

## In Praise of the Emperor Constantine

### **Introduction**

I COME not forward prepared with a fictitious narrative, nor with elegance of language to captivate the ear, desiring to charm my hearers as it were, with a siren's voice; nor shall I present the draught of pleasure in cups of gold decorated with lorry flowers (I mean the graces of style) to those who are pleased with such things. Rather would I follow the precepts of the wise, and admonish all to avoid and turn aside from the beaten road, and keep themselves from contact with the vulgar crowd. I come, then, prepared to celebrate our emperor's praises in a newer strain; and, though the number be infinite of those who desire to be my companions in my present task, I am resolved to shun the common track of men, and to pursue that untrodden path which it is unlawful to enter on with unwashed feet. Let those who admire a vulgar style, abounding in puerile subtleties, and who court a pleasing and popular muse, essay, since pleasure is the object they have in view, to charm the earn of men by a narrative of merely human merits. Those, however who are initiated into the universal science, and have attained to Divine as well as human knowledge, and account the choice of the latter as the real excellence, will prefer those virtues of the emperor which Heaven itself approves, and his pious actions, to his merely human accomplishments; and will leave to inferior encomiasts the task of celebrating his lesser merits. For since our emperor is gifted as well with that sacred wisdom which has immediate reference to God, as with the knowledge which concerns the interests of men; let those who are competent to such a task describe his secular acquirements, great and transcendent as they are, and fraught with advantage to mankind (for all that characterizes the emperor is great and noble), yet still inferior to his diviner qualifies, to those who stand without the sacred precincts. Let those, however, who are within the sanctuary, and have access to its inmost and untrodden recesses, close the doors against every profane ear, and unfold, as it were, the secret mysteries of our emperors character to the initiated alone. And let those who have purified their ears in the streams of piety, and raised their thoughts on the soaring wing of the mind itself, join the company which surrounds the Sovereign Lord of all, and learn in silence the divine mysteries. Meanwhile let the sacred oracles, given, not by the spirit of divination (or rather let me say of madness and folly), but by the inspiration of Divine truth, be our instructors in these mysteries; speaking to us of sovereignty, generally: the heavenly array which surrounds the Lord of all; of that exemplar of imperial power which is before us, and that counterfeit coin: and, lastly, of the consequences which result from both. With these oracles, then, to initiate us in the knowledge of the sacred rites, let us essay, as follows, the commencement of our divine mysteries.

### **The Oration**

#### **CHAPTER I.**

TO-DAY is the festival of our great emperor: and we his children rejoice therein, feeling the inspiration of our sacred theme. He who presides over our solemnity is the Great Sovereign himself; he, I mean, who is truly great; of whom I affirm (nor will the sovereign who hears me be offended, but will rather aprepels the gaze of every eye from his Divine majesty. His ministers are the heavenly hosts; his armies the supernal powers, angels, the companies of archangels, the chorus of holy spirits, draw from and reflect his radiance as from the fountains of everlasting light. Yea every light, and specially those divine and incorporeal intelligences whose place is beyond the heavenly sphere, celebrate this august Sovereign with lofty and sacred strains of praise. The vast expanse of heaven, like an azure veil is interposed between those without, and those who inhabit his royal mansions: while round this expanse the sun and moon, with the rest of the heavenly luminaries (like torch-bearers around the entrance of the imperial palace), perform, in honor of their sovereign, their appointed courses; holding forth, at the word of his command, an ever-burning light to those whose lot is cast in the darker regions without the pale of heaven. And surely when I remember that our own victorious emperor renders praises to this Mighty Sovereign, I do well to follow him, knowing as I do that to him alone we owe that imperial power under which we live. The pious Caesars, instructed by their father's wisdom, acknowledge him as the source of every blessing: the soldiery, the entire body of the people, both in the country and in the cities of the empire, with the governors of the several provinces, assembling together in accordance with the precept of their great Saviour and Teacher, worship him. In short, the whole family of mankind, of every nation, tribe, and tongue, both collectively and severally, however diverse their opinions on other subjects, are unanimous in this one confession; and, in obedience to the reason implanted in them, and the spontaneous and uninstructed impulse of their own minds, unite in calling on the One and only God. Nay, does not the universal frame of earth acknowledge him her Lord,

and declare, by the vegetable and animal life which she produces her subjection to the will of a superior Power? The rivers, flowing with abundant stream, and the perennial fountains, springing from hidden and exhaust-less depths, ascribe to him the cause of their marvellous source. The mighty waters of the sea, enclosed in chambers of unfathomable ing currents of the winds, and the airy courses of the clouds, all reveal his presence to those to whom his Person is invisible. The all-radiant sun, who holds his constant career through the lapse of ages, owns him Lord alone, and obedient to his will, dares not depart from his appointed path. The inferior splendor of the moon, alternatively diminished and increased at stated periods, is subject to his Divine command. The beauteous mechanism of the heavens, glittering with the hosts of stars, moving in harmonious order, and preserving the measure of each several orbit, proclaims him the giver of all light: yea, all the heavenly luminaries maintaining at his will and word a grand and perfect unity of motion, pursue the track of their ethereal career, and complete in the lapse of revolving ages their distant course. The alternate recurrence of day and night, the changing seasons, the order and proportion of the universe, all declare the manifold wisdom of [his boundless power]. To him the unseen agencies which hold their course throughout the expanse of space, render the due tribute of praise. To him this terrestrial globe itself, to him the heavens above, and the choirs beyond the vault of heaven, give honor as to their mighty Sovereign: the angelic hosts greet him with ineffable songs of Praise; and the spirits which draw their being from incorporeal light, adore him as their Creator. The everlasting ages which were before this heaven and earth, with other periods beside them, infinite, and antecedent to all visible creation acknowledge him the sole and supreme Sovereign and Lord. Lastly, he who is in all, before, and after all, his only begotten, pre-existent Word, the great High Priest of the mighty God, elder than all time and every age, devoted to his Father's glory, first and alone makes intercession with him for the salvation of mankind. Supreme and pre-eminent Ruler of the universe, he shares the glory of his Father's kingdom: for he is that Light, which, transcendent above the universe, encircles the Father's Person, interposing and dividing between the eternal and uncreated Essence and all derived existence: that Light which, streaming from on high, proceeds from that Deity who knows not origin or end, and illumines the super-celestial regions, and all that heaven itself contains, with the radiance of wisdom bright beyond the splendor of the sun. This is he who holds a supreme dominion over this whole world, who is over and in all things, and pervades all things visible and invisible; the Word of God. From whom and by whom our divinely favored emperor, receiving, as it were a transcript of the Divine sovereignty, directs, in imitation of God himself, the administration of this world's affairs.

## CHAPTER II.

THIS only begotten Word of God reigns, from ages which had no beginning, to infinite and endless ages, the partner of his Father's kingdom. And [our emperor] ever beloved by him, who derives the source of imperial authority from above, and is strong in the power of his sacred title, has controlled the empire of the world for a long period of years. Again, that Preserver of the universe orders these heavens and earth, and the celestial kingdom, consistently with his Father's will. Even so our emperor whom he loves, by bringing those whom he rules on earth to the only begotten Word and Saviour renders them fit subjects of his kingdom. And as he who is the common Saviour of mankind, by his invisible and Divine power as the good shepherd, drives far away from his flock, like savage beasts, those apostate spirits which once flew through the airy tracts above this earth, and fastened on the souls of men; so this his friend, graced by his heavenly favor with victory over all his foes, subdues and chastens the open adversaries of the truth in accordance with the usages of war. He who is the pre-existent Word, the Preserver of all things, imparts to his disciples the seeds of true wisdom and salvation, and at once enlightens and gives them understanding in the knowledge of his Father's kingdom. Our emperor, his friend, acting as interpreter to the Word of God, aims at recalling the whole human race to the knowledge of God; proclaiming clearly in the ears of all, and declaring with powerful voice the laws of truth and godliness to all who dwell on the earth. Once more, the universal Saviour opens the heavenly gates of his Father's kingdom to those whose course is thitherward from this world. Our emperor, emulous of his Divine example, having purged his earthly dominion from every stain of impious error, invites each holy and pious worshiper within his imperial mansions, earnestly desiring to save with all its crew that mighty vessel of which he is the appointed pilot. And he alone of all who have wielded the imperial power of Rome, being honored by the Supreme Sovereign with a reign of three decennial periods, now celebrates this festival, not, his ancestors might have done, in honor of infernal demons, or the apparitions of seducing spirits, or of the fraud and deceitful arts of impious men; but as an act of thanksgiving to him by whom he has thus been honored, and in

acknowledgment of the blessings he has received at his hands. He does not, in imitation of ancient usage, defile his imperial mansions with blood and gore, nor propitiate the infernal deities with fire and smoke, and sacrificial offerings; but dedicates to the universal Sovereign a pleasant and acceptable sacrifice, even his own imperial soul, and a mind truly fitted for the service of God. For this sacrifice alone is grateful to him: and this sacrifice our emperor has learned, with purified mind and thoughts, to present as an offering without the intervention of fire and blood, while his own piety, strengthened by the truthful doctrines with which his soul is stored, he sets forth in magnificent language the praises of God, and imitates his Divine philanthropy by his own imperial acts. Wholly devoted to him, he dedicates himself as a noble offering, a first-fruit of that world, the government of which is intrusted to his charge. This first and greatest sacrifice our emperor first dedicates to God; and then, as a faithful shepherd, he offers, not "famous hecatombs of firstling lambs," but the souls of that flock which is the object of his care, those rational beings whom he leads to the knowledge and pious worship of God.

### CHAPTER III.

AND gladly does he accept and welcome this sacrifice, and commend the presenter of so august and noble an offering, by protracting his reign to a lengthened period of years, giving larger proofs of his beneficence in proportion to the emperor's holy services to himself. Accordingly he permits him to celebrate each successive festival during great and general prosperity throughout the empire, advancing one of his sons, at the recurrence of each decennial period, to a share of his own imperial power. The eldest, who bears his father's name, he received as his partner in the empire about the close of the first decade of his reign: the second, next in point of age, at the second; and the third in like manner at the third decennial period, the occasion of this our present festival. And now that the fourth period has commenced, and the time of his reign is still further prolonged, he desires to extend his imperial authority by calling still more of his kindred to partake his power; and, by the appointment of the Caesars, fulfills the predictions of the holy prophets, according to what they uttered ages before: "And the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom." And thus the Almighty Sovereign himself accords an increase both of years and of children to our most pious emperor, and renders his sway over the nations of the world still fresh and flourishing, as though it were even now springing up in its earliest vigor. He it is who appoints him this present festival, in that he has made him victorious over every enemy that disturbed his peace: he it is who displays him as an example of true godliness to the human race. And thus our emperor, like the radiant sun, illuminates the most distant subjects of his empire through the presence of the Caesars, as with the far piercing rays of his own brightness. To us who occupy the eastern regions he has given a son worthy of himself; a second and a third respectively to other departments of his empire, to be, as it were, brilliant reflectors of the light which proceeds from himself. Once more, having harnessed, as it were, under the self-same yoke the four most noble Caesars as horses in the imperial chariot, he sits on high and directs their course by the reins of holy harmony and concord; and, himself every where present, and observant of every event, thus traverses every region of the world. Lastly, invested as he is with a semblance of heavenly sovereignty, he directs his gaze above, and frames his earthly government according to the pattern of that Divine original, feeling strength in its conformity to the monarchy of God. And this conformity is granted by the universal Sovereign to man alone of the creatures of this earth: for he only is the author of sovereign power, who decrees that all should be subject to the rule of one. And surely monarchy far transcends every other constitution and form of government: for that democratic equality of power, which is its opposite, may rather be described as anarchy and disorder. Hence there is one God, and not two, or three, or more: for to assert a plurality of gods is plainly to deny the being of God at all. There is one Sovereign; and his Word and royal Law is one: a Law not expressed in syllables and words, not written or engraved on tablets, and therefore subject to the ravages of time; but the living and self-subsisting Word, who himself is God, and who administers his Father's kingdom on behalf of all who are after him and subject to his power. His attendants are the heavenly hosts; the myriads of God's angelic ministers; the super-terrestrial armies, of unnumbered multitude; and those unseen spirits within heaven itself, whose agency is employed in regulating the order of this world. Ruler and chief of all these is the royal Word, acting as Regent of the Supreme Sovereign. To him the names of Captain, and great High Priest, Prophet of the Father, Angel of mighty counsel, Brightness of the Father's light, Only begotten Son, with a thousand other titles, are ascribed in the oracles of the sacred writers. And the Father, having constituted him the living Word, and Law and Wisdom the fullness of all blessing, has presented this best and greatest gift to all who are the subjects of his sovereignty. And he himself, who pervades all things, and is every where present, unfolding his Father's

205 bounties to all with unsparing hand, has accorded a specimen of his sovereign power even to his rational creatures of this earth, in that he has provided the mind of man, who is formed after his own image, with Divine faculties, whence it is capable of other virtues also, which flow from the same heavenly source. For he only is wise, who is the only God: he only is essentially good: he only is of mighty power, the Parent of justice, the Father of reason and wisdom, the Fountain of light and life, 210 the Dispenser of truth and virtue: in a word, the Author of empire itself, and of all dominion and power.

#### CHAPTER IV.

BUT whence has man this knowledge, and who has ministered these truths to mortal ears? Or whence has a tongue of flesh the power to speak of things so utterly 215 distinct from fleshly or material substance? Who has gazed on the invisible King, and beheld these perfections in him? The bodily sense may comprehend elements and their combinations, of a nature kindred to its own: but no one yet has boasted to have scanned with corporeal eye that unseen kingdom which governs all things nor has mortal nature yet discerned the beauty of perfect wisdom. Who has beheld the face of 220 righteousness through the medium of flesh? And whence came the idea of legitimate sovereignty and imperial power to man? Whence the thought of absolute dominion to a being composed of flesh and blood? Who declared those ideas which are invisible and undefined, and that incorporeal essence which has no external form, to the mortals of this earth? Surely there was but one interpreter of these things; the all-pervading 225 Word of God. For he is the author of that rational and intelligent being which exists in man; and, being himself one with his Father's Divinenature, he sheds upon his offspring the out-flowings of his Father's bounty. Hence the natural and untaught powers of thought, which all men, Greeks or Barbarians, alike possess: hence the perception of reason and wisdom, the seeds of integrity and righteousness, the 230 understanding of the arts of life, the knowledge of virtue, the precious name of wisdom, and the noble love of philosophic learning. Hence the knowledge of all that is great and good: hence apprehension of God himself, and a life worthy of his worship: hence the royal authority of man, and his invincible lordship over the creatures of this world. And when that Word, who is the Parent of rational beings, 235 had impressed a character on the mind of man according to the image and likeness of God, and had made him a royal creature, in that he gave him alone of all earthly creatures capacity to rule and to obey (as well as forethought and foreknowledge even here, concerning the promised hope of his heavenly kingdom, because of which he himself came, and, as the Parent of his children, disdained not to hold converse with 240 mortal men); he continued to cherish the seeds which himself had sown, and renewed his gracious favors from above; holding forth to all the promise of sharing his heavenly kingdom. Accordingly he called men, and exhorted them to be ready for their heavenward journey, and to provide themselves with the garment which became their calling. And by an indescribable power he filled the world in every part with his 245 doctrine, expressing by the similitude of an earthly kingdom that heavenly one to which he earnestly invites all mankind, and presents it to them as a worthy object of their hope.

#### CHAPTER V.

AND in this hope our divinely-favored emperor partakes even in this present life, 250 gifted as he is by God with native virtues, and having received into his soul the out-flowings of his favor. His reason he derives from the great Source of all reason: he is wise, and good, and just, as having fellowship with perfect Wisdom, Goodness, and Righteousness: virtuous, as following the pattern of perfect virtue: valiant, as partaking of heavenly strength. And truly may he deserve the imperial title, who has 255 formed his soul to royal virtues, according to the standard of that celestial kingdom. But he who is a stranger to these blessings, who denies the Sovereign of the universe, and owns no allegiance to the heavenly Father of spirits; who invests not himself with the virtues which become, an emperor, but overlays his soul with moral deformity and baseness; who for royal clemency substitutes the fury of a savage 260 beast; for a generous temper, the incurable venom of malicious wickedness; for prudence, folly; for reason and wisdom, that recklessness which is the most odious of all vices, for from it, as from a spring of bitterness, proceed the most pernicious fruits; such as inveterate profligacy of life, covetousness, murder, impiety and defiance of God; surely one abandoned to; such vices as these, however he may be 265 deemed powerful through despotic violence, has no true title to the name of Emperor. For how should he whose soul is impressed with a thousand absurd images of false deities, be able to exhibit a counterpart of the true and heavenly sovereignty? Or how can he be absolute lord of others, who has subjected himself to the dominion of a thousand cruel masters? a slave of low delights and un-governed lust, a slave of 270 wrongfully-extorted wealth, of rage and passion, as well as of cowardice and terror;

a slave of ruthless demons, and soul-destroying spirits? Let then, our emperor, on the testimony of truth itself, be declared alone worthy of the title; who is dear to the Supreme Sovereign himself; who alone is free, nay, who is truly lord: above the thirst of wealth, superior to sexual desire; victorious even over natural pleasures; controlling, not controlled by, anger and passion. He is indeed an emperor, and bears a title corresponding to his deeds; a VICTOR in truth, who has gained the victory over those passions which overmaster the rest of men: whose character is formed after the Divine original a of the Supreme Sovereign, and whose mind reflects, as in a mirror, the radiance of his virtues. Hence is our emperor perfect in discretion, in goodness, in justice, in courage, in piety, in devotion to God: he truly and only is a philosopher, since he knows himself, and is fully aware that supplies of every blessing are showered on him from a source quite external to himself, even from heaven itself. Declaring the august title of supreme authority by the splendor of his vesture, he alone worthily wears that imperial purple which so well becomes him. He is indeed an emperor, who calls on and implores in prayer the favor of his heavenly Father night and day, and whose ardent desires are fixed on his celestial kingdom. For he knows that present things, subject as they are to decay and death, flowing on and disappearing like a river's stream, are not worthy to be compared with him who is sovereign of all; therefore it is that he longs for the incorruptible and incorporeal kingdom of God. And this kingdom he trusts he shall obtain, elevating his mind as he does in sublimity of thought above the vault of heaven, and filled with inexpressible longing for the glories which shine there, in comparison with which he deems the precious things of this present world but darkness. For he sees earthly sovereignty to be but a petty and fleeting dominion over a mortal and temporary life, and rates it not much higher than the goatherd's, or shepherd's, or herdsman's power: nay, as more burdensome than theirs, and exercised over more stubborn subjects. The acclamations of the people, and the voice of flattery, he reckons rather troublesome than pleasing, because of the steady constancy of his character, and genuine discipline of his mind. Again, when he beholds the military service of his subjects, the vast array of his armies, the multitudes of horse and foot, entirely devoted to his command, he feels no astonishment, no pride at the possession of such mighty power; but turns his thoughts inward on himself, and recognizes the same common nature there. He smiles at his vesture, embroidered with gold and flowers, and at the imperial purple and diadem itself, when he sees the multitude gaze in wonder, like children at a bugbear, on the splendid spectacle. Himself superior to such feelings, he clothes his soul with the knowledge of God, that vesture, the broidery of which is temperance, righteousness, piety, and all other virtues; a vesture such as truly becomes a sovereign. The wealth which others so much desire, as gold, silver, or precious gems, he regards to be, as they really are, in themselves mere stones and worthless matter, of no avail to preserve or defend from evil. For what power have these things to free from disease, or repel the approach of death? And knowing as he does this truth by personal experience in the use of these things, he regards the splendid attire of his subjects with calm indifference, and smiles at the childishness of those to whom they prove attractive. Lastly, he abstains from all excess in food and wine, and leaves superfluous dainties to gluttons, judging that such indulgences, I however suitable to others, are not so to him, and deeply convinced of their pernicious tendency, and their effect in darkening the intellectual powers of the soul. For all these reasons, ur divinely taught and noble-minded emperor, aspiring to higher objects than this life affords, calls upon his heavenly Father as one who longs for his kingdom; exhibits a pious spirit in each action of his life; and finally, as a wise and good instructor, imparts to his subjects the knowledge of him who is the Sovereign Lord of all.

#### CHAPTER VI.

AND God himself, as an earnest of future reward, assigns to him now as it were tricennial crowns composed of prosperous periods of time; and now, after the revolution of three circles of ten years, he grants permission to all mankind to celebrate this general, nay rather, this universal festival. And while those on earth thus rejoice, crowned as it were with the flowers of divine knowledge, surely, we may not unduly suppose that the heavenly choirs, attracted by a natural sympathy, unite their joy with the joy of those on earth: nay, that the Supreme Sovereign himself, as a gracious father, delights in the worship of duteous children, and for this reason is pleased to honor the author and cause of their obedience through a lengthened period of time; and, far from limiting his reign to three decennial circles of years, he extends it to the remotest period, even to far distant eternity. Now eternity in its whole extent is beyond the power of decline or death: its beginning and extent alike incapable of being scanned by mortal thoughts. Nor will it suffer its central point to be perceived, nor that which is termed its present duration to be grasped by the inquiring mind. Far less, then, the future, or the past: for the one is not, but



340 is already gone; while the future has not yet arrived, and therefore is not. As  
 regards what is termed the present time, it vanishes even as we think or speak, more  
 swiftly than the word itself is uttered. Nor is it possible in any sense to apprehend  
 this time as present; for we must either expect the future, or contemplate the past;  
 the present slips from us, and is gone, even in the act of thought. Eternity, then,  
 345 in its whole extent, resists and refuses subjection to mortal reason. But it does not  
 refuse to acknowledge its own Sovereign and Lord, and bears him as it were mounted on  
 itself, rejoicing in the fair trappings which he bestows. And he himself, not binding  
 it, as the poet imagined, with a golden chain, but as it were controlling its  
 movements by the reins of ineffable wisdom, has adjusted its months and seasons, its  
 350 times and years, and the alterations of day and night, with perfect harmony, and has  
 thus attached to it limits and measures of various kinds. For eternity, being in its  
 nature direct, and stretching onward into infinity, and receiving its name, eternity,  
 as having an everlasting existence, and being similar in all its parts, or rather  
 having no division or distance, progresses only in a line of direct extension. But  
 355 God, who has distributed it by intermediate sections, and has divided it, like a far  
 extended line, in many points, has included in it a vast number of portions; and  
 though it is in its nature one, and resembles unity itself, he has attached to it a  
 multiplicity of numbers, and has given it, though formless in itself, an endless  
 variety of forms. For first of all he framed in it formless matter, as a substance  
 capable of receiving all forms. He next, by the power of the number two, imparted  
 360 quality to matter, and gave beauty to that which before was void of all grace. Again,  
 by means of the number three, he framed a body compounded of matter and form, and  
 presenting the three dimensions of breadth, and length, and depth. Then, from the  
 doubling of the number two, he devised the quaternion of the elements, earth, water,  
 air, and fire, and ordained them to be everlasting sources for the supply of this  
 365 universe. Again, the number four produces the number ten. For the aggregate of one,  
 and two, and three, and four, is ten. And three multiplied with ten discovers the  
 period of a month: and twelve successive months complete the course of the sun. Hence  
 the revolutions of years, and changes of the seasons, which give grace, like variety  
 of color in painting, to that eternity which before was formless and devoid of  
 370 beauty, for the refreshment and delight of those whose lot it is to traverse therein  
 the course of life. For as the ground is defined by stated distances for those who  
 run in hope of obtaining the prize; and as the road of those who travel on a distant  
 journey is marked by resting-places and measured intervals, that the traveler's  
 courage may not fail at the interminable prospect; even so the Sovereign of the  
 375 universe, controlling eternity itself within the restraining power of his own wisdom,  
 directs and turns its course as he judges best. The same God, I say, who thus clothes  
 the once undefined eternity as with fair colors and blooming flowers, gladdens the  
 day with the solar rays; and, while he overspreads the night with a covering of  
 darkness, yet causes the glittering stars, as golden spangles, to shine therein. It  
 380 is he who lights up the brilliancy of the morning star, the changing splendor of the  
 moon, and the glorious companies of the starry host, and has arrayed the expanse of  
 heaven, like some vast mantle, in colors of varied beauty. Again, having created the  
 lofty and profound expanse of air, and caused the world in its length and breadth to  
 feel its cooling influence, he decreed that the air itself should be graced with  
 385 birds of every kind, and left open this vast ocean of space to be traversed by every  
 creature, visible or invisible, whose course is through the tracts of heaven. In the  
 midst of this atmosphere he poised the earth, as it were its center, and encompassed  
 it with the ocean as with a beautiful azure vesture. Having ordained this earth to be  
 at once the home, the nurse, and the mother of all the creatures it contains, and  
 390 watered it both with rain and water-springs, he caused it to abound in plants and  
 flowers of every species, for the enjoyment of life. And when he had formed man in  
 his own likeness, the noblest of earthly creatures, and dearest to himself, a  
 creature gifted with intellect and knowledge, the child of reason and wisdom, he gave  
 him dominion over all other animals which move and live upon the earth. For man was  
 395 in truth of all earthly creatures the dearest to God: man, I say, to whom, as an  
 indulgent Father, he has subjected the brute creation; for whom he has made the ocean  
 navigable, and crowned the earth with a profusion of plants of every kind; to whom he  
 has granted reasoning faculties for acquiring all science; under whose control he has  
 placed even the creatures of the deep, and the winged inhabitants of the air; to whom  
 400 he has permitted the contemplation of celestial objects, and revealed the course and  
 changes of the sun and moon, and the periods of the planets and fixed stars. In  
 short, to man alone of earthly beings has he given commandment to acknowledge him as  
 his heavenly Father, and to celebrate his praises as the Supreme Sovereign of  
 eternity itself. But the unchangeable course of eternity the Creator has limited by  
 405 the four seasons of the year, terminating the winter by the approach of spring, and  
 regulating as with an equal balance that season which commences the annual period.  
 Having thus graced the eternal course of time with the varied productions of spring,

he added the summer's heat; and then granted as it were a relief of toil by the interval of autumn: and lastly, refreshing and cleansing the season by the showers of winter, he brings it, rendered sleek land glossy, like a noble steed, by these abundant rains, once more to the gates of spring. As soon, then, as the Supreme Sovereign had thus connected his own eternity by these cords of wisdom with the annual circle, he committed it to the guidance of a mighty Governor, even his only begotten Word, to whom, as the Preserver of all creation, he yielded the reins of universal power. And he, receiving this inheritance as from a beneficent Father, and uniting all things both above and beneath the circumference of heaven in one harmonious whole, directs their uniform course; providing with perfect justice whatever is expedient for his rational creatures on the earth, appointing its allotted limits to human life, and granting to all alike permission to anticipate even here the commencement of a future existence. For he has taught them that beyond this present world there is a divine and blessed state of being, reserved for those who have been supported here by the hope of heavenly blessings; and that those who have lived a virtuous and godly life will remove hence to a far better habitation; while he adjudges to those who have been guilty and wicked here a place of punishment according to their crimes. Again, as in the distribution of prizes at the public games, he proclaims various crowns to the victors, and invests each with the rewards of different virtues: but for our good emperor, who is clothed in the very robe of piety, he declares that a higher recompense of his toils is prepared; and, as a prelude to this recompense, permits us now to assemble at this festival, which is composed of perfect numbers, of decades thrice, and triads ten times repeated. The first of these, the triad, is the offspring of the unit, while the unit is the mother of number itself, and presides over all months, and seasons, and years, and every period of time. It may, indeed, be justly termed the origin, foundation, and principle of all number, and derives its name from its abiding character. For, while every other number is diminished or increased according to the subtraction or addition of others, the unit alone continues fixed and steadfast, abstracted from all multitude and the numbers which are formed from it, and resembling that indivisible essence which is distinct from all things beside, but by virtue of participation in which the nature of all things else subsists. For the unit is the originator of every number, since all multitude is made up by the composition and addition of units; nor is it possible without the unit to conceive the existence of number at all. But the unit itself is independent of multitude, apart from and superior to all number; forming, indeed, and making all, but receiving no increase from any. Kindred to this is the triad; equally indivisible and perfect, the first of those sums which are formed of even and uneven numbers. For the perfect number two, receiving the addition of the unit, forms the triad, the first perfect compound number. And the triad, by explaining what equality is, first taught men justice, having itself an equal beginning, and middle, and end. And it is also an image of the mysterious, most holy, and royal Trinity, which, though itself without beginning or origin, yet contains the germs, the reasons, and causes of the existence of all created things. Thus the power of the triad may justly be regarded as the first cause of all things. Again, the number ten, which contains the end of all numbers, and terminates them in itself, may truly be called a full and perfect number, as comprehending every species and every measure of numbers, proportions, concords, and harmonies. For example, the units by addition form and are terminated by the number ten; and, having this number as their parent, and as it were the limit of their course they round this as the goal of their career. Then they perform a second circuit, and again a third, and a fourth, until the tenth and thus by ten decades they complete the hundredth number. Returning thence to the first starting point, they again proceed to the number ten, and having ten times completed the hundredth number, again they recede, and perform round the same barriers their protracted course, proceeding from themselves back to themselves again, with revolving motion. For the unit is the tenth often, and ten units make up a decade, which is itself the limit, the settled goal and boundary of units: it is that which terminates the infinity of number; the term and end of units. Again, the triad combined with the decade, and performing a threefold circuit of tens, produces that most natural number, thirty. For as the triad is in respect to units, so is the number thirty in respect to tens. It is also the constant limit to the course of that luminary which is second to the sun in brightness. For the course of the moon from one conjunction with the sun to the next, completes the period of a month; after which, receiving as it were a second birth, it recommences a new light, and other days, being adorned and honored with thirty units, three decades, and ten triads. In the same manner is the universal reign of our victorious emperor distinguished by the giver of all good, and now enters on a new sphere of blessing, accomplishing, at present, this tricennialian festival, but reaching forward beyond this to far more distant intervals of time, and cherishing the hope of future blessings in the celestial kingdom; where, not a single sun, but infinite hosts of light surround the

Almighty Sovereign, each surpassing the splendor of the sun, glorious and resplendent  
 with rays derived from the everlasting source of light. There the soul enjoys its  
 existence, surrounded by fair and unfading blessings; there is a life beyond the  
 480 reach of sorrow; there the enjoyment of pure and holy pleasures, and a time of  
 unmeasured and endless duration, extending into illimitable space; not defined by  
 intervals of days and months, the revolutions of years, or the recurrence of times  
 and seasons, but commensurate with a life which knows no end. And this life needs not  
 the light of the sun, nor the lustre of the moon or the starry host, since it has the  
 485 great Luminary himself, even God the Word, the only begotten Son of the Almighty  
 Sovereign. Hence it is that the mystic and sacred oracles reveal him to be the Sun of  
 righteousness, and the Light which far transcends all light. We believe that he  
 illumines also the thrice-blessed powers of heaven with the rays of righteousness,  
 and the brightness of wisdom, and that he receives truly pious souls, not within the  
 490 sphere of heaven alone, but into his own bosom, and confirms indeed the assurances  
 which he himself has given. No mortal eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor can the mind  
 in its vesture of flesh understand what things are prepared for those who have been  
 here adorned with the graces of godliness; blessings which await thee too, most pious  
 emperor, to whom alone since the world began has the Almighty Sovereign of the  
 495 universe granted power to purify the course of human life: to whom also he has  
 revealed his own symbol of salvation, whereby he overcame the power of death, and  
 triumphed over every enemy. And this victorious trophy, the scourge of evil spirits,  
 thou hast arrayed against the errors of idol worship, and hast obtained the victory  
 not only over all thy impious and savage foes, but over equally barbarous  
 500 adversaries, the evil spirits themselves.

## CHAPTER VII.

FOR whereas we are composed of two distinct natures, I mean of body and spirit, of  
 which the one is visible to all, the other i invisible, against both these natures  
 two kinds of barbarous and savage enemies, the one invisibly, the other openly, are  
 505 constantly arrayed. The one oppose our bodies with bodily force the other with  
 incorporeal assaults besiege the naked soul itself. Again, the visible barbarians,  
 like the wild nomad tribes, no better than savage beasts, assail the nations of  
 civilized men, ravage their country, and enslave their cities, rushing on those who  
 inhabit them like ruthless wolves of the desert, and destroying all who fall under  
 510 their power. But those unseen foes, more cruel far than barbarians, I mean the soul-  
 destroying demons whose course is through the regions of the air, had succeeded,  
 through the snares of vile polytheism, in enslaving the entire human race, insomuch  
 that they no longer recognized the true God, but wandered in the mazes of atheistic  
 error. For they procured, I know not whence, gods who never anywhere existed, and set  
 515 him aside who is the only and the true God, as though he were not. Accordingly the  
 generation of bodies was esteemed by them a deity, and so the opposite principle to  
 this, their dissolution and destruction, was also deified. The first, as the author  
 of generative power, was honored with rites under the name of Venus: the second, as  
 rich, and mighty in dominion over the human race, received the names of Pluto, and  
 520 Death. For men in those ages, knowing no other than naturally generated life,  
 declared the cause and origin of that life to be divine: and again, believing in no  
 existence after death, they proclaimed Death himself a universal conqueror and a  
 mighty god. Hence, unconscious of responsibility, as destined to be annihilated by  
 death, they lived a life unworthy of the name, in the practice of actions deserving a  
 525 thousand deaths. No thought of God could enter their minds, no expectation of Divine  
 judgment, no recollection of, no reflection on, their spiritual existence:  
 acknowledging one dread superior, Death, and persuaded that the dissolution of their  
 bodies by his power was final annihilation, they bestowed on Death the title of a  
 mighty, a wealthy god, and hence the name of Pluto. Thus, then, Death became to them  
 530 a god; nor only so, but whatever else they accounted precious in comparison with  
 death, whatever contributed to the luxuries of life. Hence animal pleasure became to  
 them a god; nutrition, and its production, a god; the fruit of trees, a god; drunken  
 riot, a god; carnal desire and pleasure, a god. Hence the mysteries of Ceres and  
 Proserpine, the rape of the latter, and her subsequent restoration, by Pluto: hence  
 535 the orgies of Bacchus, and Hercules overcome by drunkenness as by a mightier god:  
 hence the adulterous rites of Cupid and of Venus: hence Jupiter himself infatuated  
 with the love of women, and of Ganymede: hence the licentious legends of deities  
 abandoned to effeminacy and pleasure. Such were the weapons of superstition whereby  
 these cruel barbarians and enemies of the Supreme God afflicted, and indeed entirely  
 540 subdued, the human race; erecting everywhere the monuments of impiety, and rearing in  
 every corner the shrines and temples of their false religion. Nay, so far were the  
 ruling powers of those times enslaved by the force of error, as to appease their gods  
 with the blood of their own countrymen and kindred; to whet their swords against  
 those who stood forward to defend the truth; to maintain a ruthless war and raise



545 unholy hands, not against foreign or barbarian foes, but against men I bound to them  
by the ties of family and affection, against brethren, and kinsmen, and dearest  
friends, who had resolved, in the practice of virtue and true piety, to honor and  
worship God. Such was the spirit of madness with which these princes sacrificed to  
550 their demon deities men consecrated to the service of the King of kings. On the other  
hand their victims, as noble martyrs in the cause of true godliness, resolved to  
welcome a glorious death in preference to life itself, and utterly despised these  
cruelties. Strengthened, as soldiers of God, with patient fortitude, they mocked at  
death in all its forms; at fire, and sword, and the torment of crucifixion; at  
555 exposure to savage beasts, and drowning in the depths of the sea; at the cutting off  
and searing of limbs, the digging out of eyes, the mutilation of the whole body;  
lastly, at famine, the labor of the mines, and captivity: nay, all these sufferings  
they counted better than any earthly good or pleasure, for the love they bore their  
heavenly King. In like manner women also evinced a spirit of constancy and courage  
not inferior to that of men. Some endured the same conflicts with them, and obtained  
560 a like reward of their virtue: others, forcibly carried off to be the victims of  
violence and pollution, welcomed death rather than dishonor; while many, very many  
more, endured not even to hear the same threats wherewith they were assailed by the  
provincial governors, but boldly sustained every variety of torture, and sentence of  
death in every form? Thus did these valiant soldiers of the Almighty Sovereign  
565 maintain the conflict with steadfast fortitude of soul against the hostile forces of  
polytheism: and thus did these enemies of God and adversaries of man's salvation,  
more cruel far their ministers drain as it were the cup of un-righteous slaughter in  
honor of the demons whom they served, and prepare for them this dread and impious  
banquet, to the ruin of the human race. In these sad circumstances, what course  
570 should the God and King of these afflicted ones pursue? Could he be careless of the  
safety of his dearest friends or abandon his servants in this great extremity? Surely  
none could deem him a wary pilot, who, without an effort to save his fellow-mariners  
should suffer his vessel to sink with all her crew: surely no general could be found  
so reckless as to yield his own allies, without resistance, to the mercy of the foe:  
575 nor can a faithful shepherd regard with unconcern the straying of a single sheep from  
his flock, but will rather leave the rest in safety, and dare all things for the  
wanderer's sake, even, if need be, to contend with savage beasts. The zeal, however,  
of the great Sovereign of all was for no unconscious sheep: his care was exercised  
for his own faithful host, for those who sustained the battle for his sake: whose  
580 conflicts in the cause of godliness he himself approved, and honored those who had  
returned to his presence with the prize of victory which he only can bestow, uniting  
them to the angelic choirs. Others he still preserved on earth, to communicate the  
living seeds of piety to future generations; to be at once eye-witnesses of his  
vengeance on the ungodly, and narrators of the events. After this he outstretched his  
585 arm in judgment on the adversaries, and utterly destroyed them with the stroke of  
Divine wrath, compelling them, how reluctant soever to confess with their own lips  
and recant their wickedness, but raising from the ground and exalting gloriously  
those who had long been oppressed and disclaimed by all. Such were the dealings of  
the Supreme Sovereign, who ordained an invincible champion to be the minister of his  
590 heaven-sent vengeance (for our emperor's surpassing piety delights in the title of  
Servant of God), and him he has, proved victorious over all that opposed him, having  
raised him up, an individual against many foes. For they were indeed numberless,  
being the friends of many evil spirits (though in reality they were nothing, and  
hence are now no more); but our emperor is one, appointed by, and the representative  
595 of, the one Almighty Sovereign. And they, in the very spirit of impiety, destroyed  
the righteous with cruel slaughter: but he, in imitation of his Saviour, and knowing  
only how to save men's lives, has spared and instructed in godliness the impious  
themselves. And so, as truly worthy the name of VICTOR, he has subdued the twofold  
race of barbarians; soothing the savage tribes of men by prudent embassies,  
600 compelling them to know and acknowledge their superiors, and reclaiming them from a  
lawless and brutal life to the governance of reason and humanity; at the same time  
that he proved by the facts themselves that the fierce and ruthless race of unseen  
spirits had long ago been vanquished by a higher power. For he who is the preserver  
of the universe had punished these invisible spirits by an invisible judgment: and  
605 our emperor, as the delegate of the Supreme Sovereign, has followed up the victory,  
bearing away the spoils of those who have long since died and mouldered into dust,  
and distributing the plunder with lavish hand among the soldiers of his victorious  
Lord.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

610 FOR as soon as he understood that the ignorant multitudes were inspired with a vain  
and childish dread of these bugbears of error, wrought in gold and silver, he judged  
it right to remove these also, like stumbling-stones thrown in the path of men

walking in the dark, and henceforward to open a royal road, plain and unobstructed, to all. Having formed this resolution, he considered that no soldiers or military force  
 615 of any sort was needed for the repression of the evil: a few of his own friends sufficed for this service, and these he sent by a simple expression of his will to visit each several province. Accordingly, sustained by confidence in the emperor's piety and their own personal devotion to God, they passed through the midst of  
 620 numberless tribes and nations, abolishing this ancient system of error in every city and country. They ordered the priests themselves, in the midst of general laughter and scorn, to bring their gods from their dark recesses to the light of day. They then stripped them of their ornaments, and exhibited to the gaze of all the unsightly reality which had been hidden beneath a painted exterior: and lastly, whatever part  
 625 of the material appeared to be of value they scraped off and melted in the fire to prove its worth, after which they secured and set apart whatever they judged needful for their purposes, leaving to the superstitious worshipers what was altogether useless, as a memorial of their shame. Meanwhile our admirable prince was himself engaged in a work similar to that we have described. For at the same time that these  
 630 costly images of the dead were stripped, as we have said, of their precious materials, he also attacked those composed of brass; causing those to be dragged from their places with ropes, and, as it were, carried away captive, whom the dotage of mythology had esteemed as gods. The next care of our august emperor was to kindle, as  
 635 it were, a brilliant torch, by the light of which he directed his imperial gaze around, to see if any hidden vestiges of error might yet exist. And as the keen-sighted eagle in its heavenward flight is able to descry from its lofty height the most distant objects on the earth: so did he whilst residing in the imperial palace of his own fair city, discover, as from a watch-tower, a hidden and fatal snare of souls in the province of Phoenicia. This was a grove and temple, not situated in the  
 640 midst of any city, or in any public place, as for splendor of effect is generally the case, but apart from the beaten and frequented road, on part of the summit of Mount Lebanon, and dedicated to the foul demon known by the name of Venus. It was a school of wickedness for all the abandoned rotaries of impurity and such as destroyed their bodies with effeminacy. Here men undeserving the name forgot the dignity of their sex, and propitiated the demon by their effeminate conduct: here too unlawful  
 645 commerce of women, and adulterous intercourse, with other horrible and infamous practices, were perpetrated in this temple as in a place beyond the scope and restraint of law. Meantime these evils remained unchecked by the presence of any observer, since no one of fair character ventured to visit such scenes. These proceedings, however, could not escape the vigilance of our august emperor, who,  
 650 having himself inspected them with characteristic forethought, and judging that such a temple was unfit for the light of heaven, gave orders that the building with its offerings should be utterly destroyed. Accordingly, in obedience to the imperial edict, these engines of an impure superstition were immediately abolished, and the hand of military force was made instrumental in purging the place. And now those who  
 655 had heretofore lived without restraint, learned, through the imperial threat of punishment, to practice self-control. Thus did our emperor tear the mask from this system of delusive wickedness, and expose it to the public gaze, at the same time proclaiming openly his Saviour's name to all. No advocate appeared; neither god nor demon, prophet nor diviner, could lend his aid to the detected authors of the  
 660 imposture. For the souls of men were no longer enveloped in thick darkness: but enlightened by the rays of true godliness, they deplored the ignorance and pitied the blindness of their forefathers, rejoicing at the same time in their own deliverance from such fatal error. Thus speedily, according to the counsel of the mighty God, and through our emperor's agency, was every enemy, whether visible or unseen, utterly  
 665 removed: and henceforward peace, the happy nurse of youth, extended her reign throughout the world. Wars were no more, for the gods were not: no more did warfare in country or town, no more did the effusion of human blood, distress mankind, as heretofore, when demon-worship and the madness of idolatry prevailed.

## CHAPTER IX.

670 AND now we may well compare the present with former things, and review these happy changes in contrast with the evils that are past, and mark the elaborate care with which in ancient times porches and sacred precincts, groves and temples, were prepared in every city for these false deities, and how their shrines were enriched with abundant offerings. The sovereign rulers of those days had indeed a high regard  
 675 for the worship of the gods. The nations also and people subject to their power honored them with images both in the country and in every city, nay, even in their houses and secret chambers, according to the religious practice of their fathers. The fruit, however, of this devotion, far different from the peaceful concord which now meets our view, appeared in war, in battles, and seditions, which harassed them  
 680 throughout their lives, and deluged their countries with blood and civil slaughter.

Again, the objects of their worship could hold out to these sovereigns with artful flattery the promise of prophecies, and oracles, and the knowledge of futurity: yet could they not predict their own destruction, nor forewarn themselves of the coming ruin: and surely this was the greatest and most convincing proof of their imposture.

685 Not one of those whose words once were heard with awe and wonder, had announced the glorious advent of the Saviour of mankind, or that new revelation of divine knowledge which he came to give. Not Pythius himself, nor any of those mighty gods, could apprehend the prospect of their approaching desolation; nor could their oracles point

690 at him who was to be their conqueror and destroyer. What prophet or diviner could foretell that their rites would vanish at the presence of a new Deity in the world, and that the knowledge and worship of the Almighty Sovereign should be freely given to all mankind? Which of them foreknew the august and pious reign of our victorious emperor, or his triumphant conquests everywhere over the false demons, or the

overthrow of their high places? Which of the heroes has announced the melting down

695 and conversion of the lifeless statues from their useless forms to the necessary uses of men? Which of the gods have yet had power to speak of their own images thus melted and contemptuously reduced to fragments? Where were the protecting powers, that they should not interpose to save their sacred memorials, thus destroyed by man? Where, I ask, are those who once maintained the strife of war, yet now behold their conquerors

700 abiding securely in the profoundest peace? And where are they who upheld themselves in a blind and foolish confidence, and trusted in these vanities as gods; but who, in the very height of their superstitious error, and while maintaining an implacable war with the champions of the truth, perished by a fate proportioned to their crimes? Where is the giant race whose arms were turned against heaven itself; the hissings of

705 those serpents whose tongues were pointed with impious words against the Almighty King? These adversaries of the Lord of all, confident in the aid of a multitude of gods, advanced to the attack with a powerful array of military force, preceded by certain images of the dead, and lifeless statues, as their defense. On the other, side our emperor, secure in the armor of godliness, opposed to the numbers of the

710 enemy the salutary and life-giving Sign, as at the same time a terror to the foe, and a protection against every harm; and returned victorious at once over the enemy and the demons whom they served? And then, with thanksgiving and praise, the tokens of a grateful spirit, to the Author of his victory, he proclaimed this triumphant Sign, by monuments as well as words, to all mankind, erecting it as a mighty trophy against

715 every enemy in the midst of the imperial city, and expressly enjoining on all to acknowledge this imperishable symbol of salvation as the safeguard of the power of Rome and of the empire of the world. Such were the instructions which he gave to his subjects generally; but especially to his soldiers, whom he admonished to repose

their confidence, not in their weapons, or armor, or bodily strength, but to

720 acknowledge the Supreme God as the giver of every good, and of victory itself. Thus did the emperor himself, strange and incredible as the fact may seem, become the instructor of his army in their religious exercises, and teach them to offer pious prayers in accordance with the divine ordinances, uplifting their hands towards

heaven, and raising their mental vision higher still to the King of heaven, on whom

725 they should call as the Author of victory, their preserver, guardian, and helper. He commanded too, that one day should be regarded as a special occasion for religious worship; I mean that which is truly the first and chief of all, the day of our Lord and Saviour; that day the name of which is connected with light, and life, and

immortality, and every good. Prescribing the same pious conduct to himself, he

730 honored his Saviour in the chambers of his palace, performing his devotions according to the Divine commands, and storing his mind with instruction through the hearing of the sacred word. The entire care of his household was intrusted to ministers devoted to the service of God, and distinguished by gravity of life and every other virtue; while his trusty body-guards, strong in affection and fidelity to his person, found

735 in their emperor an instructor in the practice of a godly life. Again, the honor with which he regards the victorious Sign is founded on his actual experience of its divine efficacy. Before this the hosts of his enemies have disappeared: by this the powers of the unseen spirits have been turned to flight: through this the proud

boastings of God's adversaries have come to nought, and the tongues of the profane

740 and blasphemous been put to silence. By this Sign the Barbarian tribes were vanquished: through his the rites of superstitious fraud received a just rebuke: by this our emperor, discharging as it were a sacred debt, has performed the crowning good of all, by erecting triumphant memorials of its value in all parts of the world, raising temples and churches on a scale of royal costliness, and commanding all to

745 unite in constructing the sacred houses of prayer. Accordingly these signal proofs of our emperor's magnificence forthwith appeared in the provinces and cities of the empire, and soon shone conspicuously in every country; convincing memorials of the rebuke and overthrow of those impious tyrants who but a little while before had madly dared to fight against God, and, raging like savage dogs, had vented on unconscious

750 buildings that fury which they were unable to level against him; had thrown to the  
ground and Upturned the very foundations of the houses of prayer, causing them to  
present the appearance of a city captured and abandoned to the enemy. Such was the  
exhibition of that wicked spirit whereby they sought as it were to assail God  
755 himself, but soon experienced the result of their own madness and folly. But a little  
time elapsed, when a single blast of the storm of Heaven's displeasure them utterly  
away, leaving neither kindred, nor offspring, nor memorial of their existence among  
men: for all, numerous as they were, disappeared as in a moment beneath the stroke of  
Divine vengeance. Such, then, was the fate which awaited these furious adversaries of  
760 God: but he who, armed with the salutary Trophy, had alone opposed them (nay rather,  
not alone, but aided by the presence and the power of him who is the only Sovereign),  
has replaced the ruined edifices on a greater scale, and made the second far superior  
to the first. For example, besides erecting various churches to the honor of God in  
the city which bears his name, and adorning the Bithynian capital with another on the  
greatest and most splendid scale, he has distinguished the principal cities of the  
765 other provinces by structures of a similar kind. Above all, he has selected two  
places in the eastern division of the empire, the one in Palestine (since from thence  
the life-giving stream has flowed as from a fountain for the blessing of all  
nations), the other in that metropolis of the East which derives its name from that  
of Antiochus; in which, as the head of that portion of the empire, he has consecrated  
770 to the service of God a church of unparalleled size and beauty. The entire building  
is encompassed by an enclosure of great extent, within which the church itself rises  
to a vast elevation, of an octagonal form, surrounded by many chambers and courts on  
every side, and decorated with ornaments of the richest kind. Such was his work here.  
Again, in the province of Palestine, in that city which was once the seat of Hebrew  
775 sovereignty, on the very site of the Lord's sepulchre, he has raised a church of  
noble dimensions, and adorned a temple sacred to the salutary Cross with rich and  
lavish magnificence, honoring that everlasting monument, and the trophies of the  
Saviour's victory over the power of death, with a splendor which no language can  
describe. In the same country he discovered three places venerable as the localities  
780 of three sacred caves: and these also he adorned with costly structures, paying a  
fitting tribute of reverence to the scene of the first manifestation of the Saviour's  
presence; while at the second cavern he hallowed the remembrance of his final  
ascension from the mountain top; and celebrated his mighty conflict, and the victory  
which crowned it, at the third. All these places our emperor thus adorned in the hope  
785 of proclaiming the symbol of redemption to all mankind; that Cross which has indeed  
repaid his pious zeal; through which his house and throne alike have prospered, his  
reign has been confirmed for a lengthened series of years, and the rewards of virtue  
bestowed on his noble sons, his kindred, and their descendants.  
And surely it is a mighty evidence of the power of that God whom he serves, that he  
790 has held the balances of justice with an equal hand, and has apportioned to each  
party their due reward. With regard to the destroyers of the houses of prayer, the  
penalty of their impious conduct followed hard upon them: forthwith were they swept  
away, and left neither race, nor house, nor family behind. On the other hand, he  
whose pious devotion to his Lord is conspicuous in his every act, who raises royal  
795 temples to his honor, and proclaims his name to his subjects by sacred offerings  
throughout the world, he, I say, has deservedly experienced him to be the preserver  
and defender of his imperial house and race. Thus clearly have the dealings of God  
been manifested, and this through the sacred efficacy of the salutary Sign.

#### CHAPTER X.

800 MUCH might indeed be said of this salutary Sign, by those who are skilled in the  
mysteries of our Divine religion. For it is in very truth the symbol of salvation,  
wondrous to speak of, more wondrous still to conceive; the appearance of which on  
earth has thrown the fictions of all false religion from the beginning into the  
deepest shade, has buried superstitious error in darkness and oblivion, and has  
805 revealed to all that spiritual light which enlightens the souls of men, even the  
knowledge of the only true God. Hence the universal change for the better, which  
leads men to spurn their lifeless idols, to trample under foot the lawless rites of  
their demon deities, and laugh to scorn the time-honored follies of their fathers.  
Hence, too, the establishment in every place of those schools of sacred learning,  
810 wherein men are taught the precepts of saving truth, and dread no more those objects  
of creation which are seen by the natural eye, nor direct a gaze of wonder at the  
sun, the moon, or stars; but acknowledge him who is above all these, that invisible  
Being who is the Creator of them all, and learn to worship him alone. Such are the  
blessings resulting to mankind from this great and wondrous Sign, by virtue of which  
815 the evils which once existed are now no more, and virtues heretofore unknown shine  
everywhere resplendent with the light of true godliness. Discourses, and precepts,  
and exhortations to a virtuous and holy life, are proclaimed in the ears of all

820 nations. Nay, the emperor himself proclaims them: and it is indeed a marvel that this mighty prince, raising his voice in the hearing of all the world, like an interpreter of the Almighty Sovereign's will, invites his subjects in every country to the knowledge of the true God. No more, as in former times, is the babbling of impious men heard in the imperial palace; but priests and pious worshipers of God together celebrate his majesty with royal hymns of praise. The name of the one Supreme Ruler of the universe is proclaimed to all: the gospel of glad tidings connects the human 825 race with its Almighty King, declaring the grace and love of the heavenly Father to his children on the earth. His praise is everywhere sung in triumphant strains: the voice of mortal man is blended with the harmony of the angelic choirs in heaven; and the reasoning soul employs the body which invests it as an instrument for sounding forth a fitting tribute of praise and adoration to his name. The nations of the East 830 and the West are instructed at the same moment in his precepts: the people of the Northern and Southern regions unite with one accord, under the influence of the same principles and laws, in the pursuit of a godly life, in praising the one Supreme God, in acknowledging his only begotten Son their Saviour as the source of every blessing, and our emperor as the one ruler on the earth, together with his pious sons. He 835 himself, as a skillful pilot, sits on high at the helm of state, and directs the vessel with unerring course, conducting his people as it were with favoring breeze to a secure and tranquil haven. Meanwhile God himself, the great Sovereign, extends the right hand of his power from above for his protection, giving him victory over every foe, and establishing his empire by a lengthened period of years: and he will bestow 840 on him yet higher blessings, and confirm in every deed the truth of his own promises. But on these we may not at present dwell; but must await the change to a better world: for it is not given to mortal eyes or ears of flesh, fully to apprehend the things of God.

#### CHAPTER XI.

845 AND now, victorious and mighty Constantine, in this discourse, whose noble argument is the glory of the Almighty King, let me lay before thee some of the mysteries of his sacred truth: not as presuming to instruct thee, who art thyself taught of God; nor to disclose to thee those secret wonders which he himself, not through the agency of man, but through our common Saviour, and the frequent light of his Divine presence 850 has long since revealed and unfolded to thy view: but in the hope of leading the unlearned to the light, and displaying before those who know them not the causes and motives of thy pious deeds. True it is that thy noble efforts for the daily worship and honor of the Supreme God throughout the habitable world, are the theme of universal praise. But those records of gratitude to thy Saviour and Preserver which 855 thou hast dedicated in our own province of Palestine, and in that city from which as from a fountain-head the Saviour Word has issued forth to all mankind; and again, the hallowed edifices and consecrated temples which thou hast raised as trophies of his victory over death; and those lofty and noble structures, imperial monuments of an imperial spirit, which thou hast erected in honor of the everlasting memory of the 860 Saviour's tomb the cause, I say, of these things is not equally obvious to all. Those, indeed, who are enlightened in heavenly knowledge by the power of the Divine Spirit, well understand the cause, and justly admire and bless thee for that counsel and resolution which Heaven itself inspired. On the other hand the ignorant and spiritually blind regard these designs with open mockery and scorn, and deem it a 865 strange and unworthy thing indeed that so mighty a prince should waste his zeal on the graves and monuments of the dead. "Were it not better," such a one might say, "to cherish those rites which are hallowed by ancient usage to seek the favor of those gods and heroes whose worship is observed in every province; instead of rejecting and disclaiming them, because subject to the calamities incident to man? Surely they may 870 claim equal honors with him who himself has suffered: or, if they are to be rejected, as not exempt from the sorrows of humanity, the same award would justly be pronounced respecting him." Thus, with important and contracted brow, might he give utterance in pompous language to his self -imagined wisdom. Filled with compassion for this ignorance, the gracious Word of our most beneficent Father freely invites, not such a 875 one alone, but all who are in the path of error, to receive instruction in Divine knowledge; and has ordained the means of such instruction throughout the world, in every country and village, in cultivated and desert lands alike, and in every city: and, as a gracious Saviour and Physician of the soul, calls on the Greek and the Barbarian, the wise and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, the servant and his 880 master, the subject and his lord, the ungodly, the profane, the ignorant, the evil-doer, the blasphemer, alike to draw near, and hasten to receive his heavenly cure. And thus in time past had he clearly announced to all the pardon of former transgressions, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And again, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to 885 repentance." And he adds the reason, saying, "For they that are whole need not a



physician, but they that are sick." And again, "I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent." Hence it is only for those who are themselves instructed in Divine things and understand the motives of that zeal of which these works are the result, to appreciate the more than human impulse by which our emperor was guided, to admire his piety toward God, and to believe his care for the memorial of our Saviour's resurrection to be a desire imparted from above, and truly inspired by that Sovereign, to be whose faithful servant and minister for good is his proudest boast. In full persuasion, then, of thy approval, most mighty emperor, I desire at this present time to proclaim to all the reasons and motives of thy pious works. I desire to stand as the interpreter of thy designs, to explain the counsels of a soul devoted to the love of God. I propose to teach all men, what all should know who care to understand the principles on which our Saviour God employs his power, the reasons for which he who was the pre-existent Controller of all things at length descended to us from heaven: the reasons for which he assumed our nature, and submitted even to the power of death. I shall declare the causes of that immortal life which followed, and of his resurrection from the dead. Once more, I shall adduce convincing proofs and arguments, for the sake of those who yet need such testimony: and now let me commence my appointed task. Those who transfer the worship due to that God who formed and rules the world to the works of his hand; who hold the sun and moon, or other parts of this material system, nay, the elements themselves, earth, water, air, and fire, in equal honor with the Creator of them all; who give the name of gods to things which never would have had existence, or even name, except as obedient to that Word of God who made the world: such persons in my judgment resemble those who overlook the master hand which gives its magnificence to a royal palace; and, while lost in wonder at its roofs and walls, the paintings of varied beauty and coloring which adorn them, and its gilded ceilings and sculptures, ascribe to them the praise of that skill which belongs to the artist whose work they are: whereas they should assign the cause of their wonder, not to these visible objects, but to the architect himself, and confess that the proofs of skill are indeed manifest, but that he alone is the possessor of that skill who has made them what they are. Again, well might we liken those to children, who should admire the seven-stringed lyre, and disregard him who invented or has power to use it: or those who forget the valiant warrior, and adorn his spear and shield with the chaplet of victory: or, lastly, those who hold the squares and streets, the public buildings, temples, and gymnasia of a great and royal city in equal honor with its founder; forgetting that their admiration is due, not to lifeless stones, but to him whose wisdom planned and executed these mighty works. Not less absurd is it for those who regard this universe with the natural eye to ascribe its origin to the sun, or moon, or any other heavenly body. Rather let them confess that these are themselves the works of a higher wisdom, remember the Maker and Framer of them all, and render to him the praise and honor above all created objects. Nay rather, inspired by the sight of these very objects, let them address themselves with full purpose of heart to glorify and worship him who is now invisible to mortal eye, but perceived by the clear and unclouded vision of the soul, the supremely sovereign Word of God. To take the instance of the human body: no one has yet conferred the attribute of wisdom on the eyes, or head, the hands, or feet, or other members, far less on the outward clothing, of a wise and learned man: no one terms the philosopher's household furniture and utensils, wise: but every rational person admires that invisible and secret power, the mind of the man himself. How much more, then, is our admiration due, not to the visible mechanism of the universe, material as it is, and formed of the selfsame elements; but to that invisible Word who has moulded and arranged it all, who is the only begotten Son of God, and whom the Maker of all things, who far transcends all being, has begotten of himself, and appointed Lord and Governor of this universe? For since it was impossible that perishable bodies, or the rational spirits which he had created, should approach the Supreme God, by reason of their immeasurable distance from his perfections, for he is unbegotten, above and beyond all creation, ineffable, inaccessible, unapproachable, dwelling, as his holy word assures us, in the light which none can enter; but they were created from nothing, and are infinitely far removed from his unbegotten Essence; well has the all-gracious and Almighty God interposed as it were an intermediate Power between himself and them, even the Divine omnipotence of his only begotten Word. And this Power, which is in perfect nearness and intimacy of union, with the Father which abides in him, and shares his secret counsels, has yet condescended, in fullness of grace, as it were to conform itself to those who are so far removed from the supreme majesty of God. How else, consistently with his own holiness could he who is far above and beyond all things unite himself to corruptible and corporeal matter? Accordingly the Divine Word, thus connecting himself with this universe, and receiving into his hands the reins, as it were, of the world, turns and directs it as a skillful charioteer according to his own will and pleasure, The proof of these assertions is evident. For supposing that those component parts of the world

955 which we call elements, as earth, water, air, and fire, the nature of which is manifestly without intelligence, are self-existent; and if they have one common essence, which they who are skilled in natural science call the great receptacle, mother, and nurse of all things; and if this itself be utterly devoid of shape and figure, of soul and reason; whence shall we say it has obtained its present form and beauty? To what shall we ascribe the distinction of the elements, or the union of things contrary in their very nature? Who has commanded the liquid water to sustain the heavy element of earth? Who has turned back the waters from their downward course, and carried them aloft in clouds? Who has bound the force of fire, and caused it to lie latent in wood, and to combine with substances most contrary to itself? Who has mingled the cold air with heat, and thus reconciled the enmity of opposing principles? Who has devised the continuous succession of the human race, and given it as it were an endless term of duration? Who has moulded the male and female form, adapted their mutual relations with perfect harmony, and given one common principle of production to every living creature? Who changes the character of the fluid and corruptible seed, which in itself is void of reason, and gives it its prolific power? Who is at this moment working these and ten thousand effects more wonderful than these, nay, surpassing all wonder, and with invisible influence is daily and hourly perpetuating the production of them all? Surely the wonder-working and truly omnipotent Word of God may well be deemed the efficient cause of all these things: that Word who, diffusing himself through all creation, pervading height and depth with incorporeal energy, and embracing the length and breadth of the universe within his mighty grasp, has compacted and reduced to order this entire system, from whose unreasoned and formless matter he has framed for himself an instrument of perfect harmony, the nicely balanced chords and notes of which he touches with all-wise and unerring skill. He it is who governs the sun, and moon, and the other luminaries of heaven by inexplicable laws, and directs their motions for the service of the universal whole. It is this Word of God who has stooped to the earth on which we live, and created the manifold species of animals, and the fair varieties of the vegetable world. It is this same Word who has penetrated the recesses of the deep, has given their being to the finny race, and produced the countless forms of life which there exist. It is he who fashions the burden of the womb, and informs it in nature's laboratory with the principle of life. By him the fluid and heavy moisture is raised on high, and then, sweetened by a purifying change, descends in measured quantities to the earth, and at stated seasons in more profuse supply. Like a skillful husbandman, he fully irrigates the land, tempers the moist and dry in just proportion, diversifying the whole with brilliant flowers, with aspects of varied beauty, with pleasant fragrance, with alternating varieties of fruits, and countless gratifications for the taste of men. But why do I dare essay a hopeless task, to recount the mighty works of the Word of God, and describe an energy which surpasses mortal thought? By some, indeed, he has been termed the Nature of the universe, by others, the World-Soul, by others, Fate. Others again have declared him to be the most High God himself, strangely confounding things most widely different; bringing down to this earth, uniting to a corruptible and material body, and assigning to that supreme and unbegotten Power who is Lord of all an intermediate place between irrational animals and rational mortals on the one hand, and immortal beings on the other.

## CHAPTER XII.

ON the other hand, the sacred doctrine teaches that he who is the supreme Source of good, and Cause of all things, is beyond all comprehension, and therefore inexpressible by word, or speech, or name; surpassing the power, not of language only, but of thought itself. Un-circumscribed by place, or body; neither in heaven, nor in ethereal space, nor in any other part of the universe; but entirely independent of all things else, he pervades the depths of unexplored and secret wisdom. The sacred oracles teach us to acknowledge him as the only true God, apart from all corporeal essence, distinct from all subordinate ministration. Hence it is said that all things are from him, but not through him. And he himself dwelling as Sovereign in secret and undiscovered regions of unapproachable light, ordains and disposes all things by the single power of his own will. At his will whatever is, exists; without that will, it cannot be. And his will is in every case for good, since he is essentially Goodness itself. But he through whom are all things, even God the Word, proceeding in an ineffable manner from the Father above, as from an everlasting and exhaustless fountain, flows onward like a river with a full and abundant stream of power for the preservation of the universal whole. And now let us select an illustration from our own experience. The invisible and undiscovered mind within us, the essential nature of which no one has ever known, sits as a monarch in the seclusion of his secret chambers, and alone resolves on our course of action. From this proceeds the only begotten word from its father's bosom, begotten in a

manner and by a power inexplicable to us; and is the first messenger of its father's thoughts, declares his secret counsels, and, conveying itself to the ears of others, accomplishes his designs. And thus the advantage of this faculty is enjoyed by all: yet no one has ever yet beheld that invisible and hidden mind, which is the I parent of the word itself. In the same manner, or rather in a manner which far surpasses all likeness or comparison, the perfect Word of the Supreme God, as the only begotten Son of the Father (not consisting in the power of utterance, nor comprehended in syllables and parts of speech, nor conveyed by a voice which vibrates on the air; but being himself the living and effectual Word of the most High, and subsisting personally as the Power and Wisdom of God), proceeds from his Father's Deity and kingdom. Thus, being the perfect Offspring of a perfect Father, and the common Preserver of all things, he diffuses himself with living power throughout creation, and pours from his own fullness abundant supplies of reason, wisdom, light, and every other blessing, not only on objects nearest to himself, but on those most remote, whether in earth, or sea, or any other sphere of being. To all these he appoints with perfect equity their limits, places, laws, and inheritance, allotting to each their suited portion according to his sovereign will. To some he assigns the super-terrestrial regions, to others heaven itself as their habitation: others he places in ethereal space, others in air, and others still on earth. He it is who transfers mankind from hence to another sphere, impartially reviews their conduct here, and bestows a recompense according to the life and habits of each. By him provision is made for the life and food, not of rational creatures only, but also of the brute creation, for the service of men; and while to the latter he grants the enjoyment of a perishable and fleeting term of existence, the former he invites to a share in the possession of immortal life. Thus universal is the agency of the Word of God: everywhere present, and pervading all things by the power of his intelligence, he looks upward to his Father, and governs this lower creation, inferior to and consequent upon himself, in accordance with his will, as the common Preserver of all things. Intermediate, as it were, and attracting the created to the uncreated Essence, this Word of God exists as an unbroken bond between the two, uniting things most widely different by an inseparable tie. He is the Providence which rules the universe; the guardian and director of the whole: he is the Power and Wisdom of God the only begotten God, the Word begotten of God himself. For "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him and without him was not any. thing made that hath been made"; as we learn from the words of the sacred writer? Through his vivifying power all nature grows and flourishes, refreshed by his continual showers, and invested with a vigor and beauty ever new. Guiding the reigns of the universe, he holds its onward course in conformity to the Father's will and moves, as it were, the helm of this mighty ship. This glorious Agent, the only begotten Son of the Supreme God, begotten by the Father as his perfect Offspring, the Father has given to this world as the highest of all goods infusing his word, as spirit into a lifeless body, into unconscious nature; imparting light and energy to that which in itself was a rude, inanimate, and formless mass, through the Divine power. Him therefore it is ours to acknowledge and regard as everywhere present, and giving life to matter and the elements of nature: in him we see Light, even the spiritual offspring of inexpressible Light: one indeed in essence, as being the Son of one Father; but possessing in himself many and varied powers. The world is indeed divided into many parts; yet let us not therefore suppose that there are many independent Agents nor, though creation's works be manifold, let us thence assume the existence of many gods. How grievous the error of those childish and infatuated advocates of polytheistic worship, who deify the constituent parts of the universe, and divide into many that system which is only one! Such conduct resembles theirs who should abstract the eyes of an individual man, and term them the man himself, and the ears, another man, and so the head: or again, by an effort of thought should separate the neck, the breast and shoulders, the feet and hands, : or other members, nay, the very powers of sense, and thus pronounce an individual to be a multitude of men. Such folly must surely be rewarded with contempt by men of sense. Yet such is he who from the component parts of a single world can devise for himself a multitude of gods, or even deem that world which is the work of a Creator, and consists of many parts, to be itself a god: not knowing that the Divine Nature can in no sense be divisible into parts; since, if compounded, it must be so through the agency of another power; and that which is so compounded can never be Divine. How indeed could it be so, if composed of unequal and dissimilar, and hence of worse and better elements? Simple, indivisible, uncompounded, the Divine Nature exists at an infinite elevation above the visible constitution of this world. And hence we are assured by the clear testimony of the sacred Herald, that the Word of God, who is before all things, must be the sole Preserver of all intelligent beings: while God, who is above all, and the Author of the generation of the Word, being himself the Cause of all things, is rightly called the Father of the Word, as of his only

begotten Son, himself acknowledging no superior Cause. God, therefore, himself is One, and from him proceeds the one only begotten Word, the omnipresent Preserver of all things. And as the many-stringed lyre is composed of different chords, both sharp and flat, some slightly, others tensely strained, and others intermediate between-the two extremes, yet all attuned according to the rules of harmonic art; even so this material world, compounded as it is of many elements, containing opposite and antagonist principles, as moisture and dryness, cold and heat, yet blended into one harmonious whole, may justly be termed a mighty instrument framed by the hand of God: an instrument on which the Divine Word, himself not composed of parts or opposing principles, but indivisible and uncompounded, performs with perfect skill, and produces a melody at once accordant with the will of his Father the Supreme Lord of all, and glorious to himself. Again, as there are manifold external and internal parts and members comprised in a single body, yet one invisible soul, one undivided and incorporeal mind pervades the whole; so is it in this creation, which, consisting of many parts, yet is but one: and so the One mighty, yea, Almighty Word of God, pervading all things, and diffusing himself with undeviating energy throughout this universe, is the Cause of all things that exist therein. Survey the compass of this visible world. Seest thou not how the same heaven contains within itself the countless courses and companies of the stars? Again, the sun is one, and yet eclipses many, nay all other luminaries, by the surpassing glory of his rays. Even so, as the Father himself is One, his Word is also One, the perfect Son of that perfect Father. Should any one object because they are not more, as well might he complain that there are not many suns, or moons, or worlds, and a thousand things beside; like the madman, who would fain subvert the fair and perfect course of Nature herself. As in the visible, so also in the spiritual world: in the one the same sun diffuses his light throughout this material earth; in the other the One Almighty Word of God illumines all things with invisible and secret power. Again, there is in man one spirit, and one faculty of reason, which yet is the active cause of numberless effects. The same mind, instructed in many things, will essay to cultivate the earth, to build and guide a ship, and construct houses: nay, the one mind and reason of man is capable of acquiring knowledge in a thousand forms: the same mind shall understand geometry and astronomy, and discourse on the rules of grammar, and rhetoric, and the healing art. Nor will it excel in science only, but in practice too: and yet no one has ever supposed the existence of many minds in one human form, nor expressed his wonder at a plurality of being in man, because he is thus capable of varied knowledge. Suppose one were to find a shapeless mass of clay, to mould it with his hands, and give it the form of a living creature; the head in one figure, the hands and feet in another, the eyes and cheeks in a third, and so to fashion the ears, the mouth and nose, the breast and shoulders, according to the rules of the plastic art. The result, indeed, is a variety of figure, of parts and members in the one body; yet must we not suppose it the work of many hands, but ascribe it entirely to the skill of a single artist, and yield the tribute of our praise to him who by the energy of a single mind has framed it all. The same is true of the universe itself, which is one, though consisting of many parts: yet surely we need not suppose many creative powers, nor invent a plurality of gods. Our duty is to adore the all-wise and all-perfect agency of him who is indeed the Power and the Wisdom of God, whose undivided force and energy pervades and penetrates the universe, creating and giving life to all things, and furnishing to all, collectively and severally, those manifold supplies of which he is himself the source. Even so one and the same impression of the solar rays illumines the air at once, gives light to the eyes, warmth to the touch, fertility to the earth, and growth to plants. The same luminary constitutes the course of time, governs the motions of the stars, performs the circuit of the heavens, imparts beauty to the earth, and displays the power of God to all: and all this he performs by the sole and unaided force of his own nature. In like manner fire has the property of refining gold, and fusing lead, of dissolving wax, of parching clay, and consuming wood; producing these varied effects by one and the same burning power. So also the Supreme Word of God, pervading all things, everywhere existent, everywhere present in heaven and earth, governs and directs the visible and invisible creation, the sun, the heaven, and the universe itself, with an energy inexplicable in its nature, irresistible in its effects. From him, as from an everlasting fountain, the sun, the moon, and stars receive their light: and he forever rules that heaven which he has framed as the fitting emblem of his own greatness. The angelic and spiritual powers, the incorporeal and intelligent beings which exist beyond the sphere of heaven and earth, are filled by him with light and life, with wisdom and virtue, with all that is great and good, from his own peculiar treasures. Once more, with one and the same creative skill, he ceases not to furnish the elements with substance, to regulate the union and combinations, the forms and figures, and the innumerable qualities of organized bodies; preserving the varied distinctions of animal and vegetable life, of the rational and the brute creation;

and supplying all things to all with equal power: thus proving himself the Author, not indeed of the seven-stringed lyre, but of that system of perfect harmony which is the workmanship of the One world-creating Word.

CHAPTER XIII.

1165 AND now let us proceed to explain the reasons for which this mighty Word of God descended to dwell with men. Our ignorant and foolish race, incapable of comprehending him who is the Lord of heaven and earth, proceeding from his Father's Deity as from the supreme fountain, ever present throughout the world, and evincing by the clearest proofs his providential care for the interests of man; have ascribed  
1170 the adorable title of Deity to the sun, and moon, the heaven and the stars of heaven. Nor did they stop here, but deified the earth itself, its products, and the various substances by which animal life is sustained, and devised images of Ceres, of Proserpine, of Bacchus, and many such as these. Nay, they shrank not from giving the name of gods to the very conceptions of their own minds, and the speech by which  
1175 those conceptions are expressed; calling the mind itself Minerva, and language Mercury, and affixing the names of Mnemosyne and the Muses to those faculties by means of which science is acquired. Nor was even this enough: advancing still more rapidly in the career of impiety and folly, they deified their own evil passions, which it behooved them to regard with aversion, or restrain by the principles of  
1180 self-control. Their very lust and passion and impure disease of soul, the members of the body which tempt to obscenity, and even the very uncontrol in shameful pleasure, they described under the titles of Cupid, Priapus, Venus, and other kindred terms. Nor did they stop even here. Degrading their thoughts of God to this corporeal and mortal life, they deified their fellow-men, conferring the names of gods and heroes  
1185 on those who had experienced the common lot of all, and vainly imagining that the Divine and imperishable Essence could frequent the tombs and monuments of the dead. Nay, more than this: they paid divine honors to animals of various species, and to the most noxious reptiles: they felled trees, and excavated rocks; they provided themselves with brass, and iron, and other metals, of which they fashioned resemblances of the male and female human form, of beasts, and creeping things; and these they made the objects of their worship. Nor did this suffice. To the evil spirits themselves which lurked within their statues, or lay concealed in secret and dark recesses, eager to drink their libations, and inhale the odor of their sacrifices, they ascribed the same divine honors. Once more, they endeavored to  
1195 secure the familiar aid of these spirits, and the unseen powers which move through the tracts of air, by charms of forbidden magic, and the compulsion of unhallowed songs and incantations. Again, different nations have adopted different persons as objects of their worship. The Greeks have rendered to Bacchus, Hercules, AEsculapius, Apollo, and others who were mortal men, the titles of gods and heroes. The Egyptians  
1200 have deified Horus and Isis, Osiris, and other mortals such as these. And thus they who boast of the wondrous skill whereby they have discovered geometry, astronomy, and the science of number, know not, wise as they are in their own conceit, nor understand how to estimate the measure of the power of God, or calculate his exceeding greatness above the nature of irrational and mortal beings. Hence they  
1205 shrank not from applying the name of gods to the most hideous of the brute creation, to venomous reptiles and savage beasts. The Phoenicians deified Melcatharus, Usorus, and others; mere mortals, and with little claim to honor: the Arabians, Dusaris and Obodas: the Getae, Zamolxis: the Cicilians, Mopsus: and the Thebans, Amphiaras: in short, each nation has adopted its own peculiar deities, differing in no respect from  
1210 their fellow-mortals, being simply and truly men. Again, the Egyptians with one consent, the Phoenicians, the Greeks, nay, every nation beneath the sun, have united in worshipping the very parts and elements of the world, and even the produce of the ground itself. And, which is most surprising, though acknowledging the adulterous, unnatural, and licentious crimes of their deities, they have not only filled every  
1215 city, and village, and district with temples, shrines, and statues in their honor, but have followed their evil example to the ruin of their own souls. We hear of gods and the sons of gods described by them as heroes and good genii, titles entirely opposed to truth, honors utterly at variance with the qualities they are intended to exalt. It is as if one who desired to point out the sun and the luminaries of heaven, instead of directing his gaze thitherward, should grope with his hands on the ground, and search for the celestial powers in the mud and mire. Even so mankind, deceived by their own folly and the craft of evil spirits, have believed that the Divine and spiritual Essence which is far above heaven and earth could be compatible with the birth, the affections, and death, of mortal bodies here below. To such a pitch of  
1220 madness did they proceed, as to sacrifice the dearest objects of their affection to their gods, regardless of all natural ties, and urged by frenzied feeling to slay their only and best beloved children. For what can be a greater proof of madness, than to offer human sacrifice, to pollute every city, and even their own houses, with



1230 kindred blood? Do not the Greeks themselves attest this, and is not all history  
 filled with records of the same impiety? The Phoenicians devoted their best beloved  
 and only children as an annual sacrifice to Saturn. The Rhodians, on the sixth day of  
 the month Metageitnion, offered human victims to the same god. At Salamis, a man was  
 1235 pursued in the temple of Minerva Agraulis and Diomede, compelled to run thrice round  
 the altar, afterwards pierced with a lance by the priest, and consumed as a burnt  
 offering on the blazing pile. In Egypt, human sacrifice was most abundant. At  
 Heliopolis three victims were daily offered to Juno, for whom king Amoses, impressed  
 with the atrocity of the practice, commanded the substitution of an equal number of  
 waxen figures. In Chios, and again in Tenedos, a man was slain and offered up to  
 1240 Omadian Bacchus. At Sparta they immolated human beings to Mars. In Crete they did  
 likewise, offering human sacrifices to Saturn. In Laodicea of Syria a virgin was  
 yearly slain in honor of Minerva, for whom a hart is now the substitute. The Libyans  
 and Carthaginians appeased their gods with human victims. The Dumateni of Arabia  
 buried a boy annually beneath the altar. History informs us that the Greeks without  
 1245 exception, the Thracians also, and Scythians, were accustomed to human sacrifice  
 before they marched forth to battle. The Athenians record the immolation of the  
 virgin children of Leus, and the daughter of Erechtheus. Who knows not that at this  
 day a human victim is offered in Rome itself at the festival of Jupiter Latiaris ?  
 And these facts are confirmed by the testimony of the most approved philosophers.  
 Diodorus, the epitomizer of libraries, affirms that two hundred of the noblest youths  
 1250 were sacrificed to Saturn by the Libyan people, and that three hundred more were  
 voluntarily offered by their own parents. Dionysius, the compiler of Roman history,  
 expressly says that Jupiter and Apollo demanded human sacrifices of the so-called  
 Aborigines, in Italy. He relates that on this demand they offered a proportion of all  
 1255 their produce to the gods; but that, because of their refusal to slay human victims,  
 they became involved in manifold calamities, from which they could obtain no release  
 until they had decimated themselves, a sacrifice of life which proved the desolation  
 of their country. Such and so great were the evils which of old afflicted the whole  
 human race. Nor was this the full extent of their misery: they groaned beneath the  
 1260 pressure of other evils equally numerous and irremediable. All nations, whether  
 civilized or barbarous, throughout the world, as if actuated by a demoniac frenzy,  
 were infected with sedition as with some fierce and terrible disease: insomuch that  
 the human family was irreconcilably divided against itself; the great system of  
 society was distracted and torn asunder; and in every corner of the earth men stood  
 1265 opposed to each other, and strove with fierce contention on questions of law and  
 government. Nay, more than this: with passions aroused to fury, they engaged in  
 mutual conflicts, so frequent that their lives were passed as it were in  
 uninterrupted warfare. None could undertake a journey except as prepared to encounter  
 an enemy in the very country and villages the rustics girded on the sword, provided  
 themselves with armor rather than with the implements of rural labor, and deemed it  
 1270 noble exploit to plunder and enslave any who belonged to a neighboring state. Nay,  
 more than this: from the fables they had themselves devised respecting their own  
 deities, they deduced occasions for a vile and abandoned life, and wrought the ruin  
 of body and soul by licentiousness of every kind. Not content with this, they even  
 overstepped the bounds which nature had defined, and together committed incredible  
 1275 and nameless crimes, "men with men (in the words of the sacred writer) working un-  
 seemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was  
 due." Nor did they stop even here; but perverted their natural thoughts of God, and  
 denied that the course of this world was directed by his providential care, ascribing  
 the existence and constitution of all things to the blind operation of chance, or the  
 1280 necessity of fate. Once more: believing that soul and body were alike dissolved by  
 death, they led a brutish life, unworthy of the name: careless of the nature or  
 existence of the soul, they dreaded not the tribunal of Divine justice, expected no  
 reward of virtue, nor thought of chastisement as the penalty of an evil life. Hence  
 it was that whole nations, a prey to wickedness in all its forms, were wasted by the  
 1285 effects of their own brutality: some living in the practice of most vile and lawless  
 incest with mothers, others with sisters, and others again corrupting their own  
 daughters. Some were found who slew their confiding guests; others who fed on human  
 flesh; some strangled, and then feasted on, their aged men; others threw them alive  
 to dogs. The time would fail me were I to attempt to describe the multifarious  
 1290 symptoms of the inveterate malady which had asserted its dominion over the whole  
 human race. Such, and numberless others like these, were the prevailing evils, on  
 account of which the gracious Word of God, full of compassion for his human flock,  
 had long since, by the ministry of his prophets, and earlier still, as well as later,  
 by that of men distinguished by pious devotion to God, invited those thus desperately  
 1295 afflicted to their own cure; and had, by means of laws, exhortations, and doctrines  
 of every kind, proclaimed to man the principles and elements of true godliness. But  
 when for mankind, distracted and torn as I have said, not indeed by wolves and savage

beasts, but by ruthless and soul-destroying spirits of evil, human power no longer sufficed, but a help was needed superior to that of man; then it was that the Word of God, obedient to his all-gracious Father's will, at length himself appeared, and most willingly made his abode amongst us. The causes of his advent I have already described, induced by which he condescended to the society of man; not in his wonted form and manner, for he is incorporeal, and present everywhere throughout the world, proving by his agency both in heaven and earth the greatness of his almighty power, but in a character new and hitherto unknown. Assuming a mortal body, he deigned to associate and converse with men; desiring, through the medium of their own likeness, to save our mortal race.

## CHAPTER XIV.

AND now let us explain the cause for which the incorporeal Word of God assumed this mortal body as a medium of intercourse with man. How, indeed, else than in human form could that Divine and impalpable, that immaterial and invisible Essence manifest itself to those who sought for God in created and earthly objects, unable or unwilling otherwise to discern the Author and Maker of all things? As a fitting means, therefore, of communication with mankind, he assumed a mortal body, as that with which they were themselves familiar; for like, it is proverbially said, loves its like. To those, then, whose affections were engaged by visible objects, who looked for gods in statues and lifeless images, who imagined the Deity to consist in material and corporeal substance, nay, who conferred on men the title of divinity, the Word of God presented himself in this form. Hence he procured for himself this body as a thrice-hallowed temple, a sensible habitation of an intellectual power; a noble and most holy form, of far higher worth than any lifeless statue. The material and senseless image, fashioned by base mechanic hands, of brass or iron, of gold or ivory, wood or stone, may be a fitting abode for evil spirits: but that Divine form, wrought by the power of heavenly wisdom, was possessed of life and spiritual being; a form animated by every excellence, the dwelling-place of the Word of God, a holy temple of the holy God. Thus the indwelling Word conversed with and was known to men, as kindred with themselves; yet yielded not to passions such as theirs, nor owned, as the natural soul, subjection to the body. He parted not with aught of his intrinsic greatness, nor changed his proper Deity. For as the all-pervading radiance of the sun receives no stain from contact with dead and impure bodies; much less can the incorporeal power of the Word of God be injured in its essential purity, or part with any of its greatness, from spiritual contact with a human body. Thus, I say, did our common Saviour prove himself the benefactor and preserver of all, displaying his wisdom through the instrumentality of his human nature, even as a musician uses the lyre to evince his skill. The Grecian myth tells us that Orpheus had power to charm ferocious beasts, and tame their savage spirit, by striking the chords of his instrument with a master hand: and this story is celebrated by the Greeks, and generally believed, that an unconscious instrument could subdue the untamed brute, and draw the trees from their places, in obedience to its melodious power. But he who is the author of perfect harmony, the all-wise Word of God, desiring to apply every remedy to the manifold diseases of the souls of men, employed that human nature which is the workmanship of his own wisdom, as an instrument by the melodious strains of which he soothed, not indeed the brute creation, but savages endued with reason; healing each furious temper, each fierce and angry passion of the soul, both in civilized and barbarous nations, by the remedial power of his Divine doctrine. Like a physician of perfect skill, he met the diseases of their souls who sought for God in nature and in bodies, by a fitting and kindred remedy, and showed them God in human form. And then, with no less care for the body than the soul, he presented before the eyes of men wonders and signs, as proofs of his Divine power, at the same time instilling into their ears of flesh the doctrines which he himself uttered with a corporeal tongue. In short, he performed all his works through the medium of that body which he had assumed for the sake of those who else were incapable of apprehending his Divine nature. In all this he was the servant of his Father's will, himself remaining still the same as when with the Father; unchanged in essence, unimpaired in nature, unfettered by the trammels of mortal flesh, nor hindered by his abode in a human body from being elsewhere present. Nay, at the very time of his intercourse with men, he was pervading all things, was with and in the Father, and even then was caring for all things both in heaven and earth. Nor was he precluded, as we are, from being present everywhere, or from the continued exercise of his Divine power. He gave of his own to man, but received nothing in return: he imparted of his Divine power to mortality, but derived no accession from mortality itself. Hence his human birth to him brought no defilement; nor could his impassible Essence suffer at the dissolution of his mortal body. For let us suppose a lyre to receive an accidental injury, or its chord to be broken; it does not follow that the performer on it suffers: nor, if a wise man's body undergo punishment, can we fairly assert

that his wisdom, or the soul within him, are maimed or burned. Far less can we affirm that the inherent power of the Word sustained any detriment from his bodily passion, any more than, as in the instance we have already used, the solar rays which are shot from heaven to earth contract defilement, though in contact with mire and pollution of every kind. We may, indeed, assert that these things partake of the radiance of the light, but not that the light is contaminated, or the sun defiled, by this contact with other bodies. And indeed these things are themselves not contrary to nature; but the Saviour, the incorporeal Word of God, being Life and spiritual Light itself, whatever he touches with Divine and incorporeal power must of necessity become endued with the intelligence of light and life. Thus, if he touch a body, it becomes enlightened and sanctified, is at once delivered from all disease, infirmity, and suffering, and that which before was lacking is supplied by a portion of his fullness. And such was the tenor of his life on earth; now proving the sympathies of his human nature with our own, and now revealing himself as the Word of God: wondrous and mighty in his works as God; foretelling the events of the far distant future; declaring in every act, by signs, and wonders, and supernatural powers, that Word whose presence was so little known; and finally, by his Divine teaching, inviting the souls of men to prepare for those mansions which are above the heavens.

#### CHAPTER XV.

WHAT now remains, but to account for those which are the crowning facts of all; I mean his death, so far and widely known, the manner of his passion, and the mighty miracle of his resurrection after death: and then to establish the truth of these events by the clearest testimonies? For the reasons detailed above he used the instrumentality of a mortal body, as a figure becoming his Divine majesty, and like a mighty sovereign employed it as his interpreter in his intercourse with men, performing all things consistently with his own Divine power. Supposing, then, at the end of his sojourn among men, he had by any other means suddenly withdrawn himself from their sight, and, secretly removing that interpreter of himself, the form which he had assumed, had hastened to flee from death, and afterwards by his own act had consigned his mortal body to corruption and dissolution: doubtless in such a case he would have been deemed a mere phantom by all. Nor would he have acted in a manner worthy of himself, had he who is Life, the Word, and the Power of God, abandoned this interpreter of himself to corruption and death. Nor, again, would his warfare with the spirits of evil have received its consummation by conflict. with the power of death. The place of his retirement must have remained unknown; nor would his existence have been believed by those who had not seen him for themselves. No proof would have been given that he was superior to death nor would he have delivered mortality from the law of its natural infirmity. His name had never been heard throughout the world nor could he have inspired his disciples with contempt of death, or encouraged those who. embraced his doctrine to hope for the enjoyment of a future life with God. Nor would he have fulfilled the assurances of his own promise, nor have accomplished the predictions of the prophets concerning himself. Nor would he have undergone the last conflict of all; for this was to be the struggle with the power of death. For all these reasons, then, and inasmuch as it was necessary that the mortal body which had rendered such service to the Divine Word should meet with an end worthy its sacred occupant, the manner of his death was ordained accordingly. For since but two alternatives remained: either to consign his body entirely to corruption, and so to bring the scene of life to a dishonored close, or else to prove himself victorious over death, and render mortality immortal by the act of Divine power; the former of these alternatives would have contravened his own promise. For as it is not the property of fire to cool, nor of light to darken, no more is it compatible with life, to deprive of life, or with Divine intelligence, to act in a manner contrary to reason. For how would it be consistent, with reason, that he who had promised life to others, should permit his own body, the form which he had chosen, to perish beneath the power of corruption? That he who had inspired his disciples with hopes of immortality, should yield this exponent of his Divine counsels to be destroyed by death? The second alternative was therefore needful I mean, that he should assert his dominion over the power of death. But how? should this be a furtive and secret act, or openly performed and in the sight of all? So mighty an achievement, had it remained unknown and unrevealed, must have failed of its effect as regards the interests of men; whereas the same event, if openly declared and understood, would, from its wondrous character, redound to the common benefit of all. With reason, therefore, since it was needful to prove his body victorious over death, and that not secretly but before the eyes of men, he shrank not from the trial, for this indeed would have argued fear, and a sense of inferiority to the power of death, but maintained that conflict with the enemy which has rendered mortality immortal; a conflict undertaken for the life, the immortality, the salvation of all. Suppose one desired to show us that a vessel could resist the

1435 force of fire; how could he better prove the fact than by casting it into the furnace  
and thence withdrawing it entire and unconsumed? Even thus the Word of God who is the  
source of life to all, desiring to prove the triumph of that body over death which he  
had assumed for man's salvation, and to make this body partake his own life and  
immortality, pursued a course consistent with this object. Leaving his body for a  
1440 little while, and delivering it up to death in proof of its mortal nature, he soon  
redeemed it from death, in vindication of that Divine power whereby he has manifested  
the immortality which he has promised to be utterly beyond the sphere of death. The  
reason of this is clear. It was needful that his disciples should receive ocular  
proof of the certainty of that resurrection on which he had taught them to rest their  
1445 hopes as a motive for rising superior to the fear of death. It was indeed most  
needful that they who purposed to pursue a life of godliness should receive a clear  
impression of this essential truth: more needful still for those who were destined to  
declare his name in all the world, and to communicate to mankind that knowledge of  
God which he had before ordained for all nations. For such the strongest conviction  
1450 of a future life was necessary, that they might be able with fearless and unshrinking  
zeal to maintain the conflict with Gentile and polytheistic error: a conflict the  
dangers of which they would never, have been prepared to meet, except as habituated  
to the contempt of death. Accordingly, in arming his disciples against the power of  
this last enemy, he delivered not his doctrines in mere verbal precepts, nor  
1455 attempted to prove the soul's immortality, by persuasive and probable arguments; but  
displayed to them in his own person a real victory over death. Such was the first and  
greatest reason of our Saviour's conflict with the power of death, whereby he proved  
to his disciples the nothingness of that which is the terror of all mankind, and  
afforded a visible evidence of the reality of that life which he had promised;  
presenting as it were a first-fruit of our common hope, of future life and  
1460 immortality in the presence of God. The second cause of his resurrection was, that  
the Divine power might be manifested which dwelt in his mortal body. Mankind had  
heretofore conferred Divine honors on men who had yielded to the power of death, and  
had given the titles of gods and heroes to mortals like themselves. For this reason,  
therefore, the Word of God evinced his gracious character, and proved to man his own  
1465 superiority over death, recalling his mortal body to a second life, displaying an  
immortal triumph over death in the eyes of all, and teaching them to acknowledge the  
Author of such a victory to be the only true God, even in death itself. I may allege  
yet a third cause of the Saviour's death. He was the victim offered to the Supreme  
Sovereign of the universe for the whole human race: a victim consecrated for the need  
1470 of the human race, and for the overthrow of the errors of demon worship. For as soon  
as the one holy and mighty sacrifice, the sacred body of our Saviour, had been slain  
for man, to be as a ransom for all nations, heretofore involved in the guilt of  
impious superstition, thenceforward the power of impure and unholy spirits was  
utterly abolished, and every earth-born and delusive error was at once weakened and  
1475 destroyed. Thus, then, this salutary victim taken from among themselves, I mean the  
mortal body of the Word, was offered on behalf of the common race of men. This was  
that sacrifice delivered up to death, of which the sacred oracles speak: "Behold the  
Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And again, as follows: "He was  
led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is dumb." They  
1480 declare also the cause, saying: "He bears our sins, and is pained for us: yet we  
accounted him to be in trouble, and in suffering, and in affliction. But he was  
wounded on account of our sins, and bruised because of our iniquities: the  
chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his bruises we were healed. All we as  
sheep have gone astray; every one has gone astray in this way; and the Lord gave him  
1485 up for our sins.'" Such were the causes which led to the offering of the human body  
of the Word of God. But forasmuch as he was the great high priest, consecrated to the  
Supreme Lord and King, and therefore more than a victim, the Word, the Power, and the  
Wisdom of God; he soon recalled his body from the grasp of death, presented it to his  
Father as the first-fruit of our common salvation, and raised this trophy, a proof at  
1490 once of his victory over death and Satan, and of the abolition of human sacrifices,  
for the blessing of all mankind.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1495 AND now the time is come for us to proceed to the demonstration of these things; if  
indeed such truths require demonstration, and if the aid of testimony be needful to  
confirm the certainty of palpable facts. Such testimony, however, shall be here  
given; and let it be received with an attentive and gracious ear. Of old the nations  
of the earth, the entire human race, were variously distributed into provincial,  
national, and local governments, subject to kingdoms and principalities of many  
kinds. The consequences of this variety were war and strife, depopulation and  
1500 captivity, which raged in country and city with unceasing fury. Hence, too, the  
countless subjects of history, adulteries, and rapes of women; hence the woes of

Troy, and the ancient tragedies, so known among all peoples. The origin of these may  
 justly be ascribed to the delusion of polytheistic error. But when that instrument of  
 our redemption, the thrice holy body of Christ, which proved itself superior to all  
 1505 Satanic fraud, and free from evil both in word and deed, was raised, at once for the  
 abolition of ancient evils, and in token of his victory over the powers of darkness;  
 the energy of these evil spirits was at once destroyed. The manifold forms of  
 government, the tyrannies and republics, the siege of cities, and devastation of  
 1510 countries caused thereby, were now no more, and one God was proclaimed to all  
 mankind. At the same time one universal power, the Roman empire, arose and  
 flourished, while the enduring and implacable hatred of nation against nation was now  
 removed: and as the knowledge of one God, and one way of religion and salvation, even  
 the doctrine of Christ, was made known to all mankind; so at the self-same period,  
 the entire dominion of the Roman empire being vested in a single sovereign, profound  
 1515 peace reigned throughout the world. And thus, by the express appointment of the same  
 God, two roots of blessing, the Roman empire, and the doctrine of Christian piety,  
 sprang up together for the benefit of men. For before this time the various countries  
 of the world, as Syria, Asia, Macedonia, Egypt, and Arabia, had been severally  
 subject to different rulers. The Jewish people, again, had established their dominion  
 1520 in the land of Palestine. And these nations, in every village, city, and district,  
 actuated by some insane spirit, were engaged in incessant and murderous war and  
 conflict. But two mighty powers, starting from the same point, the Roman empire,  
 which henceforth was swayed by a single sovereign, and the Christian religion,  
 subdued and reconciled these contending elements. Our Saviour's mighty power  
 1525 destroyed at once the many governments and the many gods of the powers of darkness,  
 and proclaimed to all men, both rude and civilized, to the extremities of the earth,  
 the sole sovereignty of God himself. Meantime the Roman empire, the causes of  
 multiplied governments being thus removed, effected an easy conquest of those which  
 yet remained; its object being to unite all nations in one harmonious whole; an  
 1530 object in great measure already secured, and destined to be still more perfectly  
 attained, even to the final conquest of the ends of the habitable world, by means of  
 the salutary doctrine, and through the aid of that Divine power which facilitates and  
 smooths its way. And surely this must appear a wondrous fact to those who will  
 examine the question in the love of truth, and desire not to cavil at these  
 1535 blessings. The falsehood of demon superstition was convicted: the inveterate strife  
 and mutual hatred of the nations was removed: at the same time One God, and the  
 knowledge of that God, were proclaimed to all: one universal empire prevailed; and  
 the whole human race, subdued by the controlling power of peace and concord, received  
 one another as brethren, and responded to the feelings of their common nature. Hence,  
 1540 as children of one God and Father, and owning true religion as their common mother,  
 they saluted and welcomed each other with words of peace. Thus the whole world  
 appeared like one well-ordered and united family: each one might journey unhindered  
 as far as and whithersoever he pleased: men might securely travel from West to East,  
 and from East to West, as to their own native country: in short, the ancient oracles  
 1545 and predictions of the prophets were fulfilled, more numerous than we can at present  
 cite, and those especially which speak as follows concerning the saving Word. "He  
 shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."  
 And again, "In his days shall righteousness spring up; and abundance of peace." "And  
 they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into sickles: and  
 1550 nation shall not take up sword against nation, neither shall they learn to war any  
 more.'" These words, predicted ages before in the Hebrew tongue, have received in our  
 own day a visible fulfillment, by which the testimonies of the ancient oracles are  
 clearly confirmed. And now, if thou still desire more ample proof, receive it, not in  
 words, but from the facts themselves. Open the eyes of thine understanding expand the  
 1555 gates of thought; pause awhile, and consider; inquire of thyself as though thou wert  
 another, and thus diligently examine the nature of the case. What king or prince in  
 any age of the world, what philosopher, legislator, or prophet, in civilized or  
 barbarous lands, has attained so great a height of excellence, I say not after death,  
 but while living still, and full of mighty power, as to fill the ears and tongues of  
 1560 all mankind with the praises of his name? Surely none save our only Saviour has done  
 this, when, after his victory over death, he spoke the word to his followers, and  
 fulfilled it by the event, saying to them, "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations  
 in my name.'" He it was who gave the distinct assurance, that his gospel must be  
 preached in all the world for a true testimony to all nations, and immediately  
 1565 verified his word: for within a little time the world itself was filled with his  
 doctrine. How, then, will those who caviled at the commencement of my speech be able  
 to reply to this? For surely the force of ocular testimony is superior to any verbal  
 argument. Who else than he, with an invisible and yet potent hand, has driven from  
 human society like savage beasts that ever noxious and destructive tribe of evil  
 1570 spirits who of old had made all nations their prey, and by the motions of their



images had practiced many a delusion among men? Who else, beside our Saviour, by the invocation of his name, and by unfeigned prayer addressed through him to the Supreme God, has given power to banish from the world the remnant of those wicked spirits to those who with genuine and sincere obedience pursue the course of life and conduct which he has himself prescribed? Who else but our Saviour has taught his followers to offer those bloodless and reasonable sacrifices which are performed by prayer and the secret worship of God? Hence is it that throughout the habitable world altars are erected, and churches dedicated, wherein these spiritual and rational sacrifices are offered as a sacred service by every nation to the One Supreme God. Once more, who but he, with invisible and secret power, has suppressed and utterly abolished those bloody sacrifices which were offered with fire and smoke, as well as the cruel and senseless immolation of human victims; a fact which is attested by the heathen historians themselves? For it was not till after the publication of the Saviour's Divine doctrine, about the time of Hadrian's reign, that the practice of human sacrifice was universally abandoned. Such and so manifest are the proofs of our Saviour's power and energy after death. Who then can be found of spirit so obdurate as to withhold his assent to the truth, and refuse to acknowledge his life to be Divine? Such deeds as I have described are done by the living, not the dead; and visible acts are to us as evidence of those which we cannot see. It is as it were an event of yesterday that an impious and godless race disturbed and confounded the peace of human society, and possessed mighty power. But these, as soon as life departed, lay prostrate on the earth, worthless as dung, breathless, motionless, bereft of speech, and have left neither fame nor memorial behind. For such is the condition of the dead; and he who no longer lives is nothing: and how can he who is nothing be capable of any act? But how shall his existence be called in question, whose active power and energy are greater than in those who are still alive? And though he be invisible to the natural eye, yet the discerning faculty is not in outward sense. We do not comprehend the rules of art, or the theories of science, by bodily sensation; nor has any eye yet discerned the mind of man. Far less, then, the power of God: and in such cases our judgment is formed from apparent results. Even thus are we bound to judge of our Saviour's invisible power, and decide by its manifest effects whether we shall acknowledge the mighty operations which he is even now carrying on to be the works of a living agent; or whether they shall be ascribed to one who has no existence; or, lastly, whether the inquiry be not absurd and inconsistent in itself. For with what reason can we assert the existence of one who is not? Since all allow that that which has no existence is devoid of that power, and energy, and action, for these are characteristics of the living, but the contrary is characteristic of the dead.

## CHAPTER XVII.

AND now the time is come for us to consider the works of our Saviour in our own age, and to contemplate the living operations of the living God. For how shall we describe these mighty works save as living proofs of the power of a living agent, who truly enjoys the life of God? If any one inquire the nature of these works, let him now attend. But recently a class of persons, impelled by furious zeal, and backed by equal power and military force, evinced their enmity against God, by destroying his churches, and overthrowing from their foundations the buildings dedicated to his worship. In short, in every way they directed their attacks against the unseen God, and assailed him with a thousand shafts of impious words. But he who is invisible avenged himself with an invisible hand. By the single fiat of his will his enemies were utterly destroyed, they who a little while before had been flourishing in great prosperity, exalted by their fellow men as worthy of divine honor, and blessed with a continued period of power and glory, so long as they had maintained peace and amity with him whom they afterwards opposed. As soon, however, as they dared openly to resist his will, and to set their gods in array against him whom we adore; immediately, according to the will and power of that God against whom their arms were raised, they all received the judgment due to their audacious deeds. Constrained to yield and flee before his power, together they acknowledged his Divine nature, and hastened to reverse the measures which they had before essayed. Our Saviour, therefore, without delay erected trophies of this victory everywhere, and once more adorned the world with holy temples and consecrated houses of prayer; in every city and village, nay, throughout all countries, and even in barbaric wilds, ordaining the erection of churches and sacred buildings to the honor of the Supreme God and Lord of all. Hence it is that these hallowed edifices are deemed worthy to bear his name, and receive not their appellation from men, but from the Lord himself, from which circumstances they are called churches (or houses of the Lord). And now let him who will stand forth and tell us who, after so complete a desolation, has restored these sacred buildings from foundation to roof? Who, when all hope appeared extinct, has caused them to rise on a nobler scale than heretofore? And well may it claim our

wonder, that this renovation was not subsequent to the death of those adversaries of God, but whilst the destroyers of these edifices were still alive; so that the recantation of their evil deeds came in their own words and edicts. And this they did, not in the sunshine of prosperity and ease (for then we might suppose that benevolence or clemency might be the cause), but at the very time that they were suffering under the stroke of Divine vengeance. Who, again, has been able to retain in obedience to his heavenly precepts, after so many successive storms of persecution, nay, in the very crisis of danger, so many persons throughout the world devoted to philosophy, and the service of God and those holy choirs of virgins who had dedicated themselves to a life of perpetual chastity and purity? Who taught them cheerfully to persevere in the exercise of protracted fasting, and to embrace a life of severe and consistent self-denial? Who has persuaded multitudes of either sex to devote themselves to the study of sacred things, and prefer to bodily nutriment that intellectual food which is suited to the wants of a rational soul? Who has instructed barbarians and peasants, yea, feeble women, slaves, and children, in short, unnumbered multitudes of all nations, to live in the contempt of death; persuaded of the immortality of their souls, conscious that human actions are observed by the unerring eye of justice, expecting God's award to the righteous and the wicked, and therefore true to the practice of a just and virtuous life? For they could not otherwise have persevered in the course of godliness. Surely these are the acts which our Saviour, and he alone, even now performs. And now let us pass from these topics, and endeavor by inquiries such as these that follow to convince the objector's obdurate understanding. Come forward, then, whoever thou art, and speak the words of reason: utter, not the thoughts of a senseless heart, but those of an intelligent and enlightened mind: speak, I say, after deep solemn converse with thyself. Who of the sages whose names have yet been known to fame, has ever been fore-known and proclaimed from the remotest ages, as our Saviour was by the prophetic oracles to the once divinely-favored Hebrew nation? But his very birth-place, the period of his advent the manner of his life, his miracles, and words and mighty acts, were anticipated and recorded in the sacred volumes of these prophets. Again, who so present an avenger of crimes against himself; so that, as the immediate consequence of their impiety, the entire Jewish people were scattered by an unseen power, their royal seat utterly removed, and their very temple with its holy things levelled with the ground? Who, like our Saviour, has uttered predictions at once concerning that impious nation and the establishment of his church throughout the world, and has equally verified both by the event? Respecting the temple of these wicked men, our Saviour said: "Your house is left unto you desolate": and, "There shall not be left one stone upon another in this place, that shall not be thrown down." And again, of his church he says: "I will build my church upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How wondrous, too, must that power be deemed which summoned obscure and unlettered men from their fisher's trade, and made them the legislators and instructors of the human race! And how clear a demonstration of his deity do we find in the promise so well performed, that he would make them fishers of men: in the power and energy which he bestowed, so that they composed and published writings of such authority that they were translated into every civilized and barbarous language, were read and pondered by all nations, and the doctrines contained in them accredited as the oracles of God! How marvelous his predictions of the future, and the testimony whereby his disciples were forewarned that they should be brought before kings and rulers, and should endure the severest punishments, not indeed as criminals, but simply for their confession of his name! Or who shall adequately describe the power with which he prepared them thus to suffer with a willing mind, and enabled them, strong in the armor of godliness, to maintain a constancy of spirit indomitable in the midst of conflict? Or how shall we enough admire that steadfast firmness of soul which strengthened, not merely his immediate followers, but their successors also, even to our present age, in the joyful endurance of every infliction, and every form of torture, in proof of their devotion to the Supreme God? Again, what monarch has prolonged his government through so vast a series of ages? Who else has power to make war after death, to triumph over every enemy, to subjugate each barbarous and civilized nation and city, and to subdue his adversaries with an invisible and secret hand? Lastly, and chief of all, what slanderous lip shall dare to question that universal peace to which we have already referred; established by his power throughout the world For thus the mutual concord and harmony of all nations coincided in point of time with the extension of our Saviour's doctrine and preaching in all the world: a concurrence of events predicted in long ages past by the prophets of God. The day itself would fail me, gracious emperor, should I attempt to exhibit in a single view those cogent proofs of our Saviour's Divine power which even now are visible in their effects; for no human being, in civilized or barbarous nations, has ever yet exhibited such power of Divine virtue as our Saviour. But why do I speak of men, since of the beings whom all nations have deemed divine, none has appeared on

1710 earth with power like to his? If there has, let the fact now be proved. Come forward, ye philosophers, and tell us what god or hero has yet been known to fame, who has delivered the doctrines of eternal life and a heavenly kingdom as he has done who is our Saviour? Who, like him, has persuaded multitudes throughout the world to pursue the principles of Divine wisdom, to fix their hope on heaven itself, and look forward to the mansions there reserved for them that love God? What god or hero in human form has ever held his course from the rising to the setting sun, a course co-extensive as it were with the solar light, and irradiated mankind with the bright and glorious beams of his doctrine, causing each nation of the earth to render united worship to the One true God? What god or hero yet, as he has done, has set aside all gods and heroes among civilized or barbarous nations has ordained that divine honors should be withheld from all, and chimed obedience to that command: and then, though singly conflicting with the power of all, has utterly destroyed the opposing hosts; victorious over the gods and heroes of every age, and causing himself alone, in every region of the habitable world, to be acknowledged by all people as the only Son of God? Who else has commanded the nations inhabiting the continents and islands of this mighty globe to assemble weekly on the Lord's day, and to observe it as a festival, not indeed for the pampering of the body, but for the invigoration of the soul by instruction in Divine truth? What god or hero, exposed, as our Saviour was, to so sore a conflict, has raised the trophy of victory over every foe? For they indeed, from first to last, unceasingly assailed his doctrine and his people: but he who is invisible, by the exercise of a secret power, has raised his servants and the sacred houses of their worship to the height of glory. But why should we still vainly aim at detailing those Divine proofs of our Saviour's power which no language can worthily express; which need indeed no words of ours, but themselves appeal in loudest tones to those whose mental ears are open to the truth? Surely it is a strange, a wondrous fact, unparalleled in the annals of human life; that the blessings we have described should be accorded to our mortal race, and that he who is in truth the only, the eternal Son of God, should thus be visible on earth.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

1740 THESE words of ours, however, [gracious] Sovereign, may well appear superfluous in your ears, convinced as you are, by frequent and personal experience, of our Saviour's Deity; yourself also, in actions still more than words, a her-aid of the truth to all mankind. Yourself, it may be, will vouchsafe at a time of leisure to relate to us the abundant manifestations which your Saviour has accorded you of his presence, and the oft-repeated visions of himself which have attended you in the hours of sleep. I speak not of those secret suggestions which to us are un-revealed: but of those principles which he has instilled into your own mind, and which are fraught with general interest and benefit to the human race. You will yourself relate in worthy terms the visible protection which your Divine shield and guardian has extended in the hour of battle; the ruin of your open and secret foes; and his ready aid in time of peril. To him you will ascribe relief in the midst of perplexity; defence in solitude; expedients in extremity; foreknowledge of events yet future; your fore thought for the general weal; your power to investigate uncertain questions; your conduct of most important enterprises; your administration of civil affairs; your military arrangements, and correction of abuses in all departments; your ordinances respecting public right; and, lastly, your legislation for the common benefit of all. You will, it may be, also detail to us those particulars of his favor which are secret to us, but known to you alone, and treasured in your royal memory as in secret storehouses. Such, doubtless, are the reasons, and such the convincing proofs of your Saviour's power, which caused you to raise that sacred edifice which presents to all, believers and unbelievers alike, a trophy of his victory over death, 1760 a holy temple of the holy God: to consecrate those noble and splendid monuments of immortal life and his heavenly kingdom: to offer memorialsof our Almighty Saviour's conquest which well become the imperial dignity of him by whom they are bestowed. With such memorials have you adorned that edifice which witnesses of eternal life: thus, as it were in imperial characters, ascribing victory and triumph to the heavenly Word of God: thus proclaiming to all nations, with clear and unmistakable voice, in deed and word, your own devout and pious confession of his name.

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