspectu judicis cuncta cernentis.

X.

Ut autem divina dignatio coram hominibus eum glorificaret: qui Deum in exsequendis mandatis ejus coram discolis glorificabat, licet instante jam tempore Antichristi miracula sanctorum cessare debeant, memor tamen suae promissionis, qua dicitur: Qui glorificant me, glorificabo eos, hunc famulum suum per quamdam curationis gratiam glorificare dignatus est. Quod genus curationis tale fuit, ut quamvis per humilitatem imponere manum infirmis refugeret, eis tamen frequenter et absens, et nolens subveniret. Aquam nempe, de qua manus abluere solitus erat, infirmi solebant furari, et plerique sanabantur. Quod licet ut magis credibile videatur, personas quasdam commemorari placet. Nam rusticanus quidam juxta Sollemniacum monasterium habebat filium caecum, qui diutius ingemiscens, quod eum caecitas et paupertas pariter opprimeret, monitus est per visum quatenus ad domnum Geraldum pergeret, et aqua, unde manus ejus ablutae fuissent, oculos filii sui superfudisset. Credidit homo visioni, et quid somniaverat veniens indicavit. Quo senior audito, mente consternatus intremuit, ac praesumere id refugiens, dixit illusionem fuisse, quae et illum deciperet, et illum decipere vellet, ut inconcessa tentaret: errare hominem inani spe talia postulantem. Ingemuit pater, quem filii caecitas anxiabat, et intelligens quod vir Domini causa humilitatis nequaquam acquiesceret, abire se simulans, ab uno de servitoribus aquam impetravit. Qui domum rediens, exstincta filii lumina, nomen Christi invocans, abluit, et ille lumen recepit. Quod factum aliud quoddam opus secutum est.

For he would not allow the office of so great a feast to be gone through other than festively, nor, as many are accustomed to do, the course of the office to be cut short in the celebrating. So when they had come there, the monks, as befitted a person so great and of such worth, prepared for him a seat and a rest to lean on, spread with ornaments. When he had gone to it after making the round of the oratories, the brethren began to celebrate the office solemnly, drawing it out at length, as the custom is. But the lord, until it was completed, stood so rapt in contemplation that he neither sat down nor leant even a little on the rest, showing by the very stillness of his body the devotion and constancy of his mind. But we are not so: praying before the face of God as though in secret, we utter the divine praises with a showy voice rather than with a simple heart. And whereas the understanding of the mind ought to accord with the voice, we make the voice run after the levity of the mind. Gerald, however, pondering that word of the Apostle, But to God we are manifest (2 Cor 5:11), bore himself as one in the sight of a judge who sees all things.

X

And so that the divine goodness might glorify before men him who glorified God before the unruly by carrying out his commandments, God, although with the time of Antichrist now at hand the miracles of the saints must cease, yet mindful of his promise, in which it is said, Those who glorify me I will glorify (1 Sam 2:30), deigned to glorify this servant of his by a certain grace of healing. This kind of healing was such that, although out of humility he shrank from laying his hand on the sick, he nevertheless often came to their aid, both when absent and against his will. For the sick used to steal the water in which he had been accustomed to wash his hands, and many were healed. And that this may seem the more credible, it is fitting to name certain persons. For a certain countryman near the monastery of Solignac had a blind son; and after long lamenting that blindness and poverty alike weighed upon him, he was warned in a vision to go to the lord Gerald and pour over his son's eyes the water in which Gerald's hands had been washed. The man believed the vision, and came and told what he had dreamt. When the lord heard this, he trembled, dismayed in mind, and, shrinking from such presumption, said that it was a delusion, which was deceiving the man and wished to deceive him too into attempting what was not granted; that the man was in error, asking such things in empty hope. The father, whom his son's blindness tormented, groaned; and, understanding that the man of the Lord would by no means consent, because of his humility, he pretended to go away, and obtained the water from one of the servants. Returning home, he bathed his son's darkened eyes, calling on the name of Christ, and the boy received his sight. Another work followed upon this deed.

XI.

Quidam puerulus apud Aureliacum claudus morabatur, qui fabro cuidam commendatus est, ut artem disceret, qua victitare valuisset. Cum interim somno commonitus est, ut aquam similiter expetisset, faber vero qui hanc impetrare debebat, sciens quod in hac re vir Domini nimis austerus esset, aquam non est ausus palam expetere, sed eam per ministros clam impetravit. Qui nimirum, ut inofficiosa membra de eadem aqua respersit, mox illa divina virtus in proprium officium reparavit. Quod videlicet factum cum fama paulatim spargeret, ad notitiam senioris tantumdem pervenit. At ille rei novitate perculsus, dicebat quod non suo merito, sed fide illorum qui aquam illam fabro dedissent, quod ei certatim celatum est; cumque datorem reperire non posset, vehementi interminatione commotus est, ne quispiam tale deinceps unquam praesumeret, asserens quia, si servus faceret, membris truncaretur; si vero liber, postea suus non esset. Nihil enim amplius timebat quam laudes. Et cum inimicis suis esset beneficus, laudatoribus tamen videbatur austerus.

XII.

Apud Postomium sui juris insignem alodum, quaedam mulier caeca de aqua manus illius lumen recepit. Quod apud omnes quidem divulgatum est, sed illi summo studio celabatur, maxime propter quemdam de servitoribus, qui aquam dederat mulieri. Non enim parvipendere sui poterant internecionem, quam pro hac re dudum comminatus fuerat, scientes quod impune non cederet, si datorem deprehendisset.

XIII.

Item in capella quae est juxta villam quae dicitur Crucicula, demorabatur; cum equidem alia mulier, quae ex ancillis ejus erat, de aqua manus nihilominus illuminata est. Quo videlicet ille cognito, illum, qui aquam dederat, nomine Rabboldum, urgenter investigavit, et reperit, et mox a se rejecit. Post aliquantum vero tempus, quidam nobilis vir, nomine Ebbo, seniorem ratiocinando convenit, dicens, quia forte contra voluntatem Dei faceret, dum sub obtentu indiscretae humilitatis, indultam coelitus gratiam neglexisset, et eos, quibus prodesse poterat, in angustia dimisisset: satius esse gratiam, quae forte propter illos ei data fuerat, impendere eis quae

XI

There lived at Aurillac a little boy who was lame, and he was entrusted to a smith to learn a craft by which he might earn his living. Meanwhile he was told in his sleep to ask for the water in the same way; but the smith, who was to obtain it, knowing that the man of the Lord was very stern in this matter, did not dare to ask for the water openly, but obtained it secretly through the servants. And as soon as he sprinkled the useless limbs with that water, the divine power at once restored them to their proper use. When report little by little spread this deed abroad, it came to the lord's knowledge as well. But he, struck by the strangeness of the thing, said that it had happened not by his merit but by the faith of those who had given that water to the smith, which they all vied with one another to keep hidden from him; and when he could not find the giver, he was moved to a vehement threat, that no one should ever again presume such a thing, declaring that if a serf did it, he would lose his limbs, and if a free man, he would no longer be his man. For there was nothing he feared more than praise. And though he was kind to his enemies, to those who praised him he seemed stern.

XII

At Postomia, a notable allod of his own, a blind woman received her sight from the water of his hands. This was spread abroad among everyone, but it was hidden from him with the greatest care, chiefly for the sake of one of the servants, who had given the woman the water. For his people could not make light of the ruin he had long before threatened for this offence, knowing that it would not go unpunished if he caught the giver.

XIII

Again, he was staying in the chapel that stands near the estate called Crucicula, when another woman, one of his bondwomen, likewise received her sight from the water of his hands. When he learnt of it, he searched hard for the man who had given the water, Rabbold by name, found him, and at once put him out of his service. Some time later a nobleman named Ebbo came to reason with the lord, saying that perhaps he was acting against the will of God, since, under the pretext of an indiscreet humility, he had neglected a grace granted from heaven, and had left in their distress those whom he could help; that it was better to spend on them the grace which had perhaps been given him for their sake, and to

necessitas exigit supplicantibus praestare: elationem non esse formidandam, cum laudis ille cupidus non esset: neque praesumptionem quidem, quoniam qui reposcerent opem, sese divinitus admonitos commemorassent: maxime, cum jam experimento probatum esset, quia beneficium sanitatis, quod a se quaesitum fuerat, ad effectum, licet ipso nesciente, jam non semel venisset. Et ille quidem hoc rationabiliter prosequebatur. Geraldus vero suspirans flebat, atque dicens, quia timeret quod diabolica fraus potius esset, quae sub occasione decipere vellet; et si quid aliquando boni fecisset, mercede ipsius boni privare perstruxisset. Tandem itaque vel precibus, vel ratione victus, abjectum recepit, et mulieri duodecim nummos dari jussit.

XIV.

Sciens vero quod status mentis hac alternatione melius custoditur, si interdum lectioni post orationem quisque intenderit; recitari coram se verba divina, ut supra diximus, faciebat. Unde et usum assumpsit, ut ad prandium ejus legeretur, nec omitteret hoc lector, etiamsi hospites adessent. Pro condescensione vero lectoren jubebat interdum subsistere, et ab his qui forte scirent, sensum lectionis inquirere. Cum quidem illi, quos interrogabat, precari solerent, ut ipse potius loqueretur, tandem diserte et scienter sicuti doctus, respondebat; ita tamen ut nec clericis verecundiam inferret. Discedentibus autem post refectionem quibusque ad sua, legebantur itidem coram eo ea maxime verba, quae superfuerant lectionibus in ecclesia recitatis. Dum vero lectioni intenderet, nullus eum facile pro causa qualibet interpellare praesumebat. Nam juxta illud Job, subditis erat tremendus, et lux vultus ejus non cadebat in terram. De sermonibus et confabulatione ejus mira commemoratio est. In his enim quae laeto animo loquebatur, valde gratissimus erat. Quae autem increpative proferebat, quasi stimuli videbantur, ut pene plus quam verba timerentur. In dando autem aliquid, multum erat morosus. At postquam semel dedisset, non auferebat. Si malae opinionis sacerdotem audisset, non tamen missae officium ab illo despiciebat, quia sciret illud sacrum mysterium non posse per hominem peccatorem deteriorari. Et cum in discernendis aliorum factis vel acutus pro merito causarum, vel dulcis esset, sua tamen opera vilipendebat. Quae nimirum tanto superno inspectori pretiosius commendabat, quanto haec apud se vilius aestimabat.

XV.

grant those who pleaded with him what their need required; that pride was not to be feared, since he was not greedy for praise; nor presumption either, since those who asked for help declared that they had been admonished by God; above all, since it had already been proved by experience that the benefit of healing which had been sought from him had more than once taken effect, even without his knowing. And he pressed this argument reasonably. But Gerald sighed and wept, saying that he feared it was rather a fraud of the devil, which wished to deceive him under this pretext and had contrived to rob him of the reward of whatever good he had ever done. At length, then, overcome by entreaty or by reason, he took back the man he had dismissed, and ordered twelve coins to be given to the woman.

XIV

Knowing that the state of the mind is better kept by this alternation, if one gives oneself from time to time to reading after prayer, he had the divine words read aloud before him, as we said above. Hence he also adopted the practice of having reading at his meals, and the reader was not to leave it off even when guests were present. By way of condescension, he would sometimes bid the reader stop, and ask those who might happen to know what the reading meant. And when those he questioned would beg him to speak instead, he would at length answer eloquently and knowledgeably, like a learned man, yet in such a way as not to put even the clerics to shame. And when, after the meal, each had gone off to his own affairs, there would again be read before him chiefly those passages that remained over from the lessons read in church. While he was intent on reading, hardly anyone presumed to interrupt him for any cause whatever. For, as in that word of Job, he was held in awe by those under him, and the light of his countenance did not fall to the earth (Job 29:24). Wonderful things are told of his speech and conversation. For in what he said with a cheerful mind he was most delightful. But what he uttered by way of rebuke seemed like goads, so that it was feared almost as something more than words. In giving anything he was very slow to decide. But once he had given, he did not take it back. If he heard that a priest was of bad repute, he did not on that account despise the office of the Mass at his hands, for he knew that that sacred mystery cannot be made worse by a sinful man. And though in judging the deeds of others he was either sharp or gentle according to the merits of each case, his own works he held cheap. And these, indeed, he commended the more preciously to the One who looks down from above, the more cheaply he valued them himself.

XV

Quoniam vero coeleste desiderium undatius, ut ita dicam, insumebat, os ejus ex abundantia cordis ita replebatur, ut pene jam in eodem ore semper lex Domini resonaret. Nam sacra quaedam verba sibi notaverat, quae corporalibus officiis convenire videbantur. Ut est illud, mane priusquam loqui inciperet, dicebat: Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo, et ostium circumstantiae labiis meis, et caetera hujusmodi quae ad singulos coaptabat, videlicet cum expergisceret, cum de lecto surgeret, cum caligas indueret, cum indumentum, vel cinctorium sumeret, sive certe cum iter, vel aliud quidlibet inciperet, ita ut secundum Apostoli dictum, omnia in nomine Domini facere videretur. Nonnunquam sane cum contigisset eum cum paucis, vel solum sedere, nescio quid diu tacens meditabatur, et lacrymis suffusus suspirium ab imo pectore, totum se concutiens, trahebat, ut facile quisquam posset advertere, quia mens ejus alio pendebat, et in praesenti consolationem non haberet. Tale erat ejus colloquium, tale silentium, ut os ejus annuntiaret laudem Domini, et meditatio cordis illius in conspectu ejus esset.

XVI.

Noverant autem sui, quod religionis habitum toto nisu cupiebat. Sed cum esset providus, considerans quia professores sublimis propositi, dum saeculi amore corrumpuntur, gravius ab alto ruunt, satius aestimavit sic stare, quam absque probatis cooperatoribus rem tam arduam attentare. Si igitur votum illius inspicias, monasticae professionis fidem Christo per devotionem servavit. Et laus valde eminens est, in habitu saeculari, religionis proposito deservire: sicut e contra nimis ignominiosum est, sub ejusdem religionis indumento saeculum quaesisse. Cum ergo vir iste non haberet fratres, ut praefati sumus, cum quibus bene et jocunditer habitaret in unum, vitae hujus incolatum taediose ferebat. Et sicut olim columba Noe, cum foris non invenisset ubi requiesceret, ad arcam, et ad ipsum Noe redibat: sic iste vir inter hujus saeculi fluctus, ad secretum cordis recurrens, in Christi delectatione quiescebat.

And since he drank in heavenly longing in fuller floods, so to speak, his mouth was so filled out of the abundance of the heart (Mt 12:34) that the law of the Lord was almost always sounding in it. For he had marked out for himself certain sacred words that seemed suited to the actions of the body. Such as this: in the morning, before he began to speak, he would say, Set a guard, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door round about my lips (Ps 141:3), and other words of this kind, which he fitted to each action: when he awoke, when he rose from bed, when he put on his shoes, when he took up his garment or his belt, or indeed when he began a journey or anything else, so that, according to the Apostle's saying, he seemed to do all things in the name of the Lord (Col 3:17). Sometimes, indeed, when he happened to be sitting with a few, or alone, he would meditate on I know not what in long silence, and, bathed in tears, would draw a sigh from the depths of his breast that shook his whole frame, so that anyone could easily perceive that his mind hung upon something elsewhere and found no comfort in the present. Such was his conversation, and such his silence, that his mouth proclaimed the praise of the Lord (Ps 51:17), and the meditation of his heart was in his sight (Ps 19:15).

XVI

His own people knew that he longed with all his strength for the habit of religion. But, being prudent, and considering that those who profess a lofty purpose fall the more heavily from on high when they are corrupted by love of the world, he judged it better to remain as he was than to attempt so arduous a thing without proven fellow workers. If, then, you look at his intention, he kept faith with Christ in the monastic profession by his devotion. And it is a very high praise to serve the purpose of religion in a secular habit, just as, on the contrary, it is most shameful to have sought the world under the garment of that same religion. Since, then, as we said before, this man had no brethren with whom he might dwell well and pleasantly together in unity (Ps 133:1), he bore the sojourn of this life with weariness. And just as Noah's dove once, finding nowhere outside to rest, returned to the ark and to Noah himself, so this man, amid the waves of this world, ran back to the secret place of his heart and rested in the delight of Christ.

Non, enim sicut corvus ille, morticino corporeae delectationis inhaeserat: quia renuebat anima ejus gloria praesentis vitae consolari, sed memor Dei sui, delectabatur; et ad secretum cordis, quasi ad arcam, recurrens, sub lingua sua exsultabat. Namque iniquitatem non sinebat diutius in corde suo aspicere, metuens ne forte eum Dominus exaudire nollet. Quin potius peccata, sine quibus humana conditio esse nequit, quae nobis leviora, illi vero videbantur gravia, ita semper prae oculis studebat agnoscere, ut remissionem impietatis cordis non ambigeret a Deo clementer percipere. Ob quod rex ejus et Dominus, viam ipsius in conspectu suo misericorditer dirigebat, et orationi vocis ejus benigniter intendebat. Tanto autem studio procurabatur ut semper juxta ecclesiam hospitaretur, ut per multorum annorum curricula praeter oratorium nulla nocte maneret, excepta una, quae natale Innocentium itineris contigit causa. Copia vero clericorum semper eum comitabatur, cum quibus in divino opere jugiter insudabat. Omnis autem apparatus ecclesiasticus ministerio necessario cum eo perinde ferebatur, cum quo divinae servitutis opus ingenti cura et reverentia, festivis diebus maxime gerebatur. Nocturno tempore cunctos in oratorio diutius praevenire solebat; quo expleto, solus remanere solitus erat. Et tunc temporis tanto dulcius, quanto et secretius, internae dulcedinis saporem degustabat. Quandoque autem laetus et alacer, vel ad stratum pro tempore, vel ad suos egrediebatur. Talem quippe vivendi modum conversatione sibi praefixerat, ut quisque sanum sapiens miraretur, quod in illo tanta coelestis gratia confluxisset. Hunc etiam conversandi modum in exteriori conversatione tenebat, ut ministri ejus notum haberent, qualiter in singulis anni temporibus conversaturus esset.

XVII.

Consuetudinem sibi fecerat ut Romam frequentius adiret. Fertur autem quod illic saepenumero profectus sit. Assertores tamen nostri de septem vicibus certi sunt. Nam, quia vis humanae naturae est, ut semper lumen velit aspicere, vir iste, cum esset spiritalis, illa duo mundi luminaria, Petrum scilicet et Paulum, spiritaliter ambiebat spectare. Et quoniam ipsos necdum volebat intueri, loculos eorum et templa saepius invisens, res suas eidem beato Petro delegavit.

For he did not, like that raven, cling to the carrion of bodily pleasure, since his soul refused to be comforted by the glory of the present life; but, mindful of his God, he was delighted (Ps 77:3–4), and, running back to the secret place of his heart as to an ark, he exulted under his tongue. For he did not allow himself to regard iniquity in his heart for long, fearing lest perhaps the Lord should not be willing to hear him (Ps 66:18). Rather, the sins without which the human condition cannot be, which to us seem rather light but to him seemed grave, he strove always to acknowledge before his eyes, in such a way that he did not doubt he would receive from God, in his mercy, the forgiveness of the impiety of his heart. For this reason his King and Lord mercifully directed his way in his sight, and graciously attended to the prayer of his voice. He took such pains always to lodge beside a church that through the course of many years he spent not a single night away from an oratory, except one, on the feast of the Innocents, which came about because of a journey. A large company of clerics always went with him, with whom he laboured unceasingly in the divine work. All the church furnishings needed for the ministry were likewise carried with him, and with them the work of divine service was performed with great care and reverence, above all on feast days. At night he used to come to the oratory long before everyone else; and when that was over, he was wont to remain alone. And then he tasted the savour of inward sweetness all the more sweetly for tasting it more secretly. Then at length, glad and eager, he would go out, either to his bed, as the hour allowed, or to his people. For he had fixed for himself such a manner of living in his conduct that anyone of sound judgement would marvel that so much heavenly grace had flowed together in him. He kept this way of life in his outward conduct too, so that his servants knew how he would conduct himself in each season of the year.

XVII

He had made it his custom to go to Rome often. It is said that he travelled there a great many times. Our informants, however, are certain of seven. For since it is the bent of human nature always to wish to look upon the light, this man, being spiritual, longed spiritually to behold those two lights of the world, namely Peter and Paul. And since he did not yet look to behold them in person, he often visited their shrines and churches, and made over his possessions to that same blessed Peter.

Hanc sibi legem praefixerat, ut secundo semper anno ad sepulcrum eorum recurreret, decemque solidos ad proprium collum dependentes, tanquam supplex servus, Domino suo quasi censum deferret. At vero quis digne explicet quam devote illud explebat? Tam beneficus erga indigentes erat, ut pene nullum pauperem, qui illic catervatim abundabant, ejus largitas praeteriret, ita se fidenter exaudiri confidens, si ipse clamantes pauperes audiret. Nam et contiguis viae monasteriis multa largiebatur. Ita vero fama tantae ejus benignitatis passim et ubique personuerat. Unde et monachi, et peregrini, necnon et egeni, qui et hospites ejus tempore quo Romei transire solent, sollicite requirebant, si comes Geraldus veniret, vel quando veniret. Ipsi quippe Marruci, rigentes videlicet Alpium incolae, nihil quaestuosius aestimabant, quam ut supellectilem Geraldi per juga montis Jovina transveherent.

XVIII.

Carpebat quoque quadam vice hoc iter. Cum venisset autem ad civitatem nomine Astam, fur quidam duos ex ejus sagmariis subripuit. Veniens autem ad quemdam rivulum, cogere eos non potuit ut transirent, donec ab hominibus domni Geraldi comprehensus est. Receptis namque sagmariis, nil furem laesit.

XIX.

Quadam vice, cum illud iter excurreret, quemdam monachum nomine Aribertum ducebat secum, magnae scilicet abstinentiae virum. Hoc namque erat illi dulce contubernium, ut quoties religiosae vitae quempiam reperisset, in illo semper affectuosius delectabat. Factum est aliquando, ut deesset pulmentarium, quo abstemius ille cum pane vesceretur. Senior vero studiose requirit, an consuetum illi cibum ministri paravissent. Respondentibus illis quod nihil praeter panem haberent, anxiabatur ille, dicens: O quid nobis hodie contigit? Nos omnes plenam refectionem habemus, et iste Dei servus in attenuatione erit. Erat autem dies abstinentiae solutus. Tempus abluendi manus jam venerat, et Samuel, qui hoc praesens narrat, ad afferendam aquam cucurrit, cum forte reperit pisciculum in littore expositum, et palpitantem, qui ipso vidente de aqua exsilierat. Quo apprehenso laetus ad seniorem cucurrit: En, inquiens, Deus piscem hunc vobis transmittit; nam juxta aquam eumdem expositum reperi. At ille, Deo gratias respondit. Et interim dum coqueretur, tentorium ingressus genua flectit, et cum lacrymis aliquantisper oravit.

He had laid down this law for himself, that every second year he would go back to their tomb and, like a suppliant serf, bring to his Lord, as a kind of tribute, ten shillings hanging from his own neck. But who could worthily set forth how devoutly he fulfilled it? He was so generous to the needy that his bounty passed over hardly a single one of the poor, who swarmed there in crowds, for he trusted confidently that he himself would be heard if he heard the poor when they cried out. He also gave much to the monasteries along the road. And so the fame of his great kindness had resounded far and wide, everywhere. Hence monks and pilgrims, and the needy as well, and those who were his hosts, would ask eagerly, at the season when the Rome-farers usually pass through, whether Count Gerald was coming, or when he would come. Even the Marruci, those hardy dwellers of the Alps, thought nothing more profitable than to carry Gerald's baggage over the ridges of Mount Jove.

XVIII

Once, too, he was making this journey. When he came to the city called Asti, a thief stole two of his packhorses. But when he came to a certain stream, he could not force them to cross, until he was caught by the lord Gerald's men. And once the packhorses had been recovered, he did the thief no harm.

XIX

Once, when he was making that journey, he took with him a monk named Aribert, a man of great abstinence. For such company was sweet to him: whenever he found anyone of religious life, he always took the more affectionate delight in him. It happened once that there was no dish for that abstemious man to eat with his bread. The lord asked carefully whether the servants had prepared the food he was used to. When they answered that they had nothing but bread, he was distressed, saying: “Oh, what has befallen us today? We all have a full meal, and this servant of God is to go short.” It was, moreover, a day free from abstinence. The time for washing hands had already come, and Samuel, who was present and tells of it, ran to fetch water, when by chance he found a little fish lying on the bank and flapping, which had leapt out of the water before his very eyes. Seizing it, he ran joyfully to the lord, saying: “Look, God sends you this fish; for I found it lying beside the water.” And he answered: “Thanks be to God.” And meanwhile, while it was being cooked, he went into his tent, knelt down, and prayed for some time with tears.

Talis enim illi mos perpetuo inerat, ut nihil Christo praeponeret, verum potius per singula quaeque sibi scilicet accidentia illi gratias devote referret. Qui cum ab oratione surrexisset, laetus admodum omnibus constitit. Tum vero consedentibus ad mensam, comedit ille abstemius usque satis, et cum adhuc pars quaedam de pisce superesset, urgebat eum senior, dicens, ut quid, frater, modicum piscem, nihil aliud habiturus, comedere moraris? Cum ille se jam satiatum assereret, praegustavit senior, si forte bonus esset. Et optimi saporis eum esse reperiens, manducavit et ipse quantum satis fuit, et omnibus qui aderant particulas pro benedictione dedit. Cuncti gratias Deo retulerunt, munus divinum et in pisce reperto, et in hoc quod superabundaverat, cognoscentes. Fuerat enim semipedalis mensurae.

XX.

Itidem cum Romam pergeret, et ad civitatem Tusciae, quae Luca vocatur, pervenisset, quaedam se mulier ei obviam ingessit, dicens: Visu commonitam se esse, quatenus filium ejus illuminaret. Quod cum ille audisset, exprobravit mulierem, et emisso mulo quem sedebat, concitus aufugit. Porro mulier quaerebat a quibus poterat, qualiter a Dei homine speratum beneficium impetrare posset. Cum forte quispiam de ministris ad mulierem dixit, quod de aqua manus ejus jam virtutes factae fuissent. At vero senior pro muliere sollicitior factus, quoties manus abluisset, mox aquam ante se fundi in terram faciebat. Mulier vero semper eum secuta est, donec ille jam fundi aquam minime curaret. Qua mulier tandem, ipso nesciente, impetrata, oculos caeci filii diluit, et ipse protinus ad lumen rediit. Cum ergo vir Domini ab urbe remeasset, videntem filium praedicta mulier eidem praesentavit. Et cum hoc factum omnes magnificarent, ille tacens et lacrymans ibat, nec illo audiente, quisquam de hoc vel hujusmodi quidquam referre audebat.

XXI.

Mirum quiddam, et forte incredibile dicam. Sed tamen duobus testibus id asserentibus credens, qui referunt, quod isdem vir Domini per illam viam ab Italia rediret qua Lugdunum a civitate Taurinensi venitur. Transierat jam Alpes, et quaedam loca nimis, ut fertur, inaquosa, itineris necessitate, subibant. Contigit autem ut et vinum in utribus deficeret. Et quia regio illa jamdudum a Sarracenis deserta est, cum aqua deesset nec vinum reperiri poterat, nimia siti coeperunt aestuare.

For such was ever his custom, to put nothing before Christ, but rather to give him devout thanks for each thing that befell him. When he rose from prayer, he stood before them all full of joy. Then, when they had sat down at table, the abstemious man ate his fill; and since some part of the fish was still left, the lord pressed him, saying: "Why, brother, do you hold back from eating a little fish, when you will have nothing else?" When he declared that he was already full, the lord tasted it, to see whether it might be good. And finding it of excellent flavour, he too ate as much as he needed, and gave little pieces to all who were present as a blessing. All gave thanks to God, recognising a divine gift both in the finding of the fish and in its having been more than enough. For it had been only half a foot long.

XX

Likewise, when he was on his way to Rome and had reached the Tuscan city called Lucca, a woman thrust herself in his path, saying that she had been bidden in a vision to have him give sight to her son. When he heard this, he rebuked the woman and, urging on the mule he was riding, made off in haste. The woman, however, asked whomever she could how she might obtain the hoped-for benefit from the man of God. Then by chance one of the servants told the woman that miracles had already been worked by the water from his hands. But the lord, made more watchful because of the woman, would have the water poured out on the ground before him every time he had washed his hands. The woman, however, kept following him, until he no longer took any care to have the water poured out. At last the woman obtained it without his knowledge and bathed the eyes of her blind son, and he at once returned to the light. So when the man of the Lord came back from the City, the woman we have spoken of presented her son to him, now seeing. And while all were extolling this deed, he went on his way silent and weeping, and no one dared to say anything of this or of anything like it in his hearing.

XXI

I shall tell of something wonderful, and perhaps incredible. Yet I do so trusting two witnesses who affirm it, who relate that the man of the Lord was returning from Italy by the road by which one comes from the city of Turin to Lyons. He had already crossed the Alps, and, as the journey required, they were passing through certain places that were, it is said, utterly without water. And it happened that the wine in the skins also ran out. And since that region had long since been left desolate by the Saracens, with no water and no wine to be found, they began to burn with excessive thirst.

Certabant autem si possibile esset illud spatium itineris velocius pertransire, sed pedites atque sagmarii deficiebant. Unde necesse fuit seniori, ut juberet eos paululum remorari. Moesti homines super gramina jacebant, sagmarii vagantes passim, cogente siti, pascua perlustrabant. Tunc unus ex clericis perrexit, ut ad onerandum sagmarios reduceret, nec illam pausam placebat prolongari. Clericus ergo reperit fossulam liquore plenam: miratus est, et quidnam sit explorare volens, inclinavit se: cum interim liquor ille saporem vini reflavit. Tum vero laetabundus ad seniorem recurrit, et nescio quid, veluti vinum, se reperisse nuntiavit. At ille: Quid, inquit, insanis? Utinam aquam reperisses! Nam istic unde vinum? Clericulus vero, sumpto vasculo, de praedicto liquore quiddam hausit, et coram attulit. Id sane quod allatum est, tam colorem vini quam et saporem praeferebat. Tum senior jussit capellanis, ut crucem et capsellas reliquiarum sumerent, et super fossulam praedicti liquoris exorcismum aquae benedictae facerent. Ac dehinc in Christi nomine jubet, ut gustando quid esset explorarent. Vinum itaque reperientes, cum ingenti admiratione et gaudio vir Domini cum illis omnibus gratias Deo egit, et priusquam ipse biberet, omnibus dare praecepit, non tamen inde quidquam in flasconibus efferri permisit. Quod juxta fidem illorum, qui hoc vidisse asserunt, dictum sit. Tamen ea quae nunc ad sepulcrum ejus fiunt, credi de eo quae audiuntur, vel haec, vel illa suadent.

XXII.

Hoc autem iter vir sanctus frequenter carpebat. Non enim jam vel palatia regum, vel praetoria marchionum, non certe conventicula principum adire volebat: sed coeli consules, Petrum scilicet et Paulum, frequentius, ut supra dictum est, invisere gestiebat. Alia nihilominus loca sanctorum sepulcrum videlicet sanctissimi domni Martini, necnon et beati Martialis, alacri devotione perlustrabat. Credo contemplabatur in spiritu, qualiter illa beatorum agmina, in superni Capitolii curia laetantur. Quibus itaque post paululum sociandus, gaudium Domini sui jam aliquatenus praegustabat.

XXIII.

They strove to get through that stretch of the journey more quickly, if it were possible, but the men on foot and the packhorses were failing. So the lord had no choice but to order them to halt for a little while. The men lay disheartened on the grass; the packhorses, wandering here and there, roamed over the pastures, driven by thirst. Then one of the clerics went off to bring the packhorses back for loading, since no one wished that halt to be prolonged. The cleric, then, found a little hollow full of liquid; he wondered at it, and, wishing to find out what it might be, bent down, and meanwhile the liquid breathed out the savour of wine. Then, full of joy, he ran back to the lord and told him that he had found something or other like wine. But he said: "Are you out of your mind? If only you had found water! For where would wine come from here?" But the young cleric took a little vessel, drew some of that liquid, and brought it before him. What was brought plainly showed both the colour and the taste of wine. Then the lord ordered the chaplains to take the cross and the little caskets of relics, and to perform over the hollow with that liquid the exorcism used for holy water. And then he bids them, in the name of Christ, find out by tasting what it was. Finding, then, that it was wine, the man of the Lord, with great wonder and joy, gave thanks to God together with them all, and before drinking himself he ordered that it be given to everyone; yet he did not allow any of it to be carried away in flasks. Let this be said on the word of those who assert that they saw it. Yet the things that now happen at his tomb persuade us to believe what is heard of him, both this and the rest.

XXII

This journey the holy man made often. For he no longer cared to go to the palaces of kings or the halls of margraves, and certainly not to the gatherings of princes; but he longed, as was said above, to visit often the consuls of heaven, namely Peter and Paul. Other holy places, too, he visited with eager devotion, namely the tomb of the most holy lord Martin, and that of blessed Martial as well. I believe he was contemplating in spirit how those hosts of the blessed rejoice in the court of the heavenly Capitol. And since he was soon to be joined to them, he was already in some measure tasting beforehand the joy of his Lord (Mt 25:21).

XXIII

Scirposus ager habetur ultra Sutriam, juxta burgum videlicet, qui vocantur sancti Martini, quo Romei castrametari solent. Cum ergo inibi tentoria ministri paravissent, tunc forte senior seorsum stabat, ad quem secus quidam se deduci fecit. Quem suppliciter exorans, nihilominus rogabat, quatenus aquam suis manibus tactam eidem tribuere dignaretur. Qui jussit illum ibidem stare, atque tacere. Dehinc tentorium ingressus coram sanctis pignoribus aliquantulum oravit. Intendebant singuli ministrorum ad opus quod erat eis gerendum. Illis ergo alias occupatis, videns quod secretum fieri posset, quemdam vocavit, qui latenter eum adduceret. Tunc manus diligenter abluit, et in recenti aqua digitos intinxit, atque de sanctis pignoribus signavit. De qua caecus ut orbata lumina superfudit, mox videre meruit. Cujus vocem vir Domini a clamore compressit, et ipse majestati divinae gratias cum illo egit; quem et de suo quodam vestimento, videlicet curcinbaldo indutum, latenter extra tentoria deduci fecit.

XXIV.

Item dum ab urbe rediret, venit Sabbato ad quamdam Ecclesiam, juxta locum scilicet, ubi sulphurei videntur acervi. Cum autem vellet populus in crastinum proficisci, retinuit eos, dicens quod ob reverentiam Dominici diei, saltem usque ad Nonam demorarentur. Nec illa demoratio fuit etiam sine beneficio temporali, missarum namque officio solemniter expleto, cum jam post cibum iter aggrederentur, venit quidam sedens caballum, qui in eundo perditus fuerat, quem domnus Geraldus sine sessoris injuria recipi jussit. Antequam vero ad Abricolam pervenissent, caecus quidam juxta viam sedens, quaerebat a transeuntibus si aliquis in eadem turba veniret, qui Geraldus vocaretur. Cum forte quidam de nostris fratribus tunc adhuc canonicus, in collecta domni Geraldi gradiebatur, qui devotionis causa pedester incedens, ad praedictum jam caecum lassus pervenit. Quem cum ille de domno Geraldo inquireret, eum se vestigio secuturum respondit. Sed quae, inquit, causa est, quod eum tam sollicite requiris? At ille: Novem, inquit, anni sunt, ex quo caecitatis angustia premor; hac autem nocte monitus in somno sum, ut huc venirem, et Geraldum sancti Petri peregrinum quaererem, ut manus ablueret postularem; caecatos vero oculos illa aqua perfunderem. Quo ille clericus audito, substitit, cum interim vir Domini Geraldus supervenit. Porro mos erat illi, ut cooperto capite solus equitaret, quo psalmodiae liberius vacaret. Cum ergo supervenisset, clericus caeco silenter: En, inquit, adest. At ille rogabat, ut paululum stare dignaretur. Et subjunxit quid per somnium vidisset.

There is a rushy field beyond Sutri, near the township called Saint Martin's, where the Rome-farers usually pitch their camp. So when the servants had pitched the tents there, the lord happened to be standing apart, and a certain man had himself led up to him. Imploring him humbly, he begged him none the less to deign to give him water touched by his hands. He told him to stand there and keep silent. Then, going into the tent, he prayed for a little while before the holy relics. The servants were each intent on the work they had to do. So, while they were busy elsewhere, seeing that it could be done in secret, he called someone to bring the man to him unobserved. Then he washed his hands carefully, dipped his fingers in fresh water, and signed it with the holy relics. As soon as the blind man poured it over his sightless eyes, he was granted sight at once. The man of the Lord held back his voice from crying out, and himself gave thanks with him to the divine majesty; and he had him clothed in one of his own garments, namely a curcinbald, and led secretly out of the tents.

XXIV

Again, when he was returning from the City, he came on a Saturday to a certain church, near the place where heaps of sulphur are to be seen. And when his people wished to set out on the morrow, he held them back, saying that out of reverence for the Lord's day they should wait at least until None. Nor was that delay without some temporal benefit too: for when the office of the Mass had been solemnly completed, and they were already setting out after their meal, a man came riding a horse which had been lost on the outward journey; and the lord Gerald had it taken back without any harm to its rider. Before they reached Abricola, a blind man sitting by the road was asking the passers-by whether anyone called Gerald was coming in that company. It happened that one of our brethren, then still a canon, was travelling in the lord Gerald's company; walking on foot for devotion's sake, he came up, weary, to the blind man. When the blind man asked him about the lord Gerald, he answered that he was following close behind him. “But why,” he said, “are you asking after him so anxiously?” And he said: “It is nine years since I have been weighed down by the affliction of blindness; and this night I was told in my sleep to come here and look for Gerald, the pilgrim of Saint Peter, to ask him to wash his hands, and to bathe my blinded eyes with that water.” When the cleric heard this, he stopped, and meanwhile Gerald, the man of the Lord, came up. Now it was his custom to ride alone with his head covered, so as to give himself more freely to psalmody. So when he came up, the cleric said quietly to the blind man: “Here he is.” And the blind man begged him to be so good as to stop for a moment. And he went on to tell what he had seen in his dream.

Cum quidem senior erubescens, et mutatione vultus id quod audierat exsecrans, abire coepit. Caecus vero tremenda quaedam adjuramenta proferens, rogabat ut staret, misero subveniret, et sperata beneficia non negaret. Illi autem qui aderant, hoc idem suppliciter exorabant. At ille parum deliberans, memor, ut credo, quia, juxta Apostolum, datam sibi gratiam negligere non deberet, consuetum sibi verbum respondit, dicens: Subvenite, sancti Dei, et stetit. Et quia sicut in illis colliculis assolet, rivulus praeterfluebat. Aqua protinus allata est. Tum ille descendit, et lavit manus, dicens: Fiat voluntas Dei. Et concitus abire coepit. Caecus vero nil cunctatus aquam sibi ingessit, nec fefellit eum virtutis eventus. Tam repente enim visum recepit, ut statim post eum curreret, dicens: O sancte Geralde, o sancte Geralde, Deo gratias, en video! Ille vero mulum calcaribus urgebat, ne voces laudantium audiret, et Abricolam transivit, neque dehinc perendie potuit a conviatoribus attingi. Siquidem animadverti potest, quod manus illae per quas ista sanitatis virtus conferebatur, munditia fulserint, et in eis macula non adhaeserit, sed eas ab omni munere excusserit. Quo contra nimis infelices sunt illi, quorum dextera repleta est muneribus. Quoniam, ut scriptum est, ignis devorat eos qui munera libenter accipiunt.

XXV.

Sed et alia nonnulla itineris referuntur de eo, quae nos ob prolixitatem studiose transilimus. Sed unum pro eo quod virtus alterius generis est, adhuc subnectamus. Cum aliquando Romam pergeret, jam in Italia positus, quamdam in aera vocem audivit clamantem se, atque discessum suum ei insinuantem. Videbatur autem illi quod esset cujusdam hominis nomine Girbaldi, quem in patria reliquerat. Itaque vocavit quosdam ex suis, requirens utrum de Girbaldo aliquid scirent. At illi responderunt, quod eum languentem dimiserant. Jubet igitur tempus adnotari, psalmorumque obsequia pro eo celebrari. Rediens vero, et de praedicto homine requirens, reperit quod illa die migraverit, qua ille vocem in aera audivit.

XXVI.

But the lord, blushing, and showing by the change in his countenance how he abhorred what he had heard, began to move away. But the blind man, uttering certain fearful adjurations, begged him to stop, to help a wretched man, and not to deny him the benefit he hoped for. And those who were present humbly besought him for the same. Then, after a moment's thought, mindful, I believe, that according to the Apostle he ought not to neglect the grace given him (1 Tim 4:14), he answered with his customary word, saying: "Come to help, you saints of God"; and he stopped. And a stream, as is usual among those low hills, flowed close by. Water was brought at once. Then he dismounted and washed his hands, saying: "God's will be done." And he began to make off in haste. The blind man, without the least delay, applied the water to himself, nor did the miraculous outcome fail him. For he received his sight so suddenly that he ran straight after him, crying: "O holy Gerald, O holy Gerald, thanks be to God, look, I can see!" But he spurred on his mule so as not to hear the voices of those praising him, and passed through Abricola, and his fellow travellers could not catch up with him until two days later. For one may observe that those hands through which this healing power was conferred shone with cleanness, and that no stain clung to them, but that he had shaken them free of every bribe (Is 33:15). Most unhappy, by contrast, are those whose right hand is full of bribes (Ps 26:10). For, as it is written, fire devours those who gladly take bribes (Job 15:34).

XXV

Several other things are also told of him from his journeys, which we deliberately pass over to avoid prolixity. But let us add one more, because it is a miracle of another kind. Once, when he was on his way to Rome and was already in Italy, he heard a voice in the air calling him and making known to him its own departure. It seemed to him to be the voice of a man named Girbald, whom he had left at home. So he called some of his people and asked whether they knew anything of Girbald. They answered that they had left him sick. He therefore orders the time to be noted, and the service of psalms to be celebrated for him. On his return, asking after that man, he found that he had passed away on the very day on which he had heard the voice in the air.

XXVI

Expleto autem sanctae suae devotionis itinere, jam secretiora loca frequentare delectabat, quasi vocem illam Psalmistae secutus, qua dicit: Elongavi fugiens, et mansi in solitudine. Ibi enim a saecularium frequentia, vel causarum strepitu quiescere volebat, ut liberius divinae servituti vacaret. Cum itaque sub hoc obtentu apud capellam quae dicitur Catuserias demoraretur, festivitas Joannis et Pauli supervenit. Quaedam autem rusticana mulier hortulum ingressa, nescio quid operabatur, cum repente grandis gutta sanguinis super manum illius apparuit, quae mox intumescere coepit. Tremefacta mulier ad Dei hominem ejulans cucurrit, et ostendens manum, misereri sibi rogabat. At ille protinus clericos adesse, missamque pro ea celebrari jubet, dehinc aquam exorcizari, et de eadem aqua guttam sanguinis ablui; cum tamen ipse humilitatis causa seorsum stabat, ne forte virtutis illius signum ei deputaretur. Ut autem manus mulieris abluta est, illico sanguis et tumor disparuit, et illa sana recessit.

XXVII.

Sane quia locus ille, sicut eum velle dixeramus, remotior est, et secretus, frequenter inibi mansitabat. Cum igitur quadam vice Assumptionem sanctae Dei genitricis Mariae apud eamdem ecclesiam celebrasset, missarum solemniis jam expletis, foras ad suos exiit. Mox quippe ei fuerat, ut post longas ac juges preces, ad commune eloquium sese impertiret, ut quisquis dicendi causam haberet, loquendi quoque possibilitatem obtineret. Cum ergo ad suos exisset, quidam, qui praeparandis cibis praeerat, ad eum dixit: Tristamur, Domine, quoniam ad vestram refectionem reperire in hac solemnitate non possumus, nisi carnes salitas. At ille: Ne sit, inquit, vobis curae, quia si Dei genitrici placeret, neque hoc nobis in ejus festo deesset. Dixerat, et de rupe, quae eidem loco imminet, cervus sese praecipitavit. Quem ministri gaudentes pariter et mirantes tulerunt, et inde, sicut tunc cervorum caro temporina est, delicatum edulium seniori paraverunt. Neque enim incredibile debet videri, quod ei divina largitas cibum ex improvisu concesserit, cum ille ad Dei gloriam, juxta Apostolum, faciens, bucellam suam cum pauperibus comedebat. Qui nunquam, sicut alumni ejus praesentes attestantur, aurem suam a clamore pauperis avertebat. Qui videlicet sanctus, juxta illud Psalmistae: Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem, cum voces clamantium audisset, profundum suspirare, et verba compatientis respondere solebat.

XXVIII.

When the journey of his holy devotion was over, he now delighted to frequent more secluded places, as though following that word of the Psalmist in which he says: I have gone far off in flight, and I have stayed in the wilderness (Ps 55:8). For there he wished to rest from the throng of worldly men and the din of lawsuits, so as to give himself more freely to the service of God. So when, for this purpose, he was staying at the chapel called Catuserias, the feast of Saints John and Paul came round. A countrywoman had gone into her little garden and was doing some work or other, when suddenly a large drop of blood appeared on her hand, which soon began to swell. Terrified, the woman ran wailing to the man of God, and, showing him her hand, begged him to have pity on her. At once he orders the clerics to come and Mass to be celebrated for her, then water to be exorcised and the drop of blood washed off with that water; he himself, however, stood apart out of humility, lest the sign of that miracle should perhaps be ascribed to him. As soon as the woman's hand was washed, the blood and the swelling vanished on the spot, and she went away healed.

XXVII

Since that place is rather remote and secluded, such as we said he wished for, he often stayed there. So once, when he had celebrated the Assumption of Mary, the holy Mother of God, at that same church, and the solemnities of Mass were over, he went out to his people. For it was his way, after long and unbroken prayers, to make himself available for general conversation, so that anyone who had cause to speak might also have the chance to do so. So when he had gone out to his people, the man in charge of preparing the food said to him: "We are sorry, my lord, for on this solemn feast we can find nothing for your meal but salted meat." And he said: "Let it not trouble you; for if it pleased the Mother of God, not even this would be wanting to us on her feast." He had spoken, and a stag hurled itself down from the rock that overhangs that place. The servants, rejoicing and marvelling alike, took it up, and, since venison is then in season, prepared from it a delicate dish for the lord. Nor should it seem incredible that the divine bounty granted him food unexpectedly, since, doing all things to the glory of God, as the Apostle bids (1 Cor 10:31), he used to eat his morsel with the poor. As those he brought up, who were with him, testify, he never turned his ear away from the cry of the poor. This holy man, according to that word of the Psalmist, Blessed is he who considers the needy and the poor (Ps 41:2), whenever he heard the voices of those crying out, used to sigh deeply and answer with words of compassion.

XXVIII

Raimundum noveratis comitem, filium videlicet Odonis. Hic nepotem domni Geraldi nomine Benedictum, Tolosae videlicet vicecomitem dolo captum tenebat. Rainaldus vero frater ipsius sese obsidem dedens, fratrem recepit. At domnus Geraldus audiens quod ille seipsum pro fratre obligasset, valde movebatur ad subveniendum nepoti. Raimundus autem protelabat causam reddendi, clam satagens Benedictum denuo capere, et ambos tenere. Jam septem menses fluxerant, et vir Domini Geraldus in ereptione nepotis nihil proficere poterat. Quadam vero die cum sorore sua Avigerna de hac re quasi querimoniam faciens: Quid tu, inquit, cessas Christum pro filio tuo deprecari? certe aut nos in fide dubitamus, aut, quod verius est, exaudiri digni non sumus. Et haec dicens, resolvebatur in lacrymis. Quo quidem tempore, medullitus, ut ita dicam, sese Domino in precibus mancipavit. Et adhuc Rodulfum abbatem semel ad Raimundum direxit, qui necdum quidem proficere quidquam valens, haud longe ad meatum reversus est. Nocte vero insecuta praedicto Raimundo per somnium videbatur, quod vir Domini Geraldus ante ejus lectum staret, eumque manu pulsaverit. Quid, inquiens, tu non audis me toties deprecantem? Certe scias, quoniam si ultra tenueris obsidem, nequaquam tibi cedet in prosperum. Post haec verba Raimundus expergefactus est, et considerans visionem, intremuit: vocavitque suos, et quid somniaverit indicavit. Nam et quidam ex ipsis per quem maxime usque tunc adversatus fuerat, nescio qua causa similiter exterritus persuadebat, ut petitionem domni Geraldi concitus faceret: alioquin moriendum illis esse commemorat. Raimundus confestim ad hospitium Rodulfi abbatis transmisit, eumque redire jussit. Quo redeunte qualiter vir Domini se per visum terruerat, palam enarravit: obsidem illico reddidit, et ut gratiam domni Geraldi sibi Rodulfus reconciliasset, humiliter postulavit. Ita Geraldus per divinum auxilium praevalebat, et secundum illud Scripturae, gloriosos terrae humiliabat.

XXIX.

Quodam itidem tempore, cum ad colloquium ejusdem Raimundi comitis properaret, fluvio, qui Avarionus dicitur, appropinquans, mentio incidit quod illa die piscem ad esum non haberet. Hi vero qui seniori obambulabant, cum de hoc sermocinarentur, viderunt piscem qui capito vocatur, contra se natare. Unus autem, qui hoc ipsum refert, extendit dragulum, et vulneravit piscem. Qui accepto vulnere paululum retroactus ripam ad quam antea tendebat, iterum repetiit, moratus quousque eum unus extensa manu comprehendit. Erat enim non parvae magnitudinis.

You knew Count Raymond, the son of Odo. He had treacherously seized and was holding a nephew of the lord Gerald named Benedict, the viscount of Toulouse. But Rainald, his brother, gave himself up as a hostage and got his brother back. When the lord Gerald heard that he had pledged himself for his brother, he was greatly moved to come to his nephew's aid. But Raymond kept putting off the matter of giving him back, secretly scheming to seize Benedict again and hold them both. Seven months had now gone by, and Gerald, the man of the Lord, could make no headway in rescuing his nephew. One day, making a kind of complaint about this to his sister Avigerna, he said: "Why do you cease to pray to Christ for your son? Surely either we are wavering in faith, or, what is truer, we are not worthy to be heard." And as he said this, he dissolved in tears. At that time he gave himself over to the Lord in prayer to the very marrow, so to speak. And he sent Abbot Rodulf to Raymond once more; but he, still unable to achieve anything, had started back and had gone only a short way. But the following night it seemed to Raymond in a dream that Gerald, the man of the Lord, stood before his bed and struck him with his hand. "Why," he said, "do you not hear me, who have pleaded with you so many times? Know for certain that if you hold the hostage any longer, it will by no means turn out well for you." After these words Raymond awoke, and, considering the vision, he trembled; he called his men and told them what he had dreamt. And indeed one of them, at whose instigation he had chiefly held out until then, being for some reason likewise terrified, urged him to grant the lord Gerald's request with all speed; otherwise, he reminds him, they would have to die. Raymond at once sent to Abbot Rodulf's lodging and bade him return. When he came back, Raymond told him openly how the man of the Lord had terrified him in a vision; he gave up the hostage on the spot, and humbly asked Rodulf to win back for him the lord Gerald's favour. Thus Gerald prevailed by God's help, and, according to that word of Scripture, humbled the glorious of the earth (Is 45:2).

XXIX

Likewise, once when he was hurrying to a conference with that same Count Raymond, as he drew near the river called the Aveyron, mention was made that he had no fish to eat that day. Those who were walking along with the lord, while they were talking of this, saw a fish called a chub swimming towards them. One of them, who tells this very story, stretched out a gaff and wounded the fish. The fish, on being wounded, was driven back a little, but made again for the bank it had been heading for before, and lingered there until one of them stretched out his hand and caught it. And it was of no small size.

Itaque vir Domini gratias Deo referens, caeteros, qui hoc ut miraculum extollebant, compescere studebat, quasi id fortuitu contigisset. Et forte aliquis fateri potest, quod istud casu contingere possit; credo tamen non recolet, piscem aliquando vidisse, qui in spatioso flumine, ut Avarionus est, ripam super homines ultro irrupisset.

XXX.

Siquidem pro miraculo jure censetur, quod vel piscis quondam de aqua exsiliit, vel cervus ex improviso de rupe cecidit: hoc etiam quod in flumine piscis ad capiendum sese ingessit. Sed valde plus mirum est, quod ad esum ejusdem hominis Dei coelitus est alia vice allatus. Non longe enim a Friaco monasterio vicus est in honore S. Gregorii sacratus, cui scilicet presbyter quidam nomine Geraldus praeerat, qui eidem viro Dei Geraldo valde pro sua sanctitate charus et familiaris erat, qui etiam ante vitae suae terminum sese pro amore divino reclausit. Ad hunc ergo jam dictus vir Domini Geraldus aliquando divertit, quem post orationem deosculans, dixit: Quid nobis, Geralde frater, ad refectionem daturus es? En apud te prandere venimus. Dicebat enim hoc pro familiari contubernio, quod apud illum isdem sacerdos habebat. At ille gaudens: Si, inquit, Domine, tuae pietati placet, non abibis jejunus. Verumtamen non habeo quid apponam nisi panem et vinum, sed inquiram si forte caseum, vel ova reperero. Tum senior: Ne te, inquit, fatiges, quoniam abstinentiae dies est, et bonum erit, si vel, quia desunt epulae, parcius sub hac occasione comederimus. Cum ergo presbyter ad praeparandum discurreret, conclavum ingressus, vidit piscem in ferculo. Tunc stupefactus clam interrogavit ministrum, quisnam piscem illum attulerit. At ille nescire se dixit, asserens quod nullus ibi fuerit, qui piscem illum afferret. Presbyter ergo exiens ad seniorem supplicat ut in conclavi intrare dignaretur. Quo sequente, piscem ostendit. Ille attonitus et admiratus, gratias Deo cum sacerdote referebat. Quem tamen, et ipsius ministrum juramento constrinxit, ne id, dum ille viveret, alicui prodidissent. Sed eadem res pluribus paulatim innotuit, quoniam divina dispensatio, quae sanctos quosque glorificat, eos etiam contra suum velle nonnunquam manifestat. Vere Dominus adhuc suae promissionis est memor, et inquirentes eum non deficient omni bono. Caeterum incredibile non debet hoc videri, dum frequenter legamus, quod Deus ad supplementum servis suis aut potum, aut cibum divinitus ministrare dignatus sit.

XXXI.

So the man of the Lord, giving thanks to God, tried to restrain the others, who were extolling this as a miracle, as though it had happened by chance. And perhaps someone may say that this could happen by chance; yet I believe he will not remember ever having seen a fish which, in a broad river such as the Aveyron is, rushed of its own accord onto the bank at the men.

XXX

It is rightly reckoned a miracle that a fish once leapt out of the water, or that a stag fell unexpectedly from a rock, and this too, that a fish in the river offered itself to be caught. But far more wonderful is it that on another occasion a fish was brought from heaven for that same man of God to eat. For not far from the monastery of Friacum there is a village consecrated in honour of Saint Gregory, over which a priest named Gerald presided, who for his holiness was very dear to that same man of God Gerald and close to him, and who before the end of his life even shut himself up as a recluse for the love of God. To him, then, Gerald, the man of the Lord, once turned aside, and after praying he kissed him and said: "What will you give us to eat, brother Gerald? See, we have come to dine with you." He said this because of the close friendship which that priest enjoyed with him. And he, rejoicing, said: "If it please your goodness, my lord, you shall not go away fasting. But I have nothing to set before you except bread and wine; still, I will look and see whether I can find some cheese or eggs." Then the lord said: "Do not trouble yourself, for it is a day of abstinence, and it will be good if, since there is no feast to be had, we take this occasion to eat more sparingly." So when the priest was hurrying about to make ready, he went into an inner room and saw a fish on a dish. Then, astonished, he quietly asked his servant who had brought that fish. He said he did not know, declaring that no one had been there who could have brought the fish. So the priest went out and begged the lord to be pleased to come into the room. When he followed, he showed him the fish. He, astonished and full of wonder, gave thanks to God together with the priest. Yet he bound the priest and his servant by oath not to reveal it to anyone as long as he lived. But the matter little by little became known to many, for the divine dispensation, which glorifies all the saints, sometimes makes them known even against their will. Truly the Lord is still mindful of his promise, and those who seek him shall not want for any good thing (Ps 34:11). Nor, after all, should this seem incredible, since we often read that God has deigned to provide his servants with drink or food from heaven to supply their need.

XXXI

Pagus non longe ab Aureliaco Marculiscus vocatur, juxta quem lapis quidam naturaliter rotundus insidet. Cum aliquando domnus Geraldus e regione transitaret, quidam de ejus comitatu Adraldus nomine, conviatoribus asserebat, quod super lapidem illum saltu conscendere posset. Quod protinus cunctis mirantibus fecit. Ferebatur autem quod isdem Adraldus incantationes ac maleficia nosset. Subsequente autem seniore, stabant illi qui praeibant, et ei saltum illius indicabant. Ille vero considerans quod hoc per suam agilitatem nullatenus facere posset, elevata manu signum crucis edidit. Dehinc ille cum id multis vicibus tentavisset, nullatenus exsilire super praedictum lapidem potuit. Et ita cognitum est quod illa velocitas ejus per incantationem fiebat, quae ei post signaculum adesse non potuit, et magna virtus esset domni Geraldi, post cujus signaculum vis inimica nihil valuit.

XXXII.

Quia vero de ejus signaculo id retulimus, quid itidem signando fecerit subjungamus. Solemnitas sancti Laurentii venerat, et ille in quamdam suam capellam quae non longe a vico Argentado sita est, eamdem festivitatem solemnizabat. Porro quaedam ex ancillis ejus graviter inibi vexabatur. Cum igitur ille per orationem ad eam respexisset, et in medio, ut erat, populi acerrime frenderet, et vesaniret, rogabant omnes, ut eam vir Domini signare dignaretur. Quod ille per consuetam sibi humilitatem diutius distulit. Sed illa debacchari cum non cessaret, rogantibus his qui aderant instantius tandem elevata manu, signo crucis eam signavit. At illa purulentum sanguinem evomens, continuo sanata est. Cum omnes in Dei laudibus personarent, eumque magnificarent, ille magna animadversione eos compescuit dicens, quod Dei solummodo clementiam, atque sancti Petri, cujus ecclesia est, magnificarent. Ipsa est autem illa ecclesia qua tunc morabatur, quando mulier caeca superius nominata de aqua manus ejus lumen recepit.

XXXIII.

Quidam vir nomine Herloardus de equo lapsus, unum genu sibi valide collisit. Ob cujus dolorem per sex dies jam sine cibo degebat. Et cum nihil sibi ad remedium reperire posset, ad Captennacum transmittens, aquam de manibus domni Geraldi clam sibi deferri fecit. Mirum dictu, mox ut praedictam aquam super genu sparsit, omni dolore liberatus incolumis surrexit. Alia nonnulla referuntur de eo quae vel relatu, vel admiratione digna sunt.

Not far from Aurillac there is a district called Marculiscus, near which there lies a stone, round by nature. Once, when the lord Gerald was passing over against it, one of his retinue named Adrald declared to his fellow travellers that he could leap up onto that stone. And he did so at once, to the wonder of all. Now it was said that this Adrald knew spells and sorceries. When the lord came up behind, those who had gone ahead stood waiting and told him of the man's leap. But he, considering that the man could by no means do this by his own agility, raised his hand and made the sign of the cross. After that, though the man tried many times, he could by no means leap up onto the stone. And so it was known that his nimbleness came by enchantment, which could not stay with him after the sign, and that great was the power of the lord Gerald, after whose sign the power of the enemy availed nothing.

XXXII

And since we have told this of his sign, let us add what he likewise did by making the sign. The feast of Saint Lawrence had come, and he was keeping that feast in a chapel of his that lies not far from the township of Argentat. Now one of his bondwomen there was grievously tormented. So when he looked towards her during prayer, and she, there as she was in the midst of the people, was gnashing her teeth most fiercely and raving, everyone begged the man of the Lord to deign to make the sign over her. This, out of his customary humility, he put off for a long time. But since she did not cease raging, and those present pleaded with him more urgently, at length he raised his hand and signed her with the sign of the cross. And she, vomiting purulent blood, was healed at once. When everyone was ringing out with the praises of God and extolling him, he checked them with a severe rebuke, saying that they should magnify only the mercy of God, and of Saint Peter, whose church it is. It is the same church in which he was staying when the blind woman named above received her sight from the water of his hands.

XXXIII

A man named Herloard fell from his horse and badly bruised one of his knees. Because of the pain he had now gone six days without food. And when he could find no remedy, he sent to Captennacum and had water from the lord Gerald's hands secretly brought to him. Wonderful to tell, as soon as he sprinkled that water on his knee, he was freed from all pain and rose up sound. Several other things are told of him which are worthy either to be related or to be wondered at.

Sed enim, quia vulgariter, et non a praefatis quatuor testibus asseruntur, ea reticere malumus, cum tamen non ignoremus quia multa gessit, quae vel nullus, vel pauci cognoverint. Siquidem de consuetudine piorum et bonorum hominum, semper humilitatem velut cordis oculum servare studebat. Et ideo quantum poterat, opera sua celabat. De his vero quae ipso nolente patebant, laudes non patiebatur audire.

XXXIV.

Hoc itaque de miraculis ejus sufficiat, quae satisfaciant eis qui gloriam cujuslibet sancti, non ex quantitate bonorum operum, sed ex numerositate metiuntur signorum. Apud quos forte sanctitas ejus vilior haberetur, si de miraculis quae vigens gesserat nihil audissent. Illis sane qui amore ejus pie tenentur, eumque discreta dilectione venerantur, opera justitiae quae exercuit, magis placent. At vero cum utrumque simul in eo concurrit, et justitia videlicet, et sanctificatio, et signorum glorificatio, securius hunc, et alacriori devotione colunt. Nam si fortasse prophetiae spiritum habuisset, nullus eum, ut puto, sanctum esse negaret. Sed utique plus fecit, quia avaritiam vicit. Nam quid profuit Balaam, quod tam profundo mysterio prophetavit, quando propter avaritiam reprobatus est? Nihil igitur in Geraldo grandius miraculum quaeras, quoniam hoc est quod non speravit in pecunia, vel thesauris. Hoc quippe est sicut jam diximus, mirabilia fecisse. Tam raro quippe reperies, qui non speret esse felicitatem in pecuniis, ut pro ipsa raritate sermo divinus interposuerit. Quis est hic? Cum vero talis utcunque reperitur, dignus est laude, sicut illic subjungitur: Laudabimus eum, fecit enim mirabilia in vita sua. Quod enim Geraldus hujusmodi mirabilia fecerit, multa documenta sunt. Siquidem constat eum quae a parentibus vel regibus ei collata sunt sic tenuisse, ut ea non ut servis, sed quasi dominis dispensasset: rebus in terra sine alicujus laesione excrevisse, in coelis tamen thesaurisasse; potentia sublimem fuisse, tamen spiritu pauperem permansisse. Quapropter, ut ille sequitur, neque mirum, neque incredibile debet videri, si stabilita sunt bona illius in Domino. Quamvis illud incomparabiliter in ejus factis immineat, quod usque in senectutem castus perseveravit. Castitas enim sola est quae imitatur angelicam puritatem. Cum itaque hic vicit libidinem, quae maxima virtus est Satanae, mirum non est si nec eidem Satanae imperat, quem servando castitatem devicit. Incredibile non est quod nunc obsessos a daemonibus liberat qui mammonae principem a suo corde, vincendo avaritiam, rejecit. Jure enim spiritum superbiae nunc subjectum habet, qui in ipso terrenae potestatis culmine mitem se exhibuit.

But because they are reported by common talk and not by the four witnesses mentioned before, we prefer to pass them over in silence, though we are not unaware that he did many things which either no one or few came to know. For, as is the custom of devout and good men, he was always careful to guard humility as the eye of the heart. And so he hid his works as much as he could. And for those that came to light against his will he could not bear to hear praise.

XXXIV

Let this suffice, then, concerning his miracles, which may satisfy those who measure the glory of any saint not by the quantity of his good works but by the number of his signs. In their eyes his holiness would perhaps be held cheaper if they had heard nothing of the miracles he worked in his lifetime. Those, indeed, who are devoutly held by love of him and venerate him with a discerning affection are more pleased by the works of justice that he practised. But since both meet together in him, justice and sanctification on the one hand and the glorifying of signs on the other, they honour him with greater confidence and readier devotion. For had he perhaps possessed the spirit of prophecy, no one, I think, would deny that he was a saint. But he certainly did more, for he overcame avarice. For what did it profit Balaam that he prophesied so deep a mystery, when he was rejected for his avarice? Seek, then, no greater miracle in Gerald than this, that he did not put his hope in money or treasures (Sir 31:8). For this, as we have already said, is to have done wonders. For so rarely will you find one who does not hope that happiness lies in riches that, because of this very rarity, the divine word put in the question: Who is he? And when such a one is found at all, he is worthy of praise, as is added there: We will praise him, for he has done wonders in his life (Sir 31:9). That Gerald did wonders of this kind there are many proofs. For it is well established that he held what had been bestowed on him by his parents or by kings in such a way that he dispensed it not as its slave but as its master; that he grew in goods on earth without injury to anyone, and yet laid up treasure in heaven; that he was lofty in power, and yet remained poor in spirit. Wherefore, as the same writer continues, it should seem neither wonderful nor incredible if his goods are established in the Lord (Sir 31:11). Though this stands out incomparably among his deeds, that he persevered in chastity into old age. For chastity alone imitates the purity of the angels. Since, then, he conquered lust, which is Satan's greatest strength, it is no wonder if he now commands that same Satan whom he utterly defeated by keeping chastity. It is not incredible that he now frees those possessed by demons, he who, by conquering avarice, cast the prince of mammon out of his heart. For rightly does he now hold the spirit of pride in subjection, who showed himself meek at the very summit of earthly power.

Liber tertius

Quoniam signorum virtutibus insignem fuisse venerabilem virum Geraldum praelibatus sermo enucleatius disseruit, restat nunc ut qualiter a corporeo tegmine spiritualem essentiam emiserit, stylo titulante exprimamus. Certum enim constat, quia isdem vir, quanquam parcitate frugalitatis corporalem appetitum domuerit, viguit tamen viribus. Nec impotens robore caruit vi fortitudinis. Sed cum jam contiguum esset, ut a completa militia, utpote annosus, eximi deberetur, coepit a solito vigore attenuatus elabi. Verum nec ipsum latuit, quin potius ipsarum virium evacuatio ad defectionis ejus judicium panderetur. Cumque praesentes plerosque cerneret, qui ei diligentius adhaerere consueverant, quasi profundiori et intimo singultu ac defectivo affatu exorsus est compellare. Eia, clientuli, et comites amabillimi, nonne aspicitis a pristino me destitutum robore? Animadvertite viciniorem esse depositionis meae sortem, quo spiritus, ducente suo auctore, transferatur ad destinatum habitationis receptaculum, natura fragillima redigatur in pulverem. Non illum cruciatus langoris ab abstinentia solita arcebat. Mira res: non illa saltem, quae veteranos compellere solet imbecillitas, praeter consuetum morem, adhaesum animum illius persuadere poterat. Nimirum quia lenitas carnalis nequiverat emollire rigorem mentis. Cum ergo his et hujusmodi virtutibus anima saginaretur, corporis efficaciam amittebat. Sed quia se in suis oculis despiciens virtutibus hominem nesciebat: non satis intelligebat unde sibi debilitas virium irrepsisset. Jam vero spiritalis virtus, quae pleniter in eo succreverat, corporeas vires pene trucidaverat. Quippe cum iste mos sanctorum sit, quia virtus divina minus in eis valida fuisset, si corporeum robur non attenuasset. Hinc Daniel angelica visione conspecta, per dies multos elanguit. Hinc Jacob angelum stringens, claudicare coepit. Quoniam qui spiritali gratia completur, a corporea virtute enervatur. Itaque exterior homo corrumpebatur, cum interior de die in diem renovaretur.

I.

Book Three

Since the foregoing account has set out in detail how the venerable Gerald was distinguished by the power of signs, it remains for us now to set down with our pen how he sent forth his spiritual being from its bodily covering. For it is certain that this man, though he tamed bodily appetite by sparing frugality, was nevertheless vigorous in strength. Nor was he weak in body or wanting in force and vigour. But when the time was now near for him, as a man of many years, to be released from his completed service, he began to waste away and slip from his wonted vigour. Nor did it escape him that the draining away of his strength was rather a sign laid open of his coming end. And seeing present many of those who had been accustomed to keep closest to him, he began to address them with a deep, inward sob and a failing voice: "Come, my dear vassals and most beloved companions, do you not see that I am bereft of my former strength? Mark that the lot of my laying aside is drawing near, in which the spirit, led by its Maker, is to be carried over to the dwelling appointed for it, and this most frail nature brought back to dust." The torment of his sickness did not keep him from his usual abstinence. A wonderful thing: not even that weakness which usually constrains the aged could persuade his steadfast mind to go beyond its accustomed rule. Plainly because the softness of the flesh had been unable to weaken the firmness of his mind. So while his soul was being fattened on these virtues and others like them, he was losing the strength of his body. But since, despising himself in his own eyes, he did not know himself for a man of virtues, he did not well understand whence this weakness of his strength had crept upon him. By now the spiritual power that had grown to fullness in him had all but slain his bodily strength. For such is the way with the saints: the divine power would have been less strong in them had it not worn down their bodily vigour. Hence Daniel, when he had seen the angelic vision, languished for many days. Hence Jacob, as he gripped the angel, began to limp. For he who is filled with spiritual grace is drained of bodily strength. So the outward man was wasting away, while the inward was being renewed from day to day (2 Cor 4:16).

I

Quadam autem die cum in oppido esset, quod Aureliaco imminet, respiciens ad fabricam domus. ubertim flebat. Cum unus ex familiaribus inquisisset curnam fleret? respondens ait: Quia desiderium inquit, meum quod de loco isto jamdudum concepi, ad effectum nullo pacto perducere possum. Nam haec requies mea, hic habitabo. Si quidem caetera quae monachorum usibus apta videntur, favente Deo, facile praeparavi; soli monachi desunt, soli inveniri non possunt. Et idcirco veluti solus et orbatus, moerore conficior; spero tamen quod omnipotens Deus, quando ei placuerit, desiderium meum implere dignetur. Nec mirum, si ego peccator in hoc meo desiderio prolongor; quandoquidem rex David prohibitus est ne templum Domino aedificaret, cum tamen ipse dedit qui opus illud post eum expleret. Et ego licet hoc in hac vita non videam, praestabit tamen Christi misericordia quod exopto, quando ei placuerit. Velim sane noscatis, quia maceriae hujus domus frequenter angustae erunt populis, qui ad eam conventuri sunt. Qualiter autem hoc didicerit, minime indicavit. His autem qui hoc illum dixisse norunt, cum frequentiam populorum, sicut ille praedixit, in eodem loco fieri vident, haec opinio suborta est, quod ea quae dixit, divinitus agnovisset. Jam vero os ejus sic ex abundantia cordis replebatur, ut lex Domini semper plene in eo resonaret. Caeterum, juxta exemplum praefati David, quaecunque necessaria futuris habitatoribus praevidebat, et in pignoribus sanctorum, et in ecclesiasticis utensilibus et indumentis, seu certe in agrorum redditibus praeparare curavit.

II.

At vero, sicut Scriptura dicit, ut qui sanctus est, sanctificetur adhuc, oportebat hunc Dei hominem ante obitum per flagellum exspoliri. Et ei sicut beato Job contigit, et Tobiae, quoniam acceptus erat tentatione probari. Itaque per septem, et eo amplius annos, lumen oculorum amisit. Quos tamen ita perspicaces habebat, ut nihil caecitatis pati crederetur. Qua percussione non solum non doluit, sed etiam plurimum est gavisus in Domino, quod eum flagellare dignatus sit. Quippe non nescius, quia non omnis qui flagellatur filius sit, nullus tamen est filius qui non flagelletur. Et hoc erat ei consolatio, quod supernus judex manum suam ad feriendum hunc solverit, et peccata sine quibus hic non vivitur, in praesenti puniret. Jam itaque de misericordia Domini securus, confidebat quod eum ab aeterno verbere liberare dignaretur, quem in praesenti sub flagello premere dignatus sit. Si quid autem studiis retroactis addere potuisset, quanto ab exteriori implicatione caecitatis causa cessaverat, tanto attentius orationi incumbebat. Et quo mundi figuram intueri nequibat, eo cordis ad verum lumen contemplandum clarius intendebat.

One day, when he was in the town that overlooks Aurillac, he looked at the building of the house and wept abundantly. When one of his intimates asked why he was weeping, he answered: "Because," he said, "I can in no way bring to fulfilment the desire I conceived long ago for this place. For this is my rest; here will I dwell (Ps 132:14). All the other things that seem suited to the use of monks I have, by God's favour, easily made ready; only the monks are lacking, only they cannot be found. And so, as one alone and bereaved, I am worn down with grief; yet I hope that almighty God, when it pleases him, will deign to fulfil my desire. Nor is it any wonder if I, a sinner, am kept waiting in this desire of mine, since King David was forbidden to build a temple to the Lord, though the Lord himself gave him one who would complete that work after him. And though I may not see this in this life, the mercy of Christ will yet grant what I long for, when it pleases him. I would have you know that the walls of this house will often be too narrow for the crowds who will gather to it." How he had learnt this, he did not say. But among those who know that he said this, now that they see the crowds thronging that place as he foretold, the opinion has arisen that he knew what he said by divine revelation. By now his mouth was so filled out of the abundance of the heart (Mt 12:34) that the law of the Lord sounded in it always and fully. For the rest, following the example of that same David, he took care to make ready whatever he foresaw the future inhabitants would need, in relics of the saints, in church vessels and vestments, and indeed in the revenues of lands.

II

But so that, as Scripture says, he who is holy might be sanctified still (Rev 22:11), this man of God had to be polished by the scourge before his death. And it happened to him as to blessed Job and to Tobias: because he was acceptable, he had to be proved by temptation (Tob 12:13). So for seven years and more he lost the light of his eyes. Yet they looked so clear that he was not thought to suffer any blindness. Under this stroke he not only did not grieve, but even rejoiced greatly in the Lord that he had deigned to scourge him. For he well knew that though not everyone who is scourged is a son, yet there is no son who is not scourged. And this was his consolation, that the heavenly Judge had loosed his hand to strike him, and was punishing in the present the sins without which no one lives here. Now, then, secure in the Lord's mercy, he trusted that he would deign to free from the eternal lash the one he had deigned to press beneath the scourge in the present. And if he could add anything to his former practices, it was this: the more he had withdrawn, because of his blindness, from outward entanglements, the more attentively he applied himself to prayer. And the less he could look upon the fashion of the world, the more clearly he turned his heart to contemplate the true light.

Causa ab exterioribus factis cessabat, totum se ad studium orationis, vel assiduitatem lectionis applicabat.

III.

Biennio priusquam obiret, ecclesiam fecit solemniter dedicari. In altaribus vero tanta pignera sanctorum insita sunt, ut scientibus mirum sit. His autem qui forte a scientibus audiunt, pene incredibile videatur. Nam in his undecunque colligendis pater ille sanctus, quoties sese opportunitas praebuisset, omnimodis, quoad vixit, operam dedit. Quae scilicet et apud Romam, et ubique locorum sic impetrabat: sicut nimirum ille, qui et in sermone, et vultu erat gratiosus: et in dandis pretiis munificus, et quod majus est, in id quod agendum erat, divina gratia fretus. Frequenter enim pro eisdem pignoribus impetrandis, et pretiosa tentoria, necnon corpulentos equos, et multa pecuniarum pondera constat eum dedisse. Dentem namque sancti Martialis in dextro altari, cum reliquiis beatissimi domni Martini, necnon et sancti Hilarii collocavit; quem a sancto corpore nullus ex largitoribus, a sancta maxilla, cum diu conarentur, eruere posset, ille praemissa oratione protinus eum avulsit. De eodem profecto altare mirum aliquid ipso dedicationis die contigit accidisse. Quidam enim juvenculus, cum turbae semet imprimerent, pallium desuper tulit, ut illum ministro redderet, eum quidam ei dicerent circumstantes, ne id praesumeret. Sed quoniam ille tollere non misit, protinus vehementi angustia comprehensus est, ac primo manus ejus excoriatae sunt. Tunc paulatim omne corpus pelle nudatum, ut vix post sex hebdomadas convalescere posset. Locum, sicut olim decreverat, monachorum ditioni delegavit, ubi tamen dehinc parum demorabatur.

IV.

Spatio quo supervixit, summopere procuravit, ut omnes ad se pertinentes in pace dimitteret, ne forte litis occasio posset inter eos oriri. Praedia vel mancipia, quae beato Petro non delegaverat, inter quosdam propinquos ac milites, vel certe servitoribus dimisit. Nonnullis tamen eo tenore, quo postquam obissent, ad Aureliacum accepta redissent. Centum ex mancipiis tantum libertate tunc donavit. Nam alias diversis locis ac temporibus innumera sunt, quae emancipavit. Quamplures autem ex ipsis amore ejus perstricti libertatem recusantes, permanere magis in servitute ejus maluerunt.

He gave up lawsuits and outward affairs, and applied himself wholly to the practice of prayer or to unwearied reading.

III

Two years before he died, he had the church solemnly dedicated. In its altars so many relics of the saints were placed that those who know are amazed. And to those who perhaps hear of it from those who know, it may seem almost incredible. For that holy father, as long as he lived, took every pains to gather them from every quarter whenever the opportunity offered. These he obtained both at Rome and everywhere else, as one would expect of a man who was gracious in speech and countenance, munificent in the prices he paid, and, what is more, reliant on divine grace in whatever he had to do. For it is well known that he often gave costly tents, well-fed horses and great weights of money to obtain these relics. In the right-hand altar he placed a tooth of Saint Martial, with relics of the most blessed lord Martin and of Saint Hilary as well; that tooth none of those who were giving it could pull from the holy body, from the holy jaw, though they tried for a long time; but he, after first praying, drew it out at once. Something wonderful happened concerning this same altar on the very day of the dedication. For a certain youth, while the crowds were pressing forward, took the cloth from the top of it to hand it back to the minister, though some of the bystanders told him not to presume to do so. But since he would not leave off taking it, he was at once seized by violent anguish, and first his hands lost their skin. Then little by little his whole body was stripped of its skin, so that he could scarcely recover after six weeks. The place, as he had long since resolved, he made over to the authority of monks, though he himself stayed there little from then on.

IV

In the time he survived, he took the utmost care to leave all who belonged to him at peace, lest any occasion of strife should arise among them. The estates and serfs that he had not made over to blessed Peter he left to certain kinsmen and knights, or indeed to his servants. To some, however, on the condition that after their death what they had received should return to Aurillac. Of his serfs he then gave freedom to a hundred only. For at other times and in various places those he set free were countless. Many of them, however, bound by love of him, refused their freedom and preferred to remain in his service.

Quo facto pervideri potest, quam dulce dominium in eos exercuerit, quandoquidem suae libertati servitutem illius praeferre maluerunt. Monebatur autem a quibusdam suis, quatenus de familia, quae sibimet affatim superabundabat, majorem multitudinem jugo servitutis absolveret. Quibus ait: Justum, inquit, est, ut lex mundialis in hoc observetur, et ideo numerum in eadem lege praestitutum praetergredi non debere. Quod ad hoc sit commemoratum, ut hinc pateat quantopere divinis praeceptis adhaeserat: quando etiam legalibus ita se submiserit, et humanis.

V.

Intrante vero jam suae migrationis tempore, morabatur apud Cezerviacum quamdam sui juris ecclesiam, quae in honorem sancti Cirici consecrata est. Cum quidem plus solito compunctus profundius suspirabat, ita ut satis pateret quod desiderium cordis ejus alio tenderet, consolationemque in praesenti nequaquam haberet. Inter suspiria vero lacrymis suffundebatur, et erectis in coelum subinde visibus orabat, ut ab hoc saeculo liberaretur, saepius repetens atque dicens: Subvenite, sancti Dei. Hoc namque verbum semper ori ejus familiare fuerat, hoc ad eventum cujuslibet subiti casus inclamare solebat. Non multum vero post vitalis vigor coepit spasmo quodam intabescere, artuumque vires ac totius corporis harmonia paulatim dissolvi. Dissolutionem igitur sui jam instare cognoscens Amblardum episcopum jubet evocari, ut ejus transitum suis orationibus muniret, ovemque paradisi pascua repetentem, pastori omnium Christo pastor consignaret. Interim vero cuncta quae vel funeris causa, vel remanentium necessitas poposcisset, sano sensu, et integra memoria disponit. Cum subito velox fama rumorem circumquaque disparserat, quod vir Domini Geraldus ad transitum propinquaret, accucurrerunt omnes veluti commune dispendium lugentes, clericorum ac monachorum turbae nobilibus viris admistae, catervae pauperum, et pagensium plebes, lugentibus istis aliorum fletus incitabantur. Inter singultus vero et lacrymas erumpentes, quasi querimoniam facientes; unusquisque de ejus pietate, de charitate, de cura pauperum, de tuitione impotentium, plangoris voces ingeminabant. Flentes igitur isti dicebant: O quale solatium mundus amittit! Illi vero: O Geralde, qui merito bonus vocaris, quis jam erit, sicut tu, sustentator indigentium? Quis nutritor pupillorum, vel defensor viduarum? quis dolentium consolator? Certe quis potentiae tuae culmen ita pauperibus inclinabit? Vel quis, sicut tu, singulorum necessitates perpendet, aut expediet? Indulgentissime pater, quam blandus, quam suavis semper fuisti! Cunctorum gratiam hauriebas, ignotorum etiam affectus fama tantae bonitatis ad te traxeras.

From this it may plainly be seen how gentle a lordship he exercised over them, since they chose to prefer his service to their own freedom. Some of his people urged him to release from the yoke of servitude a larger number of his household, of whom he had a great abundance. To them he said: "It is right that the law of the world should be observed in this"; and so, he said, the number fixed in that law ought not to be exceeded. Let this be recorded so that it may be clear from it how closely he held to the divine commandments, when he submitted himself thus even to the precepts of law, and human ones at that.

V

When the time of his passing was now at hand, he was staying at Cezerviacum (Cézerac), at a church of his own consecrated in honour of Saint Cyricus. There, moved to compunction more than usual, he sighed more deeply, so that it was quite plain that the desire of his heart was reaching elsewhere and that he had no comfort in the present. Amid his sighs he was bathed in tears, and, raising his eyes to heaven again and again, he prayed to be delivered from this world, often repeating and saying: "Come to help, you saints of God." For this word had always been familiar on his lips; this he would cry out whenever anything happened suddenly. Not long afterwards his vital strength began to waste away under a kind of spasm, and the strength of his limbs and the harmony of his whole body to be little by little dissolved. Knowing, then, that his dissolution was now at hand, he bids Bishop Amblard be summoned, to fortify his passing with his prayers, and, as shepherd, to commit to Christ, the Shepherd of all, the sheep that was going back to the pastures of paradise. Meanwhile, with sound mind and unimpaired memory, he sets in order everything that his funeral or the needs of those remaining behind would require. When swift report had suddenly spread the news round about that Gerald, the man of the Lord, was drawing near his passing, all came running, as if mourning a common loss: throngs of clerics and monks mingled with noblemen, bands of the poor, and the common folk of the countryside; and as these mourned, the weeping of others was stirred. Breaking out amid sobs and tears, as though making complaint, each one redoubled his cries of lament over his kindness, his charity, his care for the poor, his protection of the powerless. Some, then, said weeping: "O what a comfort the world is losing!" And others: "O Gerald, rightly called good, who will now be, as you were, the support of the needy? Who the nurturer of orphans, or the defender of widows? Who the comforter of those who mourn? Who, surely, will bow the height of your power so low to the poor? Or who, as you did, will weigh the needs of each and meet them? Most indulgent father, how gentle, how kind you always were! You drew to yourself the goodwill of all; by the fame of such great goodness you had drawn to yourself the affection even of strangers."

Haec et hujusmodi, quae dolorum vis inter singultus exaggerare solet, tam luctuosis planctibus inundabant, ut putares quod illae lacrymae nunquam possent cessare. Ita per singulos dies agebatur, donec ad ipsum vocationis ejus terminum veniretur. At vero ille morem suum, nec in fine poterat deserere, quin singulis accipere volentibus omne stipendium dari juberet.

VI.

Vere beatum et felicem dixerim, qui talis fuit, ut charitatem suis operibus debitam non reliquerit in terris, et in charitate sanctorum receptus sit in coelis. Vere felix, qui licet potentia saeculari sublimis esset, nullum tamen laesit, nullum oppressit, nec aliquis vel parvam querelam adversus eum reclamavit. Nam si Nathanael vere Israelita vocatur, eo quod dolus in eo non fuerit, jure et hunc Israelitam dixerim, quem auris audiens beatificat, et cui, ad exemplum beati Job, oculus videns testimonium reddit. Cum igitur omnes una lugerent, solus ille perstabat laetabundus. Quippe qui noverat, quod sperantibus in Domino meridianus fulgor in vesperum consurget, et dum dederit eis somnum, haec est haereditas. Quamvis ergo pro mortali conditione caro forte timeret, tamen spiritus in aspectu gloriae defixus exsultabat, utpote qui spem diu desideratam se jam in re percipere confidebat. Nam, ut scriptum est, quia justus in morte sua confidit, putares illum in eadem spe confixum, et nullatenus mortem timere. Laetabundus itaque videbatur, cum nec quidem parum aliquid fateretur, in quo pavere se vel tenuiter demonstraret. Per omne vero sui langoris tempus, ita fatiscentes ad divinum obsequium impellebat artus, ut nec unum quidem nocturnale officium, nisi in ecclesia pateretur celebrare; missam vero unam diei competentem, et alteram pro defunctis coram altari positus audiret. Sane cum membris jam nimis rigescentibus, gressum per se nec sustentatus quidem progredi potuisset, adhuc tamen spiritus in sui fervore perdurans cogebat, ut corpusculum manibus bajulorum portaretur in oratorium: nimirum, ut boni operis tunicam usque ad talum extendens, virtutis suae laudem in fine cecinisset.

VII.

These things and others like them, which the force of grief is wont to heap up amid sobs, they poured out in such mournful lamentation that you would have thought those tears could never cease. So it went on day after day, until the very end of his calling was reached. But he could not forsake his custom even at the end, but ordered every kind of provision to be given to each who wished to receive it.

VI

Truly blessed and happy would I call him who was such that he left no debt of charity unpaid by his works on earth, and has been received into the charity of the saints in heaven. Truly happy, he who, though raised high in worldly power, yet harmed no one, oppressed no one, and against whom no one raised even a small complaint. For if Nathanael is called truly an Israelite because there was no guile in him (Jn 1:47), rightly would I call this man an Israelite too, whom the ear that hears calls blessed, and to whom, after the example of blessed Job, the eye that sees bears witness (Job 29:11). So while all mourned together, he alone remained joyful. For he knew that for those who hope in the Lord a noonday brightness shall rise at evening (Job 11:17), and that when he gives them sleep, this is the inheritance (Ps 127:2–3). Though, then, his flesh may have feared, as mortal nature does, yet his spirit, fixed on the sight of glory, exulted, as one who trusted that he was now about to receive in reality the hope he had long desired. For since, as it is written, the just man trusts in his death (Prov 14:32), you would have thought him fastened to that same hope and not fearing death at all. So he seemed full of joy, for he did not utter even the least word by which he showed himself even slightly afraid. Throughout the whole time of his sickness he so drove his failing limbs to the divine service that he would not suffer even one night office to be celebrated except in church; and, placed before the altar, he would hear one Mass proper to the day and another for the dead. And when, his limbs now grown very stiff, he could not walk a step by himself, nor even when supported, his spirit, still enduring in its fervour, compelled them to carry his poor body into the oratory in the arms of bearers: surely so that, drawing out the tunic of good works to the ankle, he might sing the praise of his virtue at the end.

VII

Sexta namque feria dilucescente die, ingravescere sesentiens, jussit ut nocturnale coram se capellani peregissent, episcopo cum suis in ecclesia illud celebrante; cum psallentibus autem et ipse psallebat, donec post matutinale officium, omnes etiam horas diei compleret. Tum vero completorium finiens, signo se sanctae crucis armavit, et subjunxit illud verbum quod ei semper familiare fuit, dicens: Subvenite, sancti Dei. Hoc in ultimo locutus, oculos tacens clausit. Videntes vero qui aderant, quod loqui cessaret, episcopum advocarunt. Sancta quoque membra illius in cilicio posuerunt, caeterisque pro exitu psallentibus quidam de sacerdotibus missam concitus celebravit, atque sacrosanctum mysterium attulit. Cum vero quidam dicerent quod jam discessisset, ille sensum adhuc retinens, oculos aperuit, et hoc judicio nondum se discessisse, monstravit. Tum vero Dominicum corpus quod exspectabat, sua sponte suscepit, et ita felix illa anima ad coelos migravit. Et velut ipso feriarum numero sui causam insinuans, bonum opus, quod ad senarium pertinet, bene consummasse, et ad verum Sabbatum, quod est requies, se transmigrasse monstravit. Et ille quidem quod cupiebat, ut credimus, jam videt; quod speravit jam tenet. Multis tamen non modicum dolorem dereliquit. Nam licet ipse moeror quadam dulcedine respersus esset, pro eo quod scirent, quia talis fuit, ut de illo magis gaudendum, quam lugendum; clamore tamen ingenti plangebant, quod ejus contubernio privarentur, cujus similem vultum non se videre sperarent. Illi humanitatis causa tristabantur, sed angeli, ut credimus, laetabantur. Nam si coram eisdem angelis gaudium est super uno peccatore qui poenitentiam agit, quanto magis super hoc homine justo, qui inter opera virtutum consenuit? Sed gaudium Domini sui, quo ab eisdem angelis exceptus est, fides contemplatur; oculis vero corporeis interim latet, qui videbant quidem cadaver, quod exsolverat debitum mortis, et nondum apparebat quantum anima glorificaretur in coelis. Moritur ergo Geraldus, sed juxta illud Davidicum, nequaquam ut ignavi solent, quoniam inter sanctos sors illius est. Et si persolvit illud Psalmistae: Vos autem sicut homines moriemini, tamen ad eum pertinet hoc quod ibi praemittitur: Ego dixi: Dii estis, et filii Excelsi omnes. Testatur evangelista: Filii Dei sumus, sed nondum apparet quid erimus. Felix itaque Geraldus qui separavit pretiosum a vili. Postquam enim gustavit quam dulcis est Dominus, nequaquam hujus vitae delectamentis, ad ejusdem Domini contemptum se submisit. Sed hanc vitam, quae reprobis pretiosa est, vilem sibi deputavit, et mortem, quae illis pessima est, pretiosam invenit.

For on the Friday, as day was dawning, feeling himself grow worse, he ordered the chaplains to perform the night office in his presence, while the bishop celebrated it with his clergy in the church; and he himself chanted the psalms with those who chanted, until, after the morning office, he had completed all the hours of the day as well. Then, as he finished Compline, he armed himself with the sign of the holy cross and added that word which had always been familiar to him, saying: "Come to help, you saints of God." Having said this last of all, he fell silent and closed his eyes. Those present, seeing that he had stopped speaking, called the bishop. They also laid his holy limbs on haircloth; and while the others chanted psalms for his passing, one of the priests hastily celebrated Mass and brought the most holy mystery. And when some said that he had already departed, he, still keeping his senses, opened his eyes, and by this sign showed that he had not yet departed. Then he received of his own accord the Lord's Body, for which he had been waiting, and so that happy soul passed to heaven. And, as if hinting at his own case by the very number of the day of the week, he showed that he had well completed the good work, which belongs to the number six, and had passed over to the true Sabbath, which is rest. And he, as we believe, now sees what he longed for; what he hoped for he now holds. Yet to many he left no small grief. For though their very sorrow was sprinkled with a certain sweetness, because they knew that he had been such a man that one should rather rejoice over him than mourn, yet they lamented with a great outcry that they were deprived of the company of one whose like they did not hope to see. They were sad, as men are; but the angels, we believe, were rejoicing. For if there is joy before those same angels over one sinner who repents (Lk 15:10), how much more over this just man, who grew old amid the works of virtue? But the joy of his Lord (Mt 25:21), into which he was received by those same angels, faith beholds; meanwhile it is hidden from bodily eyes, which saw indeed the corpse that had paid the debt of death, but could not yet see how greatly the soul was glorified in heaven. So Gerald dies, but, according to that word of David, by no means as cowards are wont to die (2 Sam 3:33), for his lot is among the saints (Wis 5:5). And if he paid the debt of that word of the Psalmist, But you shall die like men (Ps 82:7), yet to him belongs what is said there just before: I have said: You are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High (Ps 82:6). The evangelist bears witness: We are the sons of God, but it has not yet appeared what we shall be (1 Jn 3:2). Happy, then, is Gerald, who separated the precious from the vile (Jer 15:19). For after he had tasted how sweet the Lord is, he by no means gave himself up to the delights of this life in contempt of that same Lord. But this life, which is precious to the reprobate, he counted vile, and death, which for them is the worst of evils, he found precious.

Vere beatus cujus dies in dolore, et anni in gemitu transierunt: quia jam expertus est quam magna multitudo dulcedinis, quam Deus abscondit timentibus se. Qui etiam in conspectu filiorum hominum, hanc aliquatenus per singula signa demonstrat. O quanta diversitas est inter illum, et vedios, id est male divites! Huic enim lacrymae suae fuerunt panes, et potum accepit in lacrymis et mensura. Illi vero ducunt in bonis dies suos, et habent consolationem suam, juxta illud evangelicum, in praesenti. Sed enim iste jam in voce exsultationis, transiit in locum tabernaculi Dei. De illis dicitur, quod in puncto ad inferna descendunt. Caeterum si de ejus exteriori conversatione quisquam dignum aliquid referre posset, delectationes tamen, quae in dextera Domini repleverunt eum usque in finem, nullus nostrum non dico verbis explicare, sed nec sensu quidem attingere valet, nisi forte quilibet in seipso sentiscit, quid est delectare in salutare Dei.

VIII.

Porro autem quia Deus mirabilis est in sanctis suis, in quibus eum laudare jubemur, dicente Scriptura: Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus, idcirco, o beate Geralde, quales possumus referimus illi pro te. Laudantes eum quod elegit te, et quod justificavit te; quod misericordiam suam mirificavit in te, quod per vias rectas deduxit te, quod fructum tui operis inveniri fecit ipse, et postremo, quod usque in senectam et senium non dereliquit te, et quod majus est, quia inter filios Dei computavit te, et insuper in oculis omnium glorificat te. At vero quia sanctos decet laudatio, ad laudem illius laudamus etiam te, quia scilicet juxta Jeremiam, jugum Christi ab adolescentia portasti, quia gratiam vocationis ejus non recepisti [f. sprevisti], quia commutationem pro anima tua non dedisti, quia salutem ejus in vacuum non accepisti, quia intima tua, quae de amore Christi conceperas, non projecisti, quia tentationis tempore non recessisti, quia in externa praesentis vitae gaudia te non effudisti, quia bonum faciendo non defecisti. Verumtamen tu, Domine Deus, tu per ipsum nostrae praesumptioni ignosce. Nam in hac relatione excessum formidamus, quoniam id tentavimus, ad quod agendum nullatenus idonei sumus. Quia licet ille dignus sit laude, in quo tu laudaris; nos tamen, Domine, ad hanc referendam indigni sumus, quia non est speciosa laus in ore peccatoris. Sancti ergo tui, ut scriptum est, benedicant te, et opera tua confiteantur tibi.

Truly blessed is he whose days passed in sorrow and his years in sighing (Ps 31:11), for he has now experienced how great is the multitude of the sweetness which God has hidden for those who fear him (Ps 31:20). And this God shows in some measure even in the sight of the sons of men (Ps 31:20), through one sign after another. O how great is the difference between him and the vedii, that is, the wickedly rich! For to him his tears were his bread (Ps 42:4), and he received drink in tears, and in measure (Ps 80:6). But they spend their days in good things (Job 21:13), and, according to that word of the Gospel, have their consolation (Lk 6:24) in the present. But he has now passed with the voice of exultation into the place of the tabernacle of God (Ps 42:5). Of them it is said that in a moment they go down to hell (Job 21:13). For the rest, even if anyone could relate something worthy of his outward way of life, yet the delights at the right hand of the Lord which filled him to the end (Ps 16:11), none of us is able, I do not say to set forth in words, but even to reach with the understanding, unless perhaps someone perceives within himself what it is to delight in the salvation of God.

VIII

And since God is wonderful in his saints (Ps 68:36), in whom we are bidden to praise him, as Scripture says, Praise the Lord in his saints (Ps 150:1), therefore, O blessed Gerald, we render to him for you such praises as we can. We praise him that he chose you, and that he justified you; that he made his mercy wonderful in you; that he led you by right ways (Wis 10:10); that he himself caused the fruit of your work to be found; and lastly, that even to old age and grey hairs he did not forsake you (Ps 71:18); and, what is more, that he numbered you among the sons of God (Wis 5:5), and glorifies you besides in the eyes of all. But since praise becomes the saints, to his praise we praise you also: that, as Jeremiah says, you bore the yoke of Christ from your youth (Lam 3:27); that you did not spurn the grace of his calling; that you made no barter of your soul; that you did not receive his salvation in vain; that you did not cast away the inward affections you had conceived from the love of Christ; that you did not fall away in the time of temptation; that you did not pour yourself out on the outward joys of the present life; that you did not grow weary in doing good. Yet do you, O Lord God, do you, for his sake, pardon our presumption. For we fear that we have overstepped in this account, since we have attempted what we are in no way fit to do. For though he in whom you are praised is worthy of praise, yet we, O Lord, are unworthy to render it, because praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner (Sir 15:9). Let your saints, then, as it is written, bless you, and let your works give praise to you (Ps 145:10).

Sed quoniam imperfectum Ecclesiae vident oculi tui, et lapides terrae ejus miserebuntur, precamur ut hi, qui pro soliditate morum lapides vocantur, nobis, qui merito nostrae pravitatis terra sumus, subvenire dignentur: ut nos qui non habemus indumentum justitiae, lapides amplectamur, ut eorum meritis nostram nuditatem contegere possimus. Hic ergo famulus tuus affectum miserendi, quem eidem charitas tua invisceravit, in nos dirigat, et de illa sempiterna Capitolii curia, qua jam inter consules coeli residet, in hac convalle lacrymarum quam evasit pie respiciat; singulorum preces exaudiat, omniumque necessitates apud te expediat, praestante Domino nostro Jesu Christo Filio tuo, qui tecum, cum Spiritu sancto, vivit et gloriatur Deus, per infinita saecula saeculorum. Amen.

IX.

Velociter sane, sicut de excellenti persona fieri solet, transitus ejus circumquaque personuit. Cum quidem incredibilis hominum multitudo mox undique secus irruere coepit, examina nobilium virorum, innumerae catervae pagensium atque egenorum, plures monachi, et agmina sacerdotum. Quem universi germano quodam et dulcissimo affectu plangebant, et nescio quo divino instinctu compunctius atque suavius eum lugebant: ob hoc videlicet quod illum Deo placuisse non ignorabant.

X.

Cum igitur esset ex more nudatus ad lavandum, Ragambertus, et alii ministri qui id agebant, manus utrasque pectori ejus applicuerunt, cum subito dextrum brachium ipsius extensum est, et ita genitalibus membris manus ejus applicata, ut eadem membra sub volam concluderet. Quod illi quidem casu contigisse putantes, manum ipsam ad pectus denuo inflixerunt. Sed iterum, sicut prius, extensa est, et ad sexum contegendum sese aptavit. At illi stupere jam coeperunt, sed rem diligentius scire volentes, adhuc tertio brachium reflectunt, manumque super pectus ad alteram reducunt. Quae protinus summa velocitate praedicta membra, sicut prius repetiit, et obtexit. Polinctores autem admiratione simul et pavore perculsi, jam tunc animadverterunt, quod hoc absque vi divina nullatenus accidisset. Fortassis enim per hoc coelitus monstrabatur, quod ad castitatis pudorem conservandum semper illa caro vivens verecundata fit. Corpusculum itaque festinanter operuerunt. Postea vero quam indumentum accepit, nullatenus uspiam sese manus illa extendit.

XI.

But since your eyes see the imperfection of the Church (Ps 139:16), and its stones will have pity on its earth (Ps 102:15), we pray that those who for the solidity of their lives are called stones may deign to come to the help of us who, by the desert of our wickedness, are earth: so that we who have not the garment of justice may embrace the stones (Job 24:8), and by their merits may cover our nakedness. May this servant of yours, then, turn towards us the tender pity which your charity planted deep within him, and from that everlasting court of the Capitol, where he now sits among the consuls of heaven, look down with kindness on this valley of tears from which he has escaped; may he hear the prayers of each and obtain from you what all need, through the gift of our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and is glorified, God, for endless ages of ages. Amen.

IX

His passing, as usually happens with a person of eminence, swiftly resounded on every side. And soon an incredible multitude of people began to pour in from every side: swarms of noblemen, countless bands of country folk and of the needy, many monks, and columns of priests. All mourned him with a kind of brotherly and most tender affection, and, by I know not what divine prompting, they wept for him with deeper compunction and yet more sweetly, because they knew well that he had pleased God.

X

When, as is the custom, he had been stripped for washing, Ragambert and the other servants who were doing it laid both his hands upon his breast; and suddenly his right arm stretched out, and his hand was laid upon his private parts in such a way as to cover them under its palm. Thinking that this had happened by chance, they pressed the hand back to his breast. But again, as before, it stretched out and placed itself so as to cover his sex. Now they began to be amazed; but, wishing to know the matter more surely, they bend the arm back yet a third time and bring the hand back over the breast to the other. At once, with the greatest speed, it went back to those parts, as before, and covered them. Then those preparing the body, struck with wonder and fear alike, at last perceived that this could by no means have happened without divine power. For perhaps heaven was showing by this that, while it lived, that flesh had always kept itself modest in guarding the shamefastness of chastity. So they quickly covered the poor body. And after it had been clothed, that hand never stretched itself out anywhere again.

XI

Sui autem, quamplurimis comitantibus turbis, corpus illud sanctum ad Aureliacum, sicut ipse jusserat, detulerunt, et in aristonem lapidem, ad sinistram scilicet basilicae ipsius collocaverunt, juxta aram sancti Petri, ita ut sepulcrum ejus habeatur in dextro, et ipsum nihilominus in dextrorsum. Sed jam libellum hunc terminemus, ne forte cum rusticitate, tum etiam prolixitate displiceat. Si quid autem in eo lectorem oblectaverit, meritis domni Geraldi praestitum censeat. Hoc vero quod displicuerit, inertiae meae deputabit, tamen miserendi occasionem reperiet. Et ob id suppliciter obsecro, et considerans quod hoc agere jussus praesumpsi, mihi a judice cordium deprecetur.

XII.

Beato quidem Geraldo satis suffecerat, quod ille testis fidelis, qui in coelis est, et cui semper placere studuit, hunc apud se in illa paradisiaca regione remunerat; sed tamen quanta sit gloria, quam intus possidet, isdem testis Christus foris manifestare dignatur. Scriptum namque est, quia Deus instaurat testes suos contra nos. Quisquis enim praecepta illius custodit, testis ejus contra nos est, quod possumus quidem servare eadem praecepta sicut ille, sed nolumus. Nam ut de meis similibus dicam, cuncta jam piorum dicta legere fastidimus, exempla quoque imitari negligimus, cum tamen aut otiosis, aut saecularibus verbis infatigabiliter occupemur. Sed hoc agentes, de illis nos probamus esse, quos apostolica vox notat, dicens: A veritate auditum avertent, ad fabulas autem convertentur. Ad hanc ergo inertiam vel caetera portenta vitiorum, aliquatenus reprimendam, dispositor saeculorum Christus, hunc testem suum contra nos instaurat, quem et multis miraculis coram nos illustrat, ut quia oculos ad consideranda, ut dictum est, piorum exempla clausimus, vel ad splendorem hujus hominis, tanquam de prope coruscantem respiciamus. Si quidem ille divina praecepta nostro tempore custodivit. Sed quia mortuus cito recedit a corde, protinus hoc oblivioni tradimus, et non recogitantes mercedem, quae sanctis ejus operibus restat, ad haec imitanda male torpescimus. Ob hoc itaque miracula, quae forte ad tempus fiunt, operari dignatur, quatenus vel sic gloriam quam intus habet, intelligamus, et ad opera quibus ad eamdem gloriam provectus est, tanquam recens edita mentis aciem intendamus, et ac haec imitanda convalescere studeamus. Sed jam de iisdem miraculis qua rationi congruerint, Deo juvante, referamus.

Liber quartus

I.

His people, accompanied by great crowds, carried that holy body to Aurillac, as he himself had ordered, and laid it in a stone coffin on the left side of his basilica, beside the altar of Saint Peter, so that his tomb is reckoned to be on the right, and he himself likewise faces to the right. But let us now bring this little book to an end, lest it displease by its prolixity as well as by its rusticity. If anything in it has delighted the reader, let him reckon it granted by the merits of the lord Gerald. What has displeased him he will put down to my want of skill; yet he will find in it an occasion for pity. And so I humbly beseech him, considering that I presumed to do this because I was bidden, to ask pardon for me from the Judge of hearts.

XII

It would indeed have been enough for blessed Gerald that that faithful witness who is in heaven (Ps 89:38), whom he always strove to please, rewards him with himself in that region of paradise; but how great is the glory he possesses within, that same witness, Christ, deigns to make manifest without. For it is written that God renews his witnesses against us (Job 10:17). For whoever keeps his commandments is his witness against us, that we could indeed keep those same commandments as he did, but will not. For, to speak of those like me, we are by now weary of reading all the sayings of the devout, and we neglect to imitate their examples too, though we are tirelessly busy with idle or worldly talk. But in doing this we prove ourselves to be of those whom the Apostle's voice marks out, saying: They will turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned aside to fables (2 Tim 4:4). To check in some measure this sloth and the other monstrous vices, therefore, Christ, the ordainer of the ages, sets up this witness of his against us, and makes him illustrious before us by many miracles, so that, since we have closed our eyes, as was said, to the examples of the devout, we may at least look up at the splendour of this man, flashing as it were close at hand. For he kept the divine commandments in our own time. But since the dead man quickly passes from the heart (Ps 31:13), we at once consign this to oblivion, and, not thinking on the reward that awaits his holy works, we grow wretchedly sluggish in imitating them. For this reason, then, he deigns to work miracles, which perhaps happen for a time, so that in this way at least we may understand the glory he has within, and turn the eye of the mind to the works by which he was brought to that same glory, as to things newly done, and strive to grow strong to imitate them. But now, with God's help, let us relate such of these miracles as accord with reason.

Book Four

I

Dominica igitur post transitum ejus insecuta, multis, ut diximus, comitantibus turbis, ad Aureliacum delatus est. Cum igitur psallentium chori circa feretrum pernoctarent, quidam vir nobilis nomine Gibbo, filiam, quam caducus morbus obsederat, subtus eodem feretro collocavit, quae postea nihil infirmitatis illius passa est. Jam quippe materfamilias existit, et ipsa virtutis hujus testimonium seipsam incolumem praefert.

II.

Quidam homo nomine Grimaldus in villa manens, per somnium vidit quod operculum sarcophagi ejus avellere conaretur. Qui expergefactus, a cubitis et deinceps, brachia cum manibus ita repetit arefacta, ut nihil ex his operari posset. Sic per quindecim ferme dies manens debilitatus, ad sepulcrum supplicaturus venit, ac protinus sanitatem recepit.

III.

Ancilla cujusdam viri Lamberti lunatica per somnium monita est, ut ad ejus sepulcrum supplicatura veniret. Quod illa domino suo indicavit. Ille vero timens ne illusio et ridiculum esset, si visionem virtutis effectus minime sequeretur, prohibuit eam. Illa dehinc secundo, ac tertio nihilominus per visionem monita, praedictum dominum suum rogabat, ut eam illuc ire permitteret. Quod ille jam concessit. Ivit ergo mulier, et ante sepulcrum vigilans, pleniter sana recessit.

IV.

Interea plateola quaedam herbida, in modum rotae per gyrum rotunda, ante cryptam apparuit. Quae cum esset herbis referta, per gyrum tamen tellus nuda et pulvestris erat. Hi ergo qui per coemeterium transibant, cum vidissent plateolam illam, et sulcum pulvereum, qui hanc ambiebat, mirabantur, scientes quod nec homo, nec bestia calcando sulcum illum detriverit. Aliquando vero permansit, et postea disparuit. Sequenti autem aestate similiter ibidem visa est, sed multo jam latior. Habebat autem lembum circa se detritum, ut prius, et pulvereum. Tertia itidem aestate rota similiter herbida, et quasi calle pulvereo circumcincta apparuit, sed multo jam diffusior. Ac deinceps per annos plures in antea se paulatim spargens, extendi videbatur. Qui vero causam diligentius retractabant, prodigium aliquod esse credebant, conjicientes quod rota viridis famam beati Geraldi viriditate virtutis plenam fortasse figuraverit.

So on the Sunday following his passing, accompanied, as we said, by great crowds, he was carried to Aurillac. While choirs of psalm-singers kept vigil all night around the bier, a nobleman named Gibbo laid beneath that bier his daughter, whom the falling sickness had seized; and afterwards she suffered nothing more of that illness. She is now the mother of a family, and she herself, in her good health, bears witness to this miracle.

II

A man named Grimald, who lived in the village, saw in a dream that he was trying to wrench off the lid of Gerald's sarcophagus. On waking, he found his arms, from the elbows down, and his hands so withered that he could do nothing with them. Having remained crippled in this way for about fifteen days, he came to the tomb to make supplication, and at once recovered his health.

III

A moonstruck bondwoman of a man named Lambert was told in a dream to come to Gerald's tomb and make supplication. She told this to her master. But he, fearing it would be a delusion and a laughing-stock if no miraculous effect followed the vision, forbade her. Then, being warned in a vision a second and a third time all the same, she begged her master to let her go there. This he now granted. So the woman went, and, keeping vigil before the tomb, went away completely healed.

IV

Meanwhile a little grassy plot, round like a wheel, appeared before the crypt. Though it was thick with grass, the ground all round it was bare and dusty. Those who passed through the cemetery, when they saw that little plot and the dusty furrow that ran round it, marvelled, knowing that neither man nor beast had worn that furrow by treading. It remained for some time, and afterwards disappeared. The following summer it was seen in the same place in the same way, but now much wider. And it had round it a border worn bare, as before, and dusty. Likewise in the third summer the wheel appeared, grassy as before and girdled as if by a dusty path, but now spread much wider. And thereafter, for several years, it was seen to extend itself, spreading little by little outwards. Those who considered the matter more carefully believed it to be some portent, conjecturing that the green wheel perhaps figured the fame of blessed Gerald, full of the greenness of virtue.

Quae fama per populos, qui ariditate bonorum operum steriles sunt, quos pulvereus circulus significaret, subinde se spargit et illos exemplo suo quasi fecundat; dum pro ejus amore gratam peregrinationem et laborem suscipiunt, dum et munera offerunt, et nonnulli melioratis moribus redeunt: sicut rota illa in antea se extendens ariditatem pulverei circuli ex parte replebat. Utrum vero hoc significaverit, rerum dispositor novit. Certum est tamen quod nihil in terra sine causa fit.

V.

Quidam bonae opinionis clericus civitate Rotenus degit. Hic, si somnio fides adhibenda est, visionem vidit ita continentem: Erat quasi altus locus, ubi splendor ingens fulgebat. Ad quem splendorem per quatuor gradus ascendebatur. Ante primum vero gradum erat quasi antepodium de ferro. Secundus gradus habebat antepodium aereum. Tertius argenteum. Quartus aureum. In primo itaque gradu vidit advenire duos viros splendidissimos vultu et habitu. Quos alii duo sequebantur, qui inter se tertium per manus ducebant. Dictum est autem clerico qui hoc videbat, quod illi duo primi essent sanctus Paulus, et sanctus Martialis: alii duo qui sequebantur, sanctus Petrus et sanctus Andreas. Si quidem tertium quem ducebant, sanctum esse Geraldum. Quem scilicet clericus ille in hac vita manentem minime cognovit. Sed dum postea referret, quali eum statura, vel facie vidisset, illi, qui eum noverant, speciem recognoverunt. Cum ergo venissent ad primum gradum, psallebant quasi psalmum. Post quem sanctus Petrus collectam dixit. Quam completam, responderunt: Amen. Ita fecerunt secundo, tertio, atque quarto. Caeteris autem stantibus, beatus Petrus usque ad locum praedicti splendoris pertetendit. Et prostratus in terra, aliquantisper adorans, jacuit. Tunc surrexit, et usque tertio se prostravit. Deinde vox quasi de illo splendore respondens, requirit quid vellet. At ille: Domine, inquit, pro servo tuo Geraldo misericordiam tuam deprecor. Et tunc nescio quis, veluti codicem tenens, quasi vitam illius recitabat. Cumque aliquandiu legeret, hoc tantummodo clericus intelligere valuit: Qui potuit transgredi, et non est transgressus; et facere mala, et non fecit.

This fame spreads again and again among the peoples who are barren through dryness of good works, whom the dusty ring would signify, and makes them, as it were, fruitful by his example, as for love of him they undertake a welcome pilgrimage and its toil, as they offer gifts, and as some return with their ways amended: just as that wheel, extending outwards, filled up in part the dryness of the dusty ring. Whether it signified this, the Ordainer of all things knows. Yet it is certain that nothing on earth happens without a cause (Job 5:6).

V

A cleric of good repute lives in the city of Rodez. He, if faith may be given to a dream, saw a vision of this kind: there was, as it were, a high place, where a great splendour was shining. To that splendour one went up by four steps. Before the first step there was a kind of railing of iron. The second step had a railing of bronze. The third, one of silver. The fourth, one of gold. Then, at the first step, he saw two men approaching, most resplendent in countenance and in dress. Two others followed them, who were leading a third between them by the hands. And the cleric who saw this was told that the first two were Saint Paul and Saint Martial; the other two who followed, Saint Peter and Saint Andrew. And the third, whom they were leading, was Saint Gerald. That cleric had never known him while he remained in this life. But when he afterwards related of what stature and face he had seen him, those who had known him recognised his appearance. When they had come to the first step, they sang what seemed a psalm. After it Saint Peter said a collect. When it was finished, they answered: "Amen." So they did a second, a third and a fourth time. While the others stood still, blessed Peter went on as far as the place of that splendour. And, prostrate on the ground, he lay there for some time in adoration. Then he rose, and prostrated himself again, up to three times. Then a voice, as if answering from that splendour, asks what he wished. And he said: "Lord, I entreat your mercy for your servant Gerald." And then someone or other, holding as it were a book, seemed to be reading out his life. And when he had read for some time, the cleric could make out only this: He who could have transgressed, and did not transgress; and could do evil, and did not do it (Sir 31:10).

Tunc ad eum vox: Fac, inquit, de eo quod vis. Et protulit quasi sceptrum dans illi, per quod haberet potestatem exaltandi eum. Clericus vero vocem dantis audivit, sed non nisi sceptrum vidit. Tum vero beatus Petrus ad eos, qui se exspectabant, gaudens rediit. Sane ad locum, ubi stabant, apparuit quasi clivosus ascensus in coelum usque porrectus. Beatus autem Petrus dilectum Dei Geraldum manu tenens, et per gradus illos ascendere incipiens, excelsa voce, Te Deum laudamus, exclamavit. Et ita psallentes coelum cum eo petierunt. Siquidem hanc secutum est visibiliter aliud de ejus sepulcro signum.

VI.

Septimo postquam migraverat anno, sarcophagus, qui usque medium cooperculi terra contusa, calcibus fuerat contectus, sensim eminere super eamdem terram coepit. Nec tamen terra, quae erat in gyro, aut elevari, aut deprimi visa est. Incolae tamen necdum hoc animadvertebant. Cum interea quidam clericus de Lemovicensi pago veniens, interrogabat monachos, utrum sarcophagus domni Geraldi sursum adhuc emersisset. Et subjunxit quod admonitus per somnium fuerit, ut ad ejus tumulum veniret, quoniam ejus sarcophagus jam apparere coepisset. Tum vero monachi cum ipso pergentes ad tumulum, et linteum desuper evellentes, ita repererunt, ut clericus dormiens viderat. Et tunc quidem aliquantulum eminebat. Jam vero non parum altior videtur. Quisquis autem hoc dignoscit, virtutem aliquam esse divinam ignorare nequit. Ex hoc igitur miracula crebro fieri coeperunt.

VII.

Circumcisionis Dominicae solemnitas advenerat, cum vassus quidam nomine Adraldus focum caragiorum tota nocte in domo sua fieri praecepit. Intempesta autem ipsius noctis hora, daemones super focum custodes irruerunt. Quibus ita damnati sunt, ut unum occiderent, alterum, debilitatis membris corporea salute privarent. Qui postea mendicando vitam exigens, ad Aureliacum deportatus est. Quo dum per aliquot dies victitaret, quidam violenti homines praesumptionem faciebant contra potestatem loci ipsius. Qua de causa monachi signa sonare, atque litaniis insistere coeperunt.

Then the voice said to him: "Do with him what you will." And it held out something like a sceptre, giving it to him, by which he might have power to exalt him. The cleric heard the voice of the giver, but saw nothing except the sceptre. Then blessed Peter returned rejoicing to those who were waiting for him. And at the place where they stood there appeared a kind of sloping ascent reaching all the way to heaven. And blessed Peter, holding Gerald, the beloved of God, by the hand, and beginning to climb by those steps, cried out with a loud voice: "Te Deum laudamus." And so, singing psalms, they made their way to heaven with him. This vision was followed by another sign, a visible one, concerning his tomb.

VI

In the seventh year after he had passed away, the sarcophagus, which had been covered up to the middle of its lid with earth trodden down by men's heels, began little by little to rise above that earth. Yet the earth around it was seen neither to rise nor to sink. The inhabitants, however, had not yet noticed this. Meanwhile a cleric coming from the Limousin asked the monks whether the lord Gerald's sarcophagus had yet risen up. And he added that he had been told in a dream to come to his tomb, because his sarcophagus had now begun to appear. Then the monks went with him to the tomb, and, pulling off the linen cloth that lay over it, found it just as the cleric had seen in his sleep. At that time it stood out only a little. But now it is seen to be not a little higher. Whoever observes this cannot fail to recognise that it is some divine power. From then on, therefore, miracles began to happen frequently.

VII

The feast of the Lord's Circumcision had come, when a vassal named Adrald ordered a sorcerers' fire to be kept burning all night in his house. But at the dead of that night the demons fell upon the men watching over the fire. These were so stricken by them that the demons killed one and, crippling the limbs of another, robbed him of his bodily health. This man, afterwards living by begging, was carried to Aurillac. While he was living there for some days, certain violent men were committing an outrage against the jurisdiction of that place. For this reason the monks began to ring the bells and to persist in litanies.

Tunc ille contractus supplicabat, ut hi, qui circumstabant, hunc ad sepulcrum domni Geraldi deferrent. Quod cum illi fecissent, orabat ut sibi subvenire dignaretur. Qui post modicum sanus surrexit, et redintegratis membris, omnibus denuo in momento convaluit. Ex hoc jam coeperunt miracula subinde patrari virtutumque ejus opinio certius atque diffusius resonare. De quibus si forte quis dubitet, quoniam saepius eadem in infirmis repetuntur, potest visu probare, per quod praeteritorum fides sumat. Quae autem in iis qui variis langoribus opprimuntur, divina dignatio saepius iterare dignatur, hoc propter prolixitatem praetermisimus. Quaedam tamen ad gloriam ejusdem beati viri commendandam perstrinximus, ne inconsulte ea transilisse videamur.

VIII.

Constat autem quod idem sanctus vir, dum adviveret, multas sanctorum reliquias ad Aureliacum advexit. Quippe, ut superius dictum est, istius causae studiosissimus fuerit, et ad impetrandum quod vellet, non parvam gratiam a Deo habuerit. Inter caetera denique sanctorum chymilia, quae illic habentur, est quoddam lignum Domini, cui talis virtus inesse frequenti experimento dignoscitur, ut si quis illud equitando portet, equus in brevi moriatur; aut si perjurium forte quis fecerit, emptilentiscus [epilepticus] fiet. Non pauci etenim jam propter hoc peccatum caduci facti sunt. Incolae autem regionis illius mores valde ferinos habere solebant, sed aliquantulum exemplo vel reverentia sancti hominis esse mitiores videntur. Cum autem foedus, aut aliquod grande juramentum jure decernunt, per quemlibet monachum, aut clericum, qui tamen pedester incedat, deferri sibi faciunt.

IX.

Quidam sane de beati Geraldi gloria temere disputantes asserunt, quod ista curationum gratia, non meritis ejus, sed istarum virtutibus reliquiarum conferatur. At nos causam diligentius considerantes, id credimus, quod ita per sancta illa pignora sanitatum beneficia tribuuntur, ut virtus quoque beati Geraldi cooperatrix non negetur. Nam hoc ipsa qualitas accidentium rerum credi suadet, quoniam ipse solet infirmis per visum apparere, et maxime ante ejus tumulum sanitatis beneficium conferre.

Then the crippled man begged those standing round to carry him to the lord Gerald's tomb. When they had done so, he prayed that he would deign to help him. After a little while he rose up healed, and, his limbs restored, he recovered in all of them in a moment. From then on miracles began to be worked repeatedly, and the fame of his miracles to resound more surely and more widely. If anyone perhaps doubts them, since they are often repeated in the sick, he can test them with his own eyes, and by this gain faith in those of the past. But what the divine condescension deigns again and again to repeat in those weighed down by various sicknesses, we have passed over to avoid prolixity. Yet we have touched briefly on some, to commend the glory of this blessed man, lest we seem to have passed them over thoughtlessly.

VIII

It is well known that this holy man, while he lived, brought many relics of the saints to Aurillac. For, as was said above, he was most zealous in this matter, and had no small grace from God for obtaining what he wished. Among the other treasures of the saints that are kept there, there is a piece of the wood of the Lord, in which, as frequent experience shows, there is such power that if anyone carries it on horseback, the horse soon dies; and if anyone should perhaps perjure himself, he becomes epileptic. Indeed, not a few have already been struck with the falling sickness for this sin. The inhabitants of that region used to have very savage ways, but by the example of the holy man, or from reverence for him, they seem to be somewhat milder. When they lawfully settle a treaty or some great oath, they have it brought to them by some monk or cleric, who must, however, go on foot.

IX

Some, indeed, arguing rashly about blessed Gerald's glory, assert that this grace of healings is conferred not by his merits but by the power of these relics. But we, considering the matter more carefully, believe that the benefits of healing are bestowed through those holy relics in such a way that the power of blessed Gerald is not denied its share in the work. For the very nature of what happens persuades us to believe this, since he is wont to appear to the sick in visions, and to confer the benefit of health chiefly before his own tomb.

Ut est de filio Joannis videlicet Arvennensis [Arvernensis] vicecomitis, quem mutum et surdum, una manu contractum ibidem detulit. Ante sepulcrum namque prosternens sese in orationem dedit. Nocte jam mediante, sanguis ab ejus auribus erupit, manusque illius directa est, quam circa collum patris sanam expandit, et primam vocem emittens, panem ab eo quaesivit. At ille gratias agens pro filio, totam ecclesiam clamore complevit, et quemdam sui juris alodum ad sanctum sepulcrum tradidit. Sane de isto nominatim commemoramus, pro eo quod miraculum in excellenti persona patratum, ad multorum notitiam pervenit. Dissimilia autem vel diversa alterius generis, primo quidem ab incolis notabantur, sed cum numerus immensus cresceret, omissa est cura numerandi.

X.

In Aureliaco oppido ante fores ecclesiae erat epistilium, ex quo ille ascendere equum solebat. Quod videlicet cum infirmi ob ejus amorem deosculantur, solent recipere sanitatem. Ob quam etiam causam nunc est ab incolis intra ecclesiam transpositum, et in modum altaris palla coopertum. Non longe ab oppido quod rustici Mulsedonum dicunt, praedictus vir Dei casam habuerat. Porro oppidani mutuo condixerunt, ut mensam ejus, quae in praedicta casa adhuc erat, sibi ad reficiendum deferrent. Quod et fecerunt. Casu vero ad frontem cujusdam domus, hinc portitores projecerunt. Cum super eam quidam, veniente meridie, dormire vellet, subito caecus et amens effectus est. Deinde cum etiam canis eamdem mensam calcaret, omnibus membris statim diriguit. Necdum tamen illis advertentibus quidnam esset, alius itidem super hanc se projecit, sed et ipse protinus caecatus est. Tandem intelligentes, quin ob tabulam sancti viri frequenti ejus refectione consecratam ista pertulerint; hanc ad Ecclesiam beati Martini quae prope est, linteo contectam deportaverunt. Quae nunc usque domatis ibidem suspensa comparet. Ad aliam ejus mensam quae erat in villa Vaxia, quidam presbyter cum vicinis ad convivium venerat. Cumque sicut fieri solet, inter epulas gannirent, et verba ridicula vicissim immiscerent, subito pavor ingens ita omnes perculit, ut statim intermittentes scurrilitatem, ad alium locum comesuri secederent. Mensam vero deportaverunt ad illud oratorium, quod factum est in quodam loco, ubi feretrum portatores deposuerunt, ad mutandum pallium.

So it was with the son of John, the viscount of the Auvergne, whom his father brought there dumb and deaf, with one hand crippled. Prostrating himself before the tomb, he gave himself to prayer. When the night was half spent, blood burst from the boy's ears and his hand was straightened, and he stretched it out, sound, round his father's neck, and, uttering his first words, asked him for bread. And the father, giving thanks for his son, filled the whole church with his cries, and gave an allod of his own to the holy tomb. We mention this one by name because, being a miracle worked on a person of eminence, it came to the knowledge of many. Others, unlike this or of a different kind, were at first noted down by the inhabitants; but when their number grew immense, the care of counting them was given up.

X

In the town of Aurillac, before the doors of the church, there was a block of stone from which he used to mount his horse. When the sick kiss it for love of him, they are wont to recover their health. For this reason it has now been moved into the church by the inhabitants and covered with a cloth like an altar. Not far from the town which the country people call Mulsedonum, the man of God had had a house. Now the townsfolk agreed among themselves to carry off his table, which was still in that house, to eat at. And so they did. The bearers happened to throw it down in front of a certain house. When at the coming of noon a man wished to sleep on it, he was suddenly struck blind and out of his mind. Then, when a dog too trod on that table, it at once went stiff in all its limbs. Yet before they had noticed what was happening, another man likewise threw himself down on it, and he too was at once struck blind. At last, understanding that they had suffered these things because of the holy man's table, hallowed by his frequent meals at it, they covered it with a linen cloth and carried it to the church of blessed Martin, which is near by. There it may be seen to this day, hanging from the roof. At another table of his, which was on the estate of Vaxia, a priest had come with his neighbours for a feast. And as they were chattering over the food, as people do, and trading jokes, suddenly a great dread so struck them all that they at once broke off their buffoonery and withdrew to another place to eat. The table they carried to that oratory which was built at the place where the bearers had set down the bier to change the pall.

Quo videlicet loco pecora circumquaque vagantia, cum forte spatiolum illud ubi feretrum, sicut diximus, positum fuerat, pascendo contigissent, protinus tormentari incipiebant, et nonnulla moriebantur. Incolae vero per id quod animalibus acciderat, causam intelligentes, ibidem praedictum oratorium construxerunt. Quo dehinc certum est, quod plerique infirmi sanitatem sunt adepti. Praeterea mirum quiddam et pene incredibile contigit, nisi quia usu probatur. Nam fonticula ex tunc in eodem loco subbullit, quae viantibus ad potum sufficiat.

XI.

Rainaldus, quem vir Domini suspectum habens, juramento, sicut superius dictum est, adhuc vivens constrinxerat, illius juramenti fidem rupit, et familiae, quam coenobio delegaverat, nimis erat cum suis infestus. Singuli autem, inter praedationes, quas patiebantur, nomen domni Geraldi inclamare solebant. Quadam autem nocte visum est ipsi Rainaldo, quod virum Dei sibi astantem cerneret. Qui cum juramenti fidem ab eo requireret, simul admonuit, ut familiam vexare de caetero cessaret. Excitatus ille indicavit conjugi visionem. Quem et illa suadebat, ut vel commonitus juramentum servaret. Et ille compunctus ad horam suis idem retulit, praecipiens, sed ignaviter, ut familiam non inquietarent. Sed illi post paululum ad consuetam rapacitatem redierunt. Nec Rainaldus obsistebat, quia pronus erat ad malum. Et quamvis sanguine esset sancto viro propinquus, tamen ab ejus pietate longe erat alienus. Tum itidem sanctus vir eidem minans apparuit, et quae bona sibi fecisset, pro quibus ille mala reddebat, furibundus exprobravit, atque percutiens eum in capite, e vicino mortem sibi secuturam comminatus est.

XII.

In provincia, quae Alamannia vocatur, nobilis homo erat obsessus a daemonibus. Parentes vero, et milites sui per multa pignora sanctorum ducebant eum, ut saltem per eorum intercessionem divina gratia liberasset. Sed distributor omnium bonorum, qui electum suum glorificare disposuit hanc virtutem ei reservavit. Nomen vero beati viri in ipsa provincia necdum auditum erat. Praedicti autem parentes dum eum ducerent ante corpora sanctorum, daemones saepius clamabant, de ejus corpore se minime exire, nisi per intercessionem beati Geraldi.

In that place, whenever the cattle wandering round about happened, while grazing, to touch the little spot where, as we said, the bier had been set down, they at once began to be tormented, and several died. The inhabitants, understanding the reason from what had befallen the animals, built that oratory on the spot. There, it is certain, many of the sick have since obtained their health. Besides this, something wonderful and almost incredible has happened, were it not proved by use. For since then a little spring has bubbled up in that same place, which is enough to give drink to wayfarers.

XI

Rainald, whom the man of the Lord, holding him in suspicion, had bound by oath while he was still alive, as was said above, broke the faith of that oath, and with his men was very hostile to the household of serfs that Gerald had made over to the monastery. And each of them, amid the plundering they suffered, used to call upon the name of the lord Gerald. One night it seemed to Rainald himself that he saw the man of God standing beside him. He demanded of him the faith of his oath, and at the same time warned him to cease from harassing the household from then on. On waking, he told the vision to his wife. And she urged him, now that he had at least been warned, to keep his oath. And he, touched with compunction for the moment, told the same to his men, ordering them, but feebly, not to disturb the household. But after a little while they went back to their usual rapacity. Nor did Rainald stand in their way, for he was prone to evil. And though he was near to the holy man in blood, he was far removed from his goodness. Then the holy man appeared to him again, threatening, and in great wrath reproached him with the good things he had done him, for which he was returning evil; and, striking him on the head, he warned him that death would soon follow.

XII

In the province called Alemannia there was a nobleman possessed by demons. His kinsmen and his knights took him round to many relics of the saints, so that through their intercession at least divine grace might free him. But the Giver of all good things, who had resolved to glorify his chosen one, reserved this miracle for him. Yet the name of the blessed man had not yet been heard in that province. And while his kinsmen were leading him before the bodies of the saints, the demons often cried out that they would by no means come out of his body except through the intercession of blessed Gerald.

Tum iidem parentes daemoniaci huc illucque discurrebant, si vel provinciam audissent, in qua beatus Geraldus esset. Et nescio aut Romei, aut quilibet peregrinus indicavit eis provinciam et locum. Qui festine ad Aureliacum venerunt. Mox ut venit ante sepulcrum, clamare coeperunt daemones per eum obsessum: O Geralde, inquit, utquid illudis nos? Utquid ardemus tua virtute? Qui mox cecidit in terram, et evomuit eos una cum sanguine. Ex illa hora, et deinceps, incolumis mansit.

Then the possessed man's kinsmen ran hither and thither, to hear at least of the province in which blessed Gerald was. And some Rome-farers, or some pilgrim or other, I know not which, told them the province and the place. They came in haste to Aurillac. As soon as he came before the tomb, the demons began to cry out through the possessed man: "O Gerald," he said, "why do you mock us? Why do we burn by your power?" At once he fell to the ground and vomited them out together with blood. From that hour onwards he remained sound.