

0190-0264 – Dionisius Alexandrinus – Extant Fragments

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Origen in the fourth year of the reign of Philip, who succeeded Gordian in the empire. On the death of Heraclas, the thirteenth bishop of the church of Alexandria, he was put in possession of the headship of that church; and after a period of seventeen years, embracing the last three years of the reign of Philip, and the one year of that of Decius, and the one year of Gallus and Volusianus the son of Decius, and twelve years of the reigns of Valerian and his son Gallus (Gallienus), he departed to the Lord. And Basilides was bishop of the parishes in the Pentapolis of Libya, as Eusebius informs us in the sixth and seventh books of his *Ecclesiastical History*.



The Works of Dionysius.

Extant Fragments.

Part I.—Containing Various Sections of the Works.

I.—From the Two Books on the Promises.⁶¹²

1. BUT as they produce a certain composition by Nepos,⁶¹³ on which they insist very strongly, as if it demonstrated incontestably that there will be a (temporal) reign of Christ upon the earth, I

⁶¹² In opposition to Noëtus, a bishop in Egypt. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vii. 24 and 25. Eusebius introduces this extract in the following terms: "There are also two books of his on the subject of the promises. The occasion of writing these was furnished by a certain Nepos, a bishop in Egypt, who taught that the promises which were given to holy men in the sacred Scriptures were to be understood according to the Jewish sense of the same; and affirmed that there would be some kind of a millennial period, plenished with corporeal delights, upon this earth. And as he thought that he could establish this opinion of his by the Revelation of John, he had composed a book on this question, entitled *Refutation of the Allegorists*. This, therefore, is sharply attacked by Dionysius in his books on the Promises. And in the first of these books he states his own opinion on the subject; while in the second he gives us a discussion on the Revelation of John, in the introduction to which he makes mention of Nepos." [Of this Noëtus, see the *Philosophumena*, vol. v., this series.]

⁶¹³ As it is clear from this passage that this work by Dionysius was written against Nepos, it is strange that, in his preface to the eighteenth book of his Commentaries on Isaiah, Jerome should affirm it to have been composed against Irenæus of Lyons. Irenæus was certainly of the number of those who held millennial views, and who had been persuaded to embrace such by Papias,

have to say, that in many other respects I accept the opinion of Nepos, and love him at once for his faith, and his laboriousness, and his patient study in the Scriptures, as also for his great efforts in psalmody,⁶¹⁴ by which even now many of the brethren are delighted. I hold the man, too, in deep respect still more, inasmuch as⁶¹⁵ he has gone to his rest before us. Nevertheless the truth is to be prized and revered above all things else. And while it is indeed proper to praise and approve ungrudgingly anything that is said aright, it is no less proper to examine and correct anything which may appear to have been written unsoundly. If he had been present then himself, and had been stating his opinions orally, it would have been sufficient to discuss the question together without the use of writing, and to endeavour to convince the opponents, and carry them along by interrogation and reply. But the work is published, and is, as it seems to some, of a very persuasive character; and there are unquestionably some teachers, who hold that the law and the prophets are of no importance, and who decline to follow the Gospels, and who depreciate the epistles of the apostles, and who have also made large promises⁶¹⁶ regarding the doctrine of this composition, as though it were some great and hidden mystery, and who, at the same time, do not allow that our simpler brethren have any sublime and elevated conceptions either of our Lord's appearing in His glory and His true divinity, or of our own resurrection from the dead, and of our being gathered together to Him, and assimilated to Him, but, on the contrary, endeavour to lead them to hope⁶¹⁷ for things which are trivial and corruptible, and only such as what we find at present in the kingdom of God.

as Jerome himself tells us in the *Catalogus* and as Eusebius explains towards the close of the third book of his *History*. But that this book by Dionysius was written not against Irenæus but against Nepos, is evident, not only from this passage in Eusebius, but also from Jerome himself, in his work *On Ecclesiastical Writers*, where he speaks of Dionysius.—VALES. [Compare (this series, *infra*) the comments of Victorinus of Petau for a Western view of the millennial subject.]

⁶¹⁴ τῆς πολλῆς ψαλμωδίας. Christophorus interprets this of psalms and hymns composed by Nepos. It was certainly the practice among the ancient Christians to compose psalms and hymns in honour of Christ. Eusebius bears witness to this in the end of the fifth book of his *History*. Mention is made of these psalms in the Epistle of the Council of Antioch against Paul of Samosata, and in the penultimate canon of the Council of Laodicea, where there is a clear prohibition of the use of ψαλμοὶ ἰδιωτικοί in the church, i.e., of psalms composed by private individuals. For this custom had obtained great prevalence, so that many persons composed psalms in honour of Christ, and got them sung in the church. It is psalms of this kind, consequently, that the Fathers of the Council of Laodicea forbid to be sung thereafter in the church, designating them ἰδιωτικοί, i.e., composed by unskilled men, and not dictated by the Holy Spirit. Thus is the matter explained by Agobardus in his book *De ritu canendi psalmos in Ecclesia*.—VALES. [See vol. v., quotation from Pliny.]

⁶¹⁵ ταυτῆ μᾶλλον ἢ προανεπάσαστο: it may mean, perhaps, *for the way in which he has gone to his rest before us*.

⁶¹⁶ κατεπαγγελλομένων, i.e., *diu ante promittunt quam tradunt*. The metaphor is taken from the mysteries of the Greeks, who were wont to promise great and marvellous discoveries to the initiated, and then kept them on the rack by daily expectation, in order to confirm their judgment and reverence by such suspense in the conveyance of knowledge, as Tertullian says in his book *Against the Valentinians*.—VALES. [Vol. iii. p. 503.]

⁶¹⁷ Reading ἐλπίζειν ἀναπειθόντων for ἐλπίζόμενα πειθόντων, with the Codex Mazarin.

And since this is the case, it becomes necessary for us to discuss this subject with our brother Nepos just as if he were present.

2. *After certain other matters, he adds the following statement:*—Being then in the Arsinoitic⁶¹⁸ prefecture—where, as you are aware, this doctrine was current long ago, and caused such division, that schisms and apostasies took place in whole churches—I called together the presbyters and the teachers among the brethren in the villages, and those of the brethren also who wished to attend were present. I exhorted them to make an investigation into that dogma in public. Accordingly, when they had brought this book before us, as though it were a kind of weapon or impregnable battlement, I sat with them for three days in succession from morning till evening, and attempted to set them right on the subjects propounded in the composition. Then, too, I was greatly gratified by observing the constancy of the brethren, and their love of the truth, and their docility and intelligence, as we proceeded, in an orderly method, and in a spirit of moderation, to deal with questions, and difficulties, and concessions. For we took care not to press, in every way and with jealous urgency, opinions which had once been adopted, even although they might appear to be correct.⁶¹⁹ Neither did we evade objections alleged by others; but we endeavoured as far as possible to keep by the subject in hand, and to establish the positions pertinent to it. Nor, again, were we ashamed to change our opinions, if reason convinced us, and to acknowledge the fact; but rather with a good conscience, and in all sincerity, and with open hearts⁶²⁰ before God, we accepted all that could be established by the demonstrations and teachings of the Holy Scriptures. And at last the author and introducer of this doctrine, whose name was Coracion, in the hearing of all the brethren present, made acknowledgment of his position, and engaged to us that he would no longer hold by his opinion, nor discuss it, nor mention it, nor teach it, as he had been completely convinced by the arguments of those opposed to it. The rest of the brethren, also, who were present, were delighted with the conference, and with the conciliatory spirit and the harmony exhibited by all.

3. *Then, a little further on, he speaks of the Revelation of John as follows:*—Now some before our time have set aside this book, and repudiated it entirely, criticising it chapter by chapter, and endeavouring to show it to be without either sense or reason. They have alleged also that its title

⁶¹⁸ ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ Ἀρσινοείτῃ. In the three codices here, as well as in Nicephorus and Ptolemy, we find this scription, although it is evident that the word should be written Ἀρσινοειτῃ, as the district took its name from Queen Arsinoe.—VALES.

⁶¹⁹ εἰ καὶ φαίνονται. There is another reading, εἰ καὶ μὴ φαίνονται, *although they might not appear to be correct*. Christophorsonus renders it: ne illis quæ fuerant ante ab ipsis decreta, si quidquam in eis veritati repugnare videretur, mordicus adhærerent præcavebant.

⁶²⁰ ἡπλωμέναις ταῖς καρδίαις. Christophorsonus renders it, *puris erga Deum ac simplicibus animis*; Musculus gives, *cordibus ad Deum expansis*; and Rufinus, *patefactis cordibus*. [The picture here given of a primitive synod searching the Scriptures under such a presidency, and exhibiting such tokens of brotherly love, mutual subordination (1 Pet. v. 5), and a prevailing love of the truth, is to me one of the most fascinating of patristic sketches. One cannot but reflect upon the contrast presented in every respect by the late Council of the Vatican.]

is false; for they deny that John is the author. Nay, further, they hold that it can be no sort of revelation, because it is covered with so gross and dense a veil of ignorance. They affirm, therefore, that none of the apostles, nor indeed any of the saints, nor any person belonging to the Church, could be its author; but that Cerinthus,⁶²¹ and the heretical sect founded by him, and named after him the Cerinthian sect, being desirous of attaching the authority of a great name to the fiction propounded by him, prefixed that title to the book. For the doctrine inculcated by Cerinthus is this: that there will be an earthly reign of Christ; and as he was himself a man devoted to the pleasures of the body, and altogether carnal in his dispositions, he fancied⁶²² that that kingdom would consist in those kinds of gratifications on which his own heart was set,—to wit, in the delights of the belly, and what comes beneath the belly, that is to say, in eating and drinking, and marrying, and in other things under the guise of which he thought he could indulge his appetites with a better grace,⁶²³ such as festivals, and sacrifices, and the slaying of victims. But I, for my part, could not venture to set this book aside, for there are many brethren who value it highly. Yet, having formed an idea of it as a composition exceeding my capacity of understanding, I regard it as containing a kind of hidden and wonderful intelligence on the several subjects which come under it. For though I cannot comprehend it, I still suspect that there is some deeper sense underlying the words. And I do not measure and judge its expressions by the standard of my own reason, but, making more allowance for faith, I have simply regarded them as too lofty for my comprehension; and I do not forthwith reject what I do not understand, but I am only the more filled with wonder at it, in that I have not been able to discern its import.⁶²⁴

4. *After this, he examines the whole book of the Revelation; and having proved that it cannot possibly be understood according to the bald, literal sense, he proceeds thus:*—When the prophet now has completed, so to speak, the whole prophecy, he pronounces those blessed who should observe it, and names himself, too, in the number of the same: “For blessed,” says he, “is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book; and I John *who* saw and heard these things.”⁶²⁵ That this person was called John, therefore, and that this was the writing of a John, I do not deny. And I admit further, that it was also the work of some holy and inspired man. But I could not so easily admit that this was the apostle, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James, and the same person

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⁶²¹ This passage is given substantially by Eusebius also in book iii. c. 28.

⁶²² The text gives *ὄνειροπολεῖν*, for which for which *ὄνειροπολεῖ* or *ὄνειροπόλει* is to be read.

⁶²³ *δι' ὧν εὐφημότερον ταῦτα ᾤθη ποριεῖσθαι*. The old reading was *εὐθυμότερον*; but the present reading is given in the MSS., Cod. Maz., and Med., as also in Eusebius, iii. 28, and in Nicephorus, iii. 14. So Rufinus renders it: *et ut aliquid sacratius dicere videretur, legales aiebat festivitates rursum celebrandas*. [These gross views of millennial perfection entailed upon subsequent ages a reactionary neglect of the study of the Second Advent. A Papal aphorism, preserved by Roscoe, embodies all this: “Sub umbilico nulla religio.” It was fully exemplified, even under Leo X.]

⁶²⁴ [The humility which moderates and subdues our author's pride of intellect in this passage is, to me, most instructive as to the limits prescribed to argument in what Coleridge calls “the faith of reason.”]

⁶²⁵ Rev. xxii. 7, 8.

with him who wrote the Gospel which bears the title *according to John*, and the catholic epistle. But from the character of both, and the forms of expression, and the whole disposition and execution⁶²⁶ of the book, I draw the conclusion that the authorship is not his. For the evangelist nowhere else subjoins his name, and he never proclaims himself either in the Gospel or in the epistle.

And a little further on he adds:—John, moreover, nowhere gives us the name, whether as of himself directly (in the first person), or as of another (in the third person). But the writer of the Revelation puts himself forward at once in the very beginning, for he says: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which He gave to him to show to His servants quickly; and He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bare record of the Word of God, and of his testimony, and of all things that he saw.”⁶²⁷ And then he writes also an epistle, in which he says: “John to the seven churches which are in Asia, grace be unto you, and peace.” The evangelist, on the other hand, has not prefixed his name even to the catholic epistle; but without any circumlocution, he has commenced at once with the mystery of the divine revelation itself in these terms: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes.”⁶²⁸ And on the ground of such a revelation as that the Lord pronounced Peter blessed, when He said: “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”⁶²⁹ And again in the second epistle, which is ascribed to John, the apostle, and in the third, though they are indeed brief, John is not set before us by name; but we find simply the anonymous writing, “The elder.” This other author, on the contrary, did not even deem it sufficient to name himself once, and then to proceed with his narrative; but he takes up his name again, and says: “I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”⁶³⁰ And likewise toward the end he speaks thus: “Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book; and I John *who* saw these things and heard them.”⁶³¹ That it is a John, then, that writes these things we must believe, for he himself tells us.

5. What John this is, however, is uncertain. For he has not said, as he often does in the Gospel, that he is the disciple beloved by the Lord, or the one that leaned on His bosom, or the brother of James, or one that was privileged to see and hear the Lord. And surely he would have given us some of these indications if it had been his purpose to make himself clearly known. But of all this

⁶²⁶ διεξαγωγῆς λεγομένης. Musculus renders it *tractatum libri*; Christophorsonus gives *discursum*; and Valesius takes it as equivalent to οἰκονομίαν, as διεξαγαγεῖν is the same as διοικεῖν.

⁶²⁷ Rev. i. 1, 2.

⁶²⁸ 1 John i. 1.

⁶²⁹ Matt. xvi. 17.

⁶³⁰ Rev. i. 9.

⁶³¹ Rev. xxii. 7, 8.

he offers us nothing; and he only calls himself our brother and companion, and the witness of Jesus, and one blessed with the seeing and hearing of these revelations. I am also of opinion that there were many persons of the same name with John the apostle, who by their love for him, and their admiration and emulation of him, and their desire to be loved by the Lord as he was loved, were induced to embrace also the same designation, just as we find many of the children of the faithful called by the names of Paul and Peter.⁶³² There is, besides, another John mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, with the surname Mark, whom Barnabas and Paul attached to themselves as companion, and of whom again it is said: “And they had also John to their minister.”⁶³³ But whether this is the one who wrote the Revelation, I could not say. For it is not written that he came with them into Asia. But the writer says: “Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.”⁶³⁴ I think, therefore, that it was some other one of those who were in Asia. For it is said that there were two monuments in Ephesus, and that each of these bears the name of John.

6. And from the ideas, and the expressions, and the collocation of the same, it may be very reasonably conjectured that this one is distinct from that.⁶³⁵ For the Gospel and the Epistle agree with each other, and both commence in the same way. For the one opens thus, “In the beginning was the Word;” while the other opens thus, “That which was from the beginning.” The one says: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the



⁶³² It is worth while to note this passage of Dionysius on the ancient practice of the Christians, in giving their children the names of Peter and Paul, which they did both in order to express the honour and affection in which they held these saints, and to secure that their children might be dear and acceptable to God, just as those saints were. Hence it is that Chrysostom in his first volume, in his oration on St. Meletius, says that the people of Antioch had such love and esteem for Meletius, that the parents called their children by his name, in order that they might have their homes adorned by his presence. And the same Chrysostom, in his twenty-first homily on Genesis, exhorts his hearers not to call their children carelessly by the names of their grandfathers, or great-grandfathers, or men of fame; but rather by the names of saintly men, who have been shining patterns of virtue, in order that the children might be fired with the desire of virtue by their example.—VALES. [A chapter in the history of civilization might here be given on the origin of Christian names and on the motives which should influence Christians in the bestowal of names. The subject is treated, after Plato, by De Maistre.]

⁶³³ Acts xiii. 5.

⁶³⁴ Acts xiii. 13.

⁶³⁵ This is the second argument by which Dionysius reasoned that the Revelation and the Gospel of John are not by one author. For the first argument he used in proof of this is drawn from the character and usage of the two writers; and this argument Dionysius has prosecuted up to this point. Now, however, he adduces a second argument, drawn from the words and ideas of the two writers, and from the collocation of the expressions. For, with Cicero, I thus interpret the word σύνταξις. See the very elegant book of Dionysius Hal. entitled Περὶ συντάξεως ὀνομάτων—On the Collocation of Names; although in this passage σύνταξις appears to comprehend the disposition of sentences as well as words. Further, from this passage we can see what experience Dionysius had in criticism; for it is the critic’s part to examine the writings of the ancients, and distinguish what is genuine and authentic from what is spurious and counterfeit.—VALES.

Only-begotten of the Father.”⁶³⁶ The other says the same things, with a slight alteration: “That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: and the life was manifested.”⁶³⁷ For these things are introduced by way of prelude, and in opposition, as he has shown in the subsequent parts, to those who deny that the Lord is come in the flesh. For which reason he has also been careful to add these words: “And that which we have seen we testify, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us: that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.”⁶³⁸ Thus he keeps to himself, and does not diverge inconsistently from his subjects, but goes through them all under the same heads and in the same phraseologies, some of which we shall briefly mention. Thus the attentive reader will find the phrases, “the life,” “the light,” occurring often in both; and also such expressions as *fleeing from darkness, holding the truth, grace, joy, the flesh and the blood of the Lord, the judgment, the remission of sins, the love of God toward us, the commandment of love on our side toward each other; as also, that we ought to keep all the commandments, the conviction of the world, of the devil, of Antichrist, the promise of the Holy Spirit, the adoption of God, the faith* required of us in all things, *the Father and the Son*, named as such everywhere. And altogether, through their whole course, it will be evident that the Gospel and the Epistle are distinguished by one and the same character of writing. But the Revelation is totally different, and altogether distinct from this; and I might almost say that it does not even come near it, or border upon it. Neither does it contain a syllable in common with these other books. Nay more, the Epistle—for I say nothing of the Gospel—does not make any mention or evince any notion of the Revelation and the Revelation, in like manner, gives no note of the Epistle. Whereas Paul gives some indication of his revelations in his epistles; which revelations, however, he has not recorded in writing by themselves.

7. And furthermore, on the ground of difference in diction, it is possible to prove a distinction between the Gospel and the Epistle on the one hand, and the Revelation on the other. For the former are written not only without actual error as regards the Greek language, but also with the greatest elegance, both in their expressions and in their reasonings, and in the whole structure of their style. They are very far indeed from betraying any barbarism or solecism, or any sort of vulgarism, in their diction. For, as might be presumed, the writer possessed the gift of both kinds of discourse,⁶³⁹ the Lord having bestowed both these capacities upon him, viz., that of knowledge and that of expression. That the author of the latter, however, saw a revelation, and received knowledge and

⁶³⁶ John i. 14.

⁶³⁷ 1 John i. 1, 2.

⁶³⁸ 1 John i. 2, 3.

⁶³⁹ The old reading was, τὸν λόγον, τὴν γνῶσιν. Valesius expunges the τὴν γνῶσιν, as disturbing the sense, and as absent in various codices. Instead also of the reading, τὸν τε τῆς σοφίας, τὸν τε τῆς γνώσεως, the same editor adopts τὸν τε τῆς γνώσεως, τὸν τε τῆς φράσεως, which is the reading of various manuscripts, and is accepted in the translation. Valesius understands that by the ἐκότερον λόγον Dionysius means the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and the λόγος προφορικός, that is, the subjective discourse, or reason in the mind, and the objective discourse, or utterance of the same.

prophecy, I do not deny. Only I perceive that his dialect and language are not of the exact Greek type, and that he employs barbarous idioms, and in some places also solecisms. These, however, we are under no necessity of seeking out at present. And I would not have any one suppose that I have said these things in the spirit of ridicule; for I have done so only with the purpose of setting right this matter of the dissimilarity subsisting between these writings.⁶⁴⁰

II.—From the Books on Nature.⁶⁴¹

I. In Opposition to Those of the School of Epicurus Who Deny the Existence of a Providence, and Refer the Constitution of the Universe to Atomic Bodies.

Is the universe one coherent whole, as it seems to be in our own judgment, as well as in that of the wisest of the Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Pythagoras, and the Stoics and Heraclitus? or is it a duality, as some may possibly have conjectured? or is it indeed something manifold and infinite, as has been the opinion of certain others who, with a variety of mad speculations and fanciful usages of terms, have sought to divide and resolve the essential matter⁶⁴² of the universe, and lay down the position that it is infinite and unoriginated, and without the sway of Providence?⁶⁴³ For there are those who, giving the name of atoms to certain imperishable and most minute bodies which are supposed to be infinite in number, and positing also the existence of a certain vacant space of an unlimited vastness, allege that these atoms, as they are borne along casually in the void, and clash all fortuitously against each other in an unregulated whirl, and become commingled one with another in a multitude of forms, enter into combination with each other, and thus gradually form this world and all objects in it; yea, more, that they construct infinite worlds. This was the opinion of Epicurus and Democritus; only they differed in one point, in so far as the former supposed these atoms to be all most minute and consequently imperceptible, while Democritus held that there



⁶⁴⁰ [The jealousy with which, while the canon of New Testament Scripture was forming, every claim was sifted, is well illustrated in this remarkable essay. Observe its critical skill and the fidelity with which he exposes the objections based on the style and classicality of the Evangelist. The Alexandrian school was one of bold and original investigation, always subject in spirit, however, to the great canon of Prescription.]

⁶⁴¹ Against the Epicureans. In Eusebius, *Præpar. Evangel.*, book xiv. ch. 23–27. Eusebius introduces this extract in terms to the following effect: It may be well now to subjoin some few arguments out of the many which are employed in his disputation against the Epicureans by the bishop Dionysius, a man who professed a Christian philosophy, as they are found in the work which he composed on Nature. But peruse thou the writer's statements in his own terms.

⁶⁴² οὐσίαν.

⁶⁴³ ἀπρονόητον.

were also some among them of a very large size. But they both hold that such atoms do exist, and that they are so called on account of their indissoluble consistency. There are some, again, who give the name of atoms to certain bodies which are indivisible into parts, while they are themselves parts of the universe, out of which in their undivided state all things are made up, and into which they are dissolved again. And the allegation is, that Diodorus was the person who gave them their names as bodies indivisible into parts.⁶⁴⁴ But it is also said that Heraclides attached another name to them, and called them “weights;”⁶⁴⁵ and from him the physician Asclepiades also derived that name.⁶⁴⁶

II. A Refutation of This Dogma on the Ground of Familiar Human Analogies.

How, shall we bear with these men who assert that all those wise, and consequently also noble, constructions (in the universe) are only the works of common chance? those objects, I mean, of which each taken by itself as it is made, and the whole system collectively, were seen to be good by Him by whose command they came into existence. For, as it is said, “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.”⁶⁴⁷ But truly these men do not reflect on⁶⁴⁸ the analogies even of small familiar things which might come under their observation at any time, and from which they might learn that no object of any utility, and fitted to be serviceable, is made without design or by mere chance, but is wrought by skill of hand, and is contrived so as to meet its proper use. And when the object falls out of service and becomes useless, then it also begins to break up indeterminately, and to decompose and dissipate its materials in every casual and unregulated way, just as the wisdom by which it was skilfully constructed at first no longer controls and maintains it. For a cloak, for example, cannot be made without the weaver, as if the warp could be set aright and the woof could be entwined with it by their own spontaneous action; while, on the other hand, if it is once worn out, its tattered rags are flung aside. Again, when a house or a city is built, it does not take on its stones, as if some of them placed themselves spontaneously upon the foundations, and others lifted themselves up on the several layers, but the builder carefully disposes the skilfully

⁶⁴⁴ τῶν ἀμερῶν.

⁶⁴⁵ ὄγκους.

⁶⁴⁶ ἐκληρονόμησε τὸ ὄνομα. Eusebius subjoins this remark: ταῦτ' εἰπὼν, ἐξῆς ἀνασκευάζει τὸ δόγμα διὰ πολλῶν, ἀτὰρ δὲ διὰ τούτων, = having said thus much, he (Dionysius) proceeds to demolish this doctrine by many arguments, and among others by what follows.—GALL.

⁶⁴⁷ Gen. i. 31.

⁶⁴⁸ The text is, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τῶν μικρῶν τῶν συνήθων καὶ παρὰ πόδας νουθεοῦντων, etc. We adopt Viger's suggestions and read νουθεοῦνται.

prepared stones in their proper positions; while if the structure happens once to give way, the stones are separated and cast down and scattered about. And so, too, when a ship is built, the keel does not lay itself, neither does the mast erect itself in the centre, nor do all the other timbers take up their positions casually and by their own motion. Nor, again, do the so-called hundred beams in the wain fit themselves spontaneously to the vacant spaces they severally light on. But the carpenter in both cases puts the materials together in the right way and at the right time.⁶⁴⁹ And if the ship goes to sea and is wrecked, or if the wain drives along on land and is shattered, their timbers are broken up and cast abroad anywhere,—those of the former by the waves, and those of the latter by the violence of the impetus. In like manner, then, we might with all propriety say also to these men, that those atoms of theirs, which remain idle and unmanipulated and useless, are introduced vainly. Let them, accordingly, seek for themselves to see into what is beyond the reach of sight, and conceive what is beyond the range of conception;⁶⁵⁰ unlike him who in these terms confesses to God that things like these had been shown him only by God Himself: “Mine eyes did see Thy work, being till then imperfect.”⁶⁵¹ But when they assert now that all those things of grace and beauty, which they declare to be textures finely wrought out of atoms, are fabricated spontaneously by these bodies without either wisdom or perception in them, who can endure to hear⁶⁵² them talk in such terms of those unregulated⁶⁵³ atoms, than which even the spider, that plies its proper craft of itself, is gifted with more sagacity?

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⁶⁴⁹ The text is, ἑκατέρας συνεκόμισε καιριον, for which Viger proposes εἰς τὸν ἑκατέρας, etc.

⁶⁵⁰ The text gives, ὀράτωσαν γὰρ τὰς ἀθεάτους ἐκεῖνοι, καὶ τὰς ἀνοήτους νοεῖτωσαν, οὐχ ὁμοίως ἐκείνω, etc. The passage seems corrupt. Some supply φύσεις as the subject intended in the ἀθεάτους and ἀνοήτους; but that leaves the connection still obscure. Viger would read, with one MS., ἀθέτους instead of ἀθάετους, and makes this then the sense: that those Epicureans are bidden study more closely these unregulated and stolid (ἀνοήτους) atoms, not looking at them with a merely cursory and careless glance, as David acknowledges was the case with him in the thoughts of his own imperfect nature, in order that they may the more readily understand how out of such confusion as that in which they are involved nothing orderly and finished could possibly have originated. [P. 86, note 2, *infra*.]

⁶⁵¹ Ps. cxxxix. 16. The text gives, τὸ ἀκατέργαστόν σου ἴδωσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου. This strange reading, instead of the usual τὸ ἀκατέργαστόν μου εἶδον (or ἴδον) οἱ ὀφθαλμοί σου, is found also in the Alexandrine exemplar of the Septuagint, which gives, τὸ ἀκατέργαστόν σου εἶδωσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου, and in the Psalter of S. Germanus in Calmet, which has, *imperfectum tuum viderunt oculi mei*. Viger renders it thus: *quod ex tuis operibus imperfectum adhuc et impositum videbatur, oculi tandem mei perviderunt*; i.e., Thy works, which till now seemed imperfect and unfinished, my eyes have at length discerned clearly; to wit, because being now penetrated by greater light from Thee, they have ceased to be dim-sighted. See Viger's note in Migne.

⁶⁵² [The reproduction of all this outworn nonsense in our age claims for itself the credit of *progressive* science. It has had its day, and its destiny is to be speedily wiped out by the next school of thinkers. Meanwhile let the believer's answer be found in Isa. xxxvii. 22, 23.]

⁶⁵³ ἀρρόθμους.

III. A Refutation on the Ground of the Constitution of the Universe.

Or who can bear to hear it maintained, that this mighty habitation, which is constituted of heaven and earth, and which is called “Cosmos” on account of the magnitude and the plenitude of the wisdom which has been brought to bear upon it, has been established in all its order and beauty by those atoms which hold their course devoid of order and beauty, and that that same state of disorder has grown into this true Cosmos, Order? Or who can believe that those regular movements and courses are the products of a certain unregulated impetus? Or who can allow that the perfect concord subsisting among the celestial bodies derives its harmony from instruments destitute both of concord and harmony? Or, again, if there is but one and the same substance⁶⁵⁴ in all things, and if there is the same incorruptible nature⁶⁵⁵ in all,—the only elements of difference being, as they aver, size and figure,—how comes it that there are some bodies divine and perfect,⁶⁵⁶ and eternal,⁶⁵⁷ as they would phrase it, or lasting,⁶⁵⁸ as some one may prefer to express it; and among these some that are visible and others that are invisible,—the visible including such as sun, and moon, and stars, and earth, and water; and the invisible including gods, and demons, and spirits? For the existence of such they cannot possibly deny however desirous to do so. And again, there are other objects that are long-lived, both animals and plants. As to animals, there are, for example, among birds, as they say, the eagle, the raven, and the phoenix; and among creatures living on land, there are the stag, and the elephant, and the dragon; and among aquatic creatures there are the whales, and such like monsters of the deep. And as to trees, there are the palm, and the oak, and the persea;⁶⁵⁹ and among trees, too, there are some that are evergreens, of which kind fourteen have been reckoned up by some one; and there are others that only bloom for a certain season, and then shed their leaves. And there are other objects, again—which indeed constitute the vast mass of all which either grow or are begotten—that have an early death and a brief life. And among these is man himself, as a certain holy scripture says of him: “Man that is born of woman is of few days.”⁶⁶⁰ Well, but I suppose they will reply that the varying conjunctions of the atoms account fully for differences⁶⁶¹ so great in the matter of duration. For it is maintained that there are some things that are compressed together by them, and firmly interlaced, so that they become closely compacted bodies, and consequently exceedingly hard to break up; while there are others in which more or less the conjunction of the

654 οὐσίας.

655 φύσεως.

656 ἀκήρατα.

657 αἰώνια.

658 μακραίωνα.

659 περσέα, a sacred tree of Egypt and Persia, the fruit of which grew from the stem.

660 Job xiv. 1.

661 The text gives διαφθοράς, for which Viger suggests διαφορᾶς.

atoms is of a looser and weaker nature, so that either quickly or after some time they separate themselves from their orderly constitution. And, again, there are some bodies made up of atoms of a definite kind and a certain common figure, while there are others made up of diverse atoms diversely disposed. But who, then, is the sagacious discriminator,⁶⁶² that brings certain atoms into collocation, and separates others; and marshals some in such wise as to form the sun, and others in such a way as to originate the moon, and adapts all in natural fitness, and in accordance with the proper constitution of each star? For surely neither would those solar atoms, with their peculiar size and kind, and with their special mode of collocation, ever have reduced themselves so as to effect the production of a moon; nor, on the other hand, would the conjunctions of these lunar atoms ever have developed into a sun. And as certainly neither would Arcturus, resplendent as he is, ever boast his having the atoms possessed by Lucifer, nor would the Pleiades glory in being constituted of those of Orion. For well has Paul expressed the distinction when he says: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory."⁶⁶³ And if the coalition effected among them has been an unintelligent one, as is the case with soulless⁶⁶⁴ objects, then they must needs have had some sagacious artificer; and if their union has been one without the determination of will, and only of necessity, as is the case with irrational objects, then some skilful leader⁶⁶⁵ must have brought them together and taken them under his charge. And if they have linked themselves together spontaneously, for a spontaneous work, then some admirable architect must have apportioned their work for them, and assumed the superintendence among them; or there must have been one to do with them as the general does who loves order and discipline, and who does not leave his army in an irregular condition, or suffer all things to go on confusedly, but marshals the cavalry in their proper succession, and disposes the heavy-armed infantry in their due array, and the javelin-men by themselves, and the archers separately, and the slingers in like manner, and sets each force in its appropriate position, in order that all those equipped in the same way may engage together. But if these teachers think that this illustration is but a joke, because I institute a comparison between very large bodies and very small, we may pass to the very smallest.

Then we have what follows:—But if neither the word, nor the choice, nor the order of a ruler is laid upon them, and if by their own act they keep themselves right in the vast commotion of the stream in which they move, and convey themselves safely through the mighty uproar of the collisions, and if like atoms meet and group themselves with like, not as being brought together by God, according to the poet's fancy, but rather as naturally recognising the affinities subsisting between each other, then truly we have here a most marvellous democracy of atoms, wherein friends welcome



⁶⁶² φιλοκρίνων.

⁶⁶³ 1 Cor. xv. 41.

⁶⁶⁴ ἀψύχων.

⁶⁶⁵ ἀγελάρχης.

and embrace friends, and all are eager to sojourn together in one domicile; while some by their own determination have rounded themselves off into that mighty luminary the sun, so as to make day; and others have formed themselves into many pyramids of blazing stars, it may be, so as to crown also the whole heavens; and others have reduced themselves into the circular figure, so as to impart a certain solidity to the ether, and arch it over, and constitute it a vast graduated ascent of luminaries, with this object also, that the various conventions of the commoner atoms may select settlements for themselves, and portion out the sky among them for their habitations and stations.

Then, after certain other matters, the discourse proceeds thus:—But inconsiderate men do not see even things that are apparent, and certainly they are far from being cognisant of things that are unapparent. For they do not seem even to have any notion of those regulated risings and settings of the heavenly bodies,—those of the sun, with all their wondrous glory, no less than those of the others; nor do they appear to make due application of the aids furnished through these to men, such as the day that rises clear for man’s work, and the night that overshadows earth for man’s rest. “For man,” it is said, “goeth forth unto his work, and to his labour, until the evening.”⁶⁶⁶ Neither do they consider that other revolution, by which the sun makes out for us determinate times, and convenient seasons, and regular successions, directed by those atoms of which it consists. But even though men like these—and miserable men they are, however they may believe themselves to be righteous—may choose not to admit it, there is a mighty Lord that made the sun, and gave it the impetus⁶⁶⁷ for its course by His words. O ye blind ones, do these atoms of yours bring you the winter season and the rains, in order that the earth may yield food for you, and for all creatures living on it? Do they introduce summertime, too, in order that ye may gather their fruits from the trees for your enjoyment? And why, then, do ye not worship these atoms, and offer sacrifices to them as the guardians of earth’s fruits?⁶⁶⁸ Thankless surely are ye, in not setting solemnly apart for them even the most scanty first-fruits of that abundant bounty which ye receive from them.

After a short break he proceeds thus:—Moreover, those stars which form a community so multitudinous and various, which these erratic and ever self-dispersing atoms have constituted, have marked off by a kind of covenant the tracts for their several possessions, portioning these out like colonies and governments, but without the presidency of any founder or house-master; and with pledged fealty and in peace they respect the laws of vicinity with their neighbours, and abstain from passing beyond the boundaries which they received at the outset, just as if they enjoyed the legislative administration of true princes in the atoms. Nevertheless these atoms exercise no rule. For how could these, that are themselves nothing, do that? But listen to the divine oracles: “The

⁶⁶⁶ Ps. civ. 23.

⁶⁶⁷ [Our author touches with sagacity this *crux* of theory: whence comes *force*, the origin and the perpetuation of *impetus*? Christianity has thus anticipated the defects of “modern science.”]

⁶⁶⁸ ταῖς ἐπικάρποις.

works of the Lord are in judgment; from the beginning, and from His making of them, He disposed the parts thereof. He garnished His works for ever, and their principles⁶⁶⁹ unto their generations.”⁶⁷⁰

Again, after a little, he proceeds thus:—Or what phalanx ever traversed the plain in such perfect order, no trooper outmarching the others, or falling out of rank, or obstructing the course, or suffering himself to be distanced by his comrades in the array, as is the case with that steady advance in regular file, as it were, and with close-set shields, which is presented by this serried and unbroken and undisturbed and unobstructed progress of the hosts of the stars? Albeit by side inclinations and flank movements certain of their revolutions become less clear. Yet, however that may be, they assuredly always keep their appointed periods, and again bear onward determinately to the positions from which they have severally risen, as if they made that their deliberate study. Wherefore let these notable anatomizers of atoms,⁶⁷¹ these dividers of the indivisible, these compounders of the uncompoundable, these adepts in the apprehension of the infinite, tell us whence comes this circular march and course of the heavenly bodies, in which it is not any single combination of atoms that merely chances all unexpectedly to swing itself round in this way;⁶⁷² but it is one vast circular choir that moves thus, ever equally and concordantly, and whirls in these orbits. And whence comes it that this mighty multitude of fellow-travellers, all unmarshalled by any captain, all ungifted with any determination of will, and all unendowed with any knowledge of each other, have nevertheless held their course in perfect harmony? Surely, well has the prophet ranked this matter among things which are impossible and undemonstrable,—namely, that two strangers should walk together. For he says, “Shall two come to the same lodging unless they know each other?”⁶⁷³

IV. A Refutation of the Same on the Grounds of the Human Constitution.

Further, those men understand neither themselves nor what is proper to themselves. For if any of the leaders in this impious doctrine only considered what manner of person he is himself, and whence he comes, he would surely be led to a wise decision, like one who has obtained understanding of himself, and would say, not to these atoms, but to his Father and Maker, “Thy hands have made me and fashioned me.”⁶⁷⁴ And he would take up, too, this wonderful account of his formation as it has been given by one of old: “Hast Thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me as cheese?

⁶⁶⁹ ἀρχάς.

⁶⁷⁰ Eccclus. xvi. 26, 27.

⁶⁷¹ τῶν ἀτόμων τομεῖς.

⁶⁷² οὕτω σφενδονισθέντος.

⁶⁷³ This sentence, which is quoted as from the Scriptures, is found nowhere there, at least *verbatim et ad litteram*. [Amos iii. 3.]

⁶⁷⁴ Ps. cxix. 73.

Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews. Thou hast granted me life and favour, and Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.”⁶⁷⁵ For of what quantity and of what origin were the atoms which the father of Epicurus gave forth from himself when he begat Epicurus? And how, when they were received within his mother’s womb, did they coalesce, and take form and figure? and how were they put in motion and made to increase? And how did that little seed of generation draw together the many atoms that were to constitute Epicurus, and change some of them into skin and flesh for a covering, and make bone of others for erectness and strength, and form sinews of others for compact contexture? And how did it frame and adapt the many other members and parts—heart and bowels, and organs of sense, some within and some without—by which the body is made a thing of life? For of all these things there is not one either idle or useless: not even the meanest of them—the hair, or the nails, or such like—is so; but all have their service to do, and all their contribution to make, some of them to the soundness of bodily constitution, and others of them to beauty of appearance. For Providence cares not only for the useful, but also for the seasonable and beautiful.⁶⁷⁶ Thus the hair is a kind of protection and covering for the whole head, and the beard is a seemly ornament for the philosopher. It was Providence, then, that formed the constitution of the whole body of man, in all its necessary parts, and imposed on all its members their due connection with each other, and measured out for them their liberal supplies from the universal resources. And the most prominent of these show clearly, even to the uninstructed, by the proof of personal experience, the value and service attaching to them: the head, for example, in the position of supremacy, and the senses set like a guard about the brain, as the ruler in the citadel; and the advancing eyes, and the reporting ears; and the taste which, as it were, is the tribute-gatherer;⁶⁷⁷ and the smell, which tracks and searches out its objects: and the touch, which manipulates all put under it.

Hence we shall only run over in a summary way, at present, some few of the works of an all-wise Providence; and after a little we shall, if God grant it, go over them more minutely, when we direct our discourse toward one who has the repute of greater learning. *So*, then, we have the ministry of the hands, by which all kinds of works are wrought, and all skilful professions practised, and which have all their various faculties furnished them, with a view to the discharge of one common function; and we have the shoulders, with their capacity for bearing burdens; and the fingers, with their power of grasping; and the elbows, with their faculty of bending, by which they can turn inwardly, upon the body, or take an outward inclination, so as to be able either to draw objects toward the body, or to thrust them away from it. We have also the service of the feet, by which the whole terrestrial

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⁶⁷⁵ Job x. 10–12. [The milky element (*sperma*) marvellously changed into flesh, and the *embroidery* of the human anatomy, are here admirably brought out. Compare Ps. cxxxix. 12–16; also p. 86, note 1, *supra*.]

⁶⁷⁶ [Eccles. iii. 11. Note the force of the word *Cosmos*. Coleridge’s *Aids to Reflection*, p. 251, ed. New York, 1840. Also, Coleridge’s fancy about the τὸ καλὸν *quasi* καλοῦν.

⁶⁷⁷ ἔδωδὴ ὡσπερ φορολογῶσα.

creation is made to come under our power, the earth itself is traversed thereby, the sea is made navigable, the rivers are crossed, and intercourse is established for all with all things. The belly, too, is the storehouse of meats, with all its parts arranged in their proper collocations, so that it apportions for itself the right measure of aliment, and ejects what is over and above that. And so is it with all the other things by which manifestly the due administration of the constitution of man is wisely secured.⁶⁷⁸ Of all these, the intelligent and the unintelligent alike enjoy the same use; but they have not the same comprehension of them.⁶⁷⁹ For there are some who refer this whole economy to a power which they conceive to be a true divinity,⁶⁸⁰ and which they apprehend as at once the highest intelligence in all things, and the best benefactor to themselves, believing that this economy is all the work of a wisdom and a might which are superior to every other, and in themselves truly divine. And there are others who aimlessly attribute this whole structure of most marvellous beauty to chance and fortuitous coincidence. And in addition to these, there are also certain physicians, who, having made a more effective examination into all these things, and having investigated with utmost accuracy the disposition of the inward parts in especial, have been struck with astonishment at the results of their inquiry, and have been led to deify nature itself. The notions of these men we shall review afterwards, as far as we may be able, though we may only touch the surface of the subject.⁶⁸¹ Meantime, to deal with this matter generally and summarily, let me ask who constructed this whole tabernacle of ours, so lofty, erect, graceful, sensitive, mobile, active, and apt for all things? Was it, as they say, the irrational multitude of atoms? Nay, these, by their conjunctions, could not mould even an image of clay, neither could they hew and polish a statue of stone; nor could they cast and finish an idol of silver or gold; but arts and handicrafts calculated for such operations have been discovered by men who fabricate these objects.⁶⁸² And if, even in these, representations and models cannot be made without the aid of wisdom, how can the genuine and

678 The text is, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα δι' ὧν ἐμφανῶς ἡ διοίκησις τῆς ἀνθρωπείου μεμηχάνηται διανομῆς. Viger proposes διαμονῆς for διανομῆς, and renders the whole thus: “ac cætera quorum vi humanæ firmitatis et conservationis ratio continetur.”

679 The text is, ὧν ὁμοίως τοῖς ἄφροσιν ἔχοντες οἱ σοφοὶ τὴν κρίσιν, οὐκ ἴσχυοσι τὴν γνῶσιν. We adopt Viger's suggestion, and read χρῆσιν for κρίσιν.

680 We read, with Viger, θεότητα for ἀθεότητα. The text gives οἱ μὲν γὰρ εἰς ἣν ἂν οἰηθῶσιν ἀθεότητα, etc., which might possibly mean something like this: There are some who refer the whole economy to a power which these (others) may deem to be no divinity (but which is) the highest intelligence in all things, and the best benefactor, etc. Or the sense might be = There are some who refer this most intelligent and beneficent economy to a power which they deem to be no divinity, though they believe the same economy to be the work of a wisdom, etc.

681 The text is, ἡμεῖς δὲ ὕστερον ὡς ἂν οἰοί τε γενώμεθα, κὰν ἐπιπολῆς, ἀναθεωρήσομεν. Viger renders it thus: “Nos eam postea, jejune fortassis et exiliter, ut pro facultate nostra, prosequemur.” He proposes, however, to read ἐπὶ πολλοῖς (*sc.* ῥήμασι or λόγοις) for ἐπιπολῆς.

682 The text is, χειρουργίαι τούτων ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων εὑρίνται σωματουργῶν. Viger proposes σωματουργοί, “handicrafts for the construction of such bodies have been discovered by men.”

original patterns of these copies have come into existence spontaneously? And whence have come the soul, and the intelligence, and the reason, which are born with the philosopher? Has he gathered these from those atoms which are destitute alike of soul, and intelligence, and reason? and has each of these atoms inspired him with some appropriate conception and notion? And are we to suppose that the wisdom of man was made up by these atoms, as the myth of Hesiod tells us that Pandora was fashioned by the gods? Then shall the Greeks have, to give up speaking of the various species of poetry, and music, and astronomy, and geometry, and all the other arts and sciences, as the inventions and instructions of the gods, and shall have to allow that these atoms are the only muses with skill and wisdom for all subjects. For this theogony, constructed of atoms by Epicurus, is indeed something extraneous to the infinite worlds of order,⁶⁸³ and finds its refuge in the infinite disorder.⁶⁸⁴

V. That to Work is Not a Matter of Pain and Weariness to God.

Now to work, and administer, and do good, and exercise care, and such like actions, may perhaps be hard tasks for the idle, and silly, and weak, and wicked; in whose number truly Epicurus reckons himself, when he propounds such notions about the gods. But to the earnest, and powerful, and intelligent, and prudent, such as philosophers ought to be—and how much more so, therefore, the gods!—these things are not only not disagreeable and irksome, but ever the most delightful, and by far the most welcome of all. To persons of this character, negligence and procrastination in the doing of what is good are a reproach, as the poet admonishes them in these words of counsel:—

“Delay not aught till the morrow.”⁶⁸⁵

And then he adds this further sentence of threatening:—

“The lazy procrastinator is ever wrestling with miseries.”⁶⁸⁶

And the prophet teaches us the same lesson in a more solemn fashion, and declares that deeds done according to the standard of virtue are truly worthy of God,⁶⁸⁷ and that the man who gives no heed to these is accursed: “For cursed be he that doeth the works of the Lord carelessly.”⁶⁸⁸ Moreover, those who are unversed in any art, and unable to prosecute it perfectly, feel it to be wearisome when



683 κόσμων. [See note 6, p. 88, *supra*.]

684 ἀκοσμίαν.

685 Hesiod's *Works and Days*, v. 408.

686 *Ibid.*, v. 411.

687 θεοπρεπῆ.

688 ἀμελῶς. Jer. xlviii. 10.

they make their first attempts in it, just by reason of the novelty⁶⁸⁹ of their experience, and their want of practice in the works. But those, on the other hand, who have made some advance, and much more those who are perfectly trained in the art, accomplish easily and successfully the objects of their labours, and have great pleasure in the work, and would choose rather thus, in the discharge of the pursuits to which they are accustomed, to finish and carry perfectly out what their efforts aim at, than to be made masters of all those things which are reckoned advantageous among men. Yea, Democritus himself, as it is reported, averred that he would prefer the discovery of one true cause to being put in possession of the kingdom of Persia. And that was the declaration of a man who had only a vain and groundless conception of the causes of things,⁶⁹⁰ inasmuch as he started with an unfounded principle, and an erroneous hypothesis, and did not discern the real root and the common *law of necessity* in the constitution of natural things, and held as the greatest wisdom the apprehension of things that come about simply in an unintelligent and random way, and set up chance⁶⁹¹ as the mistress and queen of things universal, and even things divine, and endeavoured to demonstrate that all things happen by the determination of the same, although at the same time he kept it outside the sphere of the life of men, and convicted those of senselessness who worshipped it. At any rate, at the very beginning of his *Precepts*⁶⁹² he speaks thus: “Men have made an image⁶⁹³ of chance, as a cover⁶⁹⁴ for their own lack of knowledge. For intellect and chance are in their very nature antagonistic to each other.⁶⁹⁵ And men have maintained that this greatest adversary to intelligence is its sovereign. Yea, rather, they completely subvert and do away with the one, while they establish the other in its place. For they do not celebrate intelligence as the fortunate,⁶⁹⁶ but they laud chance⁶⁹⁷ as the most intelligent.”⁶⁹⁸ Moreover, those who attend to things conducing to the good of life, take special pleasure in what serves the interests of those of the same race with themselves, and seek the recompense of praise and glory in return for labours undertaken in behalf of the general good; while some exert themselves as purveyors of ways and means,⁶⁹⁹ others as

689 The text gives, διὰ τὸ τῆς πείρας ἀληθές. We adopt Viger’s emendation, ἄληθες.

690 [“Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.” But see *Hippolytus* (vol. v.), and compare Clement, vol. ii. pp. 565–567, this series.]

691 τύχην.

692 ὑποθηκῶν.

693 εἶδωλον.

694 πρόφασιν.

695 φύσει γὰρ γνώμη τυχή μάχεται. Viger refers to the parallel in Tullius, *pro Marcello*, sec. 7: “Nunquam temeritas cum sapientia commiscetur, nec ad consilium casus admittitur.”

696 εὐτυχῆ.

697 Fortune, τύχην.

698 ἐμφρονεστάτην.

699 τρέφοντες.

magistrates, others as physicians, others as statesmen; and even philosophers pride themselves greatly in their efforts after the education of men. Will, then, Epicurus or Democritus be bold enough to assert that in the exertion of philosophizing they only cause distress to themselves? Nay, rather they will reckon this a pleasure of mind second to none. For even though they maintain the opinion that the good is pleasure, they will be ashamed to deny that philosophizing is the greater pleasure to them.⁷⁰⁰ But as to the gods, of whom the poets among them sing that they are the “bestowers of good gifts,”⁷⁰¹ these philosophers scoffingly celebrate them in strains like these: “The gods are neither the bestowers nor the sharers in any good thing.” And in what manner, forsooth, can they demonstrate that there are gods at all, when they neither perceive their presence, nor discern them as the doers of aught, wherein, indeed, they resemble those who, in their admiration and wonder at the sun and the moon and the stars, have held these to have been named *gods*,⁷⁰² from their *running*⁷⁰³ such courses: when, further, they do not attribute to them any function or power of operation,⁷⁰⁴ so as to hold them gods⁷⁰⁵ from their *constituting*,⁷⁰⁶ that is, from their *making* objects,⁷⁰⁷ for thereby in all truth the one maker and operator of all things must be God: and when, in fine, they do not set forth any administration, or judgment, or beneficence of theirs in relation to men, so that we might be bound either by fear or by reverence to worship them? Has Epicurus then been able, forsooth, to see beyond this world, and to overpass the precincts of heaven? or has he gone forth by some secret gates known to himself alone, and thus obtained sight of the gods in the void?⁷⁰⁸ and, deeming them blessed in their full felicity, and then becoming himself a passionate aspirant after such pleasure, and an ardent scholar in that life which they pursue in the void, does he now call upon all to participate in this felicity, and urge them thus to make themselves like the gods, preparing⁷⁰⁹ as their true *symposium* of blessedness neither heaven nor Olympus, as the poets feign, but the sheer void, and setting before them the ambrosia of atoms,⁷¹⁰ and pledging them in⁷¹¹ nectar made of the same? However, in matters which have no relation to us, he introduces into his books a myriad oaths and solemn asseverations, swearing constantly both negatively and affirmatively



700 The text gives, ἡδὺ ὄν αὐτοῖς εἶναι τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν. Viger suggests ἡδιον for ἡδὺ ὄν.

701 δωτήρας ἐάων. See Homer, *Odyssey*, viii. 325 and 335.

702 θεούς.

703 διὰ τὸ θέειν.

704 δημιουργίαν αὐτοῖς ἢ κατασκευήν.

705 θεοποιησωσιν.

706 ἐκ τοῦ θεῖναι.

707 ποιῆσαι.

708 The text gives, οὓς ἐν τῷ κενῷ κατεῖδε θεούς. Viger proposes τούς for οὓς.

709 συγκροτῶν.

710 For ἀτόμων Viger suggests ἀτμῶν, “of vapours.”

711 Or, giving them to drink.

by Jove, and making those whom he meets, and with whom he discusses his doctrines, swear also by the gods, not certainly that he fears them himself, or has any dread of perjury, but that he pronounces all this to be vain, and false, and idle, and unintelligible, and uses it simply as a kind of accompaniment to his words, just as he might also clear his throat, or spit, or twist his face, or move his hand. So completely senseless and empty a pretence was this whole matter of the naming of the gods, in his estimation. But this is also a very patent fact, that, being in fear of the Athenians after (the warning of) the death of Socrates, and being desirous of preventing his being taken for what he really was—an atheist—the subtle charlatan invented for them certain empty shadows of unsubstantial gods. But never surely did he look up to heaven with eyes of true intelligence, so as to hear the clear voice from above, which another attentive spectator did hear, and of which he testified when he said, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork.”⁷¹² And never surely did he look down upon the world’s surface with due reflection; for then would he have learned that “the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord”⁷¹³ and that “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof;”⁷¹⁴ and that, as we also read, “After this the Lord looked upon the earth, and filled it with His blessings. With all manner of living things hath He covered the face thereof.”⁷¹⁵ And if these men are not hopelessly blinded, let them but survey the vast wealth and variety of living creatures, land animals, and winged creatures, and aquatic; and let them understand then that the declaration made by the Lord on the occasion of His judgment of all things⁷¹⁶ is true: “And all things, in accordance with His command, appeared good.”⁷¹⁷

III.—From the Books Against Sabellius.⁷¹⁸ On the Notion that Matter is Ungenerated.⁷¹⁹

712 Ps. xix. 1.

713 Ps. xxxiii. 5.

714 Ps. xxiv. 1.

715 Ecclus. xvi. 29, 30.

716 The text is, ἐπὶ τῇ πάντων κρίσει. Viger suggests κτίσει, “at the creation of all things.”

717 The quotation runs thus: καὶ πάντα κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ πρόσταξιν πέφηνε καλά. Eusebius adds the remark here: “These passages have been culled by me out of a very large number composed against Epicurus by Dionysius, a bishop of our own time.” [Among the many excellent works which have appeared against the “hopelessly blinded” Epicureans of this age, let me note *Darwinism tested by Language*, by E. Bateman, M.D. London, Rivingtons, 1877.]

718 In Eusebius, *Præpar. Evangel.*, book vii. ch. 19.

719 Eusebius introduces this extract thus: “And I shall adduce the words of those who have most thoroughly examined the dogma before us, and first of all Dionysius indeed, who, in the first book of his *Exercitations against Sabellius*, writes in these terms on the subject in hand.” [Note the *primary* position of our author in the refutation of Sabellianism, and see (vol. v.) the story of Callistus.]

These certainly are not to be deemed pious who hold that matter is ungenerated, while they allow, indeed, that it is brought under the hand of God so far as its arrangement and regulation are concerned; for they do admit that, being naturally passive⁷²⁰ and pliable, it yields readily to the alterations impressed upon it by God. It is for them, however, to show us plainly how it can possibly be that the like and the unlike should be predicated as subsisting together in God and matter. For it becomes necessary thus to think of one as a superior to either, and that is a thought which cannot legitimately be entertained with regard to God. For if there is this defect of generation which is said to be the thing like in both, and if there is this point of difference which is conceived of besides in the two, whence has this arisen in them? If, indeed, God is the ungenerated, and if this defect of generation is, as we may say, His very essence, then matter cannot be ungenerated; for God and matter are not one and the same. But if each subsists properly and independently—namely, God and matter—and if the defect of generation also belongs to both, then it is evident that there is something different from each, and older and higher than both. But the difference of their contrasted constitutions is completely subversive of the idea that these can subsist on an equality together, and more, that this one of the two—namely, matter—can subsist of itself. For then they will have to furnish an explanation of the fact that, though both are supposed to be ungenerated, God is nevertheless impassible, immutable, imperturbable, energetic; while matter is the opposite, impressible, mutable, variable, alterable. And now, how can these properties harmoniously co-exist and unite? Is it that God has adapted Himself to the nature of the matter, and thus has skilfully wrought it? But it would be absurd to suppose that God works in gold, as men are wont to do, or hews or polishes stone, or puts His hand to any of the other arts by which different kinds of matter are made capable of receiving form and figure. But if, on the other hand, He has fashioned matter according to His own will, and after the dictates of His own wisdom, impressing upon it the rich and manifold forms produced by His own operation, then is this account of ours one both good and true, and still further one that establishes the position that the ungenerated God is the hypostasis (the life and foundation) of all things in the universe. For with this fact of the defect of generation it conjoins the proper mode of His being. Much, indeed, might be said in confutation of these teachers, but that is not what is before us at present. And if they are put alongside the most impious polytheists,⁷²¹ these will seem the more pious in their speech.



⁷²⁰ παθητήν.

⁷²¹ πρὸς τοὺς ἀθεωτάτους πολυθέους.

IV.—Epistle to Dionysius Bishop of Rome.⁷²²

From the First Book.

1. There certainly was not a time when God was not the Father.⁷²³

2. Neither, indeed, as though He had not brought forth these things, did God afterwards beget the Son, but because the Son has existence not from Himself, but from the Father.

And after a few words he says of the Son Himself:—

3. Being the brightness of the eternal Light, He Himself also is absolutely eternal. For since light is always in existence, it is manifest that its brightness also exists, because light is perceived to exist from the fact that it shines, and it is impossible that light should not shine. And let us once more come to illustrations. If the sun exists, there is also day; if nothing of this be manifest, it is impossible that the sun should be there. If then the sun were eternal, the day would never end; but now, for such is not really the state of the case, the day begins with the beginning of the sun, and ends with its ending. But God is the eternal Light, which has neither had a beginning, nor shall ever fail. Therefore the eternal brightness shines forth before Him, and co-exists with Him, in that, existing without a beginning, and always begotten, He always shines before Him; and He is that Wisdom which says, “I was that wherein He delighted, and I was daily His delight before His face at all times.”⁷²⁴

And a little after he thus pursues his discourse from the same point:—

4. Since, therefore, the Father is eternal, the Son also is eternal, Light of Light. For where there is the begetter, there is also the offspring. And if there is no offspring, how and of what can He be the begetter? But both are, and always are. Since, then, God is the Light, Christ is the Brightness. And since He is a Spirit—for says He, “God is a Spirit”⁷²⁵—fittingly again is Christ called Breath; for “He,”⁷²⁶ saith He, “is the breath of God’s power.”⁷²⁷

And again he says:—

5. Moreover, the Son alone, always co-existing with the Father, and filled with Him who is, Himself also is, since He *is* of the Father.

722 Fragments of a second epistle of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, or of the treatise which was inscribed the “Elenchus et Apologia.” [A former epistle was written when Dionysius (of Rome) was a presbyter.]

723 And in what follows (says Athanasius) he professes that Christ *is* always, as being the Word, and the Wisdom, and the Power.

724 Prov. viii. 30.

725 John iv. 24.

726 *Scil.* Wisdom.

727 *Wisd.* vii. 25.

From the Same First Book.

6. But when I spoke of things created, and certain works to be considered, I hastily put forward illustrations of such things, as it were little appropriate, when I said neither is the plant the same as the husbandman, nor the boat the same as the boatbuilder.⁷²⁸ But then I lingered rather upon things suitable and more adapted to the nature of the thing, and I unfolded in many words, by various carefully considered arguments, what things were more true; which things, moreover, I have set forth to you in another letter. And in these things I have also proved the falsehood of the charge which they bring against me—to wit, that I do not maintain that Christ is consubstantial with God. For although I say that I have never either found or read this word in the sacred Scriptures, yet other reasonings, which I immediately subjoined, are in no wise discrepant from this view, because I brought forward as an illustration human offspring, which assuredly is of the same kind as the begetter; and I said that parents are absolutely distinguished from their children by the fact alone that they themselves are not their children, or that it would assuredly be a matter of necessity that there would neither be parents nor children. But, as I said before, I have not the letter in my possession, on account of the present condition of affairs; otherwise I would have sent you the very words that I then wrote, yea, and a copy of the whole letter, and I will send it if at any time I shall have the opportunity. I remember, further, that I added many similitudes from things kindred to one another. For I said that the plant, whether it grows up from seed or from a root, is different from that whence it sprouted, although it is absolutely of the same nature; and similarly, that a river flowing from a spring takes another form and name: for that neither is the spring called the river, nor the river the spring, but that these are two things, and that the spring indeed is, as it were, the father, while the river is the water from the spring. But they feign that they do not see these things and the like to them which are written, as if they were blind; but they endeavour to assail me from a distance with expressions too carelessly used, as if they were stones, not observing that on things of which they are ignorant, and which require interpretation to be understood, illustrations that are not only remote, but even contrary, will often throw light.



From the Same First Book.

7. It was said above that God is the spring of all good things, but the Son was called the river flowing from Him; because the word is an emanation of the mind, and—to speak after human fashion—is emitted from the heart by the mouth. But the mind which springs forth by the tongue is different from the word which exists in the heart. For this latter, after it has emitted the former,

⁷²⁸ From Athan., *Ep. de decret. Nic. Syn.*, 4. 18. [See remarks on *inevitable* discrepancies of language and figurative illustrations at this formative period, vol. iv. p. 223.]

remains and is what it was before; but the mind sent forth flies away, and is carried everywhere around, and thus each is in each although one is from the other, and they are one although they are two. And it is thus that the Father and the Son are said to be one, and to be in one another.

From the Second Book.

8. The individual names uttered by me can neither be separated from one another, nor parted.⁷²⁹ I spoke of the Father, and before I made mention of the Son I already signified Him in the Father. I added the Son; and the Father, even although I had not previously named Him, had already been absolutely comprehended in the Son. I added the Holy Spirit; but, at the same time, I conveyed under the name whence and by whom He proceeded. But they are ignorant that neither the Father, in that He is *Father*, can be separated from the Son, for that name is the evident ground of coherence and conjunction; nor can the Son be separated from the Father, for this word *Father* indicates association *between* them. And there is, moreover, evident a Spirit who can neither be disjoined from Him who sends, nor from Him who brings Him. How, then, should I who use such names think that these are absolutely divided and separated the one from the other?

After a few words he adds:—

9. Thus, indeed, we expand the indivisible Unity into a Trinity; and again we contract the Trinity, which cannot be diminished, into a Unity.

From the Same Second Book.

10. But if any quibbler, from the fact that I said that God is the Maker and Creator of all things, thinks that I said that He is also Creator of Christ, let him observe that I first called Him Father, in which word the Son also is at the same time expressed.⁷³⁰ For after I called the Father the Creator, I added, Neither is He the Father of those things whereof He is Creator, if He who begot is properly understood to be a Father (for we will consider the latitude of this word *Father* in what follows). Nor is a maker a father, if it is only a framer who is called a maker. For among the Greeks, they who are wise are said to be makers of their books. The apostle also says, “a doer (*scil.* maker) of the law.”⁷³¹ Moreover, of matters of the heart, of which kind are virtue and vice, men are called

⁷²⁹ Ex Athan., *Ep. de decret. Nic. Syn.*, 4. 17.

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, 4. 20.

⁷³¹ Rom. ii. 13; James iv. 12. The Greek word ποιητής meaning either *maker* or *doer*, causes the ambiguity here and below.

doers (*scil.* makers); after which manner God said, “I expected that it should make judgment, but it made iniquity.”⁷³²

11. That neither must this saying be thus blamed;⁷³³ for he says that he used the name of Maker on account of the flesh which the Word had assumed, and which certainly was made. But if any one should suspect that that had been said of the Word, even this also was to be heard without contentiousness. For as I do not think that the Word was a thing made, so I do not say that God was its Maker, but its Father. Yet still, if at any time, discoursing of the Son, I may have casually said that God was His Maker, even this mode of speaking would not be without defence. For the wise men among the Greeks call themselves the makers of their books, although the same are fathers of their books. Moreover, divine Scripture calls us makers of those motions which proceed from the heart, when it calls us doers of the law of judgment and of justice.

From the Same Second Book.

12. *In the beginning was the Word.*⁷³⁴ But that was not the Word which produced the Word.⁷³⁵ For “the Word was with God.”⁷³⁶ The Lord is Wisdom; it was not therefore Wisdom that produced Wisdom; for “I was that” says He, “wherein He delighted.”⁷³⁷ Christ is truth; but “blessed,” says He, “is the God of truth.”

From the Third Book.

13. Life is begotten of life in the same way as the river has flowed forth from the spring, and the brilliant light is ignited from the inextinguishable light.⁷³⁸

⁷³² Isa. v. 7.

⁷³³ Athanasius adds (*ut supra*, 4. 21), that Dionysius gave various replies to those that blamed him for saying that God is the Maker of Christ, whereby he cleared himself.

⁷³⁴ John i. 1. [For ῥῆμα, see vol. ii. p. 15, this series.]

⁷³⁵ Ex Athan., *Ep. de decret. Nic. Syn.*, 4. 25. [P. 94, notes 1, 2, *infra*.]

⁷³⁶ John i. 1. [For ῥῆμα, see vol. ii. p. 15, this series.]

⁷³⁷ Prov. viii. 30.

⁷³⁸ Ex Athan., *Ep. de decret. Nic. Syn.*, 4. 18.

From the Fourth Book.

14. Even as our mind emits from itself a word,⁷³⁹—as says the prophet, “My heart hath uttered forth a good word,”⁷⁴⁰—and each of the two is distinct the one from the other, and maintaining a peculiar place, and one that is distinguished from the other; since the former indeed abides and is stirred in the heart, while the latter has its place in the tongue and in the mouth. And yet they are not apart from one another, nor deprived of one another; neither is the mind without the word, nor is the word without the mind; but the mind makes the word and appears in the word, and the word exhibits the mind wherein it was made. And the mind indeed is, as it were, the word immanent, while the word is the mind breaking forth.⁷⁴¹ The mind passes into the word, and the word transmits the mind to the surrounding hearers; and thus the mind by means of the word takes its place in the souls of the hearers, entering in at the same time as the word. And indeed the mind is, as it were, the father of the word, existing in itself; but the word is as the son of the mind, and cannot be made before it nor without it, but exists with it, whence it has taken its seed and origin. In the same manner, also, the Almighty Father and Universal Mind has before all things the Son, the Word, and the discourse,⁷⁴² as the interpreter and messenger of Himself.



About the Middle of the Treatise.

15. If, from the fact that there are three hypostases, they say that they are divided, there are three whether they like it or no, or else let them get rid of the divine Trinity altogether.⁷⁴³

And Again:

For on this account after the Unity there is also the most divine Trinity.⁷⁴⁴

The Conclusion of the Entire Treatise.

739 Ex Athan., *Ep. de decret. Nic. Syn.*, 4. 25. [P. 94, notes 1, 2, *infra*.]

740 Ps. xlv. 1.

741 *Emanant*. [P. 49, *supra*, and vol. iii. p. 299, this series.]

742 Sermonem. [So Tertullian, *Sermo*, vol. iii. p. 299, note 19.]

743 Ex Basilio, *lib. de Spir. Sancto*, chap. 29.

744 *Ibid. cap. penult.*, p. 61.

16. In accordance with all these things, the form, moreover, and rule being received from the elders who have lived before us, we also, with a voice in accordance with them, will both acquit ourselves of thanks to you, and of the letter which we are now writing. And to God the Father, and His Son our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.⁷⁴⁵

V.—The Epistle to Bishop Basilides.⁷⁴⁶

—————

Canon I.

Dionysius to Basilides, my beloved son, and my brother, a fellow-minister with me in holy things, and an obedient servant of God, in the Lord greeting.

You have sent to me, most faithful and accomplished son, in order to inquire what is the proper hour for bringing the fast to a close⁷⁴⁷ on the day of Pentecost.⁷⁴⁸ For you say that there are some of the brethren who hold that that should be done at cockcrow, and others who hold that it should

⁷⁴⁵ Of the work itself Athanasius thus speaks: Finally, Dionysius complains that his accusers do not quote his opinions in their integrity, but mutilated, and that they do not speak out of a good conscience, but for evil inclination; and he says that they are like those who cavilled at the epistles of the blessed apostle. Certainly he meets the individual words of his accusers, and gives a solution to all their arguments; and as in those earlier writings of his he confuted Sabellius most evidently, so in these later ones he entirely declares his own pious faith. [Conf. *Hermas*, vol. iii. p. 15, note 7, with note 2, *supra*.]

⁷⁴⁶ Containing explanations which were given as answers to questions proposed by that bishop on various topics, and which have been received as canons. [The *Scholium*, p. 79, is transposed from here.]

⁷⁴⁷ ἀπονηστίζεσθαι δεῖ. Gentianus Hervetus renders this by *jejunandus sit dies Paschæ*; and thus he translates the word by *jejunare*, “to fast,” wherever it occurs, whereas it rather means always, *jejunium solvere*, “to have done fasting.” In this sense the word is used in the *Apostolic Constitutions* repeatedly: see book v. chap. 12, 18, etc. It occurs in the same sense in the 89th Canon of the Concilium Trullanum. The usage must evidently be the same here: so that it does not mean, What is the proper hour for fasting on the day of Pentecost? but, What is the hour at which the ante-paschal fast ought to be terminated—whether on the evening preceding the paschal festival itself, or at cockcrow, or at another time?—GALL. See also the very full article in Suicer, *s.v.*

⁷⁴⁸ I give the beginning of this epistle of Dionysius of Alexandria also as it is found in not a few manuscripts, viz., ἐπέστειλάς μοι...τῇ τοῦ πάσχα περιλύσει,—the common reading being, τὴν τοῦ πάσχα ἡμέραν. And the περιλύσις τοῦ πάσχα denotes the close of the paschal fast, as Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.* v. 23) uses the phrase τὰς τῶν ἁσιτιῶν ἐπιλύσεις,—the verbs περιλύειν, ἀπολύειν, ἐπιλύειν, καταλύειν, being often used in this sense.—COTELERIUS on the *Apostolic Constitutions*, v. 15.

be at nightfall.⁷⁴⁹ For the brethren in Rome, as they say, wait for the cock; whereas, regarding those here, you told us that they would have it earlier.⁷⁵⁰ And it is your anxious desire, accordingly, to have the hour presented accurately, and determined with perfect exactness,⁷⁵¹ which indeed is a matter of difficulty and uncertainty. However, it will be acknowledged cordially by all, that from the date of the resurrection of our Lord, those who up to that time have been humbling their souls with fastings, ought at once to begin their festal joy and gladness. But in what you have written to me you have made out very clearly, and with an intelligent understanding of the Holy Scriptures, that no very exact account seems to be offered in them of the hour at which He rose. For the evangelists have given different descriptions of the parties who came to the sepulchre one after another,⁷⁵² and all have declared that they found the Lord risen already. It was “in the end of the Sabbath,” as Matthew has said;⁷⁵³ it was “early, when it was yet dark,” as John writes;⁷⁵⁴ it was “very early in the morning,” as Luke puts it; and it was “very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun,” as Mark tells us. Thus no one has shown us clearly the exact time when He rose. It is admitted, however, that those who came to the sepulchre in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week,⁷⁵⁵ found Him no longer lying in it. And let us not suppose that the evangelists disagree or contradict each other. But even although there may seem to be some small difficulty as to the subject of our inquiry, if they all agree that the light of the world, our Lord, rose on that one night, while they differ with respect to the hour, we may well seek with wise and faithful mind to harmonize their statements. The narrative by Matthew then, runs thus: “In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week,⁷⁵⁶ came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. And his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said.”⁷⁵⁷ Now this phrase “in the end” will be thought by some to signify, according to the common use⁷⁵⁸



749 ἀφ' ἑσπέρας.

750 [Note this and the Nicene decision which made the Alexandrian bishop the authority concerning the paschal annually, vol. ii. Elucidation II. p. 343.]

751 πάνυ μεμετρημένην.

752 κατὰ καιροὺς ἐνηλλαγμένους.

753 Matt. xxviii. 1.

754 John xx. 1.

755 τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ μιᾷ Σαββάτων.

756 τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ εἰς μίαν Σαββάτων.

757 Matt. xxviii. 1–6.

758 κοινότητα.

of the word, the *evening* of the Sabbath; while others, with a better perception of the fact, will say that it does not indicate that, but *a late hour in the night*,⁷⁵⁹ as the phrase “in the end”⁷⁶⁰ denotes slowness and length of time. Also because he speaks of *night*, and not of *evening*, he has added the words, “as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week.” And the parties here did not come yet, as the others say, “bearing spices,” but “to see the sepulchre;” and they discovered the occurrence of the earthquake, and the angel sitting upon the stone, and heard from him the declaration, “He is not here, He is risen.” And to the same effect is the testimony of John. “The first day of the week,” says he, “came Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.”⁷⁶¹ Only, according to this “when it was yet dark,” she had come in advance.⁷⁶² And Luke says: “They rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment. Now, upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared; and they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.”⁷⁶³ This phrase “very early in the morning”⁷⁶⁴ probably indicates the early dawn⁷⁶⁵ of the first day of the week; and thus, when the Sabbath itself was wholly past, and also the whole night succeeding it, and when another day had begun, they came, bringing spices and myrrh, and then it became apparent that He had already risen long before. And Mark follows this, and says: “They had bought sweet spices, in order that they might come and anoint Him. And very early (in the morning), the first day of the week, they come unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.”⁷⁶⁶ For this evangelist also has used the term “very early,” which is just the same as the “very early in the morning” employed by the former; and he has added, “at the rising of the sun.” Thus they set out, and took their way first when it was “very early in the morning,” or (as Mark says) when it was “very early;” but on the road, and by their stay at the sepulchre, they spent the time till it was sunrise. And then the young man clad in white said to them, “He is risen, He is not here.” As the case stands thus, we make the following statement and explanation to those who seek an exact account of the specific hour, or half-hour, or quarter of an hour, at which it is proper to begin their rejoicing over our Lord’s rising from the dead. Those who are too hasty, and give up even before midnight,⁷⁶⁷ we reprehend as remiss and intemperate, and as almost breaking off from their course in their precipitation,⁷⁶⁸ for

759 νύκτα βαθείαν.

760 ὀψέ, late.

761 John xx. 1.

762 παρὰ τοῦτο...προεληλύθει.

763 Luke xxiii. 56; xxiv. 1, 2.

764 ὄρθρου βαθέος.

765 προῦποφαινομένην αὐτήν ἐωθινήν ἐμφανίζει.

766 Mark xvi. 1, 2.

767 πρὸ νυκτὸς ἔγγυς ἤδη μεσοῦσης ἀνιέντας.

768 ὡς παρ’ ὀλίγον προκαταλύοντας τὸν δρόμον.

it is a wise man's word, "That is not little in life which is within a little." And those who hold out and continue for a very long time, and persevere even on to the fourth watch, which is also the time at which our Saviour manifested Himself walking upon the sea to those who were then on the deep, we receive as noble and laborious disciples. On those, again, who pause and refresh themselves in the course as they are moved or as they are able, let us not press very hard.⁷⁶⁹ for all do not carry out the six days of fasting⁷⁷⁰ either equally or alike; but some pass even all the days as a fast, remaining without food through the whole; while others take but two, and others three, and others four, and others not even one. And to those who have laboured painfully through these protracted fasts. and have thereafter become exhausted and well-nigh undone, pardon ought to be extended if they are somewhat precipitate in taking food. But if there are any who not only decline such protracted fasting, but refuse at the first to fast at all, and rather indulge themselves luxuriously during the first four days, and then when they reach the last two days—viz., the preparation and the Sabbath—fast with due rigour during these, and these alone, and think that they do something grand and brilliant if they hold out till the morning, I cannot think that they have gone through the time on equal terms with those who have been practising the same during several days before. This is the counsel which, in accordance with my apprehension of the question, I have offered you in writing on these matters.⁷⁷¹



Canon II.

The question touching women in the time of their separation, whether it is proper for them when in such a condition to enter the house of God, I consider a superfluous inquiry. For I do not think that, if they are believing and pious women, they will themselves be rash enough in such a condition either to approach the holy table or to touch the body and blood of the Lord. Certainly the woman who had the issue of blood of twelve years' standing did not touch *the Lord* Himself, but only the hem of His garment, with a view to her cure.⁷⁷² For to pray, however a person may be situated, and to remember the Lord, in whatever condition a person may be, and to offer up petitions for the obtaining of help, are exercises altogether blameless. But the individual who is not perfectly pure both in soul and in body, shall be interdicted from approaching the holy of holies.

769 [1 Tim. iv. 8. Mark the moderation of our author in contrast with superstition. But in our days the peril is one of an opposite kind. Contrast St. Paul, 2 Cor. xi. 27.]

770 That is, as Balsamon explains, the six days of the week of our Lord's passion.

771 To these canons are appended the comments of Balsamon and Zonaras, which it is not necessary to give here.

772 Matt. ix. 20; Luke viii. 43.

Canon III.

Moreover, those who are competent, and who are advanced in years, ought to be judges of themselves in these matters. For that it is proper to abstain from each other by consent, in order that they may be free for a season to give themselves to prayer, and then come together again, they have heard from Paul in his epistle.⁷⁷³

Canon IV.

As to those who are overtaken by an involuntary flux in the night-time, let such follow the testimony of their own conscience, and consider themselves as to whether they are doubtfully minded⁷⁷⁴ in this matter or not. And he that doubteth in the matter of meats, the apostle tells us, “is damned if he eat.”⁷⁷⁵ In these things, therefore, let every one who approaches God be of a good conscience, and of a proper confidence, so far as his own judgment is concerned. And, indeed, it is in order to show your regard for us (for you are not ignorant, beloved,) that you have proposed these questions to us, making us of one mind, as indeed we are, and of one spirit with yourself. And I, for my part, have thus set forth my opinions in public, not as a teacher, but only as it becomes us with all simplicity to confer with each other. And when you have examined this opinion of mine, my most intelligent son, you will write back to me your notion of these matters, and let me know whatever may seem to you to be just and preferable, and whether you approve of my judgment in these things.⁷⁷⁶ That it may fare well with you, my beloved son, as you minister to the Lord in peace, is my prayer.

Part II.—Containing Epistles, or Fragments of Epistles.

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Epistle I.—To Domitius and Didymus.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷³ Referring to the relations of marriage, dealt with in 1 Cor. vii. 5, etc.

⁷⁷⁴ διακρίνονται.

⁷⁷⁵ Rom. xiv. 23. [Gr. κατακρίνεται = is condemned = self-condemned. Wordsworth cites Cicero, *De Officiis*, i. 30.]

⁷⁷⁶ [The entire absence of despotic authority in these episcopal teachings is to be noted. 2 Cor. i. 24.]

⁷⁷⁷ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vii. 11.

1. But it would be a superfluous task for me to mention by name our (martyr) friends, who are numerous and at the same time unknown to you. Only understand that they include men and women, both young men and old, both maidens and aged matrons, both soldiers and private citizens,—every class and every age, of whom some have suffered by stripes and fire, and some by the sword, and have won the victory and received their crowns. In the case of others, however, even a very long lifetime has not proved sufficient to secure their appearance as men acceptable to the Lord; as indeed in my own case too, that sufficient time has not shown itself up to the present. Wherefore He has preserved me for another convenient season, of which He knows Himself, as He says: “In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee.”⁷⁷⁸

2. Since, however, you have been inquiring⁷⁷⁹ about what has befallen us, and wish to be informed as to how we have fared, you have got a full report of our fortunes; how when we—that is to say, Gains, and myself, and Faustus, and Peter, and Paul—were led off as prisoners by the centurion and the magistrates,⁷⁸⁰ and the soldiers and other attendants accompanying them, there came upon us certain parties from Mareotis, who dragged us with them against our will, and though we were disinclined to follow them, and carried us away by force;⁷⁸¹ and how Gaius and Peter and myself have been separated from our other brethren, and shut up alone in a desert and sterile place in Libya, at a distance of three days’ journey from Parætonium.



778 Isa. xlix. 8.

779 Reading ἐπειδὴ πυνθάνεσθε, for which some codices give ἐπεὶ πυνθάνεσθαι.

780 στρατηγῶν. Christophorus would read στρατηγοῦ in the sense of *commander*. But the word is used here of the *duumviri*, or magistrates of Alexandria. And that the word στρατηγός was used in this *civil* acceptance as well as in the common *military* application, we see by many examples in Athanasius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and others. Thus, as Valesius remarks, the *soldiers* (στρατιωτῶν) here will be the band with the centurion, and the attendants (ὕπηρετῶν) will be the civil followers of the magistrates.

781 This happened in the first persecution under Decius, when Dionysius was carried off by the decision of the prefect Sabinus to Taposiris, as he informs us in his epistle to Germanus. Certainly any one who compares that epistle of Dionysius to Germanus with this one to Domitius, will have no doubt that he speaks of one and the same event in both. Hence Eusebius is in error in thinking that in this epistle of Dionysius to Domitius we have a narrative of the events relating to the persecution of Valerian,—a position which may easily be refuted from Dionysius himself. For in the persecution under Valerian, Dionysius was not carried off into exile under military custody, nor were there any men from Mareotis, who came and drove off the soldiers, and bore him away unwillingly, and set him at liberty again; nor had Dionysius on that occasion the presbyters Gaius and Faustus, and Peter and Paul, with him. All these things happened to Dionysius in that persecution which began a little before Decius obtained the empire, as he testifies himself in his epistle to Germanus. But in the persecution under Valerian, Dionysius was accompanied in exile by the presbyter Maximus, and the deacons Faustus, and Eusebius, and Chæremon, and a certain Roman cleric, as he tells us in the epistle to Germanus.—VALESIIUS.

3. *And a little further on, he proceeds thus:*—And they concealed themselves in the city, and secretly visited the brethren. I refer to the presbyters Maximus, Dioscorus, Demetrius, and Lucius. For Faustinus and Aquila, who are persons of greater prominence in the world, are wandering about in Egypt. I specify also the deacons who survived those who died in the sickness,⁷⁸² viz., Faustus, Eusebius, and Chæremon. And of Eusebius I speak as one whom the Lord strengthened from the beginning, and qualified for the task of discharging energetically the services due to the confessors who are in prison, and of executing the perilous office of dressing out and burying⁷⁸³ the bodies of those perfected and blessed martyrs. For even up to the present day the governor does not cease to put to death, in a cruel manner, as I have already said, some of those who are brought before him; while he wears others out by torture, and wastes others away with imprisonment and bonds, commanding also that no one shall approach them and making strict scrutiny lest any one should be seen to do so. And nevertheless God imparts relief to the oppressed by the tender kindness and earnestness of the brethren.

Epistle II.—To Novatus.⁷⁸⁴

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Dionysius to Novatus⁷⁸⁵ his brother, greeting. If you were carried on against your will, as you say, you will show that such has been the case by your voluntary retirement. For it would have

⁷⁸² ἐν τῇ νόσῳ. Rufinus reads νήσῳ, and renders it, “But of the deacons, some died in the island after the pains of confession.” But Dionysius refers to the pestilence which traversed the whole Roman world in the times of Gallus and Volusianus, as Eusebius in his *Chronicon* and others record. See Aurelius Victor. Dionysius makes mention of this sickness again in the paschal epistle to the Alexandrians, where he also speaks of the deacons who were cut off by that plague.—VALES.

⁷⁸³ περιστολὰς ἐκτελεῖν. Christophorus renders it: “to prepare the linen cloths in which the bodies of the blessed martyrs who departed this life might be wrapped.” In this Valesius thinks he errs by looking at the modern method of burial, whereas among the ancient Christians the custom was somewhat different, the bodies being dressed out in full attire, and that often at great cost, as Eusebius shows us in the case of Astyrius, in the *Hist. Eccles.*, vii. 16. Yet Athanasius, in his *Life of Antonius*, has this sentence: “The Egyptians are accustomed to attend piously to the funerals of the bodies of the dead, and especially those of the holy martyrs, and to wrap them in linen cloths: they are not wont, however, to consign them to the earth, but to place them on couches, and keep them in private apartments.”

⁷⁸⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 45.

⁷⁸⁵ Jerome, in his *Catalogus*, where he adduces the beginning of this epistle, gives Novatianus for Novatus. So in the *Chronicon* of Georgius Syncellus we have Διονύσιος Ναυατιανῶ. Rufinus’ account appears to be that there were two such epistles,—one to Novatus, and another to Novatianus. The confounding of these two forms seems, however, to have been frequent among the

been but dutiful to have suffered any kind of ill, so as to avoid rending the Church of God. And a martyrdom borne for the sake of preventing a division of the Church, would not have been more inglorious than one endured for refusing to worship idols;⁷⁸⁶ nay, in my opinion at least, the former would have been a nobler thing than the latter. For in the one case a person gives such a testimony simply for his own individual soul, whereas in the other case he is a witness for the whole Church. And now, if you can persuade or constrain the brethren to come to be of one mind again, your uprightness will be superior to your error; and the latter will not be charged against you, while the former will be commended in you. But if you cannot prevail so far with your recusant brethren, see to it that you save your own soul. My wish is, that in the Lord you may fare well as you study peace.

Epistle III.—To Fabius,⁷⁸⁷ Bishop of Antioch.

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1. The persecution with us did not commence with the imperial edict, but preceded it by a whole year. And a certain prophet and poet, an enemy to this city,⁷⁸⁸ whatever else he was, had previously roused and exasperated against us the masses of the heathen, inflaming them anew with the fires of their native superstition. Excited by him, and finding full liberty for the perpetration of wickedness, they reckoned this the only piety *and* service to their demons,⁷⁸⁹ namely, our slaughter.

2. First, then, they seized an old man of the name of Metras, and commanded him to utter words of impiety; and as he refused, they beat his body with clubs, and lacerated his face and eyes with



Greeks. [See Lardner, *Credib.*, *sub voce Novat.* Wordsworth thinks the Greeks shortened the name, on the grounds which Horace notes *ad vocem* “Equotuticum.” *Satires*, I. v. 87.]

⁷⁸⁶ We read, with Gallandi, καὶ ἦν οὐκ ἄδοξυτέρα τῆς ἔνεκεν τοῦ μὴ ἰδωλολατρεῦσαι (*sic*) γινομένης, ἢ ἔνεκεν τοῦ μὴ σχίσαι μαρτυρία. This is substantially the reading of three Venetian codices, as also of Sophronius on Jerome’s *De vir. illustr.*, ch. 69, and Georgius Syncellus in the *Chronogr.*, p. 374, and Nicephorus Callist., *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 4. Pearson, in the *Annales Cyprian.*, Num. x. p. 31, proposes θῦσαι for σχίσαι. Rufinus renders it: “et erat non inferior gloria sustinere martyrrium ne scindatur ecclesia quam est illa ne idolis immoletur.”

⁷⁸⁷ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 41, 42, 44. Certain codices read Fabianus for Fabius, and that form is adopted also by Rufinus. Eusebius introduces this epistle thus: “The same author, in an epistle written to Fabius bishop of Antioch, gives the following account of the conflicts of those who suffered martyrdom at Alexandria.”

⁷⁸⁸ καὶ φθάσας ὁ κακῶν, etc. Pearson, *Annales Cyprian. ad ann.*, 249 § 1, renders it rather thus: “et prævertens malorum huic urbi vates et auctor, quisquis ille fuit, commovit,” etc.

⁷⁸⁹ εὐσέβειαν τὴν θρησκείαν δαιμόνων. Valesius thinks the last three words in the text (= service to their demons) an interpolation by some scholiast. [Note θρησκείαν = *cultus*, James i. 27.]

sharp reeds, and then dragged him off to the suburbs and stoned him there. Next they carried off a woman named Quinta, who was a believer, to an idol temple, and compelled her to worship the idol; and when she turned away from it, and showed how she detested it, they bound her feet and dragged her through the whole city along the rough stone-paved streets, knocking her at the same time against the millstones, and scourging her, until they brought her to the same place, and stoned her also there. Then with one impulse they all rushed upon the houses of the God-fearing, and whatever pious persons any of them knew individually as neighbours, after these they hurried and bore them with them, and robbed and plundered them, setting aside the more valuable portions of their property for themselves, and scattering about the commoner articles, and such as were made of wood, and burning them on the roads, so that they made these parts present the spectacle of a city taken by the enemy. The brethren, however, simply gave way and withdrew, and, like those to whom Paul bears witness,⁷⁹⁰ they took the spoiling of their goods with joy. And I know not that any of them—except possibly some solitary individual who may have chanced to fall into their hands—thus far has denied the Lord.

3. But they also seized that most admirable virgin Apollonia, then in advanced life, and knocked out all her teeth,⁷⁹¹ and cut her jaws; and then kindling a fire before the city, they threatened to burn her alive unless she would repeat along with them their expressions of impiety.⁷⁹² And although she seemed to deprecate⁷⁹³ her fate for a little, on being let go, she leaped eagerly into the fire and was consumed. They also laid hold of a certain Serapion in his own house;⁷⁹⁴ and after torturing him with severe cruelties, and breaking all his limbs, they dashed him headlong from an upper storey to the ground. And there was no road, no thoroughfare, no lane even, where we could walk, whether by night or by day; for at all times and in every place they all kept crying out, that if any one should refuse to repeat their blasphemous expressions, he must be at once dragged off and burnt. These inflictions were carried rigorously on for a considerable time⁷⁹⁵ in this manner. But

790 Heb. x. 30.

791 [To this day St. Apollonia is invoked all over Europe; and votive offerings are to be seen hung up at her shrines, in the form of teeth, by those afflicted with toothache.]

792 τὰ τῆς ἀσεβείας κηρύγματα. What these precisely were, it is not easy to say. Dionysius speaks of them also as δύσφημα ῥήματα in this epistle, and as ἄθεοι φωναί in that to Germanus. Gallandi thinks the reference is to the practice, of which we read also in the Acts of Polycarp, ch. 9, where the proconsul addresses the martyr with the order: λοιδόρησον τὸν Χριστόν—Revile Christ. And that the test usually put to reputed Christians by the early persecutors was this cursing of Christ, we learn from Pliny, book x. epist. 97. [Vol. i. p. 41.]

793 Or, shrink from.

794 ἐφέστιον, for which Nicephorus reads badly, Ἐφέστιον.

795 ἐπιπολύ.

when the insurrection and the civil war in due time overtook these wretched people,⁷⁹⁶ that diverted their savage cruelty from us, and turned it against themselves. And we enjoyed a little breathing time, as long as leisure failed them for exercising their fury against us.⁷⁹⁷

4. But speedily was the change from that more kindly reign⁷⁹⁸ announced to us; and great was the terror of threatening that was now made to reach us. Already, indeed, the edict had arrived; and it was of such a tenor as almost perfectly to correspond with what was intimated to us beforetime by our Lord, setting before us the most dreadful horrors, so as, if that were possible, to cause the very elect to stumble.⁷⁹⁹ All verily were greatly alarmed, and of the more notable there were some, and these a large number, who speedily accommodated themselves to the decree in fear;⁸⁰⁰ others, who were engaged in the public service, were drawn into compliance by the very necessities of their official duties;⁸⁰¹ others were dragged on to it by their friends, and on being called by name

796 ἄθλιους. But Pearson suggests ἄθλους, = "when insurrection and civil war took the place of these persecutions." This would agree better with the common usage of διαδεχομαι.

797 ἀσχολίαν του πρὸς ἡμᾶς θυμοῦ λαβόντων. The Latin version gives "dum illorum cessaret furor." W. Lowth renders, "dum non vacaret ipsis furorem suum in nos exercere."

798 This refers to the death of the Emperor Philip, who showed a very righteous and kindly disposition toward the Christians. Accordingly the matters here recounted by Dionysius took place in the last year of the Emperor Philip. This is also indicated by Dionysius in the beginning of this epistle, where he says that the persecution began at Alexandria a whole year before the edict of the Emperor Decius. But Christophoronus, not observing this, interprets the μεταβολὴν τῆς βασιλείας as signifying a change in *the emperor's mind* toward the Christians, in which error he is followed by Baronius, ch. 102.—VALES.

799 In this sentence the Codex Regius reads, τὸ προῤῥηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν παραβραχὺ τὸ φοβερώτατον, etc., = "the one intimated beforetime by our Lord, *very nearly* the most terrible one." In Georgius Syncellus it is given as ἡ παρὰ βραχύ. But the reading in the text, ἀποφαίνον, "setting forth," is found in the Codices Maz., Med., Fuk., and Savilii; and it seems the best, the idea being that this edict of Decius was so terrible as in a certain measure to represent the most fearful of all times, viz., those of Antichrist.—VALES.

800 ἀπήντων δεδιότες.

801 οἱ δὲ δημοσιεύοντες ὑπὸ τῶν πράξεων ἤγοντο. This is rendered by Christophoronus, "alii ex privatis ædibus in publicum raptati ad delubra ducuntur a magistratibus." But δημοσιεύοντες is the same as τὰ δημόσια πράττοντες, i.e., decurions and magistrates. For when the edict of Decius was conveyed to them, commanding all to sacrifice to the immortal gods, these officials had to convene themselves in the court-house as usual, and stand and listen while the decree was there publicly recited. Thus they were in a position officially which led them to be the first to sacrifice. The word πράξεις occurs often in the sense of the acts and administration of magistrates: thus, in Eusebius, viii. 11; in Aristides, in the funeral oration on Alexander, τὰ δ' εἰς πράξεις τε καὶ πολιτείας, etc. There are similar passage also in Plutarch's Πολιτικά παραγγέλματα, and in Severianus's sixth oration on the Hexameron. So Chrysostom, in his eighty-third homily on Matthew, calls the decurions τοὺς τὰ πολιτικά πράττοντας. The word δημοσιεύοντες, however, may also be explained of those employed in the departments of law or finance; so that the clause might be rendered, with Valesius: "alii, qui in publico versabantur, rebus ipsis et reliquorum exemplo, ad sacrificandum ducebantur." See the note in Migne.



approached the impure and unholy sacrifices; others yielded pale and trembling, as if they were not to offer sacrifice, but to be themselves the sacrifices and victims for the idols, so that they were jeered by the large multitude surrounding the scene, and made it plain to all that they were too cowardly either to face death or to offer the sacrifices. But there were others who hurried up to the altars with greater alacrity, stoutly asserting⁸⁰² that they had never been Christians at all before; of whom our Lord's prophetic declaration holds most true, that it will be hard for such to be saved. Of the rest, some followed one or other of these parties *already mentioned*; some fled, and some were seized. And of these, some went as far *in keeping their faith* as bonds and imprisonment; and certain persons among them endured imprisonment even for several days, and then after all abjured the faith before coming into the court of justice; while others, after holding out against the torture for a time, sank before the prospect of further sufferings.⁸⁰³

5. But there were also others, stedfast and blessed pillars of the Lord, who, receiving strength from Himself, and obtaining power and vigour worthy of and commensurate with the force of the faith that was in themselves, have proved admirable witnesses for His kingdom. And of these the first was Julianus, a man suffering from gout, and able neither to stand nor to walk, who was arranged along with two other men who carried him. Of these two persons, the one immediately denied *Christ*; but the other, a person named Cronion, and surnamed Eunos, and together with him the aged Julianus himself, confessed the Lord, and were carried on camels through the whole city, which is, as you know, a very large one, and were scourged in that elevated position, and finally were consumed in a tremendous fire, while the whole populace surrounded them. And a certain soldier who stood by them when they were led away to execution, and who opposed the wanton insolence of the people, was pursued by the outcries they raised against him; and this most courageous soldier of God, Besas by name, was arranged; and after bearing himself most nobly in that mighty conflict on behalf of piety, he was beheaded. And another individual, who was by birth a Libyan, and who at once in name and in real blessedness was also a true Macar,⁸⁰⁴ although much was tried by the judge to persuade him to make a denial, did not yield, and was consequently burned alive. And these were succeeded by Epimachus and Alexander, who, after a long time⁸⁰⁵ spent in chains, and after suffering countless agonies and inflictions of the scraper⁸⁰⁶ and the scourge, were also burnt to ashes in an immense fire.

6. And along with these there were four women. Among them was Ammonarium, a pious virgin, who was tortured for a very long time by the judge in a most relentless manner, because she declared

⁸⁰² ἰσχυρίζομενοι here for διισχυρίζομενοι .— VALES.

⁸⁰³ πρὸς τὸ ἐξῆς ἀπεῖπον. It may also mean, "renounced the faith in the prospect of what was before them."

⁸⁰⁴ A blessed one. Alluding to Matt. v. 10, 12.

⁸⁰⁵ μετὰ πολὺν. But Codices Med., Maz., Fuk., and Savilii, as well as Georgius Syncellus, read μετ' οὐ πολὺν, "after a short time."

⁸⁰⁶ ξυστήρας.

plainly from the first that she would utter none of the things which he commanded her to repeat; and after she had made good her profession she was led off to execution. The others were the most venerable and aged Mercuria, and Dionysia, who had been the mother of many children, and yet did not love her offspring better than her Lord.⁸⁰⁷ These, when the governor was ashamed to subject them any further to profitless torments, and thus to see himself beaten by women, died by the sword, without more experience of tortures. For truly their champion Ammonarium had received tortures for them all.

7. Heron also, and Ater,⁸⁰⁸ and Isidorus⁸⁰⁹ who were Egyptians, and along with them Dioscorus, a boy of about fifteen years of age, were delivered up. And though at first he, *the judge*, tried to deceive the youth with fair speeches, thinking he could easily seduce him, and then attempted also to compel him by force of tortures, fancying he might be made to yield without much difficulty in that way, Dioscorus neither submitted to his persuasions nor gave way to his terrors. And the rest, after their bodies had been lacerated in a most savage manner, and their steadfastness had nevertheless been maintained, he consigned also to the flames. But Dioscorus he dismissed, wondering at the distinguished appearance he had made in public, and at the extreme wisdom of the answers he gave to his interrogations, and declaring that, on account of his age, he granted him further time for repentance. And this most godly Dioscorus is with us at present, tarrying for a greater conflict and a more lengthened contest. A certain person of the name of Nemesion, too, who was also an Egyptian, was falsely accused of being a companion of robbers; and after he had cleared himself of this charge before the centurion, and proved it to be a most unnatural calumny, he was informed against as a Christian, and had to come as a prisoner before the governor. And that most unrighteous magistrate inflicted on him a punishment twice as severe as that to which the robbers were subjected, making him suffer both tortures and scourgings, and then consigning him to the fire between the robbers. Thus the blessed martyr was honoured after the pattern of Christ.

8. There was also a body of soldiers,⁸¹⁰ including Ammon, and Zeno, and Ptolemy, and Ingenuus, and along with them an old man, Theophilus, who had taken up their position in a mass in front of the tribunal; and when a certain person was standing his trial as a Christian, and was already inclining



⁸⁰⁷ Here Valesius adds from Rufinus the words καὶ ἄμμωνάριον ἕτερα, “and a second Ammonarium,” as there are four women mentioned.

⁸⁰⁸ In Georgius Syncellus and Nicephorus it is given as *Aster*. Rufinus makes the name *Arsinus*. And in the old Roman martyrology, taken largely from Rufinus, we find the form *Arsenius*.—VALES.

⁸⁰⁹ In his *Bibliotheca*, cod. cxix., Photius states that Isidorus was full brother to Pierius, the celebrated head of the Alexandrian school, and his colleague in martyrdom. He also intimates, however, that although some have reported that Pierius ended his career by martyrdom, others say that he spent the closing period of his life in Rome after the persecution abated.—RUINART.

⁸¹⁰ σύνταγμα στρατιωτικόν. Rufinus and Christophoronus make it *turram militum*. Valesius prefers *manipulum* or *contubernium*. These may have been the apparitors or officers of the *praefectus Augustalis*. Valesius thinks rather that they were legionaries, from the legion which had to guard the city of Alexandria, and which was under the authority of the *praefectus Augustalis*. For at that time the *praefectus Augustalis* had charge of military affairs as well as civil.

to make a denial, these stood round about and ground their teeth, and made signs with their faces, and stretched out their hands, and made all manner of gestures with their bodies. And while the attention of all was directed to them, before any could lay hold of them, they ran quickly up to the bench of judgment⁸¹¹ and declared themselves to be Christians, and made such an impression that the governor and his associates were filled with fear; and those who were under trial seemed to be most courageous in the prospect of what they were to suffer, while the judges themselves trembled. These, then, went with a high spirit from the tribunals, and exulted in their testimony, God Himself causing them to triumph gloriously.⁸¹²

9. Moreover, others in large numbers were torn asunder by the heathen throughout the cities and villages. Of one of these I shall give some account, as an example. Ischyriion served one of the rulers in the capacity of steward for stated wages. His employer ordered this man to offer sacrifice; and on his refusal to do so, he abused him. When he persisted in his non-compliance, his master treated him with contumely; and when he still held out, he took a huge stick and thrust it through his bowels and heart, and slew him. Why should I mention the multitudes of those who had to wander about in desert places and upon the mountains, and who were cut off by hunger, and thirst, and cold, and sickness, and robbers, and wild beasts? The survivors of such are the witnesses of their election and their victory. One circumstance, however, I shall subjoin as an illustration of these things. There was a certain very aged person of the name of Chæremon, bishop of the place called the city of the Nile.⁸¹³ He fled along with his partner to the Arabian mountain,⁸¹⁴ and never returned. The brethren, too, were unable to discover anything of them, although they made frequent search; and they never could find either the men themselves, or their bodies. Many were also carried off as slaves by the barbarous Saracens⁸¹⁵ to that same Arabian mount. Some of these were ransomed with difficulty, and only by paying a great sum of money; others of them have not been ransomed to this day. And these facts I have related, brother, not without a purpose, but in order that you may

811 βᾶθρον. Valesius supposes that what is intended is the seat on which the accused sat when under interrogation by the judge.

812 θριαμβεύοντος αὐτούς. Rufinus makes it, "God thus triumphing in them;" from which it would seem that he had read δι' αὐτούς. But θριαμβεύειν is probably put here for θριαμβεύειν ποιεῖν, as βασιλεύειν is also used by Gregory Nazianzenus.

813 That is, Nilopolis or Niloupolis. Eusebius, bishop of the same seat, subscribed the Council of Ephesus.—READING.

814 τὸ Ἀράβιον ὄρος. There is a *Mons Arabicus* mentioned by Herodotus (ii. 8), which Ptolemy and others call *Mons Troicus*.—VALES.

815 This passage is notable from the fact that it makes mention of the Saracens. For of the writers whose works have come down to us there is none more ancient than Dionysius of Alexandria that has named the Saracens. Ammianus Marcellinus, however, writes in his fourteenth book that he has made mention of the Saracens in the Acts of Marcus. Spartianus also mentions the Saracens in his *Niger*, and says that the Roman soldiers were beaten by them.—VALES. ["The barbarous Saracens:" what a *nominis umbra* projected by "coming events," in this blissfully ignorant reference of our author! Compare Robertson, *Researches*, on the conquest of Jerusalem.]

know how many and how terrible are the ills that have befallen us; which troubles also will be best understood by those who have had most experience of them.

10. Those sainted martyrs, accordingly, who were once with us, and who now are seated with Christ,⁸¹⁶ and are sharers in His kingdom, and partakers with Him in His judgment⁸¹⁷ and who act as His judicial assessors,⁸¹⁸ received there certain of the brethren who had fallen away, and who had become chargeable with sacrificing to the idols. And as they saw that the conversion and repentance of such might be acceptable to Him who desires not at all the death of the sinner,⁸¹⁹ but rather his repentance, they proved their sincerity, and received them, and brought them together again, and assembled with them, and had fellowship with them in their prayers and at their festivals.⁸²⁰ What advice then, brethren, do you give us as regards these? What should we do? Are we to stand forth and act with the decision and judgment which those (martyrs) formed, and to observe the same graciousness with them, and to deal so kindly with those toward whom they showed such compassion? or are we to treat their decision as an unrighteous one,⁸²¹ and to constitute ourselves judges of their opinion on such subjects, and to throw clemency into tears, and to overturn the established order?⁸²²

101

11. But I shall give a more particular account of one case here which occurred among us:⁸²³ There was with us a certain Serapion, an aged believer. He had spent his long life blamelessly, but had fallen in the time of trial (the persecution). Often did this man pray (for absolution), and no

816 As to the martyrs' immediate departure to the Lord, and their abode with Him, see Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, ch. xliiii., and *On the Soul*, v. 55. [Vol. iii. p. 576; *Ib.*, p. 231.]

817 That the martyrs were to be Christ's assessors, judging the world with Him, was a common opinion among the fathers. So, after Dionysius, Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria, in his fifth book, *Against the Novatians*. Photius, in his *Bibliotheca*, following Chrysostom, objects to this, and explains Paul's words in 1 Cor. vi. 2 as having the same intention as Christ's words touching the men of Nineveh and the queen of the south who should rise up in the judgment and condemn that generation.

818 συνδικάζοντες. See a noble passage in Bossuet, *Préface sur l'Apocal*, § 28.

819 Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

820 Dionysius is dealing here not with public communion, such as was the bishop's prerogative to confer anew on the penitent, but with private fellowship among Christian people.—VALES.

821 ἄδικον ποιησόμεθα is the reading of Codices Maz., Med., Fuk., and Savil., and also of Georgius Syncellus. Others read ἄδεκτον ποιησόμεθα, "we shall treat it as inadmissible."

822 The words καὶ τὸν Θεὸν παροξύνομεν, "and provoke God," are sometimes added here; but they are wanting in Codices Maz., Med., Fuk., Savil., and in Georgius Syncellus.

823 Eusebius introduces this in words to the following effect: "Writing to this same Fabius, who seemed to incline somewhat to this schism, Dionysius of Alexandria, after setting forth in his letter many other matters which bore on repentance, and after describing the conflicts of the martyrs who had recently suffered in Alexandria, relates among other things one specially wonderful fact, which I have deemed proper for insertion in this history, and which is as follows."

one gave heed to him;⁸²⁴ for he had sacrificed to the idols. Falling sick, he continued three successive days dumb and senseless. Recovering a little on the fourth day, he called to him his grandchild, and said, “My son, how long do you detain me? Hasten, I entreat you, and absolve me quickly. Summon one of the presbyters to me.” And when he had said this, he became speechless again. The boy ran for the presbyter; but it was night, and the man was sick, and was consequently unable to come. But as an injunction had been issued by me,⁸²⁵ that persons at the point of death, if they requested it then, and especially if they had earnestly sought it before, should be absolved,⁸²⁶ in order that they might depart this life in cheerful hope, he gave the boy a small portion of the Eucharist,⁸²⁷ telling him to steep it in water⁸²⁸ and drop it into the old man’s mouth. The boy returned bearing the portion; and as he came near, and before he had yet entered, Serapion again recovered, and said, “You have come, my child, and the presbyter was unable to come; but do quickly what you were instructed to do, and so let me depart.” The boy steeped the morsel in water, and at once dropped it into the (old man’s) mouth; and after he had swallowed a little of it, he forthwith gave up the ghost. Was he not then manifestly preserved? and did he not continue in life just until he could be absolved, and until through the wiping away of his sins he could be acknowledged⁸²⁹ for the many good acts he had done?

824 That is, none either of the clergy or of the people were moved by his prayers to consider him a proper subject for absolution; for the people’s suffrages were also necessary for the reception into the Church of any who had lapsed, and been on that account cut off from it. And sometimes the bishop himself asked the people to allow absolution to be given to the suppliant, as we see in Cyprian’s Epistle 53, to Cornelius [vol. v. p. 336, this series], and in Tertullian *On Modesty*, ch. xiii. [vol. iv. p. 86, this series]. Oftener, however, the people themselves made intercession with the bishop for the admission of penitents; of which we have a notable instance in the Epistle of Cornelius to Fabius of Antioch about that bishop who had ordained Novatianus. See also Cyprian, Epistle 59 [vol. v. p. 355].—VALES.

825 In the African Synod, which met about the time that Dionysus wrote, it was decreed that absolution should be granted to lapsed persons who were near their end, provided that they had sought it earnestly before their illness. See Cyprian in the Epistle to Antonianus [vol. v. p. 327, this series].—VALES.

826 ἀφίεσθαι. There is a longer reading in Codices Fuk. and Savil., viz.: τῶν θείων δώρων τῆς μεταδόσεως ἀξιοῦσθαι καὶ οὕτως ἀφίεσθαι, “be deemed worthy of the imparting of the divine gifts, and thus be absolved.”

827 Valesius thinks that this custom prevailed for a long time, and cites a synodical letter of Ratherius, bishop of Verona (which has also been ascribed to Udalricus by Gretserus, who has published it along with his *Life of Gregory VII.*), in which the practice is expressly forbidden in these terms: “And let no one presume to give the communion to a laic or a woman for the purpose of conveying it to an infirm person.”

828 ἀποβρέξαι. Rufinus renders it by *infundere*. References to this custom are found in Adamanus, in the second book of the *Miracles of St. Columba*, ch 6; in Bede, *Life of St. Cuthbert*, ch. 31, and in the poem on the life of the same; in Theodorus Campidunensis, *Life of St. Magnus*, ch. 22; in Paulus Bernriedensis, *Life of Gregory VII.*, p. 113.

829 ὁμολογηθῆναι. Langus, Wolfius, and Musculus render it *confiteri*, “confess.” Christophorsonus makes it *in numerum confessorum referri*, “reckoned in the number of confessors:” which may be allowed if it is understood to be a reckoning by

Epistle IV.—To Cornelius the Roman Bishop.⁸³⁰

—————

In addition to all these, he writes likewise to Cornelius at Rome after receiving his Epistle against Novatus. And in that letter he also shows that he had been invited by Helenus, bishop in Tarsus of Cilicia, and by the others who were with him—namely, Firmilian, bishop in Cappadocia, and Theoctistus in Palestine—to meet them at the Council of Antioch, where certain persons were attempting to establish the schism of Novatus. In addition to this, he writes that it was reported to him that Fabius was dead, and that Demetrianus was appointed his successor in the bishopric of the church at Antioch. He writes also respecting the bishop in Jerusalem, expressing himself in these very words: “And the blessed Alexander, having been cast into prison, went to his rest in blessedness.”

Epistle V.—Which is the First on the Subject of Baptism Addressed to Stephen, Bishop of Rome.⁸³¹

—————

Understand, however, my brother,⁸³² that all the churches located in the east, and also in remoter districts,⁸³³ that were formerly in a state of division, are now made one again;⁸³⁴ and all those at the head of the churches everywhere are of one mind, and rejoice exceedingly at the peace which has

Christ. For Dionysius alludes to those words of Christ in the Gospel: “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father.”—VALES.

⁸³⁰ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 46.

⁸³¹ In the second chapter of the seventh book of his *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius says: “To this Stephen, Eusebius wrote the first of his epistles on the matter of baptism.” And he calls this the *first*, because Dionysius also wrote other four epistles to Xystus and Dionysius, two of the successors of Stephen, and to Philemon, on the same subject of the baptizing of heretics.—GALLANDI.

⁸³² Eusebius introduces the letter thus: “When he had addressed many reasonings on this subject to him (Stephen) by letter, Dionysius at last showed him that, as the persecution had abated, the churches in all parts opposed to the innovations of Novatus were at peace among themselves.” [See vol. v. p. 275.]

⁸³³ καὶ ἔτι προσωτέρω. These words are omitted in Codices Fulk, and Savil., as also by Christophorsonus; but are given in Codices Reg. Maz., and Med., and by Syncellus and Nicephorus.

⁸³⁴ Baronius infers from this epistle that at this date, about 259 A.D., the Oriental bishops had given up their “error,” and fallen in with Stephen’s opinion, that heretics did not require to be rebaptized,—an inference, however, which Valesius deems false. [Undoubtedly so.]



been restored beyond all expectation. I may mention Demetrianus in Antioch; Theoctistus in Cæsareia; Mazabanes in Ælia,⁸³⁵ the successor of the deceased Alexander;⁸³⁶ Marinus in Tyre; Heliodorus in Laodicea, the successor of the deceased Thelymidres; Helenus in Tarsus, and with him all the churches of Cilicia; and Firmilian and all Cappadocia. For I have named only the more illustrious of the bishops, so as neither to make my epistle too long, nor to render my discourse too heavy for you. All the districts of Syria, however, and of Arabia, to the brethren in which you from time to time have been forwarding supplies⁸³⁷ and at present have sent letters, and Mesopotamia too, and Pontus, and Syria, and, to speak in brief, all parties, are everywhere rejoicing at the unanimity and brotherly love now established, and are glorifying God for the same.

The Same, Otherwise Rendered.⁸³⁸

But know, my brother, that all the churches throughout the East, and those that are placed beyond, which formerly were separated, are now at length returned to unity; and all the presidents⁸³⁹ of the churches everywhere think one and the same thing, and rejoice with incredible joy on account of the unlooked-for return of peace: to wit, Demetrianus in Antioch; Theoctistus in Cæsarea; Mazabanes in Ælia, after the death of Alexander; Marinus in Tyre; Heliodorus in Laodicea, after the death of Thelymidres; Helenus in Tarsus, and all the churches of Cilicia; Firmilianus, with all Cappadocia. And I have named only the more illustrious bishops, lest by chance my letter should be made too prolix, and my address too wearisome. The whole of the Syrias, indeed, and Arabia, to which you now and then send help, and to which you have now written letters; Mesopotamia

835 The name assigned by the pagans to Jerusalem was Ælia. It was so called even in Constantine's time as we see in the *Tabula Peutingerorum* and the *Itinerarium Antonini*, written after Constantine's reign. In the seventh canon of the Nicene Council we also find the name Ælia. [Given by Hadrian A.D. 135.]

836 The words κοιμηθέντος Ἀλεξάνδρου are given in the text in connection with the clause Μαρίνος ἐν Τύρῳ. They must be transposed however as in the translation; for Mazabanes had succeeded Alexander the bishop of Ælia, as Dionysius informs us in his Epistle to Cornelius. So Rufinus puts it also in his Latin version.—VALES.

837 Alluding to the generous practice of the church at Rome in old times in relieving the wants of the other churches, and in sending money and clothes to the brethren who were in captivity, and to those who toiled in the mines. To this effect we have the statement of Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, in his Epistle to Soter, which Eusebius cites in his fourth book. In the same passage, Eusebius also remarks that this commendable custom had been continued in the Roman church up to his own time; and with that object collections were made there, of which Leo Magnus writes in his *Sermones*.—VALES. [Note this to the eternal honour of this See in its early purity.]

838 [In vol. v., to illustrate the history of Cyprian, reference is made to this letter; and in the Clark edition another rendering is there given (a preferable one, I think) of this same letter, which I have thought better to reserve for this place. It belongs here, and I have there noted its appearance in this volume.]

839 [προεστῶτες. See Euseb., *Hist. Eccles.*, book viii. capp. 2, 3 and 4; also vol. v., this series, as above mentioned.]

also, and Pontus, and Bithynia; and, to comprise all in one word, all the lands everywhere, are rejoicing, praising God on account of this concord and brotherly charity.

Epistle VI.—To Sixtus, Bishop.⁸⁴⁰

1. Previously, indeed, (Stephen) had written letters about Helanus and Firmilianus, and about all who were established throughout Cilicia and Cappadocia, and all the neighbouring provinces, giving them to understand that for that same reason he would depart from their communion, because they rebaptized heretics. And consider the seriousness of the matter. For, indeed, in the most considerable councils of the bishops, as I hear, it has been decreed that they who come from heresy should first be trained in *Catholic* doctrine, and then should be cleansed by baptism from the filth of the old and impure leaven. Asking and calling him to witness on all these matters, I sent letters.

And a little after Dionysius proceeds:—

2. And, moreover, to our beloved co-presbyters Dionysius and Philemon, who before agreed with Stephen, and had written to me about the same matters, I wrote previously in few words, but now I have written again more at length.

In the same letter, says Eusebius,⁸⁴¹ he informs Xystus⁸⁴² of the Sabellian heretics, that they were gaining ground at that time, in these words:—

3. For since of the doctrine, which lately has been set on foot at Ptolemais, a city of Pentapolis, impious and full of blasphemy against Almighty God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; full of unbelief and perfidy towards His only begotten Son and the first-born of every creature, the Word made man, and which takes away the perception of the Holy Spirit,—on either side both letters were brought to me, and brethren had come to discuss it, setting forth more plainly as much as by God's gift I was able,—I wrote certain letters, copies of which I have sent to thee.

Epistle VII.—To Philemon, a Presbyter.⁸⁴³

⁸⁴⁰ Dionysius mentions letters that had been written by him as well to the Presbyters Dionysius and Philemon as to Stephen, on the baptism of heretics and on the Sabellian heresy.

⁸⁴¹ Lib. vii. ch. 6.

⁸⁴² [i.e., Sixtus II.]

⁸⁴³ Of Sixtus, bishop of Rome. [A.D. 257].



I indeed gave attention to reading the books and carefully studying the traditions of heretics, to the extent indeed of corrupting my soul with their execrable opinions; yet receiving from them this advantage, that I could refute them in my own mind, and detested them more heartily than ever. And when a certain brother of the order of presbyters sought to deter me, and feared lest I should be involved in the same wicked filthiness, because he said that my mind would be contaminated, and indeed with truth, as I myself perceived, I was strengthened by a vision that was sent me from God. And a word spoken to me, expressly commanded me, saying, Read everything which shall come into thy hands, for thou art fit to do so, who correctest and provest each one; and from them to thee first of all has appeared the cause and the occasion of believing. I received this vision as being what was in accordance with the apostolic word, which thus urges all who are endowed with greater virtue, “Be ye skilful money-changers.”⁸⁴⁴

Then, says Eusebius, he subjoins some things parenthetically about all heresies:—

This rule and form I have received from our blessed Father Heraclus: For thou, who came from heresies, even if they had fallen away from the Church, much rather if they had not fallen away, but when they were seen to frequent the assemblies of the faithful, were charged with going to hear the teachers of perverse doctrine, and ejected from the Church, he did not admit after many prayers, before they had openly and publicly narrated whatever things they had heard from their adversaries. Then he received them at length to the assemblies of the faithful, by no means asking of them to receive baptism anew. Because they had already previously received the Holy Spirit from that very baptism.

Once more, this question being thoroughly ventilated, he adds:—

I learned this besides, that this custom is not now first of all imported among the Africans⁸⁴⁵ alone; but moreover, long before, in the times of former bishops, among most populous churches, and that when synods of the brethren of Iconium and Synades were held, it also pleased as many as possible, I should be unwilling, by overturning their judgments, to throw them into strifes and contentious. For it is written, “Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour’s landmark, which thy fathers have placed.”⁸⁴⁶

844 1 Thess. v. 21. [Euseb., vi. 7. The apostle is supposed to refer to one of the *reputed* sayings of our Lord, γινεσθε δόκιμοι
τραπεζίται = *examinatores*, i.e., of coins, rejecting the base, and laying up in store the precious. Compare Jer. xv. 19.]

845 [I find that it is necessary to say that the “Africans” of Egypt and Carthage were no more negroes than we “Americans”
are redmen. The Carthaginians were Canaanites and the Alexandrians Greeks. I have seen Cyprian’s portrait representing him
as a Moor.]

846 Deut. xix. 14.

Epistle VIII.—To Dionysius.⁸⁴⁷

For we rightly repulse Novatian, who has rent the Church, and has drawn away some of the brethren to impiety and blasphemies; who has brought into the world a most impious doctrine concerning God, and calumniates our most merciful Lord Jesus Christ as if He were unmerciful; and besides all these things, holds the sacred laver as of no effect, and rejects it, and overturns faith and confession, which are put before baptism, and utterly drives away the Holy Spirit from them, even if any hope subsists either that He would abide in them, or that He should return to them.

Epistle IX.—To Sixtus II.⁸⁴⁸

For truly, brother, I have need of advice, and I crave your judgment, lest perchance I should be mistaken upon the matters which in such wise happen to me. One of the brethren who come together to the church, who for some time has been esteemed as a believer, and who before my ordination, and, if I am not deceived, before even the episcopate of Heraclas himself, had been a partaker of the assembly of the faithful, when he had been concerned in the baptism of those who were lately baptized, and had heard the interrogatories and their answers, came to me in tears, and bewailing his lot. And throwing himself at my feet, he began to confess and to protest that this baptism by which he had been initiated among heretics was not of this kind, nor had it anything whatever in common with this of ours, because that it was full of blasphemy and impiety. And he said that his soul was pierced with a very bitter sense of sorrow, and that he did not dare even to lift up his eyes to God, because he had been initiated by those wicked words and things. Wherefore he besought that, by this purest laver, he might be endowed with adoption and grace. And I, indeed, have not dared to do this; but I have said that the long course of communion had been sufficient for this. For I should not dare to renew afresh, after all, one who had heard the giving of thanks, and who had answered with others Amen; who had stood at the holy table, and had stretched forth his hands⁸⁴⁹ to receive the blessed food, and had received it, and for a very long time had been a partaker of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Henceforth I bade him be of good courage, and approach

⁸⁴⁷ At that time presbyter of Xystus, and afterwards his successor. He teaches that Novatian is deservedly to be opposed on account of his schism, on account of his impious doctrine, on account of the repetition of baptism to those who came to him.

⁸⁴⁸ Of a man who sought to be introduced to the Church by baptism, although he said that he had received baptism, with other words and matters among the heretics.

⁸⁴⁹ [Vol. v. See a reference to Cyril's *Catechetical Lectures*.]

to the sacred *elements* with a firm faith and a good conscience, and become a partaker of them. But he makes no end of his wailing, and shrinks from approaching to the table; and scarcely, when entreated, can he bear to be present at the prayers.

Epistle X.—Against Bishop Germanus.⁸⁵⁰

1. Now I speak also before God, and He knoweth that I lie not: it was not by my own choice,⁸⁵¹ neither was it without divine instruction, that I took to flight. But at an earlier period,⁸⁵² indeed, when the *edict for the persecution* under Decius was determined upon, Sabinus at that very hour sent a certain Frumentarius⁸⁵³ to make search for me. And I remained in the house for four days, expecting the arrival of this Frumentarius. But he went about examining all other places, the roads, the rivers, the fields, where he suspected that I should either conceal myself or travel. And he was smitten with a kind of blindness, and never lighted on the house; for he never supposed that I should tarry at home when under pursuit. Then, barely after the lapse of four days, God giving me instruction to remove, and opening the way for me in a manner beyond all expectation, my domestics⁸⁵⁴ and I, and a considerable number of the brethren, effected an exit together. And that this was brought about by the providence of God, was made plain by what followed: in which also we have been perhaps of some service to certain parties.

2. Then, after a certain break, he narrates the events which befell him after his flight, subjoining the following statement:—Now about sunset I was seized, along with those who were with me, by the soldiers, and was carried off to Taposiris. But by the providence of God, it happened that Timotheus was not present with me then, nor indeed had he been apprehended at all. Reaching the

850 Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vi. 40, vii. 11.

851 οὐδεμίαν ἐπ' ἑμαυτοῦ βαλλόμενος. In Codex Fuk. and in the *Chronicon* of Syncellus it is ἐπ' ἑμαυτῶ. In Codices Maz. and Med. it is ἐπ' ἑμαυτόν. Herodotus employs the phrase in the genitive form—βαλλόμενος ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ πέπρηχε, i.e., *seipsum in consilium adhibens, sua sponte et proprio motu fecit*.

852 ἀλλὰ καὶ πρότερον. Christophorsonus and others join the πρότερον, with the διωγμοῦ, making it mean, “before the persecution.” This is contrary to pure Greek idiom, and is also inconsistent with what follows; for by the αὐτῆς ὥρας is meant the very hour at which the edict was decreed, διωγμός here having much the sense of “edict for the persecution.”—VALES.

853 There was a body of men called *frumentarii milites*, employed under the emperors as secret spies, and sent through the provinces to look after accused persons, and collect floating rumors. They were abolished at length by Constantine, as Aurelius Victor writes. They were subordinate to the judges or governors of the provinces. Thus this Frumentarius mentioned here by Dionysius was deputed in obedience to Sabinus, the *praefectus Augustalis*.—VALES.

854 οἱ παῖδες. Musculus and Christophorsonus make it “children.” Valesius prefers “domestics.”

place later, he found the house deserted, and officials keeping guard over it, and ourselves borne into slavery.

3. *And after some other matters, he proceeds thus:*—And what was the method of this marvellous disposition of Providence in his case? For the real facts shall be related. When Timotheus was fleeing in great perturbation, he was met⁸⁵⁵ by a man from the country.⁸⁵⁶ This person asked the reason for his haste, and he told him the truth plainly. Then the man (he was on his way at the time to take part in certain marriage festivities; for it is their custom to spend the whole night in such gatherings), on hearing the fact, held on his course to the scene of the rejoicings, and went in and narrated the circumstances to those who were seated at the feast; and with a single impulse, as if it had been at a given watchword, they all started up, and came on all in a rush, and with the utmost speed. Hurrying up to us, they raised a shout; and as the soldiers who were guarding us took at once to flight, they came upon us, stretched as we were upon the bare couches.⁸⁵⁷ For my part, as God knows, I took them at first to be robbers who had come to plunder and pillage us; and remaining on the bedstead on which I was lying naked, save only that I had on my linen underclothing, I offered them the rest of my dress as it lay beside me. But they bade me get up and take my departure as quickly as I could. Then I understood the purpose of their coming, and cried, entreated, and implored them to go away and leave us alone; and I begged that, if they wished to do us any good, they might anticipate those who led me captive, and strike off my head. And while I was uttering such vociferations, as those who were my comrades and partners in all these things know, they began to lift me up by force. And I threw myself down on my back upon the ground; but they seized me by the hands and feet, and dragged me away, and bore me forth. And those who were witnesses of all these things followed me,—namely, Caius, Faustus, Peter, and Paul. These men also took me up, and hurried me off⁸⁵⁸ out of the little town, and set me on an ass without saddle, and in that fashion carried me away.

4. I fear that I run the risk of being charged with great folly and senselessness, placed as I am under the necessity of giving a narrative of the wonderful dispensation of God's providence in our case. Since, however, as one says, it is good to keep close the secret of a king, but it is honourable to reveal the works of God,⁸⁵⁹ I shall come to close quarters with the violence of Germanus. I came

⁸⁵⁵ ἀπήντητό τις τῶν χωριτῶν. In Codices Maz., Med., Fuk., and Savil., ἀπήντα is written; in Georgius Syncellus it is ἀπηντᾶτο.

⁸⁵⁶ χωριτῶν rendered *indigenarum* by Christophorsonus, and *incolarum*, “inhabitants,” by the interpreter of Syncellus; but it means rather “rustics.” Thus in the Greek Councils the τῶν χωρῶν πρεσβύτεροι, *presbyteri pagorum*, are named. Instead of χωριτῶν, Codices Maz., Med., and Fuk. read χωρικῶν; for thus the Alexandrians named the country people, as we see in the tractate of Sophronius against Dioscorus, and the *Chronicon* of Theophanes, p. 139.

⁸⁵⁷ ἀστρώτων σκιμπόδων.

⁸⁵⁸ φοράδην ἐξήγαγον. The φοράδην may mean, as Valesius puts it, *in sella*, “on a stool or litter.”

⁸⁵⁹ Tobit xii. 7.

to Æmilianus not alone; for there accompanied me also my co-presbyter Maximus, and the deacons Faustus and Eusebius and Chæremon; and one of the brethren who had come from Rome went also with us. Æmilianus, then, did not lead off by saying to me, "Hold no assemblies." That was indeed a thing superfluous for him to do, and the last thing which one would do who meant to go back to what was first and of prime importance.⁸⁶⁰ for his concern was not about our gathering others together in assembly, but about our not being Christians ourselves. From this, therefore, he commanded me to desist, thinking, doubtless, that if I myself should recant, the others would also follow me in that. But I answered him neither unreasonably nor in many words, "We must obey God rather than men."⁸⁶¹ Moreover, I testified openly that I worshipped the only true God and none other, and that I could neither alter that position nor ever cease to be a Christian. Thereupon he ordered us to go away to a village near the desert, called Cephro.

5. Hear also the words which were uttered by both of us as they have been put on record.⁸⁶² When Dionysius, and Faustus, and Maximus, and Marcellus, and Chæremon had been placed at the bar, Æmilianus, as prefect, said: "I have reasoned with you verily in free speech,⁸⁶³ on the clemency of our sovereigns, as they have suffered you to experience it; for they have given you power to save yourselves, if you are disposed to turn to what is accordant with nature, and to worship the gods who also maintain them in their kingdom, and to forget those things which are repugnant to nature. What say ye then to these things? for I by no means expect that you will be ungrateful to them for their clemency, since indeed what they aim at is to bring you over to better courses." Dionysius made reply thus: "All men do not worship all the gods, but different men worship different objects that they suppose to be true gods. Now we worship the one God, who is the Creator of all things, and the very Deity who has committed the sovereignty to the hands of their most sacred majesties Valerian and Gallienus. Him we both reverence and worship; and to Him we pray continually on behalf of the sovereignty of these princes, that it may abide unshaken." Æmilianus, as prefect, said to them: "But who hinders you from worshipping this god too, if indeed he is a god, along with those who are gods by nature? for you have been commanded to worship the gods, and those gods whom all know as such." Dionysius replied: "We worship no other one." Æmilianus, as prefect, said to them: "I perceive that you are at once ungrateful to and insensible of the clemency of our princes. Wherefore you shall not remain in this city; but you shall be despatched to the parts of Libya, and settled in a place called Cephro: for of this place I have made choice in accordance with the command of our princes. It shall not in any wise be lawful for you or for any others, either to hold assemblies or to enter those places which are called cemeteries. And if any one is seen not to have betaken himself to this place whither I have ordered him to repair, or if he be discovered

⁸⁶⁰ τὸ τελευταῖον ἐπὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἀνατρέχοντι, i.e., to begin by interdicting him from holding Christian assemblies, while the great question was whether he was a Christian at all, would have been to place first what was last in order and consequence.

⁸⁶¹ Acts v. 29.

⁸⁶² ὑπεμνηματίσθη.

⁸⁶³ ἀγράφως.

in any assembly, he will prepare peril for himself; for the requisite punishment will not fail. Be off, therefore, to the place whither you have been commanded to go.” So he forced me away, sick as I was; nor did he grant me the delay even of a single day. What opportunity, then, had I to think either of holding assemblies, or of not holding them?⁸⁶⁴

6. *Then after some other matters he says:*—Moreover, we did not withdraw from the visible assembling of ourselves together, with the Lord’s presence.⁸⁶⁵ But those in the city I tried to gather together with all the greater zeal, as if I were present with them; for I was absent indeed in the body, as I said,⁸⁶⁶ but present in the spirit. And in Cephro indeed a considerable church sojourned with us, composed partly of the brethren who followed us from the city, and partly of those who joined us from Egypt. There, too, did God open to us a door⁸⁶⁷ for the word. And at first we were persecuted, we were stoned; but after a period some few of the heathen forsook their idols, and turned to God. For by our means the word was then sown among them for the first time, and before that they had never received it. And as if to show that this had been the very purpose of God in conducting us to them, when we had fulfilled this ministry, He led us away again. For Æmilianus was minded to remove us to rougher parts, as it seemed, and to more Libyan-like districts; and he gave orders to draw all in every direction into the Mareotic territory, and assigned villages to each party throughout the country. But he issued instructions that we should be located specially by the public way, so that we might also be the first to be apprehended;⁸⁶⁸ for he evidently made his arrangements and plans with a view to an easy seizure of all of us whenever he should make up his mind to lay hold of us.

7. Now when I received the command to depart to Cephro, I had no idea of the situation of the place, and had scarcely even heard its name before; yet for all that, I went away courageously and calmly. But when word was brought me that I had to remove to the parts of Colluthion,⁸⁶⁹ those

⁸⁶⁴ Germanus had accused Dionysius of neglecting to hold the assemblies of the brethren before the persecutions broke out, and of rather providing for his own safety by flight. For when persecution burst on them, the bishops were wont first to convene the people, in order to exhort them to hold fast the faith of Christ; there infants and catechumens were baptized, to provide against their departing this life without baptism, and the Eucharist was given to the faithful.—VALES.

⁸⁶⁵ αἰσθητῆς μετὰ τοῦ Κυρίου συναγωγῆς.

⁸⁶⁶ ὡς εἶπον. Codices Maz. and Med. give εἶπεῖν, “so to speak;” Fuk. and Savil. give ὡς εἶπεν ὁ ἀπόστολος, “as the apostle said.” See on 1 Cor. v. 3.

⁸⁶⁷ [Acts xiv. 27; Rev. iii. 8. If the author here quotes the Apocalypse, it is noteworthy. Elucidation, p. 110.]

⁸⁶⁸ ἡμᾶς δὲ μᾶλλον ἐν ὁδῷ καὶ πρώτους καταληφθησομένους ἔταξεν.

⁸⁶⁹ τὰ Κολλουθίωνος, supplying μέρη, as Dionysius has already used the phrase τὰ μέρη τῆς Λιβύης. This was a district in the Mareotic prefecture. Thus we have mention made also of τὰ Βουκόλου, a certain tract in Egypt, deriving its name from the old masters of the soil. Nicephorus writes Κολούθιον, which is probably more correct; for Κολλουθίων is a derivative from Colutho, which was a common name in Egypt. Thus a certain poet of note in the times of Anastasius, belonging to the Thebaid,



present know how I was affected; for here I shall be my own accuser. At first, indeed, I was greatly vexed, and took very ill; for though these places happened to be better known and more familiar to us, yet people declared that the region was one destitute of brethren, and even of men of character, and one exposed to the annoyances of travellers and to the raids of robbers. I found comfort, however when the brethren reminded me that it was nearer the city; and while Cephro brought us large intercourse with brethren of all sorts who came from Egypt, so that we were able to hold our sacred assemblies on a more extensive scale, yet there, on the other hand, as the city was in the nearer vicinity, we could enjoy more frequently the sight of those who were the really beloved, and in closest relationship with us, and dearest to us: for these would come and take their rest among us, and, as in the more remote suburbs, there would be distinct and special meetings.⁸⁷⁰ And thus it turned out.

8. Then, after some other matters, he gives again the following account of what befell him:—Germanus, indeed, boasts himself of many professions of faith. He, forsooth, is able to speak of many adverse things which have happened to him! Can he then reckon up in his own case as many condemnatory sentences⁸⁷¹ as we can number in ours, and confiscations too, and proscriptions, and spoilings of goods, and losses of dignities,⁸⁷² and despisings of worldly honour, and contemnings of the laudations of governors and councillors, and patient subjections to the threatenings of the adversaries,⁸⁷³ and to outcries, and perils, and persecutions, and a wandering life, and the pressure

was so named, as Suidas informs us. There was also a Coluthus, a certain schismatic, in Egypt, in the times of Athanasius, who is mentioned often in the *Apologia*; and Gregory of Nyssa names him Acoluthus in his *Contra Eunomium*, book ii.—VALES.

⁸⁷⁰ κατὰ μέρος συναγωγαί. When the suburbs were somewhat distant from the city, the brethren resident in them were not compelled to attend the meetings of the larger church, but had meetings of their own in a basilica, or some building suitable for the purpose. The Greeks, too, gave the name προάστειον to places at some considerable distance from the city, as well as to suburbs immediately connected with it. Thus Athanasius calls Canopus a προάστειον; and so Daphne is spoken of as the προάστειον of Antioch, Achyrona as that of Nicomedia, and Septimum as that of Constantinople, though these places were distant some miles from the cities. From this place it is also inferred that in the days of Dionysius there was still but one church in Alexandria, where all the brethren met for devotions. But in the time of Athanasius, when several churches had been built by the various bishops, the Alexandrians met in different places, κατὰ μέρος καὶ διηρημένως, as Athanasius says in his first Apology to Constantius; only that on the great festivals, as at the paschal season and at Pentecost, the brethren did not meet separately, but all in the larger church, as Athanasius also shows us—VALES.

⁸⁷¹ ἀποφάσεις.

⁸⁷² Maximus, in the scholia to the book of Dionysius the Areopagite, *De caelesti hierarchia*, ch. 5, states that Dionysius was by profession a *rhetor* before his conversion: ὁ γοῦν μέγας Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεῶν ἐπίσκοπος, ὁ ἀπὸ ῥητόρων, etc.—VALES.

⁸⁷³ τῶν ἐναντίων ἀπειλῶν.

of difficulties, and all kinds of trouble, such as befell me in the time of Decius and Sabinus,⁸⁷⁴ and such also as I have been suffering under the present severities of Æmilianus? But where in the world did Germanus make his appearance? And what mention is made of him? But I retire from this huge act of folly into which I am suffering myself to fall on account of Germanus; and accordingly I forbear giving to the brethren, who already have full knowledge of these things, a particular and detailed narrative of all that happened.

Epistle XI.—To Hermammon.⁸⁷⁵

1. But Gallus did not understand the wickedness of Decius, nor did he note beforehand what it was that wrought his ruin. But he stumbled at the very stone which was lying before his eyes; for when his sovereignty was in a prosperous position, and when affairs were turning out according to his wish,⁸⁷⁶ he oppressed those holy men who interceded with God on behalf of his peace and his welfare. And consequently, persecuting them, he persecuted also the prayers offered in his own behalf.

2. And to John a revelation is made in like manner:⁸⁷⁷ “And there was given unto him,” he says, “a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemy; and power was given unto him, and forty and two months.”⁸⁷⁸ And one finds both things to wonder at in Valerian’s case; and most especially has one

⁸⁷⁴ This Sabinus had been prefect of Egypt in the time of Decius; it is of him that Dionysius writes in his Epistle to Fabius, which is given above. The Æmilianus, prefect of Egypt, who is mentioned here, afterwards seized the imperial power, as Pollio writes in his *Thirty Tyrants*, who, however, calls him general (*ducem*), and not prefect of Egypt.—VALES.

⁸⁷⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vii. 1, 10, 23. Eusebius introduces this extract thus: “In an epistle to Hermammon, Dionysius makes the following remarks upon Gallus” the Emperor.

⁸⁷⁶ κατὰ νοῦν is the reading in the Codices Maz., Med., Fuk, and Savil., and adopted by Rufinus and others. But Robertus Stephanus, from the Codex Regius, gives κατὰ ῥοῦν, “according to the stream,” i.e., favourably.

⁸⁷⁷ Eusebius prefaces this extract thus: “Gallus had not held the government two full years when he was removed, and Valerian, together with his son Gallienus, succeeded him. And what Dionysius has said of him may be learned from his Epistle to Hermammon, in which he makes the following statement.”

⁸⁷⁸ ἐξουσία καὶ μῆνες τεσσαρακονταδύο. Rev. xiii. 5. Baronius expounds the numbers as referring to the period during which the persecution under Valerian continued: see him, under the year 257 A.D., ch. 7. [See Introductory Note, p. 78, *supra*. Here is a quotation from the Apocalypse to be noted in view of our author’s questionings, part i., i. 5, p. 83, *supra*.]



to consider how different it was with him before these events,⁸⁷⁹—how mild and well-disposed he was towards the men of God. For among the emperors who preceded him, there was not one who exhibited so kindly and favourable a disposition toward them as he did; yea, even those who were said to have become Christians openly⁸⁸⁰ did not receive them with that extreme friendliness and graciousness with which he received them at the beginning of his reign; and his whole house was filled then with the pious, and it was itself a very church of God. But the master and president⁸⁸¹ of the Magi of Egypt⁸⁸² prevailed on him to abandon that course, urging him to slay and persecute those pure and holy men as adversaries and obstacles to their accursed and abominable incantations. For there are, indeed, and there were men who, by their simple presence, and by merely showing themselves, and by simply breathing and uttering some words, have been able to dissipate the artifices of wicked demons. But he put it into his mind to practise the impure rites of initiation, and detestable juggleries, and execrable sacrifices, and to slay miserable children, and to make oblations of the offspring of unhappy fathers, and to divide the bowels of the newly-born, and to mutilate and cut up the creatures made by God, as if by such means they⁸⁸³ would attain to blessedness.

3. *Afterwards he subjoins the following:*—Splendid surely were the thank-offerings, then, which Macrianus brought them⁸⁸⁴ for that empire which was the object of his hopes; who, while formerly reputed as the sovereign's faithful public treasurer,⁸⁸⁵ had yet no mind for anything which was either

879 The text is, καὶ τούτων μάλιστα τὰ πρὸ αὐτοῦ ὡς οὕτως ἔσχε συννοεῖν· ἕως ἡπίος, etc. Gallandi emends the sentence thus: καὶ αὐτοῦ τὰ μάλιστα πρὸ τούτων, ὡς οὐχ οὕτως ἔσχε, συννοεῖν, ἕως ἡπίος, etc. Codex Regius gives ὡς μὲν ἡπίος. But Codices Maz. and Med. give ἕως ἡπίος, while Fuk. and Savil. give ἕως γὰρ ἡπίος.

880 He means the Emperor Philip who, as many of the ancients have recorded, was the first of the Roman emperors to profess the Christian religion. But as Dionysius speaks in the plural number, to Philip may be added Alexander Severus, who had an image of Christ in the chapel of his Lares, as Lampridius testifies, and who favoured and sustained the Christians during the whole period of his empire. It is to be noted further, that Dionysius says of these emperors only that *they were said* and thought to be Christians, not that they were so in reality.—GALLANDI

881 ἀρχισυνάγωγος.

882 Baronius thinks that this was that *Magus* who, a little while before the empire of Decius, had incited the Alexandrians to persecute the Christians, and of whom Dionysius speaks in his Epistle to Fabius. What follows here, however, shows that Macrianus is probably the person alluded to.

883 εὐδαιμονήσοντας. So Codices Maz., Med., Fuk. and Savil. read: others give εὐδαιμονήσαντας. It would seem to require εὐδαιμονήσοντα, "as if he would attain;" for the reference is evidently to Valerian himself.

884 By the αὐτοῖς some understand τοῖς βασιλεῦσι; others better, τοῖς δαίμοσι. According to Valesius, the sense is this: that Macrianus having, by the help and presages of the demons, attained his hope of empire, made a due return to them, by setting Valerian in arms against the Christians.

885 ἐπὶ τῶν καθόλου λόγων. The Greeks gave this name to those officials whom the Latins called *rationales*, or *procuratores summae rei*. Under what emperor Macrianus was procurator, is left uncertain here.

reasonable in itself or conducive to the public good,⁸⁸⁶ but subjected himself to that curse of prophecy which says, “Woe unto those who prophesy from their own heart, and see not the public good!”⁸⁸⁷ For he did not discern that providence which regulates all things; nor did he think of the judgment of Him who is before all, and through all, and over all. Wherefore he also became an enemy to His Catholic Church; and besides that, he alienated and estranged himself from the mercy of God, and fled to the utmost possible distance from His salvation.⁸⁸⁸ And in this indeed he demonstrated the reality of the peculiar significance of his name.⁸⁸⁹

4. *And again, after some other matters, he proceeds thus:*—For Valerian was instigated to these acts by this man, and was thereby exposed to contumely and reproach, according to the word spoken *by the Lord* to Isaiah: “Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their own abominations in which their souls delighted; I also will choose their mockeries,⁸⁹⁰ and will recompense their sin.”⁸⁹¹ But this man⁸⁹² (Macrianus), being maddened with his passion for the empire, all unworthy of it as he was, and at the same time having no capacity for assuming the insignia of imperial government,⁸⁹³ by reason of his crippled⁸⁹⁴ body,⁸⁹⁵ put forward his two sons as the bearers, so to speak, of their father’s offences. For unmistakably apparent in their case was the truth of that declaration made by God, when He said, “Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.” For he heaped his own wicked passions, for which he had failed in securing satisfaction,⁸⁹⁶ upon the heads of his sons, and thus wiped off⁸⁹⁷ upon them his own wickedness, and transferred to them, too, the hatred he himself had shown toward God.

⁸⁸⁶ οὐδὲν εὐλογον οὐδὲ καθολικὸν ἐφρόνησεν. There is a play here on the two senses of the word καθολικός, as seen in the official title ἐπὶ τῶν καθόλου λόγων, and in the note of character in οὐδὲ καθολικόν. But it can scarcely be reproduced in the English.

⁸⁸⁷ οὐαὶ τοῖς προφητεύουσιν ἀπὸ καρδίας αὐτῶν καὶ τὸ καθόλου μὴ βλέπουσιν. The quotation is probably from Ezek. xiii. 3, of which Jerome gives this interpretation: *Vae his qui prophetant ex corde suo et omnino non vident.*

⁸⁸⁸ Robertus Stephanus edits τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ἐκκλησίας, “from his Church,” following the Codex Medicæus. But the best manuscripts give σωτηρίας.

⁸⁸⁹ A play upon the name *Macrianus*, as connected with μακράν, “at a distance.” [This playfulness runs through the section.]

⁸⁹⁰ ἐμπαίγματα.

⁸⁹¹ Isa. lxvi. 3, 4.

⁸⁹² Christophorus refers this to Valerian. But evidently the οὗτος δέ introduces a different subject in Macrianus; and besides, Valerian could not be said to have been originally unworthy of the power which he aspired to.

⁸⁹³ τὸν βασιλείον ὑποδῦναι κόσμον.

⁸⁹⁴ ἀναπήρω.

⁸⁹⁵ Joannes Zonaras, in his *Annals*, states that Macrianus was lame.

⁸⁹⁶ ὧν ἦτύχει. So Codex Regius reads. But Codices Maz., Med., and Fuk. give ἠτύχει, “in which he succeeded.”

⁸⁹⁷ ἐξωμόρξατο.

5.⁸⁹⁸ That man,⁸⁹⁹ then, after he had betrayed the one and made war upon the other of the emperors preceding him, speedily perished, with his whole family, root and branch. And Gallienus was proclaimed, and acknowledged by all. And he was at once an old emperor and a new; for he was prior to those, and he also survived them. To this effect indeed is the word spoken *by the Lord* to Isaiah: “Behold, the things which were from the beginning have come to pass; and there are new things which shall now arise.”⁹⁰⁰ For as a cloud which intercepts the sun’s rays, and overshadows it for a little, obscures it, and appears itself in its place, but again, when the cloud has passed by or melted away, the sun, which had risen before, comes forth again and shows itself: so did this Macrianus put himself forward,⁹⁰¹ and achieve access⁹⁰² for himself even to the very empire of Gallienus now established; but now he is *that* no more, because indeed he never was it, while this other, *i.e.*, *Gallienus*, is just as he was. And his empire, as if it had cast off old age, and had purged itself of the wickedness formerly attaching to it, is at present in a more vigorous and flourishing condition, and is now seen and heard of at greater distances, and stretches abroad in every direction.

6. *Then he further indicates the exact time at which he wrote this account, as follows:*—And it occurs to me again to review the days of the imperial years. For I see that those most impious men, whose names may have been once so famous, have in a short space become nameless. But our more pious and godly prince⁹⁰³ has passed his septennium, and is now in his ninth year, in which we are to celebrate the festival.⁹⁰⁴

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⁸⁹⁸ Eusebius introduces the extract thus: He (Dionysius) addressed also an epistle to Hermammon and the brethren in Egypt; and after giving an account of the wickedness of Decius and his successors, he states many other circumstances, and also mentions the peace of Gallienus. And it is best to hear his own relation as follows.

⁸⁹⁹ This is rightly understood of Macrianus, by whose treachery Valerian came under the power of the Persians. Aurelius Victor, Syncellus, and others, testify that Valerian was overtaken by that calamity through the treachery of his generals.

⁹⁰⁰ Isa. xlii. 9.

⁹⁰¹ προστάς. But Valesius would read προσστάς, *adstans*.

⁹⁰² προσπελάσας is the reading of three of the codices and of Nicephorus; others give προπελάσας.

⁹⁰³ [Rom. xiii. 4, 6. St. Paul’s strong expressions in this place must explain these expressions. A prince was, *quoad hoc*, comparatively speaking, godly and pious, as he “attended continually to this very thing.” So, “most religious,” in the Anglican Liturgy.]

⁹⁰⁴ Who ever expressed himself thus,—that one after his seven years was passing his ninth year? This septennium (επταετηρίς) must designate something peculiar, and different from the time following it. It is therefore the septennium of imperial power which he had held along with his father. In the eighth year of that empire, Macrianus possessed himself of the imperial honour specially in Egypt. After his assumption of the purple, however, Gallienus had still much authority in Egypt. At length, in the ninth year of Gallienus, that is, in 261, Macrianus the father and the two sons being slain, the sovereignty of Gallienus was recognised also among the Egyptians. And then Gallienus gave a rescript to Dionysius, Pinna, and Demetrius, bishops of Egypt, to re-establish the sacred places,—a boon which he had granted in the former year. The ninth year of Gallienus, moreover, began

Epistle XII.—To the Alexandrians.⁹⁰⁵

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1. To other men, indeed, the present state of matters would not appear to offer a fit season for a festival: and this certainly is no festal time to them; nor, in sooth, is any other that to them. And I say this, not only of occasions manifestly sorrowful,⁹⁰⁶ but even of all occasions whatsoever which people might consider to be most joyous.⁹⁰⁷ And now certainly all things are turned to mourning, and all men are in grief, and lamentations resound through the city, by reason of the multitude of the dead and of those who are dying day by day. For as it is written in the case of the first-born of the Egyptians, so now too a great cry has arisen. “For there is not a house in which there is not one dead.”⁹⁰⁸ And would that even this were all!

2. Many terrible calamities, it is true, have also befallen us before this. For first they drove us away; and though we were quite alone, and pursued by all, and in the way of being slain, we kept our festival, even at such a time. And every place that had been the scene of some of the successive sufferings which befell any of us, became a seat for our solemn assemblies,—the field, the desert, the ship, the inn, the prison,—all alike. The most gladsome festival of all, however, has been celebrated by those perfect martyrs who have sat down at the feast in heaven. And after these things war and famine surprised us. These were calamities which we shared, indeed, with the heathen. But we had also to bear by ourselves alone those ills with which they outraged us, and we had at the same time to sustain our part in those things which they either did to each other or suffered at each other’s hands; while again we rejoiced deeply in that peace of Christ which He imparted to us alone.

about the midsummer of this year; and the time at which this letter was written by Dionysius, as Eusebius observes, may be gathered from that, and falls consequently before the Paschal season of 262 A.D.—PEARSON, p. 72. GALL.

⁹⁰⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vii. 22. Eusebius prefaces the 21st chapter of his seventh book thus: “When peace had scarcely yet been established, he (Dionysius) returned to Alexandria. But when sedition and war again broke out, and made it impossible for him to have access to all the brethren in that city, divided as they then were into different parties, he addressed them again by an epistle at the Passover, as if he were still an exile from Alexandria.” Then he inserts the epistle to Hierax; and thereafter, in ch. xxiii., introduces the present excerpt thus: “After these events, the pestilence succeeding the war, and the festival being now at hand, he again addressed the brethren by letters, in which he gave the following description of the great troubles connected with that calamity.”

⁹⁰⁶ οὐχ ὅπως τῶν ἐπιλύπων is the reading of Codices Maz., Med., and Savil.; others give, less correctly, ἐπιλοίπων.

⁹⁰⁷ The text gives, ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ εἴ τις περιχαρῆς ὄν οἰθεῖεν μάλιστα, which is put probably for the mere regular construction, ὄν οἰοῖντο ἂν μάλιστα περιχαρῆ. Nicephorus reads, εἴ τις περιχαρῆς ὄν οἰθείη. The idea is, that the heathen could have no real festal time. All seasons, those apparently most joyous, no less than those evidently sorrowful, must be times void of all real rejoicing to them, until they learn the grace of God.

⁹⁰⁸ Ex. xii. 30.

3. And after we and they together had enjoyed a very brief season of rest, this pestilence next assailed us,—a calamity truly more dreadful to them than all other objects of dread, and more intolerable than any other kind of trouble whatsoever;⁹⁰⁹ and a misfortune which, as a certain writer of their own declares, alone prevails over all hope. To us, however, it was not so; but in no less measure than other ills it proved an instrument for our training and probation. For it by no means kept aloof from us, although it spread with greatest violence among the heathen.

4. *To these statements he in due succession makes this addition:*—Certainly very many of our brethren, while, in their exceeding love and brotherly-kindness, they did not spare themselves, but kept by each other, and visited the sick without thought of their own peril, and ministered to them assiduously, and treated them for their healing in Christ, died from time to time most joyfully along with them, lading themselves with pains derived from others, and drawing upon themselves their neighbours' diseases, and willingly taking over to their own persons the burden of the sufferings of those around them.⁹¹⁰ And many who had thus cured others of their sicknesses, and restored them to strength, died themselves, having transferred to their own bodies the death that lay upon these. And that common saying, which else seemed always to be only a polite form of address,⁹¹¹ they expressed in actual fact then, as they departed this life, like the "*off-scourings of all*."⁹¹² Yea, the very best of our brethren have departed this life in this manner, including some presbyters and some deacons, and among the people those who were in highest reputation: so that this very form of death, in virtue of the distinguished piety and the steadfast faith which were exhibited in it, appeared to come in nothing beneath martyrdom itself.

5. And they took the bodies of the saints on their upturned hands,⁹¹³ and on their bosoms, and closed⁹¹⁴ their eyes, and shut their mouths. And carrying them in company,⁹¹⁵ and laying them out decently, they clung to them, and embraced them, and prepared them duly with washing and with attire. And then in a little while after they had the same services done for themselves, as those who



⁹⁰⁹ Dionysius is giving a sort of summary of all the calamities which befell the Alexandrian church from the commencement of his episcopal rule: namely, first, persecution, referring to that which began in the last year of the reign of Philip; then war, meaning the civil war of which he speaks in his Epistle to Fabius; then pestilence, alluding to the sickness which began in the time of Decius, and traversed the land under Gallus and Volusianus.—VALES.

⁹¹⁰ ἀναμασσόμενοι τὰς ἀλιγδόνας. Some make this equivalent to *mitigantes*. It means properly to "wipe off," and so to become "responsible" for. Here it is used apparently to express much the same idea as the two preceding clauses.

⁹¹¹ μόνης φιλοφροσύνης ἔχεσθαι.

⁹¹² The phrase περίφημα πάντων refers to 1 Cor. iv. 13. Valesius supposes that among the Alexandrians it may have been a humble and complimentary form of salutation, ἐγὼ εἰμι περίφημά σου; or that the expression περίφημα πάντων had come to be habitually applied to the Christians by the heathen.

⁹¹³ ὑπτίαις χερσὶ. [See Introductory Note, p. 77.]

⁹¹⁴ καθαιροῦντες.

⁹¹⁵ ὁμοφοροῦντες.

survived were ever following those who departed before them. But among the heathen all was the very reverse. For they thrust aside any who began to be sick, and kept aloof even from their dearest friends, and cast the sufferers out upon the public roads half dead, and left them unburied, and treated them with utter contempt when they died, steadily avoiding any kind of communication and intercourse with death; which, however, it was not easy for them altogether to escape, in spite of the many precautions they employed.⁹¹⁶

Epistle XIII.—To Hierax, a Bishop in Egypt.⁹¹⁷

1. But what wonder should there be if I find it difficult to communicate by letter with those who are settled in remote districts, when it seems beyond my power even to reason with myself, and to take counsel with⁹¹⁸ my own soul? For surely epistolary communications are very requisite for me with those who are, as it were, my own bowels, my closest associates, and my brethren—one in soul with myself, and members, too, of the same Church. And yet no way opens up by which I can transmit such addresses. Easier, indeed, would it be for one, I do not say merely to pass beyond the limits of the province, but to cross from east to west, than to travel from this same Alexandria to Alexandria. For the most central pathway in this city⁹¹⁹ is vaster⁹²⁰ and more impassable even than that extensive and untrodden desert which Israel only traversed in two generations; and our smooth and waveless harbours have become an image of that sea through which the people drove, at the time when it divided itself and stood up like walls on either side, and in whose thoroughfare the Egyptians were drowned. For often they have appeared like the Red Sea, in consequence of the slaughter perpetrated in them. The river, too, which flows by the city, has sometimes appeared drier than the waterless desert, and more parched than that wilderness in which Israel was so overcome with thirst on their journey, that they kept crying out against Moses, and the water was made to stream for them from the precipitous⁹²¹ rock by the power of Him who alone doeth wondrous things.

⁹¹⁶ Compare Defoe, *Plague in London*.]

⁹¹⁷ Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, vii. 21. The preface to this extract in Eusebius is as follows: “After this he (Dionysius) wrote also another Paschal epistle to Hierax, a bishop in Egypt, in which he makes the following statement about the sedition then prevailing at Alexandria.”

⁹¹⁸ Or, for.

⁹¹⁹ μεσαιτάτη τῆς πόλεως. Codex Regius gives τῶν πόλεων. The sedition referred to as thus dividing Alexandria is probably that which broke out when Æmilianus seized the sovereignty in Alexandria. See Pollio’s *Thirty Tyrants*.

⁹²⁰ ἄπειρος. But Codices Fuk. and Savil. give ἄπορος, “impracticable.”

⁹²¹ ἀκροτόμου. It may perhaps mean “smitten” here.

And sometimes, again, it has risen in such flood-tide, that it has overflowed all the country round about, and the roads, and the fields, as if it threatened to bring upon us once more that deluge of waters which occurred in the days of Noah.

2. But now it always flows onward, polluted with blood and slaughters and the drowning struggles of men, just as it did of old, when on Pharaoh's account it was changed by Moses into blood, and made putrid. And what other liquid could cleanse water, which itself cleanses all things? How could that ocean, so vast and impassable for men, though poured out on it, ever purge this bitter sea? Or how could even that great river which streams forth from Eden,⁹²² though it were to discharge the four hearts into which it is divided into the one channel of the Gihon,⁹²³ wash away these pollutions? Or when will this air, befouled as it is by noxious exhalations which rise in every direction, become pure again? For there are such vapours sent forth from the earth, and such blasts from the sea, and breezes from the rivers, and reeking mists from the harbours, that for dew we might suppose ourselves to have the impure fluids⁹²⁴ of the corpses which are rotting in all the underlying elements. And yet, after all this, men are amazed, and are at a loss to understand whence come these constant pestilences, whence these terrible diseases, whence these many kinds of fatal inflictions, whence all that large and multiform destruction of human life, and what reason there is why this mighty city no longer contains within it as great a number of inhabitants, taking all parties into account, from tender children up to those far advanced in old age, as once it maintained of those alone whom it called hale old men.⁹²⁵ But those from forty years of age up to seventy were so much more numerous then, that their number cannot be made up now even when those from fourteen to eighty years of age have been added to the roll and register of persons who are recipients of the public allowances of grain. And those who are youngest in appearance have now become, as it were, equals in age with those who of old were the most aged. And yet, although they thus see the human race constantly diminishing and wasting away upon the earth, they have no trepidation in the midst of this increasing and advancing consumption and annihilation of their own number.

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Epistle XIV.—From His Fourth Festival Epistle.⁹²⁶

⁹²² Ἐδέμ.

⁹²³ Written Γῶν in Codex Alexandrinus, but Γεῶν in Codex Vaticanus.

⁹²⁴ ἰχῶρας.

⁹²⁵ ὠμογέροντας.

⁹²⁶ ἐκ τῆς δ' ἑορταστικῆς ἐπιστολῆς. From the *Sacred Parallels of John of Damascus*, Works, ii. p. 753 C, edit. Paris, 1712.

In his *Ecclesiastical History*, book vii. ch. 20, Eusebius says: "In addition to these epistles, the same Dionysius also composed others about this time, designated his *Festival Epistles*, and in these he says much in commendation of the Paschal feast. One of these he addressed to Flavius, and another to Domitius and Didymus, in which he gives the canon for eight years, and shows

Love is altogether and for ever on the alert, and casts about to do some good even to one who is unwilling to receive it. And many a time the man who shrinks from it under a feeling of shame, and who declines to accept services of kindness on the ground of unwillingness to become troublesome to others, and who chooses rather to bear the burden of his own grievances than cause annoyance and anxiety to any one, is importuned by the man who is full of love to bear with his aids, and to suffer himself to be helped by another, though it might be as one sustaining a wrong, and thus to do a very great service, not to himself, but to another, in permitting that other to be the agent in putting an end to the ill in which he has been involved.

Elucidations.

(Apocalypse, note 7, p. 105, and note 9, p. 106.)

The moderation of Dionysius is hardly less conspicuous than his fearlessness of inquiry in the questions he raises about the Apocalypse.⁹²⁷ He utterly refuses to reject it.⁹²⁸ He testifies to the value set upon it by his fellow-Christians. Only, he doubts as to (*the* John) the “inspired person” who was its author, and with critical skill exposes the inferiority of the Greek of the Apocalypse to that of the Gospel and Epistles of St. John. Obviously he accepts it as part of the canon, only doubting as to the author. Modestly he owns that it passes his understanding. So Calvin forbore to comment upon it, and owned to “headache” when he came to it.

that the Paschal feast ought not to be kept until the passing of the vernal equinox. And besides these, he wrote another epistle to his co-presbyters at Alexandria.”

⁹²⁷ P. 84, note 6.

⁹²⁸ P. 82, note 6.