St. Augustine's Confessions

Saint Augustine (Bishop of Hippo.)

Digitized by Google

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Digitized by Google

THE LOEB CLASSICAL LIBRARY

EDITED BY

T. E. PAGE, M.A., AND W. H. D. ROUSE, LITT.D.

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

I

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONFESSIONS

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY
WILLIAM WATTS
1631

IN TWO VOLUMES

I

LONDON : WILLIAM HEINEMANN
NEW YORK : THE MACMILLAN CO.
MCMXII

Digitized by Google

192409

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

Aurelius Augustinus was born at Tagaste, in Numidia, November 13, A.D. 354, and died August 30, 430. It was in 373 that he joined the Manichaeans, and in 386 he was converted to Catholicism. He returned to Africa in 388, was ordained presbyter in 391, and in 395 became Bishop of Hippo, where he lived until his death. His first book, *De Pulchro et Apto,* is lost. Besides the *Confessions,* he wrote *De Doctrina Christiana, Encheiridion, De Trinitate, De Civitate Dei, Retractationes,* and a number of controversial and other pamphlets.

There is no need to say much of the contents of this book. Some it will attract by its devotion, some by its philosophy perhaps; but all it will charm by its complete sincerity. The scenes of Augustine's early life stand out like pictures; and his mother lives before our mind's eye as if we had seen her in the flesh. The psychologist will notice how acutely the author traces the workings of his own mind, particularly in childhood.

This is a reprint of William Watts's translation (with Scripture references), corrected according to Knöll's text, with the help of the translations of Pusey (1838) and C. Bigg (Books I. to IX.; Methuen, 1897–1909) and the annotated text of J. Gibb and W. Montgomery (Cambridge Patristic Texts, 1908).

William Watts, Rector of St. Alban's, Wood Street, London (1590?–1649), published his translation in 1631. "This translation I began," he says, "for

Digitized by Google

the exercise of my Lenten Devotions; but I quickly found it to exercise more than my Devotions: it exercised my skill, (all I had); it exercised my Patience, it exercised my Friends too (for it is incomparably the hardest task that ever I yet undertook)." The present editor is inclined to echo this remark. For the first two books especially, and partly later, he used an earlier translation by Sir Tobie Matthew (London, 1624; second edition Paris, 1638), to whom he alludes in his notes with often upbraiding as "the Papist."

Pusey based his translation on Watts, but it is really rewritten. In the present edition I have kept Watts's text as far as possible, and where it had to be corrected I have tried to keep his style. The style of Augustine, both condensed in phrase and formless in structure, could not possibly be reproduced: and I am much mistaken if readers will not enjoy the leisurely flow of Watts's rhythms, and forgive him heartily for using more words than he need have used.

The Latin text is Knöll's (Teubner, 1909), with rather simpler spelling, fuller punctuation, and a very few changes which are noted at the foot of the page.

W. H. D. ROUSE

Digitized by Google

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Editio Princeps:

Collected Works: Amerbach, Basle, 1506; reprinted Paris, 1515.

Confessions: Mediolani, 1475.

Latest Critical Edition:

Confessions: P. Knöll, Teubner, 1909.

Translations (of the Confessions):

Sir Tobie Matthew, 1624.

William Watts, London, 1631.

E. B. Pusey (with Latin text and notes), Rivington, 1838, 2 vols.

C. Bigg, Books I.–IX., Methuen, 1897–1909.

Illustrative Works:

Opera emendata studio monachorum ordinis S. Benedicti. Paris, 1679–1700; reprinted Gaume, Paris, 1836–39; with life.

Schröckh: Kirchengeschichte, vol. xv.

Neander: Geschichte der Christlichen Religion und Kirche, vol. ii.

Cunningham: St. Austin and his place in the History of Christian Thought, London, 1886.

Gwatkin: The Knowledge of God, 1908, vol. ii.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK I

1 A

Digitized by Google

LIBER PRIMVS

I

CAP. I Magnus es, domine, et laudabilis valde: magna virtus tua, et sapientiae tuae non est numerus. et laudare te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturae tuae, et homo circumferens mortalitatem suam, circumferens testimonium peccati sui et testimonium, quia superbis resistis: et tamen laudare te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturae tuae. tu excitas, ut laudare te delectet, quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te. da mihi, domine, scire et intellegere, utrum sit prius invocare te an laudare te, et scire te prius sit an invocare te. sed quis te invocat nesciens te? aliud enim pro alio potest invocare nesciens. an potius invocaris, ut sciaris? quomodo autem invocabunt, in quem non crediderunt? aut quomodo credent sine praedicante? et laudabunt dominum qui requirunt eum. quaerentes enim inveniunt eum et invenientes laudabunt eum. quaeram te, domine, invocans te, et invocem te credens in te: praedicatus enim es nobis.

Digitized by Google

THE FIRST BOOK

I

He admires God's Majesty, and is inflamed with a deep desire of praising him

Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised: CHAP. I.
great is thy power, and thy wisdom is infinite. And
man, who being a part of what thou hast created, is Ps. cxlvii. 5
desirous to praise thee; this man, bearing about his own mortality with him, carrying about him a testimony of his own sin, (even this testimony, that
God resisteth the proud;) yet this man, this part James iv. 6
of what thou hast created, is desirous to praise thee; thou so provokest him, that he even delighteth to praise thee. For thou hast created us for thyself, and our heart cannot be quieted till it may find repose in thee. Grant me, Lord, to know and understand what I ought first to do, whether call upon thee, or praise thee? and which ought to be first, to know thee, or to call upon thee? But who can rightly call upon thee, that is yet ignorant of thee? for such an one may instead of thee call upon another. Or art thou rather first called upon, that thou mayest so come to be known? But how
then shall they call on him, in whom they have Rom. x. 14
not believed? and how shall they believe without a preacher? And again, they shall praise the
Lord that seek after him: for, they that seek shall Matt. vii. 7
find; and finding they shall praise him. Thee will I seek, O Lord, calling upon thee; and I will call upon thee, believing in thee: for thou hast been

Digitized by Google

CAP. I invocat te, domine, fides mea, quam dedisti mihi, quam inspirasti mihi per humanitatem filii tui, per ministerium praedicatoris tui.

II

CAP. II ET quomodo invocabo deum meum, deum et dominum meum, quoniam utique in me ipsum eum invocabo, cum invocabo eum? et quis locus est in me, quo veniat in me deus meus? quo deus veniat in me, deus, qui fecit caelum et terram? itane, domine deus meus, est quicquam in me, quod capiat te? an vero caelum et terra, quae fecisti et in quibus me fecisti, capiunt te? an quia sine te non esset quidquid est, fit, ut quidquid est capiat te? quoniam itaque et ego sum, quid peto, ut venias in me, qui non essem, nisi esses in me? non enim ego iam in inferis,[1] et tamen etiam ibi es. nam etsi descendero in infernum, ades. non ergo essem, deus meus, non omnino essem, nisi esses in me. an potius non essem, nisi essem in te, ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia? etiam sic, domine, etiam sic. quo te invoco, cum in te sim? aut unde venias in me? quo enim recedam extra caelum et terram, ut

[1] In inferis: most MSS. inferi.

Digitized by Google

declared unto us. My faith, O Lord, calls upon thee, which thou hast given me, which thou hast inspired into me; even by the humanity of thy Son, and by the ministry of thy preacher. CHAP. I

II

Man hath his being from God; and that God is in man, and man in God

AND how shall I call upon my God, my Lord and God? because that when I invoke him, I call him into myself: and what place is there in me fit for my God to come into me by, whither God may come into me; even that God which made heaven and earth? Is it so, my Lord God? Is there anything in me which can contain thee? Nay, can both heaven and earth which thou hast made, and in which thou hast made me, in any wise contain thee? Or else because whatsoever is, could not subsist without thee, must it follow thereupon, that whatsoever hath being, is endued with a capacity of thee? Since therefore I also am, how do I entreat thee to come into me, who could not be, unless thou wert first in me? For I am not after all in hell, and yet thou art there: For if I go down into hell, thou art there also. I should therefore not be, O God, yea I should have no being at all, unless thou wert in me: or rather, I should not be, unless I had my being in thee; of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. Even so it is, Lord, even so. Wherefore, then, do I invoke thee, seeing I am already in thee? Or whence canst thou come into me? For whither CHAP. II Ps. xiii. 28 Rom. xi. 36

Digitized by Google

CAP. II inde in me veniat deus meus, qui dixit: caelum et terram ego impleo?

III

CAP. III Capiunt ergone te caelum et terra, quoniam tu imples ea? an imples et restat, quoniam non te capiunt? et quo refundis quidquid impleto caelo et terra restat ex te? an non opus habes, ut quoquam continearis, qui contines omnia, quoniam quae imples continendo imples? non enim vasa, quae te plena sunt, stabilem te faciunt, quia etsi frangantur non effunderis. et cum effunderis super nos, non tu iaces, sed erigis nos, nec tu dissiparis, sed colligis nos. sed quae imples omnia, te toto imples omnia. an quia non possunt te totum capere omnia, partem tui capiunt et eandem partem simul omnia capiunt? an singulas singula et maiores maiora, minores minora capiunt? ergo est aliqua pars tua maior, aliqua minor? an ubique totus es et res nulla te totum capit?

Digitized by Google

shall I go, beyond heaven and earth, that from thence my God may come unto me? who hath said, The heaven and earth do I fill. CHAP. II Jer. xxiii. 24

III

God is wholly everywhere, and is not by parts contained by the Creature

Do therefore the heaven and earth contain thee, seeing thou fillest them? Or dost thou fill them, and there yet remains an overplus of thee, because they are not able to comprehend thee? If so, into what dost thou pour whatsoever remaineth of thee after heaven and earth are filled? Is it not that thou hast no need to be contained by something, thou who containest all things; seeing that what thou fillest, by containing them thou fillest. For those vessels which are full of thee, add no stability to thee; for were they broken, thou art not shed out: and when thou art shed upon us, thou art not spilt, but thou raisest us up; nor art thou scattered, but thou gatherest up us: but thou who fillest all, with thy whole self dost thou fill them all. Or because these things cannot contain all of thee, do they receive a part of thee; and do all at once receive the same part of thee? or, several capacities, several parts; and greater things, greater parts; and less, lesser? Is therefore one part of thee greater, or another lesser? Or art thou all everywhere, and nothing contains thee wholly? CHAP. III

Digitized by Google

IV

CAP. IV Quid est ergo deus meus? quid, rogo, nisi dominus deus? quis enim dominus praeter dominum? aut quis deus praeter deum nostrum? summe, optime, potentissime, omnipotentissime, misericordissime et iustissime, secretissime et praesentissime, pulcherrime et fortissime, stabilis et inconprehensibilis, inmutabilis, mutans omnia, numquam novus, numquam vetus, innovans omnia; in vetustatem perducens superbos et nesciunt; semper agens, semper quietus, colligens et non egens, portans et implens et protegens, creans et nutriens, perficiens, quaerens, cum nihil desit tibi. amas nec aestuas, zelas et securus es; paenitet te et non doles, irasceris et tranquillus es, opera mutas nec mutas consilium; recipis quod invenis et numquam amisisti; numquam inops et gaudes lucris, numquam avarus et usuras exigis. supererogatur tibi, ut debeas, et quis habet quicquam non tuum? reddens debita nulli debens, donans debita nihil perdens. et quid diximus, deus meus, vita mea, dulcedo mea sancta, aut quid dicit aliquis, cum de te dicit? et vae tacentibus de te, quoniam loquaces muti sunt.

Digitized by Google

IV

An admirable description of God's Attributes

CHAP IV

WHAT is therefore my God? What, I ask, but the Lord God? For who is Lord but the Lord? Or who is God besides our God? O thou supreme, most excellent, most mighty, most omnipotent, most merciful and most just; most secret and most present; most beautiful and most strong; constant and incomprehensible; immutable, yet changing all things; never new, and never old; renewing all things, and insensibly bringing proud men into decay; ever active, and ever quiet; gathering together, yet never wanting; upholding, filling, and protecting; creating, nourishing and perfecting all things; still seeking, although thou standest in need of nothing. Thou lovest, yet art not transported; art jealous, but without fear; thou dost repent, but not grieve; art angry, but cool still. Thy works thou changest, but not thy counsel; takest what thou findest, never losest aught. Thou art never needy, yet glad of gain; never covetous, yet exactest advantage. Men pay thee in superabundance of all things, that thou mayest be the debtor: and who hath anything which is not thine? Thou payest debts, yet owest nothing; forgivest debts, yet losest nothing. And shall we say, my God, my Life, my holy Delight: or what can any man say when he speaks of thee? And woe to them that speak nothing in thy praise, seeing those that speak most, are dumb.

Ps. xviii. 31

Job ix. 5

Digitized by Google

V

CAP. V Quis mihi dabit adquiescere in te? quis dabit mihi, ut venias in cor meum et inebries illud, ut obliviscar mala mea et unum bonum meum amplectar, te? quid mihi es? miserere, ut loquar. quid tibi sum ipse, ut amari te iubeas a me et, nisi faciam, irascaris mihi et mineris ingentes miserias? parvane ipsa est, si non amem te? ei mihi! dic mihi per miserationes tuas, domine deus meus, quid sis mihi. dic animae meae: salus tua ego sum. sic dic, ut audiam. ecce aures cordis mei ante te, domine; aperi eas et dic animae meae: salus tua ego sum. curram post vocem hanc et adprehendam te. noli abscondere a me faciem tuam: moriar, ne moriar, ut eam videam.

Angusta est domus animae meae, quo venias ad eam: dilatetur abs te. ruinosa est: refice eam. habet quae offendant oculos tuos: fateor et scio. sed quis mundabit eam? aut cui alteri praeter te clamabo: ab occultis meis munda me, domine, et ab alienis parce servo tuo? credo, propter quod et loquor. domine, tu scis. nonne tibi prolocutus sum adversum me delicta mea, deus meus, et tu dimisisti inpietatem cordis mei? non iudicio contendo tecum, qui veritas es; et ego nolo fallere me ipsum, ne mentiatur

Digitized by Google

V

He prays for forgiveness of sins, and the Love of God

CHAP. V

WHO shall procure for me, that I may repose in thee? Who shall procure thee to enter into my heart; and so to inebriate it, that I may forget my own evils, and embrace thee, my only good? What art thou to me? let me find grace to speak to thee. What am I to thee, that thou shouldest command me to love thee, and be angry with me, yea and threaten me with great mischiefs, unless I do love thee? Is it to be thought a small misery in itself, not to love thee? Woe is me! Answer me for thy mercy's sake, O Lord my God, what thou art unto me: Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation. Speak it out, Ps. xxxv. 5 that I may hear thee. Behold, the ears of my heart are before thee, O Lord, open them, and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. I will run after that voice, and take hold of thee. Hide not thy face from me: let me die lest I die, that I may see it.

My soul's house is too strait for thee to come into: let it be enlarged by thee: 'tis ruinous, but do thou repair it. There be many things in it, I both confess and know, which may offend thine eyes; but who can cleanse it? or to whom but thee shall I cry, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins, and Ps. xix. 12 from strange sins deliver thy servant; I believe, and Ps. cxvi. 10 therefore do I speak. Thou knowest, O Lord, that I have confessed my sins against mine own self, O my God; and thou forgavest me the iniquity of my heart. I will not plead with thee, who art Truth: Jer. ii. 29 and I will not deceive myself, lest my iniquity be a false witness to itself. I will not therefore plead

Digitized by Google

CAP. V iniquitas mea sibi. non ergo iudicio contendo tecum, quia, si iniquitates observaveris, domine, domine, quis sustinebit?

VI

CAP. VI Sed tamen sine me loqui apud misericordiam tuam, me terram et cinerem, sine tamen loqui, quoniam ecce misericordia tua est, non homo, inrisor meus, cui loquor. et tu fortasse inrides me, sed conversus misereberis mei. quid enim est quod volo dicere, domine, nisi quia nescio, unde venerim huc, in istam, dico vitam mortalem, an mortem vitalem? nescio. et susceperunt me consolationes miserationum tuarum, sicut audivi a parentibus carnis meae, ex quo et in qua me formasti in tempore; non enim ego memini. exceperunt ergo me consolationes lactis humani, nec mater mea vel nutrices meae sibi ubera implebant, sed tu mihi per eas dabas alimentum infantiae, secundum institutionem tuam, et divitias usque ad fundum rerum dispositas. tu etiam mihi dabas nolle amplius, quam dabas, et nutrientibus me dare mihi velle quod eis dabas: dare enim mihi per ordinatum affectum volebant quo abundabant ex te. nam bonum erat eis bonum meum ex eis, quod ex

Digitized by Google

with thee: for if thou, Lord, shouldest be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, O Lord, who may abide it? CHAP. V Ps. cxxx. 3

VI

That he hath received all blessings from God: and how he hath been preserved by him

YET suffer me to plead before thy Mercy, even me, who am but dust and ashes: once again let me speak, seeing 'tis thy mercy to which I address my speech, and not man who is my mocker. Yet even thou perhaps dost smile at me; but turning, thou wilt pity me. What is it that I would say, O Lord my God, but even this: that I know not whence I came hither; into this, a dying life (shall I call it) or a living death rather? I know not. And the comforts of thy mercies did take me up, as I have heard it of the parents of my flesh, out of whom, and in whom thou sometimes did form me, for I myself cannot remember it. The comfort therefore of a woman's milk did then entertain me: yet did neither my mother nor nurses fill their own breasts; but thou, O Lord, didst by them afford a nourishment fit for my infancy, even according to thine own institution, and those riches of thine, reaching to the root of all things. Thou also ingraftedst in me a desire to suck no more than thou suppliedst them withal; and in my nurses to afford me what thou gavest them: for they were willing to dispense unto me with proportion, what thou suppliedst them with in abundance. For it was a blessing to them, that I received this blessing from CHAP. VI

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI eis non, sed per eas erat: ex te quippe bona omnia, deus, et ex deo meo salus mihi universa. quod animadverti postmodum clamante te mihi per haec ipsa, quae tribuis intus et foris. nam tunc sugere noram et adquiescere delectationibus, flere autem offensiones carnis meae, nihil amplius.

Post et ridere coepi, dormiens primo, deinde vigilans. hoc enim de me mihi indicatum est et credidi, quoniam sic videmus alios infantes; nam ista mea non memini. et ecce paulatim sentiebam, ubi essem, et voluntates meas volebam ostendere eis, per quos implerentur, et non poteram, quia illae intus erant, foris autem illi, nec ullo suo sensu valebant introire in animam meam. itaque iactabam et membra et voces, signa similia voluntatibus meis, pauca quae poteram, qualia poteram: non enim erant veri similia. et cum mihi non obtemperabatur, vel non intellecto vel ne obesset, indignabar non subditis maioribus, et liberis non servientibus, et me de illis flendo vindicabam. tales esse infantes didici, quos discere potui, et me talem fuisse magis mihi ipsi indicaverunt nescientes quam scientes nutritores mei.

Et ecce infantia mea olim mortua est et ego vivo,

Digitized by Google

them; which yet was rather by them, than from them. For all good things proceed from thee, O God, and from my God cometh all my healthfulness. And so much I observed afterwards, when thou didst cry unto me by those instincts of nature which thou induedst me withal, both inwardly and outwardly. For then first I knew how to suck; and to be contented with what did please me, and to cry at what offended my flesh, nothing more. CHAP. VI

Afterwards I began also to laugh; first sleeping, and then waking: for thus much was told me of myself, and I easily believed it, for that we see other infants do so too. For these things of myself I remember not. And behold, by little and little I came on to perceive where I was; and I had the will to signify what I would have, to those that should help me to it: but I could not yet clearly enough express my desires to them; for these were within me, and they without me; nor could the guess of their senses dive into my meaning. Thereupon would I flutter with my limbs, and sputter out some words, making some other few signs, like to my wishes, as well as I could; but could not get myself to be understood by them: and when people obeyed me not, either for that they understood me not, or lest what I desired should hurt me; then how would I wrangle at those elder servants that would not submit to me, and the children that did not aptly humour me, and I thought to revenge myself upon them all, with crying. And this is, as I have learned, the fashion of all children, that I could hear of: and such an one was I, as those taught me, not knowing, better than my nurses who knew.

And now behold, my infancy is dead long ago, yet I live still. But thou, O Lord, who both livest for

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI tu autem, domine, qui et semper vivis et nihil moritur in te, quoniam ante primordia saeculorum et ante omne, quod vel ante dici potest, tu es et deus es dominusque omnium, quae creasti, et apud te rerum omnium instabilium stant causae, et rerum omnium mutabilium inmutabiles manent origines, et omnium inrationalium et temporalium sempiternae vivunt rationes, dic mihi supplici tuo, deus, et misericors misero tuo, dic mihi, utrum alicui iam aetati meae mortuae successerit infantia mea. an illa est, quam egi intra viscera matris meae? nam et de illa mihi nonnihil indicatum est et praegnantes ipse vidi feminas. quid ante hanc etiam, dulcedo mea, deus meus? fuine alicubi aut aliquis? nam quis mihi dicat ista, non habeo; nec pater nec mater potuerunt, nec aliorum experimentum, nec memoria mea. an irrides me ista quaerentem, teque de hoc, quod novi, laudari a me iubes, et confiteri me tibi? confiteor tibi, domine caeli et terrae, laudem dicens tibi de primordiis et infantia mea, quae non memini; et dedisti ea homini ex aliis de se conicere et auctoritatibus etiam muliercularum multa de se credere. eram enim et vivebam etiam tunc, et signa, quibus sensa mea nota aliis facerem, iam in fine infantiae quaerebam. unde hoc tale animal nisi abs te, domine? an quisquam se faciendi erit artifex? aut ulla vena trahitur aliunde, qua esse et vivere

Digitized by Google

ever, and in whom nothing dies, (because that before the foundations of the world, and before everything else, that can be said to be before, thou art both God and Lord of all which thyself hath created; and in whose presence are the causes of all uncertain things, and the immutable patterns of all things mutable, with whom do live the eternal reasons of all these contingent chance-medleys, for which we can give no reason) tell, I pray thee, O God, unto me thy suppliant: thou who art merciful, tell me who am miserable, did my infancy succeed to any other age of mine that was dead before; or was that it which I past in my mother's belly? for something have I heard of that too, and myself have seen women with child. What passed before that age, O God my delight? Was I anywhere, or anybody? For I have none to tell me thus much: neither could my father and mother, nor the experience of others, nor yet mine own memory. Dost thou laugh at me for enquiring these things, who commandest to praise and to confess to thee for what I know? I confess unto thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, and I sing praises unto thee for my first being and infancy, which I have no memory of: and thou hast given leave to man, by others to conjecture of himself, and upon the credit of women to believe many things that concern himself. For even then had I life and being, and towards the end of mine infancy, I sought for some significations to express my meaning by unto others. Whence could such a living creature come, but from thee, O Lord? Or hath any man the skill to frame himself? Or is any vein of ours, by which being and life runs into us, derived from any original but thy workmanship, O Lord, to whom being and

CHAP. VI

CAP. VI currat in nos, praeterquam quod tu facis nos, domine, cui esse et vivere non aliud atque aliud est, quia summe esse atque summe vivere id ipsum est? summus enim es et non mutaris, neque peragitur in te hodiernus dies, et tamen in te peragitur, quia in te sunt et ista omnia: non enim haberent vias transeundi, nisi contineres ea. et quoniam anni tui non deficiunt, anni tui hodiernus dies: et quam multi iam dies nostri et patrum nostrorum per hodiernum tuum transierunt, et ex illo acceperunt modos, et utcumque extiterunt, et transibunt adhuc alii et accipient et utcumque existent. tu autem idem ipse es, et omnia crastina atque ultra omniaque hesterna et retro hodie facies, hodie fecisti. quid ad me, si quis non intellegat? gaudeat et ipse dicens: quid est hoc? gaudeat etiam sic, et amet non inveniendo invenire, potius quam inveniendo non invenire te.

VII

CAP. VII Exaudi, deus. vae peccatis hominum! et homo dicit haec, et misereris eius, quoniam tu fecisti eum et peccatum non fecisti in eo. quis me commemorat peccatum infantiae meae, quoniam nemo mundus a peccato coram te, nec infans, cuius est

Digitized by Google

living are not several things, because both to be and to live in the highest degree, is of thy very essence? For thou art the highest, and thou art not changed; neither is this present day spent in thee; yet it is spent in thee, because even all these times are in thee; nor could have their ways of passing on, unless thou containedst them. And because thy years fail not, thy years are but this very day. And how many soever our days and our fathers' days have been, they have all passed through this one day of thine: from that day have they received their measures and manners of being: and those to come shall so also pass away, and so also receive their measures and manners of being. But thou art the same still; and all to-morrows and so forward, and all yesterdays and so backward, thou shalt make present in this day of thine: yea, and hast made present. What concerns it me, if any understand not this? let him rejoice notwithstanding and say: What is this? Let him so also rejoice, and rather love to find in not finding it out, than by finding it, not to find thee with it.

CHAP. VI

Ps. cii. 27

VII

That even his infancy was subject to sin

HEARKEN unto me, O God! Woe to the sins of men! Yet when man says thus, thou hast mercy on him: because him thou hast created, but sin in him thou hast not made. Who shall bring to my remembrance the sin of my infancy? For in thy sight can no man be clean from his sin; no, not an infant of a

CHAP. VII

Job xxv. 3

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII non pati. sed blande tolerantur haec, non quia nulla vel parva, sed quia aetatis accessu peritura sunt. quod licet probes, cum ferri aequo animo eadem ipsa non possunt, quando in aliquo annosiore deprehenduntur. tu itaque, domine deus meus, qui dedisti vitam infanti et corpus, quod ita, ut videmus, instruxisti sensibus, conpegisti membris, figura decorasti, proque eius universitate atque incolumitate omnes conatus animantis insinuasti, iubes me laudare te in istis et confiteri tibi et psallere nomini tuo, altissime, quia deus es omnipotens et bonus, etiamsi sola ista fecisses, quae nemo alius potest facere nisi tu, une, a quo est omnis modus, formosissime, qui formas omnia et lege tua ordinas omnia.

Hanc ergo aetatem, domine, qua me vixisse non memini, de qua aliis credidi et quam me egisse ex aliis infantibus conieci, quamquam ista multum fida coniectura sit, piget me adnumerare huic vitae meae, quam vivo in hoc saeculo. quantum enim adtinet ad oblivionis meae tenebras, par illi est, quam vixi in matris utero. quod si et in iniquitate conceptus sum, et in peccatis mater mea me in utero aluit, ubi, oro te, deus meus, ubi, domine, ego, servus tuus, ubi aut quando innocens fui? sed ecce omitto illud tempus: et quid mihi iam cum eo est, cuius nulla vestigia recolo?

Digitized by Google

and freshly flowing, though destitute of succour, and having but that only nourishment to sustain its poor life withal? But these childnesses are with pleasure borne withal: not because they be in themselves either none or small faults, but for that they will vanish with age. Which albeit they may in this age be allowed of, yet are they in no patience to be endured in an elder body. Thou therefore, O Lord my God, who hast given both life and body to the infant; which as we see thou hast furnished with senses, compacted with limbs, beautified with shape, and for his general good and safety, hast armed all the endeavours of the whole creature: even thou commandest me to praise thee for these things, and to confess and sing unto thy Name, O thou Most High! Because thou art a God omnipotent and good, although thou hadst done no more but these things which none else can do, but thou alone, from whom all proportion floweth; O thou most beautiful, which fashionest all, and after thine own method disposest all. This age therefore of my life, O Lord, of which I remember not any passages; concerning which I must give credit to others' relation, which, notwithstanding that I have passed, as I conjecture by other infants (although these tokens may very strongly assure my conjecture), it irks me to reckon unto the rest of that life which I lead in this world; seeing that in regard of the darkness of my forgetfulness of it, it is like that part which I passed in my mother's womb. Now, if I were shapen in iniquity, and in sin conceived by my mother; where, I beseech thee, O my God, in what place, Lord, was I, thy servant, where or when was I innocent? But behold I now pass by that age; for what have I to do with it, whereof I can nothing at all call to memory?

CHAP. VII

Ps. xci. 2, cii. 1

Ps. li. 5

Digitized by Google

VIII

CAP. VIII NONNE ab infantia huc pergens veni in pueritiam? vel potius ipsa in me venit et successit infantiae? nec discessit illa: quo enim abiit? et tamen iam non erat. non enim eram infans, qui non farer, sed iam puer loquens eram. et memini hoc, et unde loqui didiceram, post adverti. non enim docebant me maiores homines, praebentes mihi verba certo aliquo ordine doctrinae sicut paulo post litteras, sed ego ipse mente, quam dedisti mihi, deus meus, cum gemitibus et vócibus variis et variis membrorum motibus edere vellem sensa cordis mei, ut voluntati pareretur, nec valerem quae volebam omnia nec quibus volebam omnibus. pensabam memoria: cum ipsi appellabant rem aliquam et cum secundum eam vocem corpus ad aliquid movebant, videbam et tenebam hoc ab eis vocari rem illam, quod sonabant, cum eam vellent ostendere. hoc autem eos velle, ex motu corporis aperiebatur, tamquam verbis naturalibus omnium gentium, quae fiunt vultu et nutu oculorum ceterorumque membrorum actu et sonitu vocis indicante affectionem animi in petendis, habendis reiciendis fugiendisve rebus. ita verba in variis sententiis locis suis posita et crebro audita quarum rerum signa essent paulatim colligebam measque iam volun-

Digitized by Google

VIII

A description of his childhood

GROWING on from the state of infancy, came I not into my childhood? Or rather came not that into me, and succeeded unto my infancy? Nor yet did my infancy depart; for whither went it? yet now it was no more. For an infant I was no longer, that could not speak; seeing now I began to prove a pretty prating boy. And this I well remember, and I afterwards observed how I first learned to speak. For my elders did not teach me this ability, by giving me words in any certain order of teaching, (as they did letters afterwards), but by that mind which thou, my God, gavest me, I myself with gruntings, varieties of voices, and various motions of my body, strove to express the conceits of mine own heart, that my desire might be obeyed; but could not bring it out, either all I would have, or with all the signs I would. Then, I pondered in my memory: when they named anything, and when at that name they moved their bodies toward that thing, I observed it, and gathered thereby, that that word which they then pronounced, was the very name of the thing which they showed me. And that they meant this or that thing, was discovered to me by the motion of their bodies, even by that natural language, as it were, of all nations; which expressed by the countenance and cast of the eye, by the action of other parts, and the sound of the voice, discovers the affections of the mind, either to desire, enjoy, refuse, or to avoid anything. And thus words in divers sentences, set in their due places, and heard often over, I by little and little collected, of

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII tates, edomito in eis signis ore, per haec enuntiabam. sic cum his, inter quos eram, voluntatum enuntiandarum signa conmunicavi; et vitae humanae procellosam societatem altius ingressus sum, pendens ex parentum auctoritate nutuque maiorum hominum.

IX

CAP. IX Deus, deus meus, quas ibi miserias expertus sum et ludificationes, quandoquidem recte mihi vivere puero id proponebatur, obtemperare monentibus, ut in hoc saeculo florerem, et excellerem linguosis artibus, ad honorem hominum et falsas divitias famulantibus. inde in scholam datus sum, ut discerem litteras, in quibus quid utilitatis esset ignorabam miser. et tamen, si segnis in discendo essem, vapulabam. laudabatur enim hoc a maioribus, et multi ante nos vitam istam agentes praestruxerant aerumnosas vias, per quas transire cogebamur multiplicato labore et dolore filiis Adam.

Invenimus autem, domine, homines rogantes te, et didicimus ab eis, sentientes te, ut poteramus, esse

Digitized by Google

what things they were the signs, and having broken my mouth to the pronunciation of them, I by them expressed mine own purposes. Thus, with those whom I conversed withal, did I communicate the expressions of mine own desires; and ventured thereby upon the troublesome society of human businesses, depending all this while upon the authority of my parents, and being at the beck of my elders. CHAP. VIII

IX

The hatred that children bear to Learning, and their Love to Playing

O God, my God! what miseries and what mockeries did I find in that age; whenas being yet a boy, obedience was propounded unto me, to those who advised me to get on in the world; and prove excellent in tongue-sciences, which should get me reputation amongst men, and deceitful riches? Thereupon was I sent to school, to get learning; whereby little knew I (wretch that I was) what profit might be obtained; and yet if I proved truantly at my book, I was presently beaten. For this discipline was commended by our ancestors; and divers passing the same course before our times, had chalked these troublesome ways out unto us, by which we were constrained to follow them; multiplying by this means both labour and sorrow to the sons of Adam. CHAP. IX

Yet we observed, O Lord, how certain men would pray unto thee; and we learned of them; thinking thee (as far as we could apprehend) to be some

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX magnum aliquem, qui posses etiam non adparens sensibus nostris exaudire nos et subvenire nobis. nam puer coepi rogare te, auxilium et refugium meum, et in tuam invocationem rumpebam nodos linguae meae, et rogabam te parvus non parvo affectu, ne in schola vapularem. et cum me non exaudiebas, quod non erat ad insipientiam mihi, ridebantur a maioribus hominibus usque ab ipsis parentibus, qui mihi accidere mali nihil volebant, plagae meae, magnum tunc et grave malum meum. estne quisquam, domine, tam magnus animus, praegrandi affectu tibi cohaerens, estne, inquam, quisquam—facit enim hoc quaedam etiam stoliditas—est ergo, qui tibi pie cohaerendo ita sit affectus granditer, ut eculeos et ungulas atque huiuscemodi varia tormenta, pro quibus effugiendis tibi per universas terras cum timore magno supplicatur, ita parvi aestimet, diligens eos, qui haec acerbissime formidant, quemadmodum parentes nostri ridebant tormenta, quibus pueri a magistris affligebamur? non enim aut minus ea metuebamus aut minus te de his evadendis deprecabamur, et peccabamus tamen minus scribendo aut legendo aut cogitando de litteris, quam exigebatur a nobis. non enim deerat, domine, memoria vel ingenium, quae nos habere voluisti pro illa aetate satis, sed delectabat ludere, et vindicabatur in nos ab eis qui talia utique agebant. sed maiorum nugae negotia

Digitized by Google

great one; who wert able, (and yet not appearing to our senses) both to hear and help us. For being yet a boy, I began to pray unto thee, my Aid and Refuge, and even then brake the string of my tongue in praying to thee; and being yet a little one, I prayed to thee with no small devotion, that I might not be beaten at school. And when thou heardest not (which yet was not to be accounted folly in me), my corrections, which I then esteemed my greatest and most grievous affliction, were made sport at by my elders, yea and by mine own parents, who wished no hurt at all unto me. Is there any man, O Lord, of so great a spirit, cleaving to thee with so strong an affection; is there any man, I say, (for even a callousness may other-whiles do as much), who by devoutly applying himself unto thee, is so resolutely affected, that he can think so lightly of those racks and strappadoes, and such varieties of torments, (for the avoiding whereof men pray unto thee with so much fear all the world over), that he can make sport at those who most bitterly fear them; as our parents laughed at these torments, which we school-boys suffered from our masters? For we were no less afraid of the rod, nor did we less earnestly pray to thee for the scaping of it, than others did of their tortures. And yet for all our fears, we too often played the truants; either in writing, or reading, or thinking upon our lessons, less than was required of us. For we wanted not, O Lord, either memory or capacity, (of which, considering our age, thou pleasedst to bestow enough upon us) but our mind was all upon playing; for which we were beaten, even by those masters, who were doing as much themselves. But elder folks' idlenesses, must, forsooth, be called business, and when children

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX vocabantur, puerorum autem talia cum sint, puniuntur a maioribus, et nemo miseratur pueros vel illos vel utrosque. nisi vero adprobat quisquam bonus rerum arbiter vapulasse me, quia ludebam pila puer et eo ludo inpediebar, quominus celeriter discerem litteras, quibus maior deformius luderem. aut aliud faciebat idem ipse, a quo vapulabam, qui si in aliqua quaestiuncula a condoctore suo victus esset, magis bile atque invidia torqueretur quam ego, cum in certamine pilae a conlusore meo superabar?

X

CAP. X ET tamen peccabam, domine deus meus, ordinator et creator rerum omnium naturalium, peccatorum autem tantum ordinator, domine deus meus, peccabam faciendo contra praecepta parentum et magistrorum illorum. poteram enim postea bene uti litteris, quas volebant ut discerem quocumque animo illi mei. non enim meliora eligens inoboediens eram, sed amore ludendi, amans in certaminibus superbas victorias, et scalpi aures meas falsis fabellis, quo prurirent ardentius, eadem curiositate magis magisque per oculos emicante in spectacula, ludos maiorum; quos tamen qui edunt, ea dignitate praediti excellunt, ut hoc

Digitized by Google

do the like, the same men must punish them; and yet no man pities either children or men or both. But perhaps some indifferent judge might account me to be justly beaten for playing at ball, being yet a boy, because by that sport I was hindered in my learning, by which, when I came to be a man, I was to play the fool more unbeseemingly: or did my master, who now beat me, anything else? who, if in any trifling question he were foiled by another schoolmaster, he was presently more racked with choler and envy at him, than I was, when at a match at tennis-ball, I lost the game to my play-fellow. CHAP. IX

X

How for his play he neglected his Parents' Commandments

AND yet I offended, O Lord God, thou Ruler and Creator of all natural things, of sins only the Ruler! I sinned, O Lord my God! in doing contrary to the commandments of my parents, and of those masters: for I might afterwards have made good use of my learning, which they were desirous I should obtain, whatsoever purpose they had in it. For I disobeyed them not out of desire of choosing better courses; but all out of a desire to play: aspiring to be captain in all sports, and to have mine ears tickled with feigned fables, to make them itch the more glowingly: the like desperate curiosity also sparkling through mine eyes, after the shows and plays of my elders: the authors whereof are esteemed to gain so much honour by it, that almost all the spectators wish the like to be their CHAP. X

Digitized by Google

CAP. X paene omnes optent parvulis suis, quos tamen caedi libenter patiuntur, si spectaculis talibus inpediantur ab studio, quo eos ad talia edenda cupiunt pervenire. vide ista, domine, misericorditer, et libera nos iam invocantes te, libera etiam eos qui nondum te invocant, ut invocent te et liberes eos.

XI

CAP. XI AUDIERAM enim ego adhuc puer de vita aeterna promissa nobis per humilitatem domini dei nostri descendentis ad superbiam nostram, et signabar iam signo crucis eius, et condiebar eius sale iam inde ab utero matris meae, quae multum speravit in te. vidisti, domine, cum adhuc puer essem, et quodam die pressu stomachi repente aestuarem paene moriturus, vidisti, deus meus, quoniam custos meus iam eras, quo motu animi et qua fide baptismum Christi tui, dei et domini mei, flagitavi a pietate matris meae et matris omnium nostrum, ecclesiae tuae. et conturbata mater carnis meae, quoniam et sempiternam salutem meam carius parturibat corde casto in fide tua, iam curaret festinabunda, ut sacramentis salutaribus initiarer et abluerer, te, domine Iesu, confitens

Digitized by Google

own children; whom for all that they gladly suffer to be beaten, if by such stage-plays they be hindered from their studies, by which they desire them to arrive one day to the ability of making the like. Look down upon these things mercifully, O Lord, and deliver us that now call upon thee: deliver also those that do not yet call upon thee; that they may call upon thee, and thou mayest deliver them. CHAP. X

XI

How he fell sick, and how recovering, his Baptism was deferred

I HAD heard, being yet a boy, of eternal life promised unto us through the humility of thy Son our Lord God, descending even to our pride, and I was then signed with the sign of his Cross, and was seasoned with his salt, so soon as I came out of my mother's womb, who greatly trusted in thee. Thou sawest, O Lord, when being yet a boy, and one day taken with a pain in the stomach, I fell suddenly into a fit, very like to die. Thou sawest, O my God, (for thou wert my Keeper) with what earnestness of mind, and with what faith, I importuned the piety both of mine own mother, and of thy Church the mother of us all, for the Baptism of thy Christ, my Lord God. Whereupon the mother of my flesh being much perplexed, (for that in a chaste heart, and faith in thee, she most lovingly even travailed in birth of my eternal salvation,) did hasten with great care to procure me to be initiated and washed with thy wholesome Sacraments, (I first confessing thee, O Lord Jesus, for the remission of CHAP. XI Gal. iv.

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI in remissionem peccatorum, nisi statim recreatus essem. dilata est itaque mundatio mea, quasi necesse esset, ut adhuc sordidarer, si viverem, quia videlicet post lavacrum illud maior et periculosior in sordibus delictorum reatus foret. ita iam credebam, et illa, et omnis domus, nisi pater solus, qui tamen non evicit in me ius maternae pietatis, quominus in Christum crederem, sicut ille nondum crediderat. nam illa satagebat, ut tu mihi pater esses, deus meus, potius quam ille: et in hoc adiuvabas eam, ut superaret virum, cui melior serviebat, quia et in hoc tibi utique id iubenti serviebat.

Rogo te, deus meus, vellem scire, si tu etiam velles, quo consilio dilatus sum, ne tunc baptizarer, utrum bono meo mihi quasi laxata sint lora peccandi an non laxata sint. unde ergo etiam nunc de aliis atque aliis sonat undique in auribus nostris: "sine illum, faciat; nondum enim baptizatus est." et tamen in salute corporis non dicimus: "sine vulneretur amplius; nondum enim sanatus est." quanto ergo melius et cito sanarer, et id ageretur mecum meorum meaque diligentia, ut recepta salus animae meae tuta esset tutela tua, qui dedisses eam. melius vero. sed quot et quanti fluctus inpendere temptationum post pueritiam videbantur!

Digitized by Google

sins,) but that I presently recovered upon it. Upon my recovery was my cleansing deferred: as if it were necessary that I should yet be more defiled, if I lived longer: because, forsooth, the guilt contracted by the filth of sin, were both greater and more dangerous after Baptism, than before. Thus did I then believe, as also my mother and the whole house, except my father only; who did not for all this overthrow the power of my mother's piety in me, to the hindrance of my believing in Christ, although himself had not yet believed in him. For she by all means endeavoured, that thou, my God, shouldst be my father, rather than he. And herein didst thou assist her to overcome her husband, to whom (though the better of the two) she continued her service; wherein she principally served thee, who commandedst her so to do. CHAP. XI

I beseech thee, O my God,(for I would gladly know, if thou wert pleased to tell me) to what purpose was my Baptism thus deferred; whether it were more for my good that the reins of sin were, as it were, then enlarged, or that they should not have been enlarged at all? Whence therefore comes it, that even now my ears are on all sides so beaten with this noise: Let him alone, let him do what he will; for he is not yet baptized: whereas upon any doubt of bodily health, we do not say, Let him be more dangerously wounded, for he is not yet cured? How much better had it been for me to have been speedily cured, that by my friends' diligence and my own, so much might have been wrought in me, that my soul having received health, might have been safe under thy protection, who hadst given it? This verily had been the better course. But how many, and what violent waves of temptation did seem to threaten me after my child-

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI noverat eos iam illa mater, et terram potius, unde postea formarer, quam ipsam iam effigiem committere volebat.

XII

CAP. XII In ipsa tamen pueritia, de qua mihi minus quam de adulescentia metuebatur, non amabam litteras et me in eas urgeri oderam; et urgebar tamen, et bene mihi fiebat, nec faciebam ego bene: non enim discerem, nisi cogerer. nemo enim invitus bene facit, etiamsi bonum est quod facit. nec qui me urgebant, bene faciebant, sed bene mihi fiebat abs te, deus meus. illi enim non intuebantur, quo referrem quod me discere cogebant, praeterquam ad satiandas insatiabiles cupiditates copiosae inopiae et ignominiosae gloriæ. tu vero, cui numerati sunt capilli nostri, errore omnium, qui mihi instábant ut discerem, utebaris ad utilitatem meam, meo autem, qui discere nolebam, utebaris ad poenam meam, qua plecti non eram indignus tantillus puer et tantus peccator. ita non de bene facientibus tu bene faciebas mihi, et de peccante me ipso iuste retribuebas mihi. iussisti enim et sic est, ut poena sua sibi sit omnis inordinatus animus.

Digitized by Google

hood! Those my mother full well knew; and desired to commit to them the clay of which I was afterwards to be new moulded, rather than the image itself.[1] CHAP. XI

XII

He is forced to his Book: which God turned to good purpose

But in this my childhood (wherein was less fear of me than in my youth) I loved not my book, and I hated to be forced to it: yet was I held to it notwithstanding: wherein it was very well for me, but I did not well for myself: for I would never have taken my learning, had I not been constrained to it. For no man does well against his will, though that which he does be good. Nor did they that forced me to it, very well; but it was thou, my God, that didst the good to me. For they that held me to my learning, did not understand to what I would apply it, unless to satiate the insatiable desires of a rich beggary, and a dishonourable glory. But thou before whom the very hairs of our heads are numbered, didst convert the common error of them all who pressed me to learning, to mine own benefit; and my error, who would not learn, didst thou make use of for my punishment; of which I being then so little a boy, and so great a sinner, was not unworthy. Thus by their means who did not well by me, didst thou well for me: and upon me who was a sinner, thou inflictedst a deserved punishment. For thou hast appointed it, and so it proves, every man's inordinate affection shall be his own affliction. CHAP. XII

Matt. x. 30

[1] It was believed that this image was restored in baptism.

Digitized by Google

XIII

CAP. XIII Quid autem erat causae, cur graecas litteras oderam, quibus puerulus imbuebar, ne nunc quidem mihi satis exploratum est. adamaveram enim latinas, non quas primi magistri, sed quas docent qui grammatici vocantur. nam illas primas, ubi legere et scribere et numerare discitur, non minus onerosas poenalesque habebam quam omnes graecas. unde tamen et hoc nisi de peccato et vanitate vitae, qua caro eram et spiritus ambulans et non revertens? nam utique meliores, quia certiores, erant primae illae litterae, quibus fiebat in me et factum est et habeo illud, ut et legam, si quid scriptum invenio, et scribam ipse, si quid volo, quam illae, quibus tenere cogebar Aeneae nescio cuius errores, oblitus errorum meorum, et plorare Didonem mortuam, quia se occidit ab amore, cum interea me ipsum in his a te morientem, deus, vita mea, siccis oculis ferrem miserrimus.

Quid enim miserius misero non miserante se ipsum et flente Didonis mortem, quae fiebat amando Aenean, non flente autem mortem suam, quae fiebat non amando te, deus, lumen cordis mei et panis oris intus animae meae et virtus maritans mentem meam et sinum cogitationis meae? non te amabam, et fornicabar abs te, et fornicanti sonabat undique: "euge,

Digitized by Google

XIII

With what studies he was chiefly delighted

CHAP. XIII

But what was the reason why of a child I should so naturally hate the Greek tongue when it was taught me, I cannot yet understand. Latin I loved very well: not that part which the elementary teachers enter us in, but that which the men of letters teach us.[1] For those first rudiments, to read, to write, and cipher, I accounted no less painful and troublesome than the Greek. But whence should this proceed, but from the sinfulness and vanity of this life? For I was but flesh, a wind that passeth away and cometh not again. For those first rudiments were better, because more certain, (seeing that by them, that skill was and is wrought in me, that I am able to read what I find written, and of myself to write what I will) than these latter; by which I was enforced to commit to memory the wanderings of I know not what Æneas, while I forgat mine own: and to bewail dead Dido, because she killed herself for love; when in the mean time (wretch that I was) I with dry eyes endured myself dying towards thee, O God my Life!

Ps. lxxviii. 39

For what can be more miserable than a wretch that pities not himself; one bemoaning Dido's death, caused by loving of Æneas, and yet not lamenting his own death, caused by not loving of thee, O God, thou Light of my soul, thou Bread of the internal mouth of my soul, and thou firmest Knot, marrying my soul and the bosom of my thoughts together? I did not love thee, and I committed fornication against thee, while in the mean time every one applauded me with Well done, well done! But

[1] *I.e.* the literature, not the grammar.

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIII euge." amicitia enim mundi huius fornicatio est abs te et "euge, euge" dicitur, ut pudeat, si non ita homo sit. et haec non flebam, et flebam Didonem extinctam ferroque extrema secutam, sequens ipse extrema condita tua relicto te, et terra iens in terram: et si prohiberer ea legere, dolerem, quia non legerem quod dolerem. talis dementia honestiores et uberiores litterae putantur quam illae, quibus legere et scribere didici.

Sed nunc in anima mea clamet deus meus, et veritas tua dicat mihi: non est ita, non est ita; melior est prorsus doctrina illa prior. nam ecce paratior sum oblivisci errores Aeneae atque omnia eius modi, quam scribere et legere. at enim vela pendent liminibus grammaticarum scholarum, sed non illa magis honorem secreti quam tegimentum erroris significant. non clament adversus me quos iam non timeo, dum confiteor tibi quae vult anima mea, deus meus, et adquiesco in reprehensione malarum viarum mearum, ut diligam bonas vias tuas, non clament adversus me venditores grammaticae vel emptores, quia, si proponam eis interrogans, utrum verum sit quod Aenean aliquando Karthaginem venisse poeta dicit, indoctiores nescire se respondebunt, doctiores autem etiam negabunt verum esse. at si quaeram, quibus litteris scribatur Aeneae nomen, omnes mihi, qui haec didicerunt, verum respondent et secundum id pactum et placitum, quo inter se homines ista signa firmarunt.

Digitized by Google

the love of this world is fornication against God: which so applauds and encourages a spiritual fornicator, that it is even a shame for a man to be otherwise. But I bemoaned not all this; but dead Dido I bewailed, that killed herself by falling upon the sword: I myself following these lower creatures of thine, forsaking thee; and myself being earth, hastening to the earth. But if I were forbidden to read these toys, how sorry would I be, for that I might not read that which would make me sorry. Such madnesses were esteemed to be more commendable and fluent learning, than the learning to write and read. CHAP. XIII James iv. 4

But let my God now cry unto my soul, and let thy truth say unto me, It is not so, it is not so; that first kind of learning was far better. For behold I am readier to forget the wanderings of Æneas, and all such toys, than I am to write and read. True it is, that there are curtains at the entrance of Grammar Schools; but they signify not so much the cloth of state to privacy, as serve for a blind to the follies committed behind them. Let not these masters now cry out upon me, whom now I am out of fear of; whilst I confess to thee, my God, what my soul delights in; and rest contented with the reprehension of mine own evil ways, that I may love thy good ones. Let not those buyers or sellers of grammar exclaim upon me, for that if I ask them, whether that of the poet be true, that Æneas ever came to Carthage: the unlearned will answer, they know not; and the learned will deny it to be true. But if I ask them with what letters Æneas' name is written, every one that hath but learned so far, will pitch upon one truth, according to the agreement and will whereby men at first made rules for those characters. If I should ask again, which of

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIII item si quaeram, quid horum maiore vitae huius incommodo quisque obliviscatur, legere et scribere an poetica illa figmenta, quis non videat, quid responsurus sit, qui non est penitus oblitus sui? peccabam ergo puer, cum illa inania istis utilioribus amore praeponebam vel potius ista oderam, illa amabam. iam vero unum et unum duo, duo et duo quattuor odiosa cantio mihi erat, et dulcissimum spectaculum vanitatis equus ligneus plenus armatis, et Troiae incendium, atque ipsius umbra Creusae.

XIV

CAP. XIV Cur ergo graecam etiam grammaticam oderam talia cantantem? nam et Homerus peritus texere tales fabellas, et dulcissime vanus est, et mihi tamen amarus erat puero. credo etiam graecis pueris Vergilius ita sit, cum eum sic discere coguntur ut ego illum. videlicet difficultas, difficultas omnino ediscendae linguae peregrinae, quasi felle aspergebat omnes suavitates graecas fabulosarum narrationum. nulla enim verba illa noveram, et saevis terroribus ac poenis, ut nossem, instabatur mihi vehementer. nam et latina aliquando infans utique nulla noveram, et tamen advertendo didici sine ullo metu atque cruciatu, inter etiam blandimenta nutricum et ioca arridentium

Digitized by Google

the two would be most incommodious to the life of man to forget; to write and read, or, these poetical fictions; who sees not what any man would answer, that had not quite forgotten himself? I offended therefore being but a boy, when in my affection I preferred those vain studies to these more profitable: or rather, indeed, I utterly hated these, and was in love with those. But then, One and one makes two, and two and two makes four, was a harsh song to me; but The Wooden Horse full of Armed Men, and The Burning of Troy, and the Ghost of Creusa, was a most delightful spectacle of vanity. CHAP. XIII

XIV

Of the Greek and Latin Tongues

But why then did I hate the Greek literature that chants of such things? For Homer himself was skilful in contriving such fictions, and is most delightfully wanton; but yet very harsh to me being a schoolboy. I believe that Virgil is no less to Grecian children when they be compelled to learn him, as I was to learn Homer: for to say truth, the difficulty of learning a strange language, did sprinkle as it were with gall all the pleasures of those fabulous narrations. For I understood not a word of it, yet they vehemently pressed me and with most cruel threatenings and punishments, to make me understand it. The time was also (when I was an infant) that I knew not a word of Latin; yet by marking I got that without any fear or tormenting, even by my nurses' prattlings to me, and the pretty tales of those that laughed upon me, and the sports of those that played with me. CHAP XIV

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIV et laetitias alludentium. didici vero illa sine poenali onere urgentium, cum me urgeret cor meum ad parienda concepta sua, id quod non esset, nisi aliqua verba didicissem non a docentibus, sed a loquentibus, in quorum et ego auribus parturiebam quidquid sentiebam. hinc satis elucet maiorem habere vim ad discenda ista liberam curiositatem quam meticulosam necessitatem. sed illius fluxum haec restringit legibus tuis, deus, legibus tuis a magistrorum ferulis usque ad temptationes martyrum, valentibus legibus tuis miscere salubres amaritudines revocantes nos ad te a iucunditate pestifera, qua recessimus a te.

XV

CAP XV. Exaudi, domine, deprecationem meam, ne deficiat anima mea sub disciplina tua, neque deficiam in confitendo tibi miserationes tuas, quibus eruisti me ab omnibus viis meis pessimis, ut dulcescas mihi super omnes seductiones, quas sequebar, et amem te validissime, et amplexer manum tuam totis praecordiis meis, et eruas me ab omni temptatione usque in finem.

Ecce enim tu, domine, rex meus et deus meus, tibi serviat quidquid utile puer didici, tibi serviat

Digitized by Google

So much verily I learnt without any painful burden to me of those that urged me, for that mine own heart put me to it to bring out mine own conceptions. Which I could never have done, had I not learned divers words, not of those that taught me, but of them that talked familiarly to me, in whose hearing I also brought forth whatsoever I had conceived. Hereby it clearly appears that a free curiosity hath more force in children's learning of languages, than a frightful enforcement can have. But the unsettledness of that freedom, this enforcement restrains: thy laws, O God, yea, thy laws, even from the schoolmaster's ferule, to the martyr's trials, being able to temper wholesome and bitter together; calling us back by that means unto thyself, even from that infectious sweetness, which at first allured us to fall away from thee. CHAP. XIV

XV

His Prayer to God

Hear my prayer, O Lord, let not my soul faint under thy correction: nor let me faint in confessing unto thee thine own mercies, by which thou hast drawn me out of all mine own most wicked courses: that thyself mightest from hence forward grow sweet unto me, beyond all those allurements which heretofore I followed; and that I might most entirely love thee, and lay hold upon thy hand with all the powers of my heart, that thou mightest finally draw me out of all danger of temptation. CHAP. XV Ps. lx. 2

For behold, O Lord my King; whatsoever good I have learned, being a boy, unto thy service let it be

Digitized by Google

CAP. XV quod loquor et scribo et lego et numero, quoniam cum vana discerem, tu disciplinam dabas mihi et in eis vanis peccata delectationum mearum dimisisti mihi. didici in eis multa verba utilia; sed et in rebus non vanis disci possunt, et ea via tuta est, in qua pueri ambularent.

XVI

CAP. XVI Sed vae tibi, flumen moris humani! quis resistit tibi? quamdiu non siccaberis? quousque volves Evae filios in mare magnum et formidulosum, quod vix transeunt qui lignum conscenderint? nonne ego in te legi et tonantem Iovem et adulterantem? et utique non posset haec duo, sed actum est, ut haberet auctoritatem imitandum verum adulterium lenocinante falso tonitru. quis autem paenulatorum magistrorum audit aure sobria ex eodem pulvere hominem clamantem et dicentem: fingebat haec Homerus et humana ad deos transferebat; divina mallem ad nos? sed verius dicitur, quod fingebat haec quidem ille, sed hominibus flagitiosis divina tribuendo, ne flagitia flagitia putarentur, et ut quisquis ea fecisset, non homines perditos, sed caelestes deos videretur imitatus.

Digitized by Google

directed, yea, whatsoever I speak or write, or read, or number, let all serve thee. For when I learned vain things, thou didst discipline me: and in those vanities, thou forgavest the sinfulness of my delight in them. In those studies I learned many useful words, but those might have been also learned in studies not so vain: which is, I confess, the safest way for children to be trained up in. CHAP. XV

XVI

Against lascivious fables

CHAP. XVI

But woe unto thee, O thou torrent of human custom, who shall stop the course of thee? When wilt thou be dry? How long wilt thou continue tumbling the sons of Eve into that huge and hideous ocean, which they very hardly pass, who are shipped upon the Tree? Do I not read in thee of Jupiter sometimes thundering, and sometimes adulterating? But verily both these could not one person do: but this is feigned, that there might be authority to imitate true-acted adultery; false thunder the mean while playing the bawd to him. Yet which of our long-robed masters can with any patience hear a man that should in his school cry out saying: Homer feigned these, and ascribed men's faults unto the gods; but I had rather he had derived divine excellencies upon us. But more truly it is said, that Homer feigned these things indeed; and that by his attributing divine excellencies to most wicked mortals, crimes might not be accounted crimes: so that whosoever shall commit the like, seems not therein to imitate desperate people, but some heavenly deities.

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVI Et tamen, o flumen tartareum, iactantur in te fili hominum cum mercedibus, ut haec discant, et magna res agitur, cum hoc agitur publice in foro, in conspectu legum supra mercedem salaria decernentium, et saxa tua percutis et sonas dicens: "hinc verba discuntur, hinc adquiritur eloquentia, rebus persuadendis sententiisque explicandis maxime necessaria." ita ergo non cognosceremus verba haec, imbrem et aureum et gremium et fucum et templa caeli et alia verba, quae in eo loco scripta sunt, nisi Terentius induceret nequam adulescentem, proponentem sibi Iovem ad exemplum stupri, dum spectat tabulam quandam pictam in pariete, ubi inerat pictura haec, Iovem quo pacto Danaae misisse aiunt in gremium quondam imbrem aureum, fucum factum mulieri? et vide, quemadmodum se concitat ad libidinem quasi caelesti magisterio:

> at quem deum! (inquit) qui templa caeli summo sonitu concutit.
> ego homuncio id non facerem? ego vero illud feci ac libens.

Non omnino, non omnino per hanc turpitudinem verba ista commodius discuntur, sed per haec verba turpitudo ista confidentius perpetratur. non accuso verba quasi vasa lecta atque pretiosa, sed vinum erroris, quod in eis nobis propinabatur ab ebriis doctoribus, et nisi biberemus, caedebamur, nec appellare

Digitized by Google

This notwithstanding, O thou hellish torrent, are the sons of men east into thee, with payments made, to learn these fables; and a great solemnity is made of it, when 'tis pleaded for openly in the assemblies, and in the sight of the laws, which allow stipends to the teachers over and above the payments of the scholars: yet, O torrent, thou art still beating upon thy rocks, roaring out, and crying: Here are fine words to be learned; here eloquence is attained: eloquence so necessary to persuade to business, and with advantage to express thoughts. But for all this, should we never so well have understood these words: The Golden Shower, the Lap, the Deceit, the Temple of Heaven, and such others written in the same place, had not Terence withal brought a lewd young man upon the stage, propounding Jupiter to himself for an example of his adultery; whilst he beholds a certain picture on the wall, wherein are set out to the life, the story of Jupiter raining a golden shower into Danae's lap, deceiving the simple maiden by that means? See how that young man provoked himself to lust, as if he had had a celestial authority for it:

CHAP. XVI

Ter. Eun. 585

"But what god do I imitate, saith he? Even that god who with a mighty thunder shakes the very arches of heaven: may I not then, frail flesh and blood, do as much? But I for my part did as much, yea, and gladly too."

Ter. Eun. 589

Plainly, these words are not so much the more easily learned by this filthy matter, but by these words the sin is more confidently committed. I blame not the words, which of themselves are like vessels choice and precious; but that wine of error which is in them, drunk to us by our intoxicated teachers. If we refused to pledge them, we were beaten: nor had

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVI ad aliquem iudicem sobrium licebat. et tamen ego, deus meus, in cuius conspectu iam secura est recordatio mea, libenter haec didici et eis delectabar miser et ob hoc bonae spei puer appellabar.

XVII

CAP. XVII Sine me, deus meus, dicere aliquid de ingenio meo, munere tuo, in quibus a me deliramentis atterebatur. proponebatur enim mihi negotium animae meae satis inquietum, praemio laudis et dedecoris vel plagarum metu, ut dicerem verba Iunonis irascentis et dolentis, quod non possit Italia Teucrorum avertere regem: quae numquam Iunonem dixisse audieram, sed figmentorum poeticorum vestigia errantes sequi cogebamur, et tale aliquid dicere solutis verbis, quale poeta dixisset versibus: et ille dicebat laudabilius, in quo pro dignitate adumbratae personae irae ac doloris similior affectus eminebat verbis sententias congruenter vestientibus.

Ut quid mihi illud, o vera vita, deus meus? quid mihi recitanti adclamabatur prae multis coaetaneis et conlectoribus meis? nonne ecce illa omnia fumus et ventus? itane aliud non erat, ubi exerceretur ingenium et lingua mea? laudes tuae, domine, laudes tuae per scripturas tuas suspenderent

Digitized by Google

we liberty to appeal unto any sober judge. All this notwithstanding, O my God, (in whose presence I now with security remember this) I did willingly learn these things; and unhappy I, was for this accounted a youth of much towardness. CHAP. XVI

XVII

The way of exercising youth in repeating and varying of verses

Give me leave, O my God, to tell thee something of mine own wit, which was thy gift, and what dotages I spent it upon. My master put a task upon me, troublesome enough to my soul, and that upon terms of reward of commendations, or fear of shame and whipping: namely, that I should declaim upon those words of Juno, expressing both her anger and sorrow, that she could not keep off the Trojan King from going into Italy: which words I had heard that Juno never uttered; yet were we enforced to imitate the passages of these poetical fictions; and to vary that into prose which the poet had expressed in verse. And he declaimed with more applause, in whose action, according to the dignity of the person represented, there appeared an affection nearer to anger or grief, set out with words agreeable to the matter. CHAP. XVII

But to what end was this, O my true Life, my God? Why was my declamation more applauded than so many others of mine own age and form? Was not all this mere smoke and wind? And could no other subject be found to exercise my wit and tongue in? Thy praises, O Lord, thy praises, might have stayed the tender sprig of my heart upon the prop of thy

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVII palmitem cordis mei, et non raperetur per inania nugarum turpis praeda volatilibus. non enim uno modo sacrificatur transgressoribus angelis.

XVIII

CAP. XVIII Quid autem mirum, quod in vanitates ita ferebar, et a te, deus meus, ibam foras, quando mihi imitandi proponebantur homines, qui aliqua facta sua non mala si cum barbarismo aut soloecismo enuntiarent, reprehensi confundebantur; si autem libidines suas integris et rite consequentibus verbis copiose ordinateque narrarent, laudati gloriabantur? vides haec, domine, et taces, longanimis et multum misericors et verax. numquid semper tacebis? et nunc erues de hoc inmanissimo profundo quaerentem te animam et sitientem delectationes tuas, et cuius cor dicit tibi: quaesivi vultum tuum; vultum tuum, domine, requiram: nam longe a vultu tuo in affectu tenebroso. non enim pedibus aut spatiis locorum itur abs te aut reditur ad te, aut vero filius ille tuus equos aut currus vel naves quaesivit aut avolavit pinna visibili aut moto poplite iter egit, ut in longinqua regione vivens prodige dissiparet quod dederas

Digitized by Google

Scriptures, that it might not have been cropped off by these empty vanities, to be caught up as a prey by those flying spirits. For by more ways than one is there sacrifice offered to the collapsed angels. CHAP. XVII

XVIII

That Men care more to observe the Rules of Grammar than the Laws of God

But what wonder was it, if I were thus carried towards vanity, and estranged from thee, O my God; whenas such men were propounded to me to imitate, who should they deliver any of their own acts, though not evil, with any barbarism or solecism, they were utterly dashed out of countenance: but should they make a copious and neat oration of their own lusts, in a round and well followed style, would take a pride to be applauded for it. These things thou seest, O Lord, long suffering, and of much mercy and truth, and thou keepest silence; but wilt thou be silent for ever? Even now thou wilt draw out of this horrible pit, that soul that seeks after thee, and that thirsts after thy pleasures: whose heart saith unto thee, I have sought thy face, and thy face, Lord, will I seek. For I had straggled far away from thy countenance in the mistiness of my affections. For we neither go nor return, from, or to thee, upon our feet, or by distance of spaces: nor did that younger brother seek post-horses, or waggons, or ships, or fly away with visible wings, or take his journey by the motion of his hams, that living in a far country he might prodigally waste that portion, which thou hadst given him at his departure. A CHAP. XVIII Ps. xxvii. 9 Luke xv.

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVIII proficiscenti, dulcis pater, quia dederas, et egeno redeunti dulcior: in affectu ergo libidinoso, id enim est tenebroso atque id est longe a vultu tuo. vide, domine deus meus, et patienter, ut vides, vide, quomodo diligenter observent filii hominum pacta litterarum et syllabarum accepta a prioribus locutoribus, et a te accepta aeterna pacta perpetuae salutis neglegant: ut qui illa sonorum vetera placita teneat aut doceat, si contra disciplinam grammaticam sine adspiratione primae syllabae hominem dixerit, magis displiceat hominibus, quam si contra tua praecepta hominem oderit, cum sit homo. quasi vero quemlibet inimicum hominem perniciosius sentiat quam ipsum odium, quo in eum irritatur, aut vastet quisquam persequendo alium gravius, quam cor suum vastat inimicando. et certe non est interior litterarum scientia quam scripta conscientia, id se alteri facere quod nolit pati. quam tu secretus es, habitans in excelsis in silentio, deus solus magnus, lege infatigabili spargens poenales caecitates supra inlicitas cupiditates, cum homo eloquentiae famam quaeritans ante hominem iudicem, circumstante hominum multitudine, inimicum suum odio inmanissimo insectans, vigilantissime cavet, ne per linguae errorem dicat: Inter omines, et ne per mentis furorem hominem auferat ex hominibus non cavet.

Digitized by Google

sweet Father, because thou gavest him his portion: yet far sweeter to the poor wretch returning: for that he went from thee out of a voluptuous affection; that is to say, a darkened one; and such that is, which is far from thy countenance. Behold, O Lord God, and patiently behold, as thou still dost, how diligently the sons of men observe the rules of letters and syllables received from former speakers; and yet regard not the eternal covenants of everlasting salvation, received from thyself. Insomuch, that he who either holds or teaches the ancient rules of pronunciation, if contrary to grammar he shall pronounce *ominem*, (that is, a man) without H in the first syllable; he shall displease men more, than if against thy rules he should hate a man, although he be a man. As if any man should think his enemy to be more pernicious to him, than that hatred of his own is, whereby he is set against him: or imagine that he does worse scath to another man by persecuting him, than he does to his own heart, by contriving enmity against him. Certainly there is no more inward knowledge of Letters than this law of conscience, that one is doing to another what himself would not suffer. How secret art thou, O thou only great God, which dwellest in the Highest, and in silence, with an untiring destiny, dispersing blindness for punishments upon unlawful desires; when a man affects the credit of eloquence, standing before a mortal judge, a multitude of mortals standing about him, inveighing against his adversary with his fiercest hatred, he takes heed most watchfully, that his tongue trips not before men, and he call them *omines*; but takes no heed at all, lest through the fury of his spirit he should destroy a man out of the society of men.

CHAP. XVIII

Matt. vii. 11

Digitized by Google

XIX

CAP. XIX Horum ego puer morum in limine iacebam miser, et huius harenae palaestra erat illa, ubi magis timebam barbarismum facere, quam cavebam, si facerem, non facientibus invidere. dico haec et confiteor tibi, deus meus, in quibus laudabar ab eis, quibus placere tunc mihi erat honeste vivere. non enim videbam voraginem turpitudinis, in quam proiectus eram ab oculis tuis. nam in illis iam quid me foedius fuit, ubi etiam talibus displicebam, fallendo innumerabilibus mendaciis et paedagogum et magistros et parentes, amore ludendi, studio spectandi nugatoria et imitandi ludicra inquietudine?

Furta etiam faciebam de cellario parentum et de mensa, vel gula imperante vel ut haberem quod darem pueris, ludum suum mihi, quo pariter utique delectabantur, tamen vendentibus. in quo etiam ludo fraudulentas victorias ipse vana excellentiae cupiditate victus saepe aucupabar. quid enim tam nolebam pati atque atrociter, si deprehenderem, arguebam, quam id quod aliis faciebam? et, si deprehensus arguerer, saevire magis quam cedere libebat.

Istane est innocentia puerilis? non est, domine, non est, oro te, deus meus. nam haec ipsa sunt

Digitized by Google

XIX

How he was more careful to avoid Barbarisms of Speech, than corruption of Manners

IN the threshold of these customs lay I, wretched boy, and upon that stage I played my prizes; where I more feared to commit a barbarism in speaking, than I took care when I committed any, not to envy those that committed none. All this I declare and confess to thee, my God; but in these things I was by them applauded, to please whom, I then accounted equal to living honestly. For then I discerned not that whirlpool of filthiness whereinto I was cast from thine eyes. For in thine eyes, what was more filthy than I? Where also I displeased such as myself; with innumerable lies deceiving both my tutor, and masters, and parents: all for love of play, out of a desire to see toys, and a restless desire to imitate the stage. CHAP. XIX

Thievery also I committed out of my father's buttery and table; either gluttony oft commanding me, or that I might have something to give my play-fellows, selling me their baubles, although they were as much delighted with them as myself. In these play-games I being often over-matched, did with a vain desire to be counted excellent, aspire to win, though by foul play. And what was I so unwilling to endure, and what if I found out the deceit would I so fiercely wrangle at, as even those very tricks which I would put upon others? And being myself taken with the manner, I would rather fall flat out, than yield to it.

Is this that childish innocency? It is not, Lord, it is not. I cry thee mercy, O my God: for these are

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIX quae a paedagogis et magistris, a nucibus et pilulis et passeribus, ad praefectos et reges, aurum, praedia, mancipia, haec ipsa omnino succedentibus maioribus aetatibus transeunt, sicuti ferulis maiora supplicia succedunt. humilitatis ergo signum in statura pueritiae, rex noster, probasti, cum aisti: talium est regnum caelorum.

XX

CAP. XX Sed tamen, domine, tibi excellentissimo, optimo conditori et rectori universitatis, deo nostro gratias, etiamsi me puerum tantum esse voluisses. eram enim etiam tunc, vivebam atque sentiebam meamque incolumitatem, vestigium secretissimae unitatis, ex qua eram, curae habebam, custodiebam interiore sensu integritatem sensuum meorum, inque ipsis parvis parvarumque rerum cogitationibus veritate delectabar. falli nolebam, memoria vigebam, locutione instruebar, amicitia mulcebar, fugiebam dolorem, abiectionem, ignorantiam. quid in tali animante non mirabile atque laudabile? at ista omnia dei mei dona sunt, non mihi ego dedi haec: et bona sunt et haec omnia ego. bonus ergo est qui fecit me, et ipse est bonum meum, et illi exulto bonis omnibus, quibus etiam puer

Digitized by Google

the same things, the very same, which as our years go on, leaving tutors and masters, leaving nuts, and balls, and birds, are done with regard to kings and governors, to the getting of gold, and manor houses, and slaves. But this boy's play passes over as more years come on, just as greater punishments follow after the ferule. Thou therefore, O our King, hast approved of the character of humility in the stature of childhood, when thou sayest: To such belongeth the Kingdom of God. CHAP. XIX Matt. xix. 14

XX

He thanketh God for his Benefits

But yet, O Lord, thanks have been due to thee, our God and most excellent Creator, Governor of this universe, although thou hadst not been pleased to have brought me any further than the age of childhood. For even then a Being I had, yea Life and Senses; even then I had a care of mine own well being, which is an impression of that most secret unity of thine, whence I had my being; in my inward sense preserved I the entireness of my outward senses; even in these little things and in reflecting on little things, was I delighted with the truth. I would not willingly be deceived; a fresh memory I had; in forms of speaking I was well tutored; by friendly usage I was made tractable. I avoided all sadness, dejectedness, and ignorance; in such a little creature, what was there not admirable, not commendable? But all these are the gifts of my God: for I bestowed them not upon myself. Good endowments they were; and all these was I. Good therefore is he that made me; yea, he is my good, and CHAP. XX

Digitized by Google

CAP. XX eram. hoc enim peccabam, quod non in ipso, sed in creaturis eius, me atque ceteris, voluptates, sublimitates veritates quaerebam, atque ita inruebam in dolores, confusiones, errores. gratias tibi, dulcedo mea et honor meus et fiducia mea, deus meus, gratias tibi de donis tuis; sed tu mihi ea serva. ita enim servabis me, et augebuntur et perficientur quae dedisti mihi, et ero ipse tecum, quia et ut sim tu dedisti mihi.

Digitized by Google

to him will I rejoice for all my good gifts, which of a child I had. But here was my oversight, that I sought not pleasures, honours, and truths in him, but in his creatures, myself and the others; and therefore rushed I myself upon sorrows, disorders, and errors. Thanks to thee, my Sweetness, my Honour, my Trust, and my God! Thanks to thee for all thy gifts! But be pleased to preserve them still unto me, and thus shall myself be preserved, and all thy gifts shall be both increased and perfected: yea, and I shall be with thee; for my being is of thy giving. CHAP. XX

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK II

Digitized by Google

LIBER SECVNDVS

I

CAP. I Recordari volo transactas foeditates meas, et carnales corruptiones animae meae, non quod eas amem, sed ut amem te, deus meus. amore amoris tui facio istuc, recolens vias meas nequissimas in amaritudine recogitationis meae, ut tu dulcescas mihi, dulcedo non fallax, dulcedo felix et secura, et colligens me a dispersione, in qua frustatim discissus sum, dum ab uno te aversus in multa evanui.

Exarsi enim aliquando satiari inferis in adulescentia, et silvescere ausus sum variis et umbrosis amoribus, et contabuit species mea, et conputrui coram oculis tuis, placens mihi et placere cupiens oculis hominum.

II

CAP. II Et quid erat, quod me delectabat, nisi amare et amari? sed non tenebatur modus ab animo usque ad animum, quatenus est luminosus limes amicitiae,

Digitized by Google

THE SECOND BOOK

I

He enters upon the Years and Sins of his Youth

I WILL now call to mind my over-passed impurities, and the fleshly corruptions of my soul: not because I love them, but that I may love thee, O my God. For love of thy love I do it; in the very bitterness of my remembrance repeating over my most wicked courses, that thou mayest only grow sweet unto me; (thou Sweetness never beguiling, thou happy and secure Sweetness!) and recollecting myself out of that broken condition of mine, wherein I was piece-meal shattered asunder; while being turned away from thee alone, I squandered away myself upon many vanities. CHAP. I

For I even burnt in my youth heretofore to take my fill of hell; and I dared even to grow wild again, with these various loves beneath the shade: my beauty withered away, and I even stank in thine eyes; pleasing myself all this while, and desirous to content the eyes of mortals.

II

He accuseth his Youth spent in the heat of Lustfulness

AND what was it that I delighted in, but to love and to be beloved? But love kept not that modera- tion of one mind's loving another mind, as the lightsome bounder of true friendship; but out of CHAP. II

CAP. II sed exhalabantur nebulae de limosa concupiscentia carnis et scatebra pubertatis, et obnubilabant atque obfuscabant cor meum, ut non discerneretur serenitas dilectionis a caligine libidinis. utrumque in confuso aestuabat et rapiebat inbecillam aetatem per abrupta cupiditatum atque mersabat gurgite flagitiorum. invaluerat super me ira tua, et nesciebam. obsurdueram stridore catenae mortalitatis meae, poena superbiae animae meae, et ibam longius a te, et sinebas, et iactabar et effundebar et diffluebam et ebulliebam per fornicationes meas, et tacebas. o tardum gaudium meum! tacebas tunc, et ego ibam porro longe a te in plura et plura sterilia semina dolorum superba deiectione et inquieta lassitudine.

Quis mihi modularetur aerumnam meam et novissimarum rerum fugaces pulchritudines in usum verteret earumque suavitatibus metas praefigeret, ut usque ad coniugale litus exaestuarent fluctus aetatis meae, si tranquillitas in eis non poterat esse fine procreandorum liberorum contenta, sicut praescribit lex tua, domine, qui formas etiam propaginem mortis nostrae, potens inponere lenem manum ad temperamentum spinarum a paradiso tuo seclusarum? non enim longe est a nobis omnipotentia tua, etiam cum longe sumus a te. aut certe sonitum nubium tuarum vigilantius adverterem: tribulationem autem carnis

Digitized by Google

that puddly concupiscence of my flesh, certain mists and bubblings of youth fumed up, which beclouded and so overcast my heart, that I could not discern the beauty of a chaste affection, from a fog of impure lustfulness. Both did confusedly boil in me, and ravished away my unstayed youth over the downfalls of unchaste desires, and drenched me over head and ears in the very whirlpool of most heinous impurities. Thy wrath all this while grew upon me, and I perceived it not. I was now grown deaf by the continual crashing of that chain of my frailty, (thy punishment upon the pride of my soul) and I straggled further from thee, and thou letst me alone, and I was tumbled up and down, and I was even spilt and poured out, yea, and I boiled over in my fornications, and thou heldest thy peace yet. O my Joy, how slow art thou! Thou then heldest thy peace, and then wandered I further and further from thee, into more and more fruitless seed-plots of sorrow, with a proud dejectedness, and an untired weariness.

O for somebody that would then have sweetened my misery, and have converted to good use the fading beauties of these newest vanities! that would have prefixed some bounds to their tempting sweets, that so the high tides of my youth might have spent their force at last upon the shore of the marriage bed; if so be the calmness those tides might be brought unto, would not have been contented with having children, as thy law prescribes, O Lord: even thou, who this way formest the offspring of our mortality, being able also with a gentle hand to blunt the prickles of those thorns, which were not suffered to grow in thy Paradise? For thy omnipotency is not very far from us, even when we be far from thee. Or certainly I should have more heedfully hearkened

Digitized by Google

CAP. II habebunt huius modi, ego autem vobis parco; et: bonum est homini mulierem non tangere; et: qui sine uxore est, cogitat ea quae sunt dei, quomodo placeat deo, qui autem matrimonio iunctus est, cogitat ea quae sunt mundi, quomodo placeat uxori. has ergo voces exaudirem vigilantior, et abscisus propter regnum caelorum felicior expectarem amplexus tuos.

Sed efferbui miser, sequens impetum fluxus mei relicto te, et excessi omnia legitima tua, nec evasi flagella tua: quis enim hoc mortalium? nam tu semper aderas misericorditer saeviens, et amarissimis aspargens offensionibus omnes illicitas iucunditates meas, ut ita quaererem sine offensione iucundari, et ubi hoc possem, non invenirem quicquam praeter te, domine, praeter te, qui fingis dolorem in praecepto et percutis, ut sanes, et occidis nos, ne moriamur abs te. ubi eram, et quam longe exulabam a deliciis domus tuae, anno illo sexto decimo aetatis carnis meae, cum accepit in me sceptrum, et totas manus ei dedi, vesania libidinis licentiosae per dedecus humanum, inlicitae autem per leges tuas? non fuit cura meorum ruentem excipere me matrimonio, sed cura fuit tantum, ut discerem sermonem facere quam optimum et persuadere dictione.

Digitized by Google

to the voice of these clouds of thine: Notwithstanding such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you. And again: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. And, He that is married careth for the things of this world, how he may please his wife. I should have therefore more attentively listened to those words, and made myself an eunuch for the Kingdom of God, and so I might more happily have expected thy embracements.

CHAP. II

1 Cor. vii. 28, 1, 32

Matt. xix. 12

But I was too hot upon it (wretch that I was) pursuing still the violent course of mine own stream, having left thee utterly: yea, and exceeded all thy prescriptions, nor did I escape thy scourges. For what mortal can avoid them? For thou wert with me at every turn, most mildly rigorous, and ever and anon besaucing all my unlawful pastimes with most bitter discontentments: all to draw me on to seek for such pleasures as were without such discontent, and that I might light upon none but thee, O Lord: but thee, who makest, as it were, some hardship in thy commandment; and smitest us that thou mayest heal us, yea, slayest us, that we should not die away from thee. Where was I, and how far was I banished from those delights of thy house in that sixteenth year of the age of my flesh; at what time the madness of raging lust, (in which human shamelessness takes too much liberty, notwithstanding by thy laws it be forbidden) exercised its supreme dominion in me, I giving over all my force unto it? My parents took no care all this while by marriage to save me from ruin; but their care was to have me learn to make a powerful oration, and to prove a most persuasive speaker.

Digitized by Google

III

CAP. III Et anno quidem illo intermissa erant studia mea, dum mihi reducto a Madauris, in qua vicina urbe iam coeperam litteraturae atque oratoriae percipiendae gratia peregrinari, longinquioris apud Karthaginem peregrinationis sumptus parabantur, animositate magis quam opibus patris, municipis Thagastensis admodum tenuis. cui narro haec? neque enim tibi, deus meus, sed apud te narro haec generi meo, generi humano, quantulacumque ex particula incidere potest in istas meas litteras. et ut quid hoc? ut videlicet ego et quisquis haec legit cogitemus, de quam profundo clamandum sit ad te. et quid propius auribus tuis, si cor confitens et vita ex fide est? quis enim non extollebat laudibus tunc hominem, patrem meum, quod ultra vires rei familiaris suae impenderet filio, quidquid etiam longe peregrinanti studiorum causa opus esset? multorum enim civium longe opulentiorum nullum tale negotium pro liberis erat, cum interea non satageret idem pater, qualis crescerem tibi aut quam castus essem, dummodo essem disertus vel desertus potius a cultura tua, deus, qui es unus verus et bonus dominus agri tui, cordis mei.

Sed ubi sexto illo et decimo anno interposito otio ex necessitate domestica feriatus ab omni schola cum parentibus esse coepi, excesserunt caput meum vepres

Digitized by Google

III

Of his Travels for his Studies' sake, and his Parents' Purpose in it

Now for that year were my studies intermitted: whenas upon my return from Madaura (a neighbour city wherein I had begun to learn the principles of literature and rhetoric) the expenses for a further journey to Carthage were provided for me: and that rather out of a brave mind my father bare, than any ability in him, for he was but a poor freeman of Thagaste. To whom tell I all this? For to thee I tell it not; but before thee relate it to mine own kind, the human kind, even to so small a part of it as may light upon these writings of mine. And to what purpose do I this? Even that both myself and whosoever reads this, may bethink ourselves out of what depths we are to cry unto thee. For what is nearer to thine ears than the confessing heart, and the life directed by faith? Who did not then highly commend my father, for that even above the ability of his means he had furnished out his son with all necessaries for the taking of a far journey for his studies' sake? For many abler citizens did no such thing for their children. But yet this father of mine never troubled himself with any thought of how I might improve myself towards thee, or how chaste I were; so that I proved cultivated, though I were left withal undressed by thy tillage, O God, which art the only, true, and good landlord of the field of my heart.

CHAP. III

Ps. cxxx. 1

But whilst in that sixteenth year of my age I left going to school, and upon some household necessities lived idly at home with my parents, the briars of unclean desires grew rank over my head, and there

Digitized by Google

CAP. III libidinum, et nulla erat eradicans manus. quin immo ubi me ille pater in balneis vidit pubescentem et inquieta indutum adulescentia, quasi iam ex hoc in nepotes gestiret, gaudens matri indicavit, gaudens vinulentia, in qua te iste mundus oblitus est creatorem suum et creaturam tuam pro te amavit, de vino invisibili perversae atque inclinatae in ima voluntatis suae. sed matris in pectore iam inchoaveras templum tuum et exordium sanctae habitationis tuae: nam ille adhuc catechumenus et hoc recens erat. itaque illa exsiluit pia trepidatione ac tremore, et quamvis mihi nondum fideli, timuit tamen vias distortas, in quibus ambulant qui ponunt ad te tergum et non faciem.

Ei mihi! et audeo dicere tacuisse te, deus meus, cum irem abs te longius? itane tu tacebas tunc mihi? et cuius erant nisi tua verba illa per matrem meam, fidelem tuam, quae cantasti in aures meas? nec inde quicquam descendit in cor, ut facerem illud. volebat enim illa, et secreto memini, ut monuerit cum sollicitudine ingenti, ne fornicarer, maximeque ne adulterarem cuiusquam uxorem. qui mihi monitus muliebres videbantur, quibus obtemperare erubescerem. illi autem tui erant, et nesciebam, et te tacere putabam atque illam loqui, per quam mihi tu

Digitized by Google

was no hand put to root them out. Moreover, when my father seeing me in the bath, how the signs of manhood began to bud in me, and plumed already with a stirring youthfulness: as if in this sight he had first rejoiced in hope of having grandchildren by me, he gladly told it to my mother: rejoicing, I say, at it in his wine, in which the world too oft forgets thee its Creator, in the immaterial intoxication of its own will, perverse and bent to the lowest things, frowardly and weakly setting its love upon thy creature instead of thyself. But thou hadst already begun thy temple in my mother's breast, and laid the foundations of thine own holy habitation: whereas my father was but a Catechumen as yet, one newly converted. She therefore was even startled with an holy fear and trembling. And though I were not as yet baptized; yet feared she those crooked ways, in which they walk, who put their backs to thee, and not their faces.

CHAP. III

Woe is me! And dare I say that thou heldest thy peace, O my God, whilst I wandered further from thee? Is it so? Didst thou indeed hold thy peace to me? And whose but thine were those words, which by my mother, thy faithful one, thou sangest in my ears? Nothing of which would at that time so far sink into my heart, as to do it. For she commanded me, and, as I well remember, with very much earnestness forewarned me, that I should not commit fornication; and especially that I should never defile any man's wife. These seemed to me no better than women's advices, which would be a shame for me to follow. But they were thine, indeed, and I knew it not: I thought thou hadst held thy peace, and that she only had spoken: she, by whom thou wert not silent unto me; and in

Digitized by Google

CAP. III non tacebas, et in illa contemnebaris a me, a me, filio eius, filio ancillae tuae, servo tuo. sed nesciebam et praeceps ibam tanta caecitate, ut inter coaetaneos meos puderet me minoris dedecoris, quoniam audiebam eos iactantes flagitia sua et tanto gloriantes magis, quanto magis turpes essent, et libebat facere non solum libidine facti verum etiam laudis.

Quid dignum est vituperatione nisi vitium? ego, ne vituperarer, vitiosior fiebam, et ubi non suberat, quo admisso aequarer perditis, fingebam me fecisse quod non feceram, ne viderer abiectior, quo eram innocentior, et ne vilior haberer, quo eram castior. ecce cum quibus comitibus iter agebam platearum Babyloniae, et volutabar in caeno eius tamquam in cinnamis et unguentis pretiosis. et in umbilico eius quo tenacius haererem, calcabat me inimicus invisibilis et seducebat me, quia ego seductilis eram. non enim et illa, quae iam de medio Babylonis fugerat, sed ibat in ceteris eius tardior, mater carnis meae, sicut monuit me pudicitiam, ita curavit quod de me a viro suo audierat, iamque pestilentiosum et in posterum periculosum sentiebat cohercere termino coniugalis affectus, si resecari ad vivum non poterat. non curavit hoc, quia metus erat, ne inpediretur spes

Digitized by Google

her thyself wast contemned by me; even by me her son, the son of thy handmaid, and thy servant. But all this while I knew it not; and I ran headlong with such blindness, that I was ashamed amongst my equals to be guilty of less impudency than they were, whom I heard brag mightily of their naughtiness: yea, and so much the more boasting, by how much more they had been beastly: and I took pleasure to do it, not for the pleasure of the act only, but for the praise of it also. CHAP. III

What now is worthy of dispraise, if vice be not? But I made myself worse than indeed I was, that I might not be dispraised; and when I wanted opportunity to commit a naughtiness should make me as bad as the lost, I would feign myself to have done what I never did, that I might not seem so much the more dastardly, as I was the more innocent; and that I might not be counted so much the more faint hearted, as I was the more chaste. Behold with what companions I walked the streets of Babylon, and I wallowed myself in the mire of it, as if I had reposed in a bed of spices and most precious ointments. And to make me cleave the faster to the very centre of sin, my invisible enemy trod me down and seduced me, because I was easy to be seduced. Yea, and the mother of my flesh, although herself were already fled out of Babylon, yet Jer. li. 6 went she full slow in the outskirts: for, as she had once advised me to keep my chastity, so she carried some respect withal to what she had heard her husband say of me. She felt it to be now deadly and dangerous for the future to restrain me within the bonds of a matrimonial affection, if that infection in me could not otherwise be pared away by the quick. But she continued not in that care,

Digitized by Google

CAP. III mea conpede uxoria, non spes illa, quam in te futuri saeculi habebat mater, sed spes litterarum, quas ut nossem nimis volebat parens uterque, ille, quia de te prope nihil cogitabat, de me autem inania, illa autem, quia non solum nullo detrimento, sed etiam nonnullo adiumento ad te adipiscendum futura existimabat usitata illa studia doctrinae. ita enim conicio recolens, ut possum, mores parentum meorum. relaxabantur etiam mihi ad ludendum habenae ultra temperamentum severitatis in dissolutionem affictionum variarum, et in omnibus erat caligo intercludens mihi, deus meus, serenitatem veritatis tuae, et prodiebat tamquam ex adipe iniquitas mea.

IV

CAP. IV Furtum certe punit lex tua, domine, et lex scripta in cordibus hominum, quam ne ipsa quidem delet iniquitas: quis enim fur aequo animo furem patitur? nec copiosus adactum inopia. et ego furtum facere volui, et feci, nulla conpulsus egestate, nisi penuria et fastidio iustitiae et sagina iniquitatis. nam id furatus sum, quod mihi abundabat et multo melius; nec ea re volebam frui, quam furto appetebam, sed

Digitized by Google

because she feared withal, lest my hopes might be hindered by a she-clog. Not those hopes of the next world, which my mother reposed in thee; but the hopes of learning, which both my parents were greatly desirous I should attain unto. He, because he had little or no thought almost of thee, and but vain conceits of me neither. She, because she made reckoning that those usual courses of learning, would not only be no hindrance, but a great furtherance towards my attaining of thee. For thus I conjecture (to my best remembrance) were the dispositions of both my parents at that time. The reins (in the mean time) of liberty to play were slackened towards me, beyond all temper of due severity, yea even to dissoluteness which brought the various troubles. And in all these, there was a mist depriving my sight, O my God, of the brightness of thy truth; and mine iniquity came from me, as if swelling from a fatness. Ps. lxxiii. 7

CHAP. III

IV

How he robbed a Pear-tree

CHAP. IV

Surely thy law, O Lord, punishes thievery; yea, and this law is so written in our hearts, that iniquity itself cannot blot it out. For what thief does willingly abide another man to steal from him? No, not a rich thief, him that is driven to steal upon necessity. Yet had I a desire to commit thievery; and did it, compelled neither by hunger nor poverty; but even through a cloyedness of well doing, and a pamperedness of iniquity. For I stole that, of which I had enough of mine own, and much better. Nor when I had done, cared I to enjoy the thing which

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV ipso furto et peccato. arbor erat pirus in vicinia nostrae vineae, pomis onusta, nec forma nec sapore inlecebrosis. ad hanc excutiendam atque asportandam nequissimi adulescentuli perreximus nocte intempesta, quousque ludum de pestilentiae more in areis produxeramus, et abstulimus inde onera ingentia non ad nostras epulas, sed vel proicienda porcis, etiamsi aliquid inde comedimus, dum tamen fieret a nobis quod eo liberet, quo non liceret. ecce cor meum, deus, ecce cor meum, quod miseratus es in imo abyssi. dicat tibi nunc ecce cor meum, quid ibi quaerebat, ut essem gratis malus et malitiae meae causa nulla esset nisi malitia. foeda erat, et amavi eam; amavi perire, amavi defectum meum, non illud, ad quod deficiebam, sed defectum meum ipsum amavi, turpis anima et dissiliens a firmamento tuo in exterminium, non dedecore aliquid, sed dedecus appetens.

V

CAP. V ETENIM species est pulchris corporibus, et auro et argento et omnibus, et in contactu carnis congruentia valet plurimum, ceterisque sensibus est sua cuique accommodata modificatio corporum; habet etiam honor temporalis et imperitandi atque superandi potentia suum decus, unde etiam vindictae aviditas

Digitized by Google

I had stolen, but joying in the theft and sin itself. A pear-tree there was in the orchard next our vineyard, well laden with fruit, not much tempting either for colour or taste. To the shaking and robbing of this, a company of lewd young fellows of us went late one night, (having, according to our pestilent custom in the game-places, continued our sports even till that season): thence carried we huge loadings, not for our own lickerishness, but even to fling to the hogs, though perhaps we ate some of it. And all this we did, because we would go whither we should not. Behold my heart, O Lord, which thou hadst pity on in the very bottom of the bottomless pit. Now, behold, let my heart tell thee, what it sought for there, that I should be thus evil for nothing, having no other provocation to ill, but ill itself. It was foul, yet I loved it, I loved to undo myself, I loved mine own fault, not that for which I committed the fault, but even the very fault itself; a base soul, shrinking back thus from my holdfast upon thee, even to utter destruction; not affecting anything from the shame, but the shame itself. CHAP. IV

V

No man sinneth, but provoked by some Cause

There is a comeliness now in all beautiful bodies, both in gold and silver, and all things; and in the touch of flesh, sympathy pleases much. Each other sense hath his proper object answerably tempered. Worldly honour hath also its grace, in commanding and overcoming by its own power; whence springs also the thirst of revenge. But yet, might a man CHAP. V

Digitized by Google

CAP. V oritur: et tamen in cuncta haec adipiscenda non est egrediendum abs te, domine, neque deviandum a lege tua. et vita, quam hic vivimus, habet inlecebram suam, propter quendam modum decoris sui, et convenientiam cum his omnibus infimis pulchris. amicitia quoque hominum caro nodo dulcis est propter unitatem de multis animis. propter universa haec atque huius modi peccatum admittitur, dum inmoderata in ista inclinatione, cum extrema bona sint, meliora et summa deseruntur, tu, domine deus noster, et veritas tua et lex tua. habent enim et haec ima delectationes, sed non sicut deus meus, qui fecit omnia, quia in ipso delectatur iustus, et ipse est deliciae rectorum corde.

Cum itaque de facinore quaeritur, qua causa factum sit, credi non solet, nisi cum appetitus adipiscendi alicuius illorum bonorum, quae infima diximus, esse potuisse adparuerit, aut metus amittendi. pulchra sunt enim et decora, quamquam prae bonis superioribus et beatificis abiecta et iacentia. homicidium fecit. cur fecit? adamavit eius coniugem aut praedium aut voluit depraedari, unde viveret, aut timuit ab illo tale aliquid amittere aut laesus ulcisci se exarsit. num homicidium sine causa faceret ipso homicidio delectatus? quis crediderit? nam et de quodam dictum est vaecordi et nimis crudeli homine, quod gratuito potius malus

Digitized by Google

obtain all these, he were not to depart from thee, O Lord, nor to decline from thy Law. The life also which here we live hath its proper enticement, and that by reason of a certain proportion of comeliness of its own, and a correspondency with all these inferior beauties. That friendship also which is amongst societies, we see endeared with a sweet tie, even by reason of the union of many hearts. Upon occasion of all these and the like, is sin committed, while through an immoderate inclination towards these, which are goods but of the lowest alloy, better and higher are left out; even thou, our Lord God, thy Truth and thy Law. For these low things have their delights, but nothing like my Lord God, who hath made these all: for in him is the righteous man delighted, and he is the deliciousness of the upright in heart. CHAP. V

When enquiry is made after wickedness, upon what cause it was committed, no other reason uses to be believed but this, when there hath appeared to be a possibility of the appetites obtaining some one of those good things which we called of a lower alloy, or else a fear of losing it. For even these are beautiful and comely; although compared with those higher goods, and happy-making riches, they be but abject and contemptible. A man hath murdered another. Why so? Either he loved his wife or his estate; or he would rob another to get maintainance for himself; or he stood in fear to lose some such thing by him; or being wronged, he was all on fire to be revenged of him. Would any man commit a murder upon no provocation, but only upon a delight he takes in murdering? Who will believe it? For as for that man said to be so stupidly and savagely cruel, that he

Digitized by Google

CAP. V atque crudelis erat; praedicta est tamen causa: ne per otium, inquit, torpesceret manus aut animus. quare id quoque? cur ita? ut scilicet illa exercitatione scelerum capta urbe honores, imperia, divitias adsequeretur, et careret metu legum et difficultate rerum, propter inopiam rei familiaris et conscientiam scelerum. nec ipse igitur Catilina amavit facinora sua, sed utique aliud, cuius causa illa faciebat.

VI

CAP. VI Quid ego miser in te amavi, o furtum meum, o facinus illud meum nocturnum sexti decimi anni aetatis meae? non enim pulchrum eras, cum furtum esses. aut vero aliquid es, ut loquar ad te? pulchra erant poma illa, quae furati sumus, quoniam creatura tua erat, pulcherrime omnium, creator omnium, deus bone, deus summum bonum et bonum verum meum; pulchra erant illa poma, sed non ipsa concupivit anima mea miserabilis. erat mihi enim meliorum copia, illa autem decerpsi, tantum ut furarer. nam decerpta proieci epulatus inde solam iniquitatem, qua laetabar fruens. nam et si quid illorum pomorum

Digitized by Google

was evil and cruel merely for cruelty's sake; yet is there a cause assigned: Lest (says himself) my hand or heart should grow unactive with idleness. And why that? Why? Even in order that when he had once made himself master of the city, through frequent execution of mischievousness, he might mount up unto honours, commands, and riches; and set himself above the fear of the law, and all difficulty, because of his desperate poverty, and the consciousness of his own villanies. Therefore even Catiline himself loved not his own villanies, but 'twas something else he loved, for whose sake he fell to commit them.

CHAP. V

Sallust, Cat. 9

VI

All those things which under the shew of Good invite us unto sin, are in God alone, to be found True and perfect

CHAP. VI

WHAT then was it that wretched I so loved in thee, O thou Theft of mine, thou deed of darkness, which I committed in the sixteenth year of my age? Lovely thou wert not, because thou wert Theft. But art thou anything, that I may reason the case with thee? Those pears that we stole were fair to see to, for they were thy creature, O thou most Beautiful of all, thou Creator of all, thou good God, thou Sovereign Good, and my true Good. Those pears were fair indeed, but it was not those that my wretched soul desired; for I had store of better of mine own, and I gathered those only that I might steal. For having gathered them, I flung them away, eating little of them but my own sin only, which I was extremely pleased with the enjoying.

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI intravit in os meum, condimentum ibi facinus erat. et nunc, domine deus meus, quaero, quid me in furto delectaverit, et ecce species nulla est: non dico sicut in aequitate atque prudentia, sed neque sicut in mente hominis atque memoria et sensibus et vegetante vita, neque sicut speciosa sunt sidera et decora locis suis, et terra et mare plena fetibus, qui succedunt nascendo decedentibus; non saltem ut est quaedam defectiva species et umbratica vitiis fallentibus.

Nam et superbia celsitudinem imitatur, cum tu sis unus super omnia deus excelsus. et ambitio quid nisi honores quaerit et gloriam, cum tu sis prae cunctis honorandus unus et gloriosus in aeternum? et saevitia potestatum timeri vult: quis autem timendus nisi unus deus, cuius potestati eripi aut subtrahi quid, quando aut ubi aut quo vel a quo potest? et blanditiae lascivientium amari volunt: sed neque blandius est aliquid tua caritate, nec amatur quicquam salubrius quam illa prae cunctis formosa et luminosa veritas tua. et curiositas affectare videtur studium scientiae, cum tu omnia summe noveris. ignorantia quoque ipsa atque stultitia simplicitatis et innocentiae nomine tegitur, quia te simplicius quicquam non reperitur. quid te autem innocentius, quandoquidem opera sua malis inimica sunt? et ignavia quasi quietem appetit: quae vero quies certa praeter dominum? luxuria satietatem atque abundantiam

Digitized by Google

For if any bit of those pears came within my mouth, the sweetest sauce it had was the sin of the eater. And now, O Lord my God, I enquire what was it in that thievery of mine, should so much delight me; and behold there appears no loveliness in it. I do not mean such loveliness as there is seen in justice and wisdom; no, nor such as is in the mind and memory; or in the senses and lively soul of man: nor yet such as the stars are glorious and beautiful withal in their orbs; or the earth or sea replenished with their natural offsprings, which by daily growing supply the room of the decayed. Nay, not so much as that false colour or shadow of good, that usually appears in deceiving vices. CHAP. VI

For pride imitates high-spiritedness; whereas thou alone art the highest over all. Ambition, what seeks it but honours and reputation; whereas thou art to be honoured above all things, and glorious for evermore. The cruelty of great ones desires to be feared; but who is to be feared but God alone? Out of whose power, what can be wrested? or when, or where, or which way, or by whom? The enticements of amorous inveiglers desire to be loved; but yet is nothing more pleasurable than thy charity; nor is anything loved more wholesomely than that truth of thine, more bright and beautiful than anything. Curiosity makes semblance to affect a desire of knowledge; whereas 'tis thou only that supremely knowest all things. Yea, ignorance and foolishness itself is masked under the name of simplicity and innocency; even because nothing can be found more simple than thyself; and what is more innocent, seeing it is their own works that hunt the wicked? Yea, sloth pretends a desire of quietness; but what stable rest is there beside the Lord? Expensiveness affects

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI se cupit vocari: tu es autem plenitudo et indeficiens copia incorruptibilis suavitatis. effusio liberalitatis obtendit umbram: sed bonorum omnium largitor affluentissimus tu es. avaritia multa possidere vult: et tu possides omnia. invidentia de excellentia litigat: quid te excellentius? ira vindictam quaerit: te iustius quis vindicat? timor insolita et repentina exhorrescit, rebus, quae amantur, adversantia, dum praecavet securitati: tibi enim quid insolitum? quid repentinum? aut quis a te separat quod diligis? aut ubi nisi apud te firma securitas? tristitia rebus amissis contabescit, quibus se oblectabat cupiditas, quia ita sibi nollet, sicut tibi auferri nihil potest.

Ita fornicatur anima, cum avertitur abs te et quaerit extra te ea quae pura et liquida non invenit, nisi cum redit ad te. perverse te imitantur omnes, qui longe se a te faciunt et extollunt se adversum te. sed etiam sic te imitando indicant creatorem te esse omnis naturae et ideo non esse, quo a te omni modo recedatur. quid ergo in illo furto ego dilexi, et in quo dominum meum vel vitiose atque perverse imitatus sum? an libuit facere contra legem saltem fallacia, quia potentatu non poteram, ut mancam libertatem captivus imitarer, faciendo inpune quod non liceret, tenebrosa omnipotentiae similitudine? ecce est ille servus fugiens dominum suum et consecutus umbram.

Digitized by Google

to be called plenty and abundance; yet art thou the fulness and never failing plenty of most incorruptible sweetness. Prodigality pretends a show of liberality: but thou art the most flowing bestower of all good things. Covetousness desires to possess much; and thou possessest all. Emulation contends for excellency; but what so excellent as thou? Anger seeks revenge; but who revenges more justly than thou? Fear startles at unusual chances, which scare away the thing loved, while it is wary for its own security; but what can happen unusual or sudden unto thee? Or who can deprive thee of what thou lovest? Or where but with thee is there any settled security? Grief pines away itself at its losses, which desire took delight to enjoy; even because it would not be deprived; like as nothing can be lost to thee. CHAP. VI

Just thus does the soul commit fornication, when she turns from thee, seeking those things without thee, which she can nowhere find pure and untainted, till she returns again to thee. Thus all awkwardly imitate thee, even they that get themselves far from thee, and who pride themselves against thee: and yet by thus imitating thee, do they declare thee to be the Creator of the whole frame of nature, and consequently, that there is no place whither they can at all retire from thee. What therefore did I love in that theft of mine! And wherein did I thus awkwardly and corruptly imitate my lord? Was it a pleasure to do contrary to thy Law, if but in show, because by strong hand I could not: that being a prisoner, I might make show of a counterfeit liberty, by doing that unpunished, which I ought not to do, under the shadowy pretence of omnipotency? Behold, here is thy servant fleeing from his Lord, and gotten

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI o putredo, o monstrum vitae et mortis profunditas! potuitne libere quod non licebat, non ob aliud, nisi quia non licebat?

VII

CAP. VII QUID retribuam domino, quod recolit haec memoria mea et anima mea non metuit inde? diligam te, domine, et gratias agam et confitear nomini tuo, quoniam tanta dimisisti mihi mala et nefaria opera mea. gratiae tuae deputo et misericordiae tuae, quod peccata mea tamquam glaciem solvisti. gratiae tuae deputo et quaecumque non feci mala: quid enim non facere potui, qui etiam gratuitum facinus amavi? et omnia mihi dimissa esse fateor, et quae mea sponte feci mala et quae te duce non feci.

Quis est hominum, qui suam cogitans infirmitatem audet viribus suis tribuere castitatem atque innocentiam suam, ut minus amet te, quasi minus ei necessaria fuerit misericordia tua, qua donas peccata conversis ad te? qui enim vocatus a te secutus est vocem tuam, et vitavit ea, quae me de me ipso recordantem et fatentem legit, non me derideat ab eo medico aegrum sanari, a quo sibi praestitum est, ut non aegrotaret, vel potius ut minus aegrotaret, et ideo

Digitized by Google

under a shadow. O rottenness, O monster of life, O depth of death! Could anything please thee, that thou mightest not do lawfully; and done too upon no other reason, but because it was not lawful? CHAP. VI

VII

He returns thanks to God for remitting these sins, and for keeping him from many others

CHAP. VII

What reward shall I render unto the Lord, for that he so gently brings these things to my remembrance, that my soul is not affrighted at it? I will love thee, O Lord, and thank thee, and I will confess unto thy name; because thou hast forgiven me this crime, and these heinous deeds of mine: unto thy grace and mercy do I ascribe, that thou hast dissolved my sins as it were ice: yea unto thy grace do I ascribe whatsoever evils I have not done. For what evil was I not apt enough to commit, who loved the sin for the sin's sake? Yea all I confess to be forgiven me; both what evils I committed wilfully, and what by thy guidance I have not committed.

What man is he, who upon consideration of his own infirmity, dares so far to ascribe his chastity and innocency to his own virtue, as that he thereupon should love thee less; as if thy mercy, by which thou forgivest those that turn unto thee, had been less necessary for him? Whosoever being effectually called by thee, hath obeyed thy voice, and declined those transgressions which he here reads me remembering and confessing of myself; let him not laugh at me, who am now cured by that same Physician who ministered unto him such preservatives, that he might not be sick at all, or but a little distempered

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII te tantundem, immo vero amplius diligat, quia per quem me videt tantis peccatorum meorum languoribus exui, per eum se videt tantis peccatorum languoribus non inplicari.

VIII

CAP. VIII Quem fructum habui miser aliquando in his, quae nunc recolens erubesco, maxime in illo furto, in quo ipsum furtum amavi, nihil aliud, cum et ipsum esset nihil et eo ipso ego miserior? et tamen solus id non fecissem—sic recordor animum tunc meum—solus omnino id non fecissem. ergo amavi ibi etiam consortium eorum, cum quibus id feci. non ergo nihil aliud quam furtum amavi; immo vero nihil aliud, quia et illud nihil est. quid est re vera? quis est, qui doceat me, nisi qui inluminat cor meum et discernit umbras eius? quid est, quod mihi venit in mentem quaerere et discutere et considerare, quia si tunc amarem poma illa, quae furatus sum, et eis frui cuperem, possem etiam solus, si satis esset, conmittere illam iniquitatem, qua pervenirem ad voluptatem meam, nec confricatione consciorum animorum accenderem pruritum cupiditatis meae? sed

Digitized by Google

rather: but let him take occasion thereupon to love thee so much, yea, so much the more; since by that Physician he hath observed me to have been recovered out of such deep consumptions of sinfulness, by the same hand he perceives himself not to have been incumbered by the like. CHAP. VII

VIII

What he loved in that his theft

What fruit had I (wretched man) heretofore in these things, of the remembrance whereof I am now ashamed? In that piece of thievery especially, wherein I loved nothing but the very theft itself: whereas that was nothing itself, but I much the more miserable by it? Yet by myself alone I would not have committed it: so I now remember what my disposition then was: alone I would never have done it. Belike therefore it was the company that I loved, who were with me at it. Then it was not that I loved nothing but the theft itself; nay verily, nothing else, because that circumstance of the company, was indeed a very nothing. What is this, verily? Who is there to teach me, but even he that enlighteneth my heart and discovereth the darkness of it? What is that which came into my head to inquire into, and to discuss and consider better of? For had I then loved those pears which I stole, and wanted to eat them, I might have done it by myself, had it been enough to commit the thievery, by which I might attain my pleasure; nor needed I have provoked that itch of mine own desires, by the rubbing of those guilty consciences. But because

CHAP. VIII

Rom. vi. 21

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII quoniam in illis pomis voluptas mihi non erat, ea erat in ipso facinore, quam faciebat consortium simul peccantium.

IX

CAP. IX QUID erat ille affectus animi? certe enim plane turpis erat nimis, et vae mihi erat, qui habebam illum. sed tamen quid erat? delicta quis intellegit? risus erat quasi titillato corde, quod fallebamus eos, qui haec a nobis fieri non putabant et vehementer nolebant. cur ergo eo me delectabat, quo id non faciebam solus? an quia etiam nemo facile solus ridet? (nemo quidem facile, sed tamen etiam solos et singulos homines, cum alius nemo praesens est, vincit risus aliquando, si aliquid nimie ridiculum vel sensibus occurrit vel animo. at ego illud solus non facerem, non facerem omnino solus.)

Ecce est coram te, deus meus, viva recordatio animae meae. solus non facerem furtum illud, in quo me non libebat id quod furabar, sed quia furabar: quod me solum facere prorsus non liberet, nec facerem. o nimis inimica amicitia, seductio mentis investigabilis, ex ludo et ioco nocendi aviditas et alieni damni appetitus, nulla lucri mei, nulla ulciscendi libidine, sed cum dicitur: "eamus, faciamus," et pudet non esse impudentem.

Digitized by Google

the pleasure I took consisted not in those pears, it must needs therefore be in the very prank itself, which the company of us offenders jointly committed together. CHAP. VIII

IX

Bad Company is infectious

WHAT kind of disposition was that then? For it was too bad plainly: and woe is me that I had it. But yet what was it? Oh, who can understand his errors? We laughed heartily, till we tickled again, that we could beguile the owners, who little thought what we were a doing, and would never have endured it. Yet, again, why took I delight even in this, that I did it not alone? Is it for that no man doth so readily laugh alone? Ordinarily indeed nobody does; but yet a fit of laughter sometimes comes upon men by themselves and singly, when nobody else is with them, if anything worthy to be laughed at comes either in their eye or fancy. Yet I for my part would not have done this alone; I should never have done it alone verily. CHAP. IX Ps. xix. 12

See here, my God, the lively remembrance of my soul set before thee. Alone, I would never have committed that theft, wherein what I stole did not so much content me, as because I stole it; which would never have pleased me so well to have done alone, nor would I ever have done it. O friendship too unfriendly! Thou inscrutable inveigler of the soul, thou greediness to do mischief, all out of a mirth and wantonness, thou thirst to do wrong to others, though upon no pleasure of gain or revenge unto me: but even because when one cries: Let us go, let us do this or that, then 'tis a shame not to be shameless.

Digitized by Google

X

CAP. X Quis exaperit istam tortuosissimam et inplicatissimam nodositatem? foeda est; nolo in eam intendere, nolo eam videre. te volo, iustitia et innocentia, pulchra et decora honestis luminibus, et insatiabili satietate. quies est apud te valde et vita imperturbabilis. qui intrat in te, intrat in gaudium domini sui et non timebit et habebit se optime in optimo. defluxi abs te ego et erravi, deus meus, nimis devius ab stabilitate tua in adulescentia et factus sum mihi regio egestatis.

Digitized by Google

X

Whatsoever is good, is in God

CHAP. X

Who can pick out that crooked and intricate knottiness? 'Tis filthy, I will never give my mind to it, I will not so much as look towards it. But thee I desire, O Righteousness and Innocency, most beautiful and comely to all chaste eyes; yea, with an insatiable satiety I desire to behold thee. With thee is rest assured, and a life never to be disturbed. He that enters into thee, enters into his master's joy: and he shall have no cause of fear, and shall be well in him who is the best. I slid away from thee, and I went astray, O my God, yea, too much astray, from thee my Stay, in these days of my youth, and I became to myself a land of want.

Matt. xxv. 21

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK III

Digitized by Google

LIBER TERTIVS

I

CAP. I VENI Karthaginem, et circumstrepebat me undique sartago flagitiosorum amorum. nondum amabam, et amare amabam, et secretiore indigentia oderam me minus indigentem. quaerebam quid amarem, amans amare, et oderam securitatem et viam sine muscipulis, quoniam fames mihi erat intus ab interiore cibo, te ipso, deus meus, et ea fame non esuriebam, sed eram sine desiderio alimentorum incorruptibilium, non quia plenus eis eram, sed quo inanior, fastidiosior. et ideo non bene valebat anima mea, et ulcerosa proiciebat se foras, miserabiliter scalpi avida contactu sensibilium. sed si non haberent animam, non utique amarentur. amare et amari dulce mihi erat, magis si et amantis corpore fruerer.

Venam igitur amicitiae coinquinabam sordibus concupiscentiae, candoremque eius obnubilabam de tartaro libidinis, et tamen foedus atque inhonestus, elegans et urbanus esse gestiebam abundanti vanitate. rui etiam in amorem, quo cupiebam capi.

Digitized by Google

THE THIRD BOOK

I

He is caught with Love, which he hunted after

To Carthage I came, where a whole frying-pan full abominable loves crackled round about me, and on everyside. I was not in love as yet, yet I loved to be in love, and with a more secret kind of want, I hated myself having little want. I sought about for something to love, loving still to be in love: security I hated, and that way too that had no snares in it: and all because I had a famine within me, even of that inward food (thyself, O God) though that famine made me not hungry. For I continued without all appetite towards incorruptible nourishments, not because I was already full, but the more empty, the more queasy stomached. For this cause my soul was not very well, but miserably breaking out into botches, had an extreme itch to be scratched by the touch of these sensible things, which yet if they had not a life, would not be loved at all. It was very pleasurable to me, both to love, and to be loved; but much more, when I obtained to enjoy the person whom I loved. CHAP. I

I defiled therefore the spring of friendship with the filth of uncleanliness, and I besullied the purity of it with the hell of lustfulness. But thus filthy and dishonest as I was, with a superlative kind of vanity I took a pride to pass for a spruce and a gentle companion. I forced myself also into love,

Digitized by Google

CAP. I deus meus, misericordia mea, quanto felle mihi suavitatem illam et quam bonus aspersisti, quia et amatus sum, et perveni ad vinculum fruendi et conligabar laetus aerumnosis nexibus, ut caederer virgis ferreis ardentibus zeli et suspicionum et timorum et irarum atque rixarum.

II

CAP. II Rapiebant me spectacula theatrica, plena imaginibus miseriarum mearum et fomitibus ignis mei. quid est, quod ibi homo vult dolere luctuosa et tragica, quae tamen pati ipse nollet? et tamen pati vult ex eis dolorem spectator, et dolor ipse est voluptas eius. quid est nisi miserabilis insania? nam eo magis eis movetur quisque, quo minus a talibus affectibus sanus est, quamquam, cum ipse patitur, miseria, cum aliis compatitur, misericordia dici solet. sed qualis tandem misericordia in rebus fictis et scenicis? non enim ad subveniendum provocatur auditor, sed tantum ad dolendum invitatur et auctori earum imaginum amplius favet, cum

Digitized by Google

with which I affected to be ensnared. My God, my Mercy, with how much sourness didst thou of thy goodness to me, besour that sweetness? For obtaining once to be beloved again, and secretly arriving to the bond of enjoying; I was with much joy bound with sorrow-bringing embracements, even that I might be scourged with the iron burning rods of jealousy, and suspicions, and fears, and angers, and brawls. CHAP. I

II

Of Stage Plays

STAGE-PLAYS also at that time drew me away; sights full of the images of mine own miseries, and the fuel to mine own fire. What is the reason now that a spectator desires to be made sad when he beholds doleful and tragical passages, which himself could not endure to suffer? Yet for all that he desires to feel a kind of passionateness, yea, and his passion becomes his pleasure too. What is all this but a miserable madness? For every man is more affected with these actions, the less free he is from such affections. Howsoever, when a man suffers aught in his own person, it uses to be styled misery: but when he hath a fellow feeling of another's, then 'tis mercy. But what compassion is to be shown at those feigned and scenical passions? For the auditors here are not provoked to help the sufferer, but invited only to be sorry for him: and they so much the more love the author of these fictions, by how much the more he can CHAP. II

Digitized by Google

CAP. II amplius dolet. et si calamitates illae hominum vel antiquae vel falsae sic agantur, ut qui spectat non doleat, abscedit inde fastidiens et reprehendens; si autem doleat, manet intentus et gaudens. lacrimae ergo amantur et dolores. certe omnis homo gaudere vult. an cum miserum esse neminem libeat, libet tamen esse misericordem, quod quia non sine dolore est, hac una causa amantur dolores? et hoc de illa vena amicitiae est.

Sed quo vadit? quo fluit? ut quid decurrit in torrentem picis bullientis, aestus inmanes taetrarum libidinum, in quos ipsa mutatur, et vertitur per nutum proprium de caelesti serenitate detorta atque deiecta? repudietur ergo misericordia? nequaquam. ergo amentur dolores aliquando. sed cave inmunditiam, anima mea, sub tutore deo meo, deo patrum nostrorum et laudabili et superelato in omnia saecula, cave inmunditiam. neque enim nunc non misereor, sed tunc in theatris congaudebam amantibus, cum sese fruebantur per flagitia, quamvis haec imaginarie gererent in ludo spectaculi, cum autem sese amittebant, quasi misericors contristabar; et utrumque delectabat tamen. nunc vero magis miseror gaudentem in flagitio quam velut dura perpessum detrimento

Digitized by Google

move passion in them: and if the calamities of the CHAP. II
person represented (either fallen out long since or utterly feigned) be so lamely set out, that no passion be moved in the spectator, he goes away surfeited and reporting scurvily of it. But if he be moved to passion, he sits it out very attentively, and even weeps for joy again. Are tears therefore loved, and passions? Verily each man desires joyfulness. Or, whereas no man is willing to be miserable, is he notwithstanding pleased to be merciful? which because it cannot be without passion, for this reason alone come passions to be loved. All this springs from that vein of friendship.

But whither goes that vein? Which way flows it? Wherefore runs it into that torrent of boiling pitch, those vast overflowings of vile lustfulness, into the nature of which it is of its own inclination changed, being quite altered from its heavenly clearness, and depraved? Shall compassion therefore be banished? By no means. Let us frame ourselves rather to love passion sometimes. But take heed of uncleanness, O my soul, under the eye of God my Protector, (that God of our fathers, who is to be praised, and to be exalted above all, for ever and ever) beware of uncleanness. Nor am I now past all compassion; but when in those days I in the theatres sympathised together with the lovers, when they wickedly enjoyed one another, although their parts were merely feigned in the action of the comedy: and when they lost one another, I was sad with them, as if really pitying them: being in both equally delighted notwithstanding. But I much more pity him now that still rejoiceth in his own wickedness, than I do him that is, as it were, hardly pinched with the foregoing of some pernicious

Digitized by Google

CAP. II perniciosae voluptatis et amissione miserae felicitatis. haec certe verior misericordia, sed non in ea delectat dolor. nam etsi adprobatur officio caritatis qui dolet miserum, mallet tamen utique non esse quod doleret, qui germanitus misericors est. si enim est malevola benevolentia, quod fieri non potest, potest et ille, qui veraciter sinceriterque miseretur, cupere esse miseros, ut misereatur. nonnullus itaque dolor adprobandus, nullus amandus est. hoc enim tu, domine deus, qui animas amas, longe alteque purius quam nos, et incorruptibilius misereris, quod nullo dolore sauciaris. et ad haec quis idoneus?

At ego tunc miser dolere amabam, et quaerebam, ut esset quod dolerem, quando mihi in aerumna aliena et falsa et saltatoria, ea magis placebat actio histrionis meque alliciebat vehementius, qua mihi lacrimae excutiebantur. quid autem mirum, cum infelix pecus aberrans a grege tuo et inpatiens custodiae tuae, turpi scabie foedarer? et inde erant dolorum amores, non quibus altius penetrarer—non enim amabam talia perpeti, qualia spectare—sed quibus auditis et fictis tamquam in superficie raderer: quos tamen quasi ungues scalpentium fervidus tumor et tabes et sanies horrida consequebatur. talis vita mea numquid vita erat, deus meus?

Digitized by Google

pleasure, and the loss of some miserable felicity. CHAP. II
This certainly is the truer mercy, but the grief gives not so much delight. For though he that condoles with the miserable be commended for his office of charity; yet had he, that is most brotherly compassionate, much rather there were no occasion given him to condole. For if there be a good-will that is ill-willed, (which can never be), then only may he, who is truly and sincerely compassionate, wish there might still be some men miserable, that he might still be compassionate. Some kind of sorrow may therefore be allowed, but no kind loved. And thus dost thou, O Lord God, who lovest our own souls much more purely than ourselves can do, and art more incorruptibly merciful, because thou canst be wounded with no sorrowfulness. And who is fit for these things?

But wretched I, loved at that time to be made sorry, and sought out matter to be sorry at, whenas in another man's misery, though feigned, and merely personated, that action of the player best pleased me, yea, and drew me the more vehemently, which extracted tears out of mine eyes. What marvel was it now, when being an unhappy sheep, straying from thy flock, and not contented with thy keeping, I became infected with that filthy scab? And hence came my loving of those sorrows, not such, though, as should gall me too deep: (nor was I so far gone, as to love to suffer, what I loved to look upon:) but such yet as upon hearing these fictions should lightly scratch me; upon which (as after scratching nails) followed an impostumation, and a putrefied matter. Such a life I then led; but was that a life, O my God?

Digitized by Google

III

CAP. III ET circumvolabat super me fidelis a longe misericordia tua. in quantas iniquitates distabui, et sacrilega curiositate secutus sum, ut deserentem te deduceret me ad ima infida et circumventoria obsequia daemoniorum, quibus immolabam facta mea mala, et in omnibus flagellabas me! ausus sum etiam in celebritate sollemnitatum tuarum, intra parietes ecclesiae tuae concupiscere, et agere negotium procurandi fructus mortis: unde me verberasti gravibus poenis, sed nil ad culpam meam, o tu praegrandis misericordia mea, deus meus, refugium meum a terribilibus nocentibus, in quibus vagatus sum praefidenti collo ad longe recedendum a te, amans vias meas et non tuas, amans fugitivam libertatem.

Habebant et illa studia, quae honesta vocabantur, ductum suum intuentem fora litigiosa, ut excellerem in eis, hoc laudabilior, quo fraudulentior. tanta est caecitas hominum de caecitate etiam gloriantium. et maior iam eram in schola rhetoris et gaudebam superbe et tumebam typho, quamquam longe sedatior, domine, tu scis, et remotus omnino ab eversionibus, quas faciebant eversores—hoc enim nomen saevum et diabolicum velut insigne urbanitatis est—inter

Digitized by Google

III

His conversation with young Lawyers

AND thy faithful mercy hovered over me afar off! CHAP. III
Upon what gross iniquities consumed I myself, pursuing a sacrilegious curiosity, that having once forsaken thee, it might bring me as low as the very bottom of infidelity, to that beguiling service of devils, unto whom I sacrificed mine own vile actions; for all which thou didst chastise me? I was so bold one day, as thy solemnities were a celebrating, even within the walls of thy Church, to desire and to execute a business, enough to purchase me the very fruits of death. For which thou scourgedst me with very grievous punishments, though nothing in respect of my fault, O thou my infinite Mercy, my God, my Refuge against those terrible dangers, in which I wandered with a stiff neck, to withdraw myself the further off from thee, loving mine own ways, and not thine: affecting a freedom, though that of a runaway.

Those studies of mine also which were accounted commendable, were intended towards the Law, with an ambition to prove excellent at them; so much the famouser as I proved the craftier. Such is men's blindness, that they even brag of their own owl-eyedness. I became by this time to be a prime fellow in the Rhetoric Schools; and I joyed in it very pertly, and I swelled again with arrogancy, though more temperate I was, Lord thou knowest, yea, and far enough off from those humours of the Overturners (for this cruel and diabolical name was given out to be the very badge of gallantry) whom

Digitized by Google

CAP. III quos vivebam pudore inpudenti, quia talis non eram: et cum eis eram et amicitiis eorum delectabar aliquando, a quorum semper factis abhorrebam, hoc est ab eversionibus, quibus proterve insectabantur ignotorum verecundiam, quam proturbarent gratis inludendo atque inde pascendo malevolas laetitias suas. nihil est illo actu similius actibus daemoniorum. quid itaque verius quam eversores vocarentur, eversi plane prius ipsi atque perversi, deridentibus eos et seducentibus fallacibus occulte spiritibus in eo ipso, quo alios inridere amant et fallere?

IV

CAP. IV INTER hos ego inbecilla tunc aetate discebam libros eloquentiae, in qua eminere cupiebam, fine damnabili et ventoso per gaudia vanitatis humanae; et usitato iam discendi ordine perveneram in librum cuiusdam Ciceronis, cuius linguam fere omnes mirantur, pectus non ita. sed liber ille ipsius exhortationem continet ad philosophiam et vocatur Hortensius. ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum, et ad te ipsum, domine,

Digitized by Google

notwithstanding I kept company withal, even with an impudent bashfulness, because I had not so rightly gotten the garb of it as they. With these I conversed, and was ofttimes delighted with their acquaintance, whose doings I did ever abhor, that is their humours of Overturning: in which their custom was, malapertly enough, to come over the demure and bashful behaviour of the freshmen, whom they thoroughly vexed with abusing and jeering at, upon no occasion; and all to maintain their own humour of bitter jesting: nothing in the world can be liker the very actions of the devil himself, than this behaviour of theirs. What name then could they more truly be called by, than Overturners? Being themselves overturned and altogether perverted first, and that by those seducing and deceiving spirits, secretly deriding them, even while they themselves take so much delight to jeer at, and to put tricks upon others. CHAP. III

IV

How Tully's Hortensius provoked him to study Philosophy

AMONGST these mad companions in that tender age of mine learned I the books of eloquence, wherein my ambition was to be eminent, all out of a damnable and vain-glorious end, puffed up with a delight of human glory. By the ordinary course of study I fell upon a certain book of one Cicero, whose tongue almost every man admires, though not so his heart. This book of his contains an exhortation to Philosophy, and 'tis called Hortensius. Now this book quite altered my affection, turned my prayers CHAP. IV

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV mutavit preces meas, et vota ac desideria mea fecit alia. viluit mihi repente omnis vana spes, et inmortalitatem sapientiae concupiscebam aestu cordis incredibili, et surgere coeperam, ut ad te redirem. non enim ad acuendam linguam, quod videbar emere maternis mercedibus, cum agerem annum aetatis undevicensimum, iam defuncto patre ante biennium; non ergo ad acuendam linguam referebam illum librum, neque mihi locutionem, sed quod loquebatur persuaserat.

Quomodo ardebam, deus meus, quomodo ardebam revolare a terrenis ad te, et nesciebam quid ageres mecum! apud te est enim sapientia. amor autem sapientiae nomen graecum habet philosophiam, quo me accendebant illae litterae. sunt qui seducant per philosophiam, magno et blando et honesto nomine colorantes et fucantes errores suos; et prope omnes, qui ex illis et supra temporibus tales erant, notantur in eo libro et demonstrantur, et manifestatur ibi salutifera illa admonitio spiritus tui, per servum tuum bonum et pium: "videte, ne quis vos decipiat per philosophiam et inanem seductionem secundum traditionem hominum, secundum elementa huius mundi et non secundum Christum, quia in ipso inhabitat omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter." et ego illo tempore, scis tu, lumen cordis mei, quoniam necdum mihi haec apostolica nota erant, hoc tamen solo delectabar in illa exhortatione, quod non illam aut illam sectam, sed

Digitized by Google

to thyself, O Lord, and made me have clean other purposes and desires. All my vain hopes I thenceforth slighted; and with an incredible heat of spirit I thirsted after the immortality of wisdom, and began now to rouse up myself, that I might turn again to theeward. For I made not use of that book to file my tongue with, which I seemed to buy with that exhibition which my mother allowed me, in that nineteenth year of my age, my father being dead two years before. I made not use of that book, I say, to sharpen my tongue withal, nor had it persuaded me to affect the fine language in it, but the matter of it. CHAP. IV

How did I burn then, my God, how did I burn to fly from earthly delights towards thee, and yet I knew not what thou meanedst to do with me! For with thee is wisdom. That love of wisdom is in Greek called Philosophy, with which that book inflamed me. Some there be that seduce others through Philosophy, under a great, a fair promising, and an honest name, colouring over and palliating their own errors: and almost all those who in the same and former ages had been of that stamp, are in that book censured and set forth: there also is that most wholesome advice of thy Spirit, given by thy good and devout servant, made plain: Beware lest any man spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the Fulness of the Godhead bodily. For my part, thou Light of my heart knowest, that the Apostolical Scriptures were scarce known to me at that time: but this was it that so delighted me in that exhortation, that it did not engage me to this or that sect, but left me free to love, and seek, and

Col. ii. 8

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV ipsam quaecumque esset sapientiam ut diligerem et quaererem et adsequerer et tenerem atque amplexarer fortiter, excitabar sermone illo et accendebar et ardebam, et hoc solum me in tanta flagrantia refrangebat, quod nomen Christi non erat ibi, quoniam hoc nomen secundum misericordiam tuam, domine, hoc nomen salvatoris mei, fili tui, in ipso adhuc lacte matris tenerum cor meum pie biberat et alte retinebat, et quidquid sine hoc nomine fuisset, quamvis litteratum et expolitum et veridicum, non me totum rapiebat.

V

CAP. V Itaque institui animum intendere in scripturas sanctas, et videre, quales essent. et ecce video rem non compertam superbis neque nudatam pueris, sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam, et velatam mysteriis, et non eram ego talis, ut intrare in eam possem, aut inclinare cervicem ad eius gressus. non enim sicut modo loquor, ita sensi, cum attendi ad illam scripturam, sed visa est mihi indigna, quam Tullianae dignitati compararem. tumor enim meus refugiebat modum eius, et acies mea non penetrabat interiora eius. verum tamen illa erat, quae cresceret

Digitized by Google

obtain, and hold, and embrace Wisdom itself, whatever it was. Perchance it was that book I was stirred up, and enkindled, and inflamed by: this thing only in such a heat of zeal took me off, that the name of Christ was not in it. For this Name, according to thy mercy, O Lord, this Name of my Saviour thy Son, had my tender heart even together with my mother's milk devoutly drunken in, and charily treasured up: so that what book soever was without that Name, though never so learned, politely and truly penned, did not altogether take my approbation. CHAP. IV

V

He sets lightly by the Holy Scriptures because of the simplicity of the style

I RESOLVED thereupon to bend my studies towards the Holy Scriptures, that I might see what they were. But behold, I espy something in them not revealed to the proud, not discovered unto children, humble in style, sublime in operation, and wholly veiled over in mysteries; and I was not so fitted at that time, as to pierce into the sense, or stoop my neck to its coming. For when I attentively read these Scriptures, I thought not then so of them, as I now speak; but they seemed to me far unworthy to be compared to the stateliness of the Ciceronian eloquence. For my swelling pride soared above the temper of their style, nor was my sharp wit able to pierce into their sense. And yet such are thy CHAP. V

Digitized by Google

CAP. V cum parvulis, sed ego dedignabar esse parvulus et turgidus fastu mihi grandis videbar.

VI

CAP. VI Itaque incidi in homines superbe delirantes, carnales nimis et loquaces, in quorum ore laquei diaboli, et viscum confectum conmixtione syllabarum nominis tui et domini Iesu Christi et paracleti consolatoris nostri spiritus sancti. haec nomina non recedebant de ore eorum, sed tenus sono et strepitu linguae; ceterum cor inane veri. et dicebant: "veritas et veritas," et multum eam dicebant mihi, et nusquam erat in eis, sed falsa loquebantur non de te tantum, qui vere veritas es, sed etiam de istis elementis mundi, creatura tua, de quibus etiam vera dicentes philosophos transgredi debui prae amore tuo, mi pater summe bone, pulchritudo pulchrorum omnium. o veritas, veritas, quam intime etiam tum medullae animi mei suspirabant tibi, cum te illi sonarent mihi frequenter et multipliciter, voce sola, et libris multis et ingentibus! et illa erant fercula, in quibus mihi esurienti te inferebatur sol et luna, pulchra opera tua, sed tamen opera tua, non tu, nec

Digitized by Google

Scriptures as grew up together with thy little ones. But I much disdained to be held a little one; and big swollen with pride, I took myself to be some great man. CHAP. V

VI

How he was ensnared by the Manichees

CHAP. VI

And even then I fell upon a sect of men proudly doting, too carnal and prating, in whose mouth were the very snares of the Devil, and a very bird-lime composed by the mixture of the syllables of thy Name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost the Comforter. All these names were never out of their mouth; so far forth as the sound only and the noise of the tongue; but their heart was void of true meaning. Yet they cried out Truth, and Truth, and often sounded the word to me, yet was the Truth itself nowhere to be found amongst them. But they spake falsehood, not of thee only (who truly art the Truth itself) but also of the elements of this world, thy creatures. Concerning which it had been my duty, O my supreme and good Father, thou Beauty of all things that are beautiful, to have passed by all the Philosophers though they spake most truly. O Truth, Truth, how inwardly did the very marrow of my soul pant after thee, whenas they often and divers ways, though but barely, sounded thy name to me, with their voice only, and in many books and huge volumes? And these were the dishes wherein to me, hunger-starven for thee, they served up the sun and moon. Beautiful works indeed of thine, but thy creatures notwithstanding, not thyself, no, nor thy first creatures

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI ipsa prima. priora enim spiritalia opera tua quam ista corporea quamvis lucida et caelestia.

At ego nec priora illa, sed te ipsam, veritas, in qua non est conmutatio nec momenti obumbratio, esuriebam et sitiebam. et apponebantur adhuc mihi in illis ferculis phantasmata splendida, quibus iam melius erat amare istum solem, saltem istis oculis verum, quam illa falsa animo decepto per oculos. et tamen, quia te putabam, manducabam, non avide quidem, quia nec sapiebas in ore meo sicuti es—neque enim tu eras illa figmenta inania—nec nutriebar eis, sed exhauriebar magis. cibus in somnis simillimus est cibis vigilantium, quo tamen dormientes non aluntur; dormiunt enim. at illa nec similia erant ullo modo tibi, sicut nunc mihi locuta es, quia illa erant corporalia phantasmata, falsa corpora, quibus certiora sunt vera corpora ista, quae videmus visu carneo, sive caelestia sive terrestria: cum pecudibus et volatilibus videmus, et certiora sunt, quam cum imaginamur ea. et rursus certius imaginamur ea quam ex eis suspicamur alia grandiora et infinita, quae omnino nulla sunt. qualibus ego tunc pascebar inanibus et non pascebar.

At tu, amor meus, in quem deficio, ut fortis sim, nec ista corpora es, quae videmus quamquam in caelo, nec ea, quae non videmus ibi, quia tu ista

Digitized by Google

neither. For thy spiritual works are before these corporeal works, celestial though they be and shining. CHAP. VI

But I hungered and thirsted not after those first works of thine, but after thee, even thee, O Truth, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Yet they still set before me in those dishes glorious phantasies, than which much better it were to love this sun, which is true to our sight at least, than those phantasies which by our eyes serve to deceive our mind. Yet because I thought them to be thee, I fell to and fed; not greedily though, for thou wert not savoury in my mouth, nor like thyself; for thou wast not those empty fictions: nor was I soundly nourished by them, but drawn dry rather. That food we dream of shows very like the food which we eat awake; yet are not those asleep nourished by it, for they are asleep. But those phantasies were not any way like to thee, as thou hast since spoken to me; for that those were corporeal phantasies only, false bodies, than which these true bodies both celestial and terrestrial which with our fleshly sight we behold, are far more certain. These things the very beasts and birds discern as well as we, and they are much more certain than any we can fancy of ourselves. And again, we do with more certsinty conceive the images of these, than by them entertain the least suspicion of any vaster or infinite bodies which have at all no being. Such empty husks as these was I fed with, yet not a whit nourished.

James i. 17

But thou, my Love, after whom I pine, that I may gather the more strength, art not these bodies which we see, though from heaven appearing: nor art thou those things which we see not there: for all those

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI condidisti nec in summis tuis conditionibus habes. quanto ergo longe es a phantasmatis illis meis, phantasmatis corporum, quae omnino non sunt! quibus certiores sunt phantasiae corporum eorum, quae sunt, et eis certiora corpora, quae tamen non es. sed nec anima es, quae vita est corporum—ideo melior vita corporum certiorque quam corpora—sed tu vita es animarum, vita vitarum, vivens te ipsa, et non mutaris, vita animae meae.

Vbi ergo mihi tunc eras et quam longe? et longe peregrinabar abs te, exclusus et a siliquis porcorum, quos de siliquis pascebam. quanto enim meliores grammaticorum et poetarum fabellae quam illa decipula! nam versus et carmen et Medea volans utiliores certe, quam quinque elementa, varie fucata propter quinque antra tenebrarum, quae omnino nulla sunt et occidunt credentem. nam versum et carmen etiam ad vera pulmenta transfero; volantem autem Medeam etsi cantabam, non asserebam, etsi cantari audiebam, non credebam: illa autem credidi. vae, vae! quibus gradibus deductus in profunda inferi, quippe laborans et aestuans inopia veri, cum te, deus meus—tibi confiteor, qui me miseratus es et nondum confitentem—cum te non secundum intellectum mentis, quo modo praestare voluisti beluis, sed secundum sensum carnis quaererem. tu autem

Digitized by Google

hast thou created; nor yet dost thou count them amongst the chiefest pieces of thy workmanship. How far then art thou from those fond phantasies of mine, the phantasies of those bodies which have at all no being! Than which the images of those bodies, which have real existence, are far more certain; and the bodies themselves are more certain than their own images: yet these bodies thou art not. No, nor yet art thou the soul, which is the life of those bodies; though better and more certain be the life of those bodies, than the bodies themselves are. But thou art the life of souls, the life of lives, yea the very living life itself; nor art thou altered, O life of my soul. CHAP. VI

Where therefore wert thou then, and how far from me? Very far verily had I straggled from thee, being even barred from the husks of those swine, whom with husks I was set to feed. How much better then are those fables of the poets and grammarians, than these fool-traps! For their verses, and poems, and Medea flying, are more profitable surely, than these men's Five Elements, oddly devised to answer the Five Dens of Darkness, which have at all no being, and which slay the believer. For verses and poems I can turn into true nourishment. But Medea flying, although I chanted sometimes, yet I maintained not the truth of; and though I heard it sung, I believed it not: but these phantasies I thoroughly believed. Alas, alas! by what steps was I brought to the very bottom of hell; whenas toiling and turmoiling myself through want of truth, I sought after thee my God, (to thee I now confess it, who hadst mercy on me when I had not yet confessed) not according to the understanding of the mind, wherein thou madest me to excel the beasts, but according to the sense of the flesh? But thou at

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI eras interior intimo meo et superior summo meo. offendi illam mulierem audacem, inopem prudentiae, aenigma Salomonis, sedentem super sellam in foribus et dicentem: panes occultos libenter edite et aquam dulcem furtivam bibite. quae me seduxit, quia invenit foris habitantem in oculo carnis meae, et talia ruminantem apud me, qualia per illum vorassem.

VII

CAP. VII Nesciebam enim aliud, vere quod est, et quasi acutule movebar, ut suffragarer stultis deceptoribus, cum a me quaereretur, unde malum est? et utrum forma corporea deus finiretur, et haberet capillos et ungues, et utrum iusti existimandi essent qui haberent uxores multas simul, et occiderent homines, et sacrificarent de animalibus. quibus rerum ignarus perturbabar, et recedens a veritate ire in eam mihi videbar, quia non noveram malum non esse nisi privationem boni usque ad quod omnino non est; quod unde viderem, cuius videre usque ad corpus erat oculis, et animo usque ad phantasma? non noveram deum esse spiritum, non cui membra essent per longum et latum nec cui esse moles esset, quia moles in parte minor est quam in toto suo, et

Digitized by Google

the same time wert more inward than my most inward part; and superior then, unto my supremest. I chanced upon that bold woman, who knoweth nothing, that subtilty in Solomon, sitting at the door of her house, and saying: Eat ye bread of secrecies willingly, and drink ye stolen waters which are sweet. She seduced me, because she found my soul without-doors, dwelling in the eye of my flesh, and chewing the end by myself, upon such baits as through her enticements I had devoured.

CHAP. VI

Compare Prov. vii. 10 with Prov. ix. 13-17

VII

The absurd doctrine of the Manichees

For I knew not that other, which truly is, and I was, as it were, in some subtle way persuaded to give my consent to those foolish deceivers when they put their questions to me: Whence comes evil? and whether God were made up in a bodily shape, and had hair and nails? and whether those were to be esteemed righteous men, who had many wives at once, and did kill men, and offered sacrifices of living creatures? At which things ignorant I was much troubled; and while I went quite from the truth, I seemed to myself to be making towards it: because I yet knew not how that evil was nothing else but a privation of good, next indeed to that which has no being. Which how should I come to see, whose sight pierced no further than to a body with mine eyes; and with my soul no deeper than to a mere phantasy? Nor did I know God to be a Spirit who hath not any parts extended in length and breadth, nor whose Being was to be a bulk; for that

CHAP. VII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII si infinita sit, minor est in aliqua parte certo spatio definita, quam per infinitum, et non est tota ubique sicut spiritus, sicut deus. et quid in nobis esset, secundum quod essemus, et quid in scriptura diceremur, ad imaginem dei, prorsus ignorabam.

Et non noveram iustitiam veram interiorem non ex consuetudine iudicantem, sed ex lege rectissima dei omnipotentis, qua formarentur mores regionum et dierum pro regionibus et diebus, cum ipsa ubique ac semper esset, non alibi alia nec alias aliter; secundum quam iusti essent Abraham et Isaac et Iacob et Moyses et David, et illi omnes laudati ore dei; sed eos ab imperitis iudicari iniquos, iudicantibus ex humano die et universos mores humani generis ex parte moris sui metientibus; tamquam si quis nescius in armamentis, quid cui membro adcommodatum sit, ocrea velit caput contegi et galea calciari, et murmuret, quod non apte conveniat; aut in uno die, indicto a pomeridianis horis iustitio, quisquam stomachetur non sibi concedi quod venale proponere, quia mane concessum est; aut in una domo videat aliquid tractari manibus a quoquam servo, quod facere non sinatur qui pocula ministrat; aut aliquid post praesepia fieri, quod ante mensam prohibeatur; et

Digitized by Google

every bulk is lesser in his part, than in his whole: and if it be infinite, it must needs be less in some part that is limited, than in his infinity; and cannot so be wholly everywhere, as a spirit is, as God is. And which part in us that should be, by which we were, and how rightly in the Scriptures we may be said to be made after the image of God, I was altogether ignorant. CHAP. VII

Nor did I know that true and inward righteousness, which judgeth not according to custom, but out of the most rightful Law of God Almighty, by which the fashions of several places and times were so disposed, as was fittest both for those times and places; itself in the mean time being the same always and everywhere; not another thing in another place, nor otherwise upon another occasion. According to which righteousness Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses were righteous, yea, and all those other commended by the mouth of God: but they were judged unrighteous by unskilful people judging out of human judgment, and measuring all mankind in general by the model of their own customs: just as if in armour, a man being ignorant what piece were appointed for what part, should clap a greave upon his head, and draw a headpiece upon his leg, and then murmur because they would not fit him: or as if upon some set day when the course of Justice is publicly forbidden in the afternoon, a shopkeeper should stomach at it that he may not have leave to sell his wares, because it was lawful for him to do it in the forenoon: or when in some house he observeth some servant to pass that kind of business through his hands, which the butler is not suffered to meddle withal; or some thing done behind the stable, which is forbidden in the dining-room: or as if he should

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII indignetur, cum sit unum habitaculum et una familia, non ubique atque omnibus idem tribui. sic sunt isti qui indignantur, cum audierint illo saeculo licuisse iustis aliquid, quod isto non licet iustis; et quia illis aliud praecepit deus, istis aliud pro temporalibus causis; cum eidem iustitiae utrique servierint: cum in uno homine et in uno die et in unis aedibus videant aliud alii membro congruere, et aliud iam dudum licuisse, post horam non licere, quiddam in illo angulo permitti aut iuberi, quod in isto iuxta vetetur et vindicetur. numquid iustitia varia est et mutabilis? sed tempora, quibus praesidet, non pariter eunt; tempora enim sunt. homines autem, quorum vita super terram brevis est, quia sensu non valent causas contexere saeculorum priorum aliarumque gentium, quas experti non sunt, cum his quas experti sunt, in uno autem corpore vel die vel domo facile possunt videre, quid cui membro, quibus momentis, quibus partibus personisve congruat, in illis offenduntur, hic serviunt.

Haec ego tunc nesciebam et non advertebam, et feriebant undique ista oculos meos, et non videbam. et cantabam carmina, et non mihi licebat ponere pedem quemlibet ubilibet, sed in alio atque alio metro aliter et in uno aliquo versu non omnibus

Digitized by Google

be angry, that where there is one dwelling-house, CHAP. VII
and one family, the same equality of distribution is not observed everywhere, and to all alike in it. Of the same humour be those who are fretted to hear something to have been lawful for righteous men in the former age, which is not so for righteous men now-a-days. And because God commanded them one thing then, and these another thing now for certain temporal respects; and yet those of both ages were servants to the same righteousness: whereas they may observe in one man, and in one day, and in one house, different things to be fit for different members, and one thing to be lawful now, which an hour hence is not so; and something to be permitted or commanded in one corner, which is forbidden and punished in another. Is Justice thereupon various or mutable? No; but the times rather, which justice governs, are not like one another; for they are times. But men now, whose life is but short upon the earth, for that in their own apprehensions they are not able to compare together the causes of those former ages, and of other nations, which they have had no experience of, with these which they have had experience of; and that in one and the same body, day or family, they may easily observe what is fitting for such a member and at what seasons, what parts and what persons: they take exception to those, but to these they are slaves.

These things I then knew not, nor did I mark them; and they on every side beat about mine eyes, yet did I not see them. I endited verses, in which I had not liberty to place every foot where I pleased, but in one metre in one place, and in another metre in another place: and not the selfsame foot in all

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII locis eundem pedem; et ars ipsa, qua canebam, non habebat aliud alibi, sed omnia simul. et non intuebar iustitiam, cui servirent boni et sancti homines, longe excellentius atque sublimius habere simul omnia quae praecipit, et nulla ex parte varie, tamen variis temporibus non omnia simul, sed propria distribuentem ac praecipientem. et reprehendebam caecus pios patres, non solum, sicut deus iuberet atque inspiraret, utentes praesentibus, verum quoque, sicut deus revelaret, futura praenuntiantes.

VIII

CAP. VIII Numquid aliquando aut alicubi iniustum est diligere deum ex toto corde et ex tota anima et ex tota mente, et diligere proximum tamquam te ipsum? itaque flagitia, quae sunt contra naturam, ubique ac semper detestanda atque punienda sunt, qualia Sodomitarum fuerunt. quae si omnes gentes facerent, eodem criminis reatu divina lege tenerentur, quae non sic fecit homines, ut hoc se uterentur modo. violatur quippe ipsa societas, quae cum deo nobis esse debet, cum eadem natura, cuius

Digitized by Google

places of the same verse neither: yea, and the very art of poetry itself, by which I endited, had not rules different in one place from those in another, but all in one. Nor did I then behold how that rule of righteousness, to which those good and holy men obeyed, did far more excellently and sublimely contain all its precepts in one; which though not varied from itself in any part, yet in different times, did not distribute or command all the same things at one time, but what was fit and proper for each time. Thus blind I reprehended those holy Fathers, not only for making use of the present things with that liberty which God both commanded and inspired them, but even also for foretelling things to come, which God had revealed unto them. CHAP. VII

VIII

Heinous offences what be, and how punished

CAN it at any time or place be an unjust thing for a man to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself? Therefore are those crimes which be against nature, to be everywhere and at all times both detested and punished; such as those of the men of Sodom were: which should all nations commit, they should stand all guilty of the same crime, by the Law of God, which hath not so made men, that they should this way use one another. For even that society which should be betwixt God and us, is then violated, when the same nature of which he is author, is polluted by the preposterousness of CHAP. VIII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII ille auctor est, libidinis perversitate polluitur. quae autem contra mores hominum sunt flagitia, pro morum diversitate vitanda sunt; ut pactum inter se civitatis aut gentis consuetudine vel lege firmatum nulla civis aut peregrini libidine violetur. turpis enim omnis pars universo suo non congruens.

Cum autem deus aliquid contra morem aut pactum quorumlibet iubet, etsi nunquam ibi factum est, faciendum est; et si omissum, instaurandum; et si institutum non erat, instituendum est. si enim regi licet in civitate, cui regnat, iubere aliquid, quod neque ante illum quisquam nec ipse umquam iusserat, et non contra societatem civitatis eius obtemperatur, immo contra societatem non obtemperatur—generale quippe pactum est societatis humanae oboedire regibus suis—quanto magis deus regnator universae creaturae, cui ad ea quae iusserit sine dubitatione serviendum est! sicut enim in potestatibus societatis humanae maior potestas minori ad oboediendum praeponitur, ita deus omnibus.

Item in facinoribus, ubi libido est nocendi, sive per contumeliam sive per iniuriam, et utrumque vel ulciscendi causa, sicut inimico inimicus, vel adipiscendi alicuius extra conmodi, sicut latro viatori, vel

Digitized by Google

lust. But those actions which are offences against the customs and public usages of people, are to be avoided, with respect had to the diversity of those several customs and usages; so that a thing agreed upon, and confirmed, either by the custom or law of a city or nation amongst themselves, may not be violated at the lawless pleasure of any, whether native or foreigner. For vile is every part that agrees not with its own whole. CHAP. VIII

But when God commands anything to be done, either against the customs or constitutions of any people whatsoever, though the like were never done heretofore, yet it is to be done now; and if ever it hath been intermitted before, it is to be restored now; and if it were never made a law before, it is to be made one now. For lawful if it be for a King in that city which he reigns over, to command that which never any Prince had before him, nor he himself ever heretofore, and that it cannot be held to be against the common good of the city that he is obeyed: nay it were against it if he were not obeyed: (for a general agreement of all human societies, is that their princes should be obeyed) how much more dutiful then ought we to be to God, who is Lord Paramount over all his creatures, and that without any sticking at all, at whatsoever he pleases to command us! For as amongst those powers appointed in human society, the greater authority is set over the lesser, to command obedience; so is God set over all.

In heinous offences also, where there arises a licentious will to hurt another, be it either by offering reproach or injury; and both of these either upon occasion of revenge, as in one enemy against another, or for the compassing of some piece of profit, not in his own power, as in the highway thief to the traveller; or

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII evitandi mali, sicut ei qui timetur, vel invidendo, sicut feliciori miserior aut in aliquo prosperatus ei, quem sibi aequari timet aut aequalem dolet, vel sola voluptate alieni mali, sicut spectatores gladiatorum aut inrisores aut inlusores quorumlibet. haec sunt capita iniquitatis, quae pullulant principandi et spectandi et sentiendi libidine, aut una aut duabus earum, aut simul omnibus, et vivitur male adversus tria et septem, psalterium decem chordarum, decalogum tuum, deus altissime et dulcissime. sed quae flagitia in te, qui non corrumperis? aut quae adversus te facinora, cui noceri non potest? sed hoc vindicas, quod in se homines perpetrant, quia etiam cum in te peccant, inpie faciunt in animas suas, et mentitur iniquitas sibi: sive corrumpendo ac pervertendo naturam suam, quam tu fecisti et ordinasti; vel inmoderate utendo concessis rebus vel in non concessa flagrando in eum usum, qui est contra naturam; aut rei tenentur, animo et verbis saevientes adversus te et adversus stimulum calcitrantes; aut cum diruptis limitibus humanae societatis, laetantur, audaces privatis conciliationibus aut diremptionibus, prout quidque delectaverit aut offenderit.

Et ea fiunt, cum tu derelinqueris, fons vitae, qui es unus et verus creator et rector universitatis, et privata

Digitized by Google

for the eschewing of some evil, as in him that is afraid of another; or in case of envying, as the miserable wretch against him in happier condition, or he that is well thriven in anything, fears him that is to grow up to him, or is grieved at him already in equal case with him; or for the pleasure alone at another man's mischance, as those that are spectators of the sword-players, or that deride or put tricks on others. These be the chief heads of iniquity which sprout forth from that lawless desire of bearing rule, of seeing, of feeling, or of any one or two of these, or of all three together. Thus we live offensively against three and seven, that psaltery of ten strings, thy Ten Commandments, O God, most High and most Sweet. But what foul offences can there be against thee, seeing thou canst not by them be corrupted? Or what high-handed transgressions can cross thee who canst not be harmed? But this it is that thou revengest, that namely which men commit against themselves, seeing also when they sin against thee, they do wickedly even against their own souls, and iniquity gives itself the lie: either by corrupting or perverting its own nature which thou hast created and ordained; or else by an immoderate use of those creatures appointed for them, or in burning in lust towards the use of what is not appointed, which is against nature; or they are held guilty, for raving with heart and tongue against thee, kicking thereby against the prick: or breaking open the pale of all human society, they rejoice themselves, bold in their privy societies and schisms, right as anything either delighteth or offendeth them.

CHAP. VIII

Ps. xxvii. 12

And these pranks are played whenever thou art forsaken, O Fountain of Life, which art the only and true Creator and Governor of the universe,

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII superbia diligitur in parte unum falsum. itaque pietate humili reditur in te: et purgas nos a consuetudine mala, et propitius es peccatis confitentium, et exaudis gemitus conpeditorum, et solvis a vinculis, quae nobis fecimus, si iam non erigamus adversus te cornua falsae libertatis, avaritia plus habendi et damno totum amittendi, amplius amando proprium nostrum quam te, omnium bonum.

IX

CAP. IX Sed inter flagitia et facinora et tam multas iniquitates sunt peccata proficientium, quae a bene iudicantibus et vituperantur ex regula perfectionis, et laudantur spe frugis sicut herba segetis. et sunt quaedam similia vel flagitio vel facinori et non sunt peccata, quia nec te offendunt, dominum deum nostrum, nec sociale consortium; cum conciliantur aliqua in usum vitae congrua, et tempori, et incertum est an libidine habendi; aut puniuntur corrigendi studio potestate ordinata, et incertum est an libidine

Digitized by Google

whenas out of a personal pride, a false unity is loved in a part. By an humble devoutness must we therefore return unto thee; and then thou purgest away our lewd customs, and provest favourable to their sins that confess unto thee, and thou hearest the groans of those that are enthralled by them, and thou loosest those fetters which we have made for our own selves; if so be we do not lift up against thee the horns of a feigned liberty, through a gripple-ness of having more, though with a danger of losing all; even by more strongly settling our love upon our own private commodity, than upon thee, the common Good of all. CHAP. VIII

IX

The difference that is betwixt Sins, and betwixt the Judgment of God and Men

But amongst vices and crimes and all those iniquities are the sins of learners; which by those that judge rightly, both are discommended, after the rule of perfection, and yet the persons commended withal, upon hope of better fruit, as is the green blade of the growing corn. And there are some again, that look like infamous or impudent crimes, which yet are no sins; even for that they neither offend thee, O Lord God, nor yet the bond of society; when, namely, provision is made of some things fitting for the times, and we cannot judge whether it be out of a lust of having; or when some actions be by ordinary authority punished, with a CHAP. IX

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX nocendi. multa itaque facta, quae hominibus inprobanda viderentur, testimonio tuo adprobata sunt, et multa laudata ab hominibus te teste damnantur, cum saepe se aliter habet species facti et aliter facientis animus atque articulus occulti temporis. cum vero aliquid tu repente inusitatum et inprovisum imperas, etiamsi hoc aliquando vetuisti, quamvis causam imperii tui pro tempore occultes, et quamvis contra pactum sit aliquorum hominum societatis, quis dubitet esse faciendum, quando ea iusta est societas hominum, quae servit tibi? sed beati qui te imperasse sciunt. fiunt enim omnia a servientibus tibi, vel ad exhibendum, quod ad praesens opus est, vel ad futura praenuntianda.

X

CAP. X Haec ego nesciens, inridebam illos sanctos servos et prophetas tuos. et quid agebam, cum inridebam eos, nisi ut inriderer abs te, sensim atque paulatim perductus ad eas nugas, ut crederem ficum plorare, cum decerpitur, et matrem eius arborem lacrimis

Digitized by Google

desire of correcting, and it is uncertain whether it were out of a desire of hurting. Many a fact therefore which seems worthily disallowed by men, is yet well approved of by thy testimony; and many a one by men praised, is, thou being witness, condemned: and all this, because the outside of the fact, and the mind of the doer, and the unknown secret of the crisis, are all different from one another. But when thou on the sudden commandest any unusual and unthought-of thing, yea, notwithstanding thou hast sometime heretofore forbidden this, although thou keepest secret for the time the reason of thy command; and notwithstanding it be against the ordinance of some society of men; who doubts but it is to be obeyed, seeing that society of men is a just society, which serves thee? But happy are they who know it was thou that gave the command. For all things are done by them that serve thee, either for the providing themselves of what is needful for the present, or for the foreshowing of something to come hereafter. CHAP. IX

X

He speaks again of the Fig-tree, and derides the Manichees' foolish conceits about it

I MYSELF being at that time ignorant of these things, derided heartily those holy servants and prophets of thine. And what gained I by scorning them, but that myself should in the mean time be scorned by thee, being sensibly and by little and little drawn on to these toys, as to believe that a fig wept when it was plucked, and the tree CHAP. X

Digitized by Google

CAP. X lacteis? quam tamen ficum si comedisset aliquis sanctus, alieno sane, non suo scelere decerptam, misceret visceribus, et anhelaret de illa angelos, immo vero particulas dei, gemendo in oratione atque ructando: quae particulae summi et veri dei ligatae fuissent in illo pomo, nisi electi sancti dente ac ventre solverentur. et credidi miser magis misericordiam praestandam fructibus terrae, quam hominibus, propter quos nascerentur. si quis vero esuriens peteret, qui Manichaeus non esset, quasi capitali supplicio damnanda buccella videretur, si ei daretur.

XI

CAP. XI Et misisti manum tuam ex alto, et de hac profunda caligine eruisti animam meam, cum pro me fleret ad te mea mater, fidelis tua, amplius quam flent matres corporea funera. videbat enim illa mortem meam ex fide et spiritu, quem habebat ex te, et exaudisti eam, domine. exaudisti eam nec despexisti lacrimas eius, cum profluentes rigarent terram sub oculis eius in omni loco orationis eius: exaudisti eam. nam unde illud somnium, quo eam consolatus es, ut vivere mecum cederet et habere mecum eandem mensam

Digitized by Google

the mother of it to shed milky tears? Which fig notwithstanding (so that it were plucked by some other man's sin,) had some Manichean saint eaten, he should digest in his guts, and breathe out of that fig, very angels: yea, in his prayer, groan and sigh out certain portions, forsooth, of the Deity: which portions of the most High and True God should remain bound in that fig, unless they had been set at liberty by the teeth or belly of some elect holy one. And I believed (wretch that I was) that more mercy was to be shewn to the fruits of the earth, than unto men for whose use they were created. For if any man, though an hungered, should have begged a bit, who were no Manichee, that morsel should seem fit to be condemned with capital punishment, should it have been given to him.

CHAP. X

The elect thus released the "light-elements" imprisoned in food

XI

His Mother's Dream

And thou stretchedst thine hand from on high, and drewest my soul out of that darksome deepness, wheuas my mother thy faithful one wept to thee for me, more bitterly than mothers use to do for the bodily deaths of their children. For she evidently saw that I was dead, by that faith and spirit which thou hadst given her, and thou heardest her, O Lord; thou heardest her, and despisedst not her tears, when flowing down they watered the very earth under her eyes in every place where she prayed; yea, thou heardest her. For whence else was that dream of hers, by which thou comfortedst her; after which she allowed me to live with her, and to eat at

CHAP. XI

Ps. lxxxv. 13

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI in domo? quod nolle coeperat, aversans et detestans blasphemias erroris mei. vidit enim se stantem in quadam regula lignea et venientem ad se iuvenem splendidum hilarem atque arridentem sibi, cum illa esset maerens et maerore confecta. qui cum causas ab ea quaesisset maestitiae suae cotidianarumque lacrimarum (docendi, ut adsolet, non discendi gratia), atque illa respondisset perditionem meam se plangere, iussisse illum, quo secura esset, atque admonuisse, ut adtenderet et videret, ubi esset illa, ibi esse et me. quod illa ubi adtendit, vidit me iuxta se in eadem regula stantem. unde hoc, nisi quia erant aures tuae ad cor eius, o tu bone omnipotens, qui sic curas unumquemque nostrum, tamquam solum cures, et sic omnes, tamquam singulos?

Vnde illud etiam, quod cum mihi narrasset ipsum visum, et ego ad id detrahere conarer, ut illa se potius non desperaret futuram esse quod eram, continuo sine aliqua haesitatione: "non" inquit; "non enim mihi dictum est: ubi ille, ibi et tu, sed: ubi tu, ibi et ille." confiteor tibi, domine, recordationem meam, quantum recolo, quod saepe non tacui, amplius me isto per matrem responso tuo, quod tam vicina interpretationis falsitate turbata non est, et tam cito vidit quod videndum fuit—quod ego certe, antequam dixisset, non videram—etiam tum fuisse commotum quam ipso somnio, quo feminae piae gaudium, tanto

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XI

the same table in house with her, which she already began to be unwilling to do, refusing and detesting the blasphemies of my error. For she saw, in her sleep, herself standing upon a wooden rule, and a very beautiful young man coming towards her, with a cheerful countenance and smiling upon her, herself being grieved and far gone with sorrowfulness. Which young man when he had demanded of her the causes of her sadness and daily weepings, (that he might teach, as they use to do, rather than learn) and she had answered that it was my perdition that she bewailed; he bade her rest contented, and wished her to observe diligently and behold, that where she herself was, there was I also. Who when she looked aside, she saw me standing by her upon the same rule. How should this chance now, but that thine ears were bent towards the requests of her heart, O thou Good Omnipotent, who hast such special care of every one of us, as if thou hadst care but of one alone; and so regardest all, as if but single persons!

Compare viii. 30: "stans in ea regula fidei"

How came this about also, that when she had told me this vision, and I would have interpreted it, that she should not despair of being one day what I was: she presently, without any sticking at, replies: "No," saith she, "it was not told me, thou art where he is; but where thou art, there he is"? I confess to thee O Lord, that to the best of my remembrance (which I have often spoken of) I was then the more moved at this thy answer by my mother, that she was not put out of conceit by the likelihood of my close interpretation, and that upon the very instant she apprehended what was to be seen by it, which I myself verily had not perceived before she spake: I was more moved, I say, at that, than with her dream itself; by which the joy of that holy woman

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI post futurum, ad consolationem tunc praesentis sollicitudinis tanto ante praedictum est. nam novem ferme anni secuti sunt, quibus ego in illo limo profundi ac tenebris falsitatis, cum saepe surgere conarer et gravius allidererer, volutatus sum; cum tamen illa vidua casta, pia et sobria, quales amas, iam quidem spe alacrior, sed fletu et gemitu non segnior, non desineret horis omnibus orationum suarum de me plangere ad te, et intrabant in conspectum tuum preces eius, et tamen dimittebas adhuc volvi et involvi illa caligine.

XII

CAP. XII Et dedisti alterum responsum interim, quod recolo. nam et multa praetereo, propter quod propero ad ea quae me magis urguent confiteri tibi, et multa non memini. dedisti ergo alterum per sacerdotem tuum, quendam episcopum nutritum in ecclesia et exercitatum in libris tuis. quem cum illa femina rogasset, ut dignaretur mecum conloqui, et refellere errores meos, et dedocere me mala ac docere bona—faciebat enim hoc, quos forte idoneos invenisset—noluit ille, prudenter sane, quantum sensi postea. respondit

Digitized by Google

to be fulfilled so long after, was, for the consolation CHAP. XI
of her present anguish, so long before foresignified. For nine full years passed after that, in all which I tumbled up and down in the mud of that deep pit, and the darkness of that false belief, and when I endeavoured to rise, the more violently was I flung down again. All which time that chaste, godly, and sober widow (such thou lovest) more cheered up with hope, though no whit slackened in weeping and mourning, failed not all hours of her set prayers to bewail my case before thee. And her prayers found entry then into thy sight, yet notwithstanding thou sufferedst me to be tumbled over and over in that darkness.

XII

The answer his Mother received from a Bishop, concerning his Conversion

CHAP. XII

And thou gavest her another answer in the mean time, which I now remember: and yet I pass over many a one, for that I make haste to those things which more press me to confess unto thee, and many have I also forgotten. Thou affordedst her another answer, therefore, by a certain priest of thine, a Bishop brought up in the Church, and well studied in thy Books. Whom when this woman had entreated that he would vouchsafe to have some conference with me, as well to unteach me what was false, as to instruct me in what was sound: (for this office he ever and anon did, as he found fit hearers): but he refused it, and in truth discreetly too, as I better afterwards perceived. For his answer was, that I was

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII enim me adhuc esse indocilem, et quod inflatus essem novitate haeresis illius, et nonnullis quaestiunculis iam multos inperitos exagitassem, sicut illa indicaverat ei. "sed" inquit "sine illum ibi. tantum roga pro eo dominum: ipse legendo reperiet, quis ille sit error et quanta inpietas."

Simul etiam narravit, se quoque parvulum a seducta matre sua datum fuisse Manichaeis, et omnes paene non legisse tantum verum etiam scriptitasse libros eorum, sibique adparuisse nullo contra disputante et convincente, quam esset illa secta fugienda: itaque fugisse. quae cum ille dixisset, atque illa nollet adquiescere, sed instaret magis deprecando et ubertim flendo, ut me videret et mecum dissereret, ille iam substomachans: "vade" inquit "a me; ita vivas, fieri non potest, ut filius istarum lacrimarum pereat." quod illa ita se accepisse inter conloquia sua mecum saepe recordabatur, ac si de caelo sonuisset.

Digitized by Google

yet unripe for instruction, for that I was yet puffed up with the new taken-in heresy, and that I had already troubled divers unskilful persons with spurring of questions to them, as she had already told him: "but let him alone a while," said he, "only pray to God for him: he will of himself by reading find his own mistake, and how great his impiety is." CHAP. XII

The Bishop then up and told her how himself when he was a little one had been by his seduced mother committed to the Manichees, and how he had not only read over almost all, but also copied out their books, and that it appeared to him, without the help of any man to dispute against or to convince it, how much that sect was to be avoided; and how of himself therefore he had forsaken it. Which words when he had spoken, and she would not yet be satisfied; but pressed more upon him, what with entreating, and what with weeping, that he would be pleased to see me, and to discourse with me; he, a little displeased at her tedious importunity, "Go thy ways," saith he, "and God bless thee, for it is not possible that the son of these tears should be lost." Which answer she then took (as she often remembered in our familiar discourse afterwards) as if an oracle had resounded from Heaven.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK IV

Digitized by Google

LIBER QVARTVS

I

CAP. I Per idem tempus annorum novem, ab undevicensimo anno aetatis meae usque ad duodetricensimum, seducebamur et seducebamus, falsi atque fallentes in variis cupiditatibus, et palam per doctrinas, quas liberales vocant, occulte autem falso nomine religionis, hic superbi, ibi superstitiosi, ubique vani: hac popularis gloriae sectantes inanitatem, usque ad theatricos plausus, et contentiosa carmina, et agonem coronarum faenearum, et spectaculorum nugas, et intemperantiam libidinum; illac autem purgari nos ab istis sordibus expetentes, cum eis, qui appellarentur electi et sancti, afferremus escas, de quibus nobis in officina aqualiculi sui fabricarent angelos et deos, per quos liberaremur. et sectabar ista atque faciebam cum amicis meis, per me ac mecum deceptis. inrideant me arrogantes, et nondum salubriter prostrati et elisi a te, deus meus, et ego tamen confitear tibi dedecora mea in laude tua. sine me, obsecro, et da mihi

Digitized by Google

THE FOURTH BOOK

I

How long, and what ways he seduced others

CHAP. I

FOR the space of nine years then (that is from the nineteenth year of mine age to the eight and twentieth) I was seduced myself, and others I seduced; deceived, and deceiving in divers lusts; and in public I did it by those arts which are called liberal, but in private I still pretended the assumed name of religion: here proud, there superstitious, everywhere vain; on the one hand hunting after the empty noise of popular reputation, even affecting those theatrical hummings and applause, and those contentious strifes of wit, and to gain the grassy garlands, and the vanity of the stage, and the intemperancy of ambition; on the other hand much desiring to purge myself from these corruptions by the help of those who were called elect and holy, I carried them certain chosen meats, out of which in the workhouse of their own paunches, they should See p. 137 forge certain angels and gods, by whom I was to be cleansed. These things did I then follow, and did them with my friends, who were deceived by me and with me. Let such deride me now, who are arrogant, and not yet savingly cast down nor broken in heart, by thee, O my God; but I for all this do here confess mine own shame to thee in thy praise. Suffer me, I beseech thee, and give megrace to run over in

Digitized by Google

CAP. I circuire praesenti memoria praeteritos circuitus erroris mei, et immolare tibi hostiam iubilationis. quid enim sum ego mihi sine te nisi dux in praeceps? aut quid sum, cum mihi bene est, nisi sugens lac tuum aut fruens te, cibo qui non corrumpitur? et quis homo est quilibet homo, cum sit homo? sed inrideant nos fortes et potentes, nos autem infirmi et inopes confiteamur tibi.

II

CAP. II DOCEBAM in illis annis artem rhetoricam, et victoriosam loquacitatem victus cupiditate vendebam. malebam tamen, domine, tu scis, bonos habere discipulos, sicut appellantur boni, et eos sine dolo docebam dolos, non quibus contra caput innocentis agerent, sed aliquando pro capite nocentis. et, deus, vidisti de longinquo lapsantem in lubrico, et in multo fumo scintillantem fidem meam, quam exhibebam in illo magisterio diligentibus vanitatem et quaerentibus mendacium, socius eorum. in illis annis unam habebam, non eo quod legitimum vocatur coniugio cognitam, sed quam indagaverat vagus ardor inops prudentiæ, sed unam tamen, ei quoque servans tori

Digitized by Google

my present remembrance the errors of my forepast time, and to offer up unto thee the sacrifice of rejoicing. For what am I without thee, but a guide to mine own downfall? Or what am I even at the best, but an infant sucking thy milk, and feeding upon thee, the Food incorruptible? But what kind of thing is any man, seeing that he is but a man? Let now the strong and the mighty laugh at me, but let us weak and needy souls ever confess unto thee.

CHAP. I

Ps. xvi. 17

John vi. 27

II

He teaches Rhetoric, and despiseth a Wizard who promised him the Victory

CHAP. II

I TAUGHT in those years the art of rhetoric, and myself being overcome with a desire of gain, made sale of a loquacity, to overcome others by. Yet I desired rather (Lord, thou knowest) to have honest scholars, as they are now-a-days accounted; and those, without all deceit, I taught how to deceive; not that they might plead against the life of any innocent person, though sometimes to save the life of the guilty. And thou O God, from afar perceivedst me falling in that slippery course, and in much smoke sparkling out some little faith, which I then made show of in that schoolmastership of mine to those that loved vanity and sought a lie, becoming their companion. In those days I kept a mistress, not joined to me in lawful marriage; but one found out by wandering lust, utterly void of understanding: yet had I but that one, towards whom I truly kept the promise of the bed; in whom I might by mine

Ps. iv. 2

Digitized by Google

CAP. II fidem; in qua sane experirer exemplo meo, quid distaret inter coniugalis placiti modum, quod foederatum esset generandi gratia, et pactum libidinosi amoris, ubi proles etiam contra votum nascitur, quamvis iam nata cogat se diligi.

Recolo etiam, cum mihi theatrici carminis certamen inire placuisset, mandasse mihi nescio quem haruspicem, quid ei dare vellem mercedis, ut vincerem, me autem foeda illa sacramenta detestatum et abominatum respondisse, nec si corona illa ita esset inmortaliter aurea, muscam pro victoria mea necari sinere. necaturus enim erat ille in sacrificiis suis animantia, et illis honoribus invitaturus mihi suffragatura daemonia videbatur. sed hoc quoque malum non ex tua castitate repudiavi, deus cordis mei. non enim amare te noveram, qui nisi fulgores corporeos cogitare non noveram. talibus enim figmentis suspirans anima nonne fornicatur abs te, et fidit in falsis, et pascit ventos? sed videlicet sacrificari pro me nollem daemonibus, quibus me illa superstitione ipse sacrificabam. quid est enim aliud ventos pascere quam ipsos pascere, hoc est errando eis esse voluptati atque derisui?

Digitized by Google

own example learn experience, what difference there would be betwixt the knot of the marriage covenant, mutually consented unto for the desire of children, and the bargain of a lustful love, where though children be against our wills begotten, yet being born, they even compel us to love them. CHAP. II

I remember once, that when I had a mind to put forth myself for the prize in a theatrical poem, I was demanded by I know not what wizard, what I would give him, to be assured to win the garland: but I detesting and abhorring such filthy rites, returned him answer; that though the garland were immortal and of gold, yet would I not suffer a fly to lose its life to gain me the better of it. For he was to kill certain living creatures in those his sacrifices, and by those honours to invite the devils to favour me. But this ill means also I refused not out of any chaste reservation towards thee, O God of my heart; for then I knew not how to love thee, who knew not how to think on anything but certain corporeal shinings. And does not the soul, panting after such fond fictions, commit fornication against thee, trust in false hopes, and feed the winds? But I would not, forsooth, that he should do sacrifice to the devils for me, and yet did I offer myself unto them, even by that my superstition. For, to feed the winds, what is it else but to feed them; that is, by our own errors to make ourselves the subjects of their pleasure and derision? Hos. xii. 1

Digitized by Google

III

CAP. III Itaque illos planos, quos mathematicos vocant, plane consulere non desistebam, quod quasi nullum eis esset sacrificium, et nullae preces ad aliquem spiritum ob divinationem dirigerentur. quod tamen Christiana et vera pietas consequenter repellit et damnat. bonum est enim confiteri tibi, domine, et dicere: Miserere mei, cura animam meam, quoniam peccavi tibi; neque ad licentiam peccandi abuti indulgentia tua, sed meminisse dominicae vocis: Ecce sanus factus es; iam noli peccare, ne quid tibi deterius contingat. quam totam illi salubritatem interficere conantur, cum dicunt: "de caelo tibi est inevitabilis causa peccandi" et "Venus hoc fecit aut Saturnus aut Mars," scilicet ut homo sine culpa sit, caro et sanguis et superba putredo, culpandus sit autem caeli ac siderum creator et ordinator. et quis est hic nisi deus noster, suavitas et origo iustitiae, qui reddes unicuique secundum opera eius et cor contritum et humiliatum non spernis?

Erat eo tempore vir sagax, medicinae artis peritissimus atque in ea nobilissimus, qui proconsul manu sua coronam illam agonisticam inposuerat non sano capiti meo, sed non ut medicus. nam illius morbi tu sanator, qui resistis superbis, humilibus autem das gratiam. numquid tamen etiam per illum senem defuisti mihi, aut destitisti mederi

Digitized by Google

III

Giving himself to Astrology, he is reclaimed by an ancient Physician

THOSE impostors therefore, whom they style astrologers, I verily did not forbear to consult with; and that because they used no sacrifice, nor directed their prayers to any Spirit to speed their divinations; and yet doth Christian and true piety consistently refuse and condemn that art. For it is a good thing to confess unto thee, and to say Have mercy upon me, heal my soul: for I have sinned against thee: and not to abuse thy kindness for a liberty of sinning, but to remember our Lord's warning Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. All which wholesome advice they endeavour to overthrow, that say, The cause of thy sin is inevitably determined in heaven; and that man, flesh and blood and proud corruption, be kept without sin, is of Venus' doing, forsooth; or Saturn or Mars procured it; meanwhile the Creator and Ruler of heaven and stars bears the blame of it. And who is he but our God, the very Sweetness and Well-spring of Righteousness, who shall render to every man according to his works: and a broken and contrite heart wilt thou not despise.

CHAP. III

Ps. xli. 4

John v. 14

Ps. li. 7

There was in those days a wise gentleman very skilful in physic, and famous for his art, who being at that time Proconsul, had with his own hand put the garland of contest upon my distempered head, but not as a physician: for this disease thou only curest, who resistest the proud, and givest grace to the humble. But didst thou fail even by that old physician, or forbarest to heal my soul? For

1 Pet. v. 5

Digitized by Google

CAP. III animae meae? quia enim factus ei eram familiarior, et eius sermonibus—erant enim sine verborum cultu vivacitate sententiarum iucundi et graves—adsiduus et fixus inhaerebam: ubi cognovit et ex conloquio meo libris genethliacorum esse me deditum, benigne ac paterne monuit, ut eos abicerem, neque curam et operam rebus utilibus necessariam illi vanitati frustra inpenderem; dicens ita se illa didicisse, ut eam professionem primis annis aetatis suae deferre voluisset, qua vitam degeret, et si Hippocraten intellexisset, et illas utique litteras potuisse intellegere: et tamen non ob aliam causam se postea illis relictis medicinam adsecutum, nisi eas falsissimas conperisset, et nollet vir gravis decipiendis hominibus victum quaerere. "at tu" inquit "quo te in hominibus sustentas, rhetoricam tenes, hanc autem fallaciam libero studio, non necessitate rei familiaris sectaris. quo magis mihi te oportet de illa credere, qui eam tam perfecte discere elaboravi, quam ex ea sola vivere volui." a quo ego cum quaesissem, quae causa ergo faceret, ut multa inde vera pronuntiarentur, respondit ille, ut potuit, vim sortis hoc facere, in rerum natura usquequaque diffusam. si enim de paginis poetae cuiuspiam, longe aliud canentis atque intendentis, cum forte quis consulit, mirabiliter consonus negotio saepe versus exiret, et mirandum non esse dicebat, si ex anima humana, superiore aliquo

Digitized by Google

I grew more acquainted with him, and I diligently and firmly depended upon his words: by the liveliness of the thoughts, his talk was both pleasant and grave, although without study of elegance. Who when he had gathered by my discourse, that I was given to study the books of the Nativity-casters, he courteously and fatherly advised me to cast them all away, and that I should not hereafter in vain bestow my care or diligence (which was necessary for useful things) upon that vain study: affirming withal, that himself had in his younger years studied that art with a purpose to get his living by it; hoping, if he had understood Hippocrates, he might well attain to understand that kind of learning also: yet that he had given it over, and wholly betaken himself to physic, for no other reason, but that he found it most deceitful; and he being a grave man, would not get his living by cheating of people. "But thou," saith he, "hast the profession of Rhetoric to maintain thyself by, whereas thou followest this delusion voluntarily, not driven to it by necessity: so much the more then oughtest thou to give me credit in this point, who laboured to attain to perfection in it, out of a purpose to get my living by it alone." Of whom when I had demanded, what the reason was then, why so many true things should be foretold by it? he answered me (as well as he could) that the force of chance diffused round about in the nature of things brought this about. For if when a man had by hap-hazard consulted the books of some poet, who sang of and intended clean another matter, the verses did oftentimes fall out wondrously agreeable to the present business: it were not then to be wondered at, saith he, if out of the soul of man, by some higher instinct, knowing nothing what is done

Digitized by Google

CAP. III instinctu, nesciente quid in se fieret, non arte sed sorte sonaret aliquid, quod interrogantis rebus factisque concineret.

Et hoc quidem ab illo vel per illum procurasti mihi, et quid ipse postea per me ipsum quaererem, in memoria mea deliniasti. tunc autem nec ipse nec carissimus Nebridius, adulescens valde bonus et valde castus, inridens totum illud divinationis genus, persuadere mihi potuerunt, ut haec abicerem, quoniam me amplius ipsorum auctorum movebat auctoritas, et nullum certum quale quaerebam documentum adhuc inveneram, quo mihi sine ambiguitate appareret, quae ab eis consultis vera dicerentur, forte vel sorte, non arte inspectorum siderum dici.

IV

CAP. IV In illis annis, quo primum tempore in municipio, quo natus sum, docere coeperam, conparaveram amicum societate studiorum nimis carum, coaevum mihi et conflorentem flore adulescentiae. mecum puer creverat et pariter in scholam ieramus pariterque luseramus. sed nondum erat sic amicus, quamquam ne tum quidem sic, uti est vera amicitia, quia non est

Digitized by Google

within itself, some answer should be given, which more by hap than any good cunning, should have agreement to the business and actions of the demander. CHAP. III

And thus much truly, either from or by him, thou then wroughtest for me, and then didst sketch in my memory, what of myself I should seek out afterwards. But yet at that time neither he, nor my most dear Nebridius, (a very good dispositioned young man, and a very chaste, who utterly derided that whole manner of divination) could persuade me to cast away those studies, even because the authority of the very authors overswayed more with me, and that I had not yet lit upon any demonstrative argument, such as I sought for, whereby it might clearly and without all doubtfulness appear, that what had been truly foretold by those masters of the science, were spoken by fortune or by chance, and not out of the sure art of the Stargazers.

IV

He relates the sickness and Baptism of his Friend, whom himself had affected with Heresy: he grievously laments his Death

In those years when I first of all began to teach rhetoric in the town where I was born, I had gained a very dear friend, upon the occasion of the nearness of our studies; one he was about mine own age, now springing up with me in the flower of youth. He had grown up of a child with me, and both schoolfellows and play-fellows we had been. But yet was he not so truly my friend, no not at that later time even, as true friendship should be indeed: for true it CHAP. IV

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV vera, nisi cum eam tu agglutinas inter haerentes sibi caritate diffusa in cordibus nostris per spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis. sed tamen dulcis erat nobis, cocta fervore parilium studiorum. nam et a fide vera, quam non germanitus et penitus adulescens tenebat, deflexeram eum in superstitiosas fabellas et perniciosas, propter quas me plangebat mater. mecum iam errabat in animo ille homo, et non poterat anima mea sine illo. et ecce tu inminens dorso fugitivorum tuorum, deus ultionum et fons misericordiarum simul, qui convertis nos ad te miris modis, ecce abstulisti hominem de hac vita, cum vix explevisset annum in amicitia mea, suavi mihi super omnes suavitates illius vitae meae.

Quis laudes tuas enumerat unus in se uno, quas expertus est? quid tunc fecisti, deus meus, et quam investigabilis abyssus iudiciorum tuorum? cum enim laboraret ille febribus, iacuit diu sine sensu in sudore laetali, et cum desperaretur, baptizatus est nesciens, me non curante, et praesumente id retinere potius animam eius quod a me acceperat, non quod in nescientis corpore fiebat. longe autem aliter erat. nam recreatus est et salvus factus, statimque, ut primo cum eo loqui potui—potui autem mox, ut ille potuit, quando non discedebam et nimis pendebamus ex invicem—temptavi apud illum inridere, tamquam et illo inrisuro mecum baptismum, quem acceperat mente

Digitized by Google

cannot be, unless thou solderest it betwixt such parties as cleave together, by that love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. But yet a very sweet friendship it was, being ripened by the heat of like studies. For, from the true faith, (which he being a youth was not soundly and thoroughly grounded in) I had rapt him, even towards those selfsame superstitious and pernicious fables, for which my mother bewailed my condition. With me now that man was wandering in error, nor could my soul be without him. But behold thou, ever at the back of thy runaways, the God of revenge, and fountain of mercies, both at the same time, who turnest us to thyself by most wonderful means, tookest that man out of this life, when he had scarce continued one whole year in my friendship, sweet to me above all sweetness of this life.

CHAP. IV

Ps. xciv. 1

What one man is able to recount all thy praises which he hath felt in himself alone? What was it thou then didst, my God, and how unsearchable is the bottomless depth of thy judgments? For whenas one day, sore sick of his fever, he lay senseless in a deadly sweat, and all despairing of his recovery, he was baptized, unwitting to himself; myself meanwhile little regarding, and presuming that his soul would have retained rather what it had learnt of me, and not what was now wrought in the body of him that knew nothing of it. But it fell out far otherwise; for he became refreshed, and recovered his health upon it. And as soon as ever I could come to speak with him (and I could, so soon as he could: for I had never yet gone from him, and we very nearly depended one upon another), I offered to scoff, as if he also would have scoffed with me for company, at that Baptism, which he, being most

Ps. cvi. 2

Ps. xxxvi. 6

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV atque sensu absentissimus. sed tamen iam se accepisse didicerat. at ille ita me exhorruit ut inimicum, admonuitque mirabili et repentina libertate, ut, si amicus esse vellem, talia sibi dicere desinerem. ego autem stupefactus atque turbatus, distuli omnes motus meos, ut convalesceret prius, essetque idoneus viribus valetudinis, cum quo agere possem quod vellem. sed ille abreptus dementiae meae, ut apud te servaretur consolationi meae, post paucos dies me absente repetitur febribus et defungitur.

Quo dolore contenebratum est cor meum, et quidquid aspiciebam mors erat. et erat mihi patria supplicium, et paterna domus mira infelicitas, et quidquid cum illo conmunicaveram, sine illo in cruciatum inmanem verterat. expetebant eum undique oculi mei, et non dabatur: et oderam omnia, quod non haberent eum, nec mihi iam dicere poterant: "ecce venit," sicut cum viveret,[1] quando absens erat. factus eram ipse mihi magna quaestio, et interrogabam animam meam, quare tristis esset et quare conturbaret me valde, et nihil noverat respondere mihi. et si dicebam: "spera in deum," iuste non obtemperabat, quia verior erat et melior homo, quem carissimum amiserat, quam phantasma, in quod sperare iubebatur. solus fletus erat dulcis mihi et successerat amico meo in deliciis animi mei.

[1] So MSS.; veniret, Knöll.

Digitized by Google

absent both in understanding and feeling, had lately received, and had now understood that he had received it. But he looked with a great indignation upon me, as I had been his mortal enemy; and with an admirable and sudden freedom of language, advised me, that if I purposed to continue his friend, I should forbear such talk to him. But I all astonished and amazed, put off the disclosing of my private commotions, till he should grow well again, and had recovered so much strength of health, that he were fit for me to deal with as I would. But he was taken away from my frenzy, that with thee he might be preserved for my future comfort; falling in my absence a few days after into a relapse of his fever, he died. CHAP. IV

At the grief of this, my heart was utterly over clouded; and whatsoever I cast mine eyes upon, looked like death unto me. Mine own country was a very prison to me, and my father's house a wonderful unhappiness; and whatsoever I had communicated in with him, wanting him turned to my most cruel torture. Mine eyes roved about everywhere for him, but they met not with him; and I hated all places for that they had not him; nor could they now tell me, Behold, he will come shortly, as when he was alive they did whenever he was absent. I became a great riddle to myself, and I often asked over my soul, why she was so sad, and why she afflicted me so sorely: but she knew not what to answer me. And if I said, "Put thy trust in God," very justly she did not obey me; because that most dear man whom she had lost, was both truer and better than that fantastical god she was bid to trust in. Only tears were sweet to me, for they had now succeeded in my friend's place, in the dearest of my affections.

Digitized by Google

V

CAP. V Et nunc, domine, iam illa transierunt, et tempore lenitum est vulnus meum. possumne audire abs te, qui veritas es, et admovere aurem cordis mei ori tuo, ut dicas mihi, cur fletus dulcis sit miseris? an tu, quamvis ubique adsis, longe abiecisti a te miseriam nostram? et tu in te manes, nos autem in experimentis volvimur: et tamen nisi ad aures tuas ploraremus, nihil residui de spe nostra fieret. unde igitur suavis fructus de amaritudine vitae carpitur gemere et flere et suspirare et conqueri? an hoc ibi dulce est, quod speramus exaudire te? recte istud in precibus, quia desiderium perveniendi habent. num in dolore amissae rei et luctu, quo tunc operiebar? neque enim sperabam revivescere illum aut hoc petebam lacrimis, sed tantum dolebam et flebam. miser enim eram et amiseram gaudium meum. an et fletus res amara est, et prae fastidio rerum, quibus prius fruebamur, et tunc, dum ab eis abhorremus, delectat?

Digitized by Google

V

Of Tears in our Prayers for, and Bewailing of, the Thing Beloved

CHAP. V

And now Lord, are these things well passed over, and time hath assuaged the anguish of my wound. May I learn this from thee who art Truth, and may I apply the ear of my heart unto thy mouth, that thou mayest tell me the reason, why weeping should be so sweet to people in misery? Hast thou (notwithstanding thou art present everywhere) cast away our misery far from thee? And thou remainest constant in thyself, but we are tumbled up and down in divers trials: and yet unless we should bewail ourselves in thine ears, there should no hope remain for us. How comes it then to pass, that such sweet fruit is gathered from the bitterness of life, namely to mourn, and weep, and sigh, and complain? Is it this that sweetens it, that we are in hope thou hearest us? This may rightly be thought of our prayers, because they have a desire to approach unto thee. But may it be so said too concerning that grief and mourning for the thing lost, with which I was then wholly overwhelmed? For I did not hope he should now revive again, nor did I pray for this with all my tears; but bemoan him only I did, and weep for him: seeing a wretch I was, and had utterly lost all my joy. Or is weeping a bitter thing, and yet out of a full-gorgedness of what we before enjoyed, and only while we are a loathing of them, can it be pleasing to us?

Digitized by Google

VI

CAP. VI Quid autem ista loquor? non enim tempus quaerendi nunc est, sed confitendi tibi. miser eram, et miser est omnis animus vinctus amicitia rerum mortalium, et dilaniatur, cum eas amittit, et tunc sentit miseriam, qua miser est et antequam amittat eas. sic ego eram illo tempore, et flebam amarissime et requiescebam in amaritudine. ita miser eram, et habebam cariorem illo amico meo vitam ipsam miseram. nam quamvis eam mutare vellem, nollem tamen amittere magis quam illum; et nescio an vellem vel pro illo, sicut de Oreste et Pylade traditur, si non fingitur, qui vellent pro invicem simul mori, quia morte peius eis erat non simul vivere. sed in me nescio quis affectus nimis huic contrarius ortus erat, et taedium vivendi erat in me gravissimum et moriendi metus. credo, quo magis illum amabam, hoc magis mortem, quae mihi eum abstulerat, tamquam atrocissimam inimicam oderam et timebam; et eam repente consumpturam omnes homines putabam, quia illum potuit. sic eram omnino, memini. ecce cor meum, deus meus, ecce intus; vide, quia memini, spes mea, qui me mundas a talium affectionum inmunditia,

Digitized by Google

VI

He tells with what great Affection he loved his Friend

BUT why speak I of these things? For 'tis no time to ask questions, but to confess unto thee. Wretched I was; and wretched is every soul that is bound fast in the friendship of mortal things; who becomes all to pieces when he forgoes them, and then first he becomes sensible of his misery, by which he is already miserable even before he forgoes them. This was my case at that time, I wept full bitterly, and yet was best at quiet in that bitterness. Thus was I wretched enough, and that wretched life I accounted more dear than my friend himself. For though I would gladly have changed it, yet more unwilling I was to lose that, than I had been to lose him; yea I know not whether I would have forgone that, even to have enjoyed him. Like as the tradition (if it be not a fiction) goes of Pylades and Orestes, who would gladly have died one for another, both together, it being to them worse than death not to live together. But a strange kind of affection prevailed with me which was clean contrary to theirs, for both grievously tedious to me it was to live, and yet fearful was I to die. I suppose that how much the more affectionately I loved him, so much the more did I both hate and fear (as my cruellest enemy) death, which had bereaved me of him: and I imagined it would speedily make an end of all other men, because it had the power to do of him. Even thus I remember, stood I then affected. Behold my heart, O my God, yea, search it throughly; search it because I remember it well, O my Hope, who cleanest me from the impurity of such

CHAP. VI

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI dirigens oculos meos ad te, et evellens de laqueo pedes meos. mirabar enim ceteros mortales vivere, quia ille, quem quasi non moriturum dilexeram, mortuus erat; et me magis, quia ille alter eram, vivere illo mortuo mirabar. bene quidam dixit de amico suo: dimidium animae suae. nam ego sensi animam meam et animam illius unam fuisse animam in duobus corporibus, et ideo mihi horrori erat vita, quia nolebam dimidius vivere; et ideo forte mori metuebam, ne totus ille moreretur, quem multum amaveram.

VII

CAP. VII O DEMENTIAM nescientem diligere homines humaniter! o stultum hominem inmoderate humana patientem! quod ego tunc eram. itaque aestuabam, suspirabam, flebam, turbabar, nec requies erat nec consilium. portabam enim concisam et cruentam animam meam, inpatientem portari a me; et ubi eam ponerem non inveniebam. non in amoenis nemoribus, non in ludis atque cantibus, nec in suave olentibus locis, nec in conviviis apparatis, nec in voluptate cubilis et lecti, non denique in libris atque carminibus adquiescebat. horrebant omnia et ipsa

Digitized by Google

affections, directing mine eyes towards thee, and plucking my feet out of the snare. For I much admired that other mortals did live, since he whom I so loved, as if he never should have died, was now dead: yea, I more admired that myself who was to him a second self, should be able to live after him. Well said one of his friend, Thou half of my soul: for I still thought my soul and his soul to have been but one soul in two bodies: and therefore was my life a very horror to me, because I would not live by halves. And even therefore perchance was I afraid to die, lest he should wholly die, whom so passionately I had loved.

CHAP. VI

Hor. Odes, i. 3, 8

Rhetoric!

VII

The impatientness of grief constrains us to shift our dwellings

O Madness, which knowest not how to love men, as men should be loved! O foolish man, which so impatiently endurest the chances Mortality is subject unto! Thus mad and foolish was I at that time. Therefore I stormed, and puffed, and cried, and tumbled, being capable neither of rest nor counsel. For I was fain to carry my shattered and blood-blubbered soul, which yet had not patience enough to be carried by me; yet a place where to dispose of it, I could not light upon. Not in the delightful groves, not where mirth and music was, nor in the odoriferous gardens, nor in curious banquetings, nor in the pleasures of the bed and chambering; nor, finally, in reading over either verse or prose, took it any contentment. Everything was offensive, yea,

CHAP. VII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII lux, et quidquid non erat quod ille erat, inprobum et taediosum erat, praeter gemitum et lacrimas: nam in eis solis aliquantula requies. ubi autem inde auferebatur anima mea, onerabat me grandis sarcina miseriae, ad te, domine, levanda erat et curanda, sciebam, sed nec volebam nec valebam, eo magis, quod mihi non eras aliquid solidum et firmum, cum de te cogitabam. non enim tu eras, sed vanum phantasma et error meus erat deus meus. si conabar eam ibi ponere, ut requiesceret, per inane labebatur et iterum ruebat super me; et ego mihi remanseram infelix locus, ubi nec esse possem nec inde recedere. quo enim cor meum fugeret a corde meo? quo a me ipso fugerem? quo non me sequerer? et tamen fugi de patria. minus enim eum quaerebant oculi mei, ubi videre non solebant: atque a Thagastensi oppido veni Carthaginem.

VIII

CAP. VIII NON vacant tempora, nec otiose volvuntur per sensus nostros: faciunt in animo mira opera. ecce veniebant et praeteribant de die in diem; et veniendo et praetereundo, inserebant mihi spes alias et alias memorias, et paulatim resarciebant me pristinis

Digitized by Google

the very light itself; and whatsoever were not he, CHAP. VII
was alike painful and hateful to me, except groaning and weeping. For only in those found I a little refreshment. But so soon as I had retired my soul Ps. xxv. 1
from these, a huge misery overloaded me, which thou only couldst ease and lighten, O Lord. I knew thus much, and yet indeed I would not, nor was I able; the more so, for that thou wert not any solid or substantial thing unto me, when in those days I thought upon thee. For not thou thyself, but mine own idle fantasy and error were then my God. If I offered to discharge my burden upon that, to give it some easement, it fell as it were through the empty air, and came tumbling again upon me: whereupon I remained so unfortunate a place to myself, as there I could neither stay, nor get away from it. For whither should my heart fly from my heart? Whither was it possible to fly from mine own self? Whither should I not have followed myself? And yet after all this, out of my country I fled: for so should mine eyes less look for him there, where they were not wont to see him. And thus I left the town of Thagaste, and came to Carthage.

VIII

Time cures Sorrow

TIMES lose no time: nor do they idly go and return CHAP. VIII
about these senses of ours; but they cause strange operations in our minds. Behold, they went and came day by day, and by going and coming to and again, they brought into my mind other notions, and other remembrances, and by little and little pieced me up

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII generibus delectationum, quibus cedebat dolor meus ille; sed succedebant non quidem dolores alii, causae tamen aliorum dolorum. nam unde me facillime et in intima dolor ille penetraverat, nisi quia fuderam in harenam animam meam, diligendo moriturum ac si non moriturum? maxime quippe me reparabant atque recreabant aliorum amicorum solacia, cum quibus amabam quod postea amabam; et hoc erat ingens fabula et longum mendacium, cuius adulterina confricatione corrumpebatur mens nostra, pruriens in auribus.

Sed illa mihi fabula non moriebatur, si quis amicorum meorum moreretur. alia erant, quae in eis amplius capiebant animum, conloqui et conridere, et vicissim benivole obsequi; simul legere libros dulciloquos, simul nugari et simul honestari; dissentire interdum sine odio, tamquam ipse homo secum, atque ipsa rarissima dissensione condire consensiones plurimas; docere aliquid invicem aut discere ab invicem, desiderare absentes cum molestia, suscipere venientes cum laetitia: his atque huius modi signis, a corde amantium et redamantium procedentibus, per os, per linguam, per oculos, et mille motus gratissimos, quasi fomitibus flagrare animos et ex pluribus unum facere.

Digitized by Google

again with my old kind of delights, unto which my present sorrow gave some way. And to that again there succeeded, though not other griefs, yet the causes of other griefs. For how came that former grief so easily and so deeply to make impression in me, but even from hence, that I had spilt my soul upon the sand, in loving a man that must die, as if he never had been to die? For the comfortings of other friends did mostly repair and refresh me, with whom I did love, what afterwards I did love: and this was a great fable, and a long lie; by the impure tickling whereof, my soul, which lay itching in my ears, was wholly corrupted. CHAP. VIII

But that fable would not yet die with me, so oft as any of my friends died. They were other things which in their company did more fully take my mind; namely, to discourse, and to laugh with them, and to do obsequious offices of courtesy one to another; to read pretty books together; sometimes to be in jest, and other whiles seriously earnest to one another; sometimes so to dissent without discontent, as a man would do with his own self, and even with the seldomness of those dissentings, season our more frequent consentings; sometimes would we teach, and sometimes learn one of another; wish for the company of the absent with impatience, and welcome home the newcomers with joyfulness. With these and the like expressions, proceeding out of the hearts of those that loved and repaired one another's affections, by the countenance, by the tongue, by the eyes, and by a thousand other most pleasing motions, did we set our souls ablaze, and make but one out of many.

Digitized by Google

IX

CAP. IX Hoc est, quod diligitur in amicis; et sic diligitur, ut rea sibi sit humana conscientia, si non amaverit redamantem aut si amantem non redamaverit, nihil quaerens ex eius corpore praeter indicia benivolentiae. hinc ille luctus, si quis moriatur, et tenebrae dolorum, et versa dulcedine in amaritudinem cor madidum, et ex amissa vita morientium mors viventium. beatus qui amat te, et amicum in te, et inimicum propter te. solus enim nullum carum amittit, cui omnes in illo cari, qui non amittitur. et quis est iste nisi deus noster, deus, qui fecit caelum et terram et inplet ea, quia inplendo ea fecit ea? te nemo amittit, nisi qui dimittit, et quia dimittit, quo it aut quo fugit nisi a te placido ad te iratum? nam ubi non invenit legem tuam in poena sua? et lex tua veritas et veritas tu.

X

CAP. X Deus virtutum, converte nos et ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus. nam quoquoversum se verterit anima

Digitized by Google

IX

The comparing of Human Friendship with Divine

THIS it is now which a man loves in his friends; and so loves it, that he must in conscience confess himself guilty if he should not love him that loves him again, or not love that man again that loves him first, expecting no other thing from him besides the pure demonstration of his love. Hence is that mourning whenever a friend dies, yea, those overcastings of sorrows, that steeping of the heart in tears, all sweetness utterly turned into bitterness: hence too upon the loss of the life of the dying, comes the death of the living. But blessed is the man that loves thee, and his friend in thee, and his enemy for thee. For he alone loses none that is dear unto him, to whom all are dear, in him that can never be lost. And who is this but our God, the God that made heaven and earth, and who filleth them, because in filling them he created them? Thee, no man loses, but he that lets thee go. And he that lets thee go, whither goes he, or whither runs he, but from thee well pleased, back to thee offended? For where shall not such a one find thy Law fulfilled in his own punishment? And thy Law is truth, and Truth is thyself. John xiv. 6

CHAP. IX

X

All Beauty is from God, who is to be prayed for all

TURN us, O God of Hosts, show us the light of thy countenance and we shall be whole. For which way soever the soul of man turns itself, unless towards

CHAP. X

Ps. lxxix. 4

Digitized by Google

CAP. X hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi praeterquam in te, tametsi figitur in pulchris extra te et extra se. quae tamen nulla essent, nisi essent abs te. quae oriuntur et occidunt, et oriendo quasi esse incipiunt, et crescunt, ut perficiantur, et perfecta senescunt et intereunt: et non omnia senescunt et omnia intereunt. ergo cum oriuntur et tendunt esse, quo magis celeriter crescunt, ut sint, eo magis festinant, ut non sint. sic est modus eorum. tantum dedisti eis, quia partes sunt rerum, quae non sunt omnes simul, sed decedendo ac succedendo agunt omnes universum, cuius partes sunt. ecce sic peragitur et sermo noster per signa sonantia. non enim erit totus sermo, si unum verbum non decedat, cum sonuerit partes suas, ut succedat aliud. laudet te ex illis anima mea, deus, creator omnium, sed non eis infigatur glutine amore per sensus corporis. eunt enim quo ibant, ut non sint, et conscindunt eam desideriis pestilentiosis, quoniam ipsa esse vult et requiescere amat in eis, quae amat. in illis autem non est ubi, quia non stant: fugiunt, et quis ea sequitur sensu carnis? aut quis ea conprehendit, vel cum praesto sunt?

Tardus est enim sensus carnis, quoniam sensus carnis est: ipse est modus eius. sufficit ad aliud,

Digitized by Google

thee, it is even rivetted into dolours: yea, though it settles itself upon beautiful objects without thee, and without itself: which beauties were no beauties at all, unless they were from thee. They rise, and set; and by rising, they begin to have being; they grow up, that they may attain perfection; which having attained, they wax old and wither: though all grow not old, yet all must wither. Therefore when they spring up and tend towards a being, look how much more haste they make to be, so much the more they make not to be. This is the law of them. Thus much hast thou given to them, because they are parcels of things which are not extant all at one time, but which by going and coming do altogether make up the whole universe, whereof they are the parcels. Lo, even thus is our speech delivered by sounds significant: for it will never be a perfect sentence, unless one word gives way when it hath sounded his part, that another may succeed it. And by them let my soul praise thee, O God, Creator of all things; but yet let not my soul be fastened unto these things with the glue of love through the senses of my body. For these things go whither they were to go, that they might no longer be; and they cleave the soul in sunder with most pestilent desires: even because the soul earnestly desires to be one with them, and loves finally to rest in these things which she loves. But in those things she finds not settlement, which are still fleeing, because they stand not: they flee away; and who is he that can follow them with the senses of his flesh; yea, who is able to overtake them, when they are hard by him?

For the sense of our flesh is slow, even because it is the sense of our flesh: and itself is its own measure.

Digitized by Google

CAP. X ad quod factus est; ad illud autem non sufficit, ut teneat transcurrentia ab initio debito usque ad finem debitum. in verbo enim tuo, per quod creantur, ibi audiunt: "hinc et huc usque."

XI

CAP. XI Noli esse vana, anima mea, et obsurdescere in aure cordis tumultu vanitatis tuae. audi et tu: verbum ipsum clamat, ut redeas, et ibi est locus quietis inperturbabilis, ubi non deseritur amor, si ipse non deserat. ecce illa discedunt, ut alia succedant, et omnibus suis partibus constet infima universitas. "numquid ego aliquo discedo?" ait verbum dei. ibi fige mansionem tuam, ibi commenda quidquid inde habes, anima mea, saltem fatigata fallaciis. veritati commenda quidquid tibi est a veritate, et non perdes aliquid; et reflorescent putria tua, et sanabuntur omnes languores tui, et fluxa tua reformabuntur et renovabuntur et constringentur ad te; et non te deponent, quo descendunt, sed stabunt tecum et permanebunt ad semper stantem ac permanentem deum.

Vt quid perversa sequeris carnem tuam? ipsa te sequatur conversam. quidquid per illam sentis, in

Digitized by Google

Sufficient enough it is for the end it is made for; but it is not sufficient for this, namely, to hold at a stay things running of course from their appointed starting place to their appointed end. For in thy Word by which they are created, they hear this signal: "Hence, and thus far." CHAP. X

XI

All things are created mutable in themselves, and immutable in God

Be not foolish, O my Soul, and make not the ear of thine heart deaf, with the tumult of thy folly. But hearken now: the Word itself calls thee to return: and there is the place of quiet not to be disturbed, where thy love can never be forsaken, if itself forsake not. Behold, these things give way that other things may come in their places, that so this lowest whole may have all his parts. "But do I ever depart?" saith the Word of God. There set up thy dwelling, trust there whatsoever thou hast thence, O my Soul, at length tired out with these uncertainties. Recommend over unto truth, whatsoever thou hast left of truth; and thou shalt lose nothing by the bargain; yea, thy decays shall reflourish again, and all thy languishments shall be recovered; thy fadings shall be refreshed, shall be renewed, and shall be made to continue with thee: nor shall they put thee down to the place whither themselves descend; but they shall stay with thee and stand fast for ever before that God, who himself stays and stands fast for ever. CHAP XI

Why now, my perverse soul, wilt thou be still following thine own flesh? Let that rather follow thee now

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI parte est et ignoras totum, cuius hae partes sunt, et delectant te tamen. sed si ad totum conprehendendum esset idoneus sensus carnis tuae, ac non et ipse in parte universi accepisset pro tua poena iustum modum, velles, ut transiret quidquid existit in praesentia, ut magis tibi omnia placerent. nam et quod loquimur, per eundem sensum carnis audis, et non vis utique stare syllabas, sed transvolare, ut aliae veniant et totum audias. ita semper omnia, quibus unum aliquid constat, et non sunt omnia simul ea, quibus constat: plus delectant omnia quam singula, si possint sentiri omnia. sed longe his melior qui fecit omnia, et ipse est deus noster, et non discedit, quia nec succeditur ei.

XII

CAP. XII Si placent corpora, deum ex illis lauda, et in artificem eorum retorque amorem, ne in his, quae tibi placent, tu displiceas. si placent animae, in deo amentur, quia et ipsae mutabiles sunt et illo fixae stabiliuntur: alioquin irent et perirent. in illo ergo amentur, et rape ad eum tecum quas potes, et dic

Digitized by Google

thou hast turned. Whatever by her thou hast sense of, is but in part: and the whole whereof these are parts, thou knowest not; and yet this little contents thee. But had the sense of thy flesh been capable of comprehending the whole, and not for thy punishment been stinted to a part of the whole; thou wouldst have then desired that whatsoever hath existence at this present should pass away, that so the whole might better have pleased thee altogether. For what we speak, by the same sense of the flesh thou hearest, and yet wouldst not thou have the same syllables sound ever, but fly away, that others may come on, and thou mayest hear the whole sentence. Thus are all these things ever in being, which have still any one part of theirs in being, and yet all those parts which go to the making up of that whole being, are never all together in present being. All together surely must needs delight more fully, than parts single, if the pleasure of all could be felt all at once. But far better than these all, is he that made all; and he is our God: nor does he depart away, for that he hath no successor. CHAP. XI

XII

Love of the Creatures is not forbidden, provided that in those which please us, God be loved

If bodies then please thee, praise God for them, and turn thy love upon him that made them; lest otherwise in those things which please thee, thou displease him. If souls please, let them be loved in God: for they are mutable, but in him are they firmly established, or else would they pass and perish. In him therefore let them be beloved; and draw CHAP. XII

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII eis: "hunc amemus: ipse fecit haec et non est longe." non enim fecit atque abiit, sed ex illo in illo sunt. ecce ubi est, ubi sapit veritas: intimus cordi est, sed cor erravit ab eo. redite, praevaricatores, ad cor, et inhaerete illi, qui fecit vos. state cum eo et stabitis, requiescite in eo et quieti eritis. quo itis in aspera? quo itis? bonum, quod amatis, ab illo est: sed quantum est ad illum, bonum est et suave; sed amarum erit iuste, quia iniuste amatur deserto illo quidquid ab illo est. quo vobis adhuc et adhuc ambulare vias difficiles et laboriosas? non est requies, ubi quaeritis eam. quaerite quod quaeritis, sed ibi non est, ubi quaeritis. beatam vitam quaeritis in regione mortis: non est illic. quomodo enim beata vita, ubi nec vita?

Et descendit huc ipsa vita nostra et tulit mortem nostram, et occidit eam de abundantia vitae suae, et tonuit clamans, ut redeamus hinc ad eum in illud secretum, unde processit ad nos in ipsum primum virginalem uterum, ubi ei nupsit humana creatura, caro mortalis, ne semper mortalis; et inde velut sponsus procedens de thalamo suo exultavit ut gigans ad currendam viam. non enim tardavit, sed cucurrit clamans dictis, factis, morte, vita, descensu, ascensu, clamans, ut redeamus ad eum. et discessit ab oculis, ut redeamus

Digitized by Google

unto him along with thee as many souls as thou canst, CHAP. XII
and say to them: Him let us love, let us love him. He made all these, nor is he far from them. For he did not once make them, and then get him gone: but of him, and in him they are. See where he is, even wherever is a flavour of truth. He is within the very heart, but yet hath the heart strayed from him. Turn again to your own heart, O ye trans- Is. xlvi. 8
gressors, and cleave fast unto him that made you. Stand with him, and ye shall stand safely: rest yourselves in him, and ye shall rest safely. Whither go you in these craggy passages? Oh whither go you? The good that you love, is from him; and in respect of him 'tis both good and pleasant. But it shall justly be turned to bitterness, because whatsoever is from him is unjustly loved, if he be forsaken for it. Whither now wander ye further and further over these difficult and troublesome passages? There is no rest to be found where you seek it. Seek what you do seek, but yet 'tis not there where you are seeking for it. You seek a blessed life in the land of death; 'tis not there: for how should there be a happy life, where there is at all no life?

But our life descended hither, and took away our death, and killed him, out of the abundance of his own life: and he thundered, calling unto us to return hence to him into that secret place, from whence he came forth to us; coming first into the Virgin's womb, whence the humanity was married unto him, (even our mortal flesh, though not ever to be mortal) Ps. xviii. 6
and thence came he like a bridegroom out of his chamber, rejoicing as a giant to run his course. For he forslowed not, but he ran, crying both in words, deeds, death, descent, and ascension; still crying to us to return unto him. And he withdrew himself

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII ad cor et inveniamus eum. abscessit enim et ecce hic est. noluit nobiscum diu esse et non reliquit nos. illuc enim abscessit, unde numquam recessit, quia mundus per eum factus est, et in hoc mundo erat, et venit in hunc mundum peccatores salvos facere. cui confitetur anima mea, et sanat eam, quoniam peccavit illi. fili hominum, quo usque graves corde? numquid et post descensum vitae non vultis ascendere et vivere? sed quo ascenditis, quando in alto estis et posuistis in caelo os vestrum? descendite, ut ascendatis, et ascendatis ad deum. cecidistis enim ascendendo contra deum. dic eis ista, ut plorent in convalle plorationis, et sic eos rape tecum ad deum, quia de spiritu eius haec dicis eis, si dicis ardens igne caritatis.

XIII

CAP. XIII Haec tunc non noveram, et amabam pulchra inferiora, et ibam in profundum et dicebam amicis meis: "num amamus aliquid nisi pulchrum? quid est ergo pulchrum? et quid est pulchritudo? quid est quod nos allicit et conciliat rebus, quas amamus? nisi enim esset in eis decus et species, nullo modo nos ad

Digitized by Google

from our eyes, that we might return to our own heart, and there find him. He withdrew himself, and behold he is still here. He would not tarry long with us, yet hath he not utterly left us; for thither he is gone, from whence he never parted, because the world was made by him. And in this world he was, and into this world he came to save sinners, unto whom my soul now confesseth, and he heals it, for it hath sinned against him. O ye sons of men, how long will ye be slow of heart? Will ye not now after that life is descended down to you, will not you ascend up to it and live? But whither ascend you since you are on high, and have lifted up your head into heaven? Descend again, that you may ascend, and ascend to God. For fallen you are, by ascending against God. Tell the souls whom thou lovest, thus; that they may weep in this valley of tears; and so carry them up with thee unto God, because by his Spirit thou speakest thus unto them, if speak thou dost burning with the fire of charity. CHAP. XII

XIII

Love, whence it comes

THESE things I as then knew not, and I fell in love with these inferior beauties, and I was sinking even to the very bottom; and unto my friends I said: Do we love anything that is not beautiful? Then what is fair, and what is beauty? What is it that inveigles us thus, and that draws our affections to the things we love? For unless there were a gracefulness and a beauty in them, they could by no means draw us CHAP XIII

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIII se moverent." et animadvertebam, et videbam in ipsis corporibus aliud esse quasi totum et ideo pulchrum, aliud autem, quod ideo deceret, quoniam apte accommodaretur alicui, sicut pars corporis ad universum suum aut calciamentum ad pedem et similia. et ista consideratio scaturriit in animo meo ex intimo corde meo, et scripsi libros "de pulchro et apto," puto, duos aut tres; tu scis, deus: nam excidit mihi. non enim habemus eos, sed aberraverunt a nobis nescio quomodo.

XIV

CAP. XIV QUID est autem, quod me movit, domine deus meus, ut ad Hierium, Romanae urbis oratorem, scriberem illos libros? quem non noveram facie, sed amaveram hominem ex doctrinae fama, quae illi clara erat, et quaedam verba eius audieram, et placuerant mihi. sed magis, quia placebat aliis et eum efferebant laudibus stupentes, quod ex homine Syro, docto prius graecae facundiae, post in latina etiam dictor mirabilis extitisset, et esset scientissimus rerum ad studium sapientiae pertinentium, mihi placebat. laudabatur homo et amabatur absens. utrumnam ab ore laudantis intrat in cor audientis amor ille? absit; sed ex amante alio accenditur alius. hinc enim amatur

Digitized by Google

unto them. And I marked narrowly and perceived that in the bodies themselves there was one thing as it were the whole, which in that respect was beautiful, and another thing that was therefore becoming, because it was aptly fitted to some thing, as some part of the body, in respect of the whole body, or a shoe in respect of the foot, and the like. And this consideration sprang up in my mind even out of the innermost of my heart, and I composed certain books on the Beautiful and the Fitting, two or three as I think. Thou knowest it, O Lord, for 'tis out of my memory. For I have them not now by me, but lost they are, and I know not how. CHAP. XIII

XIV

Of his Book of Fair and Fit

WHAT was the cause, O Lord my God, that moved me to dedicate unto Hierius an Orator of Rome, these books of mine? whom as then I so much as knew not by face, but upon love to the man merely for the face of his learning, which was eminent in him, and some words of his that I had heard, which very well pleased me. But rather did he please me, for that he pleased others, who highly extolled him, admiring much that a Syrian born, brought up first in the Greek eloquence, should afterwards prove so wonderful a master in the Latin also: being above all this, a most knowing man in all the studies that pertain unto wisdom. He was commended and loved even when he was absent. Doth then this love enter the heart of the hearer immediately from the mouth of the praiser? Nothing so. But by one lover is another inflamed. Hence CHAP. XIV

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIV qui laudatur, dum non fallaci corde laudatoris praedicari creditur, id est cum amans eum laudat.

Sic enim tunc amabam homines ex hominum iudicio; non enim ex tuo, deus meus, in quo nemo fallitur. sed tamen cur non sicut auriga nobilis, sicut venator studiis popularibus diffamatus, sed longe aliter et graviter, et ita, quemadmodum et me laudari vellem? non autem vellem ita laudari et amari me ut histriones, quamquam eos et ipse laudarem et amarem, sed eligens latere quam ita notus esse, et vel haberi odio quam sic amari. ubi distribuuntur ista pondera variorum et diversorum amorum in anima una? quid est, quod amo in alio, quod rursus nisi odissem, non a me detestarer et repellerem, cum sit uterque nostrum homo? non enim sicut equus bonus amatur ab eo qui nollet hoc esse, etiamsi posset, hoc et de histrione dicendum est, qui naturae nostrae socius est. ergone amo in homine quod odi esse, cum sim homo? grande profundum est ipse homo, cuius etiam capillos tu, domine, numeratos habes et non minuuntur in te: et tamen capilli eius magis numerabiles quam affectus eius et motus cordis eius.

At ille rhetor ex eo erat genere, quem sic amabam, ut esse me vellem talem; et errabam tyfo, et circumferebar omni vento, et nimis occulte gubernabar

Digitized by Google

comes it that he is oft loved who is heard commended, when, namely, his worth is believed to be truly set forth by the unfeigned heart of the commender; that is, when he that loves him praises him. CHAP. XIV

Thus then loved I men, upon the judgment of men, but not upon thine, O my God, in which no man is deceived. But yet why not as that notable charioteer or huntsman, so famously spoken of by our vulgar affections? No, but far otherwise and more seriously, and even as I would desire to be myself commended. For I would by no means have myself or commended or loved, in that kind that stage-players are, (though I myself did sometimes both commend and love them) but I would choose rather to have lived concealed, than to be known that way; and to be hated, than in that kind to be beloved. Where now are these overswayings of such various and divers kinds of loves distributed in one soul? What is it that I am in love with in another man? And what again is it, that did I not hate him for, I should not detest and keep him out of my company, seeing we are men either of us? For the comparison holds not, that as a good horse is loved by him, who would not yet be that horse, no not though he might; the same should likewise be affirmed of a stage-player, who is a fellow in nature with us. Do I therefore love that in a man, which I hate to be, seeing I am a man? Man is a great deep, whose very hairs thou numberest, O Lord, and they are not lost in thy sight; and yet are the hairs of his head easier to be numbered than are his affections and the motions of his heart. Matt. x. 30

But that orator, whom I so loved, was of those that I would have wished myself to have been: and I erred through a swelling pride, and was tossed up and down with every wind, but I was governed by

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIV abs te. et unde scio et unde certus confiteor tibi, quod illum in amore laudantium magis amaveram quam in rebus ipsis, de quibus laudabatur? quia si non laudatum vituperarent eum idem ipsi et vituperando atque spernendo ea ipsa narrarent, non accenderer in eo et non excitarer, et certe res non aliae forent nec homo ipse alius, sed tantummodo alius affectus narrantium. ecce ubi iacet anima infirma, nondum haerens soliditati veritatis. sicut aurae linguarum flaverint a pectoribus opinantium, ita fertur et vertitur, torquetur ac retorquetur, et obnubilatur ei lumen et non cernitur veritas. et ecce est ante nos. et magnum quiddam mihi erat, si sermo meus et studia mea illi viro innotescerent: quae si probaret, flagrarem magis; si autem inprobaret, sauciaretur cor vanum et inane soliditatis tuae. et tamen pulchrum illud atque aptum, unde ad eum scripseram, libenter animo versabam ob os contemplationis meae, et nullo conlaudatore mirabar.

XV

CAP. XV Sed tantae rei cardinem in arte tua nondum videbam, omnipotens, qui facis mirabilia solus, et ibat

Digitized by Google

thee very secretly. And how now do I know, and how can I upon a sure ground confess unto thee, that I loved that man more for the love of them that commended him, than for the good parts themselves for which he was commended? Because if the self same men should not have praised but dispraised him, and in dispraising and despising him had they told the same things of him, I should never have been so kindled and provoked to love him. And certainly things would have been the same, and the man himself not different, but only a different feeling in the speakers. See where the impotent soul lies along, that is not yet stayed up by the solidity of truth! Just as the blasts of tongues blow out of the breasts of those who think they know, so is it carried this way and that way, tumbled and tossed up and down, and the light is beclouded and it can never discern the truth. And yet it is right before us. I conceived to purchase some great credit by it, if my style and meditations might but be known to that famous man; which should he allow of, then were I more on fire, but if he disapproved, this vain heart of mine utterly void of thy solidity, had been cut to the quick at it. And yet that subject of Fair and Fit upon which I wrote to him, my meditations gladly laboured upon, and though I had no others to commend it, yet did I myself admire it.

CHAP. XIV

Eph. iv. 14

XV

How his Understanding being overshadowed with corporeal images, he could not discern the spiritual

But I could not all this while discover the main point of the business in that skill of thine, O thou

CHAP. XV

Digitized by Google

CAP. XV animus meus per formas corporeas, et pulchrum, quod per se ipsum, aptum autem, quod ad aliquid adcommodatum deceret, definiebam et distinguebam et exemplis corporeis adstruebam. et converti me ad animi naturam, et non me sinebat falsa opinio, quam de spiritalibus habebam, verum cernere. et inruebat in oculos ipsa vis veri, et avertebam palpitantem mentem ab incorporea re ad liniamenta et colores et tumentes magnitudines, et quia non poteram ea videre in animo, putabam me non posse videre animum meum. et cum in virtute pacem amarem, in vitiositate autem odissem discordiam, in illa unitatem, in ista quandam divisionem notabam, inque illa unitate mens rationalis et natura veritatis ac summi boni mihi esse videbatur: in ista vero divisione inrationalis vitae nescio quam substantiam, et naturam summi mali, quae non solum esset substantia, sed omnino vita esset, et tamen abs te non esset, deus meus, ex quo sunt omnia, miser opinabar. et illam monadem appellabam tamquam sine ullo sexu mentem, hanc vero dyadem, iram in facinoribus, libidinem in flagitiis, nesciens quid loquerer. non enim noveram neque didiceram nec ullam substantiam malum esse, nec ipsam mentem nostram summum atque inconmutabile bonum.

Sicut enim facinora sunt, si vitiosus est ille animi motus, in quo est impetus, et se iactat insolenter ac

Digitized by Google

Omnipotent who only dost great wonders; and my conceit ranged through corporeal forms: and I defined and distinguished as fair, what is so, absolutely of itself; and fit, which becomes graceful when applied to some other thing: and confirmed my argument by corporeal examples. I set my studies afterwards to consider of the nature of the soul, but that false opinion which I had already entertained concerning spiritual matters, would not let me discover the truth, yet the force of truth did ever and anon flash into mine eyes, but I turned away my panting soul from all incorporeal substances, setting it upon lineaments, and colours, and swelling quantities. And for that I was not able to see all these in my soul, I verily believed that I could not see that soul of mine. And whereas in virtue I loved peace, and in viciousness I abhorred discord: in the first I observed an unity, but division ever to be in this. And in that unity, I conceived to be the rational intelligence, and the nature both of truth and of our chiefest goodness: but in this division, silly I imagined, I know not what substance of an irrational life, and the nature of the greatest evil, which should not only be a substance, but a very true life also, and yet not at all depend on thee, O my God, of whom are all things. And yet that first I called Unity, as if it had been a soul without sex; but the latter I styled a Duality, which should be anger in cruelties, and lust in impurities; not knowing what I talked of. For I had not as yet either known or learned, that neither was evil a substance, or that our own soul was not that chiefest and unchangeable good. CHAP. XV

For even as crimes are done, if so be that motion of the soul in which the force of the appetite now is,

Digitized by Google

CAP. XV turbide, et flagitia, si est inmoderata illa animae affectio, qua carnales hauriuntur voluptates, ita errores et falsae opiniones vitam contaminant, si rationalis mens ipsa vitiosa est. qualis in me tunc erat, nesciente alio lumine illam inlustrandam esse, ut sit particeps veritatis, quia non est ipsa natura veritatis, quoniam tu inluminabis lucernam meam, domine; deus meus, inluminabis tenebras meas, et de plenitudine tua omnes nos accepimus. es enim tu lumen verum, quod inluminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum, quia in te non est transmutatio nec momenti obumbratio.

Sed ego conabar ad te et repellebar abs te, ut saperem mortem, quoniam superbis resistis. quid autem superbius, quam ut assererem mira dementia me id esse naturaliter, quod tu es? cum enim ego essem mutabilis, et eo mihi manifestum esset, quod utique ideo sapiens esse cupiebam, ut ex deteriore melior fierem, malebam tamen etiam te opinari mutabilem, quam me non hoc esse, quod tu es. itaque repellebar, et resistebas ventosae cervici meae, et imaginabar formas corporeas, et caro carnem accusabam et spiritus ambulans non revertebar ad te, et ambulando ambulabam in ea, quae non sunt neque in te neque in me neque in corpore, neque mihi creabantur a veritate tua, sed a mea vanitate fingebantur ex corpore, et dicebam parvulis fidelibus tuis, civibus

Digitized by Google

be corrupted, stirring itself insolently and unrulily: CHAP. XV
and vices arise, when that affection of the soul by which carnal pleasures are taken into resolution, be immoderate: thus do errors and false opinions defile the life, if so be that the reasonable soul itself be viciously disposed. So it was in me at that time, when I was utterly ignorant that it must be enlightened by another light, to make it partaker of the truth, since it is not itself the essence of truth. For thou shalt light my candle, O Lord my God, thou Ps. xviii. 29
shalt enlighten my darkness: and of thy fulness have John i. 16, i. 9
we all received; for thou art the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; for that in thee there is no variableness, neither shadow of change.

But I pressed towards thee, and was as fast thrust from thee, that I might taste of death: for thou resistest the proud. And what could be prouder, than for me with a wonderful madness to maintain myself to be that by nature which thou thyself art? For whereas myself was mutable, (so much appearing manifestly unto me, in that I became so ambitious to grow wiser, that of worse I might so prove better;) yet chose I rather to imagine thee to be mutable, than myself not to be that which thou wert. Therefore gavest thou me the repulse, and thou resistedst my inconsistent stiff-neckedness, and I fancied to myself certain corporeal forms, and being flesh, I accused flesh; and being a wayfaring spirit, I did not turn towards thee, but went nuddling on and on towards those fancies which have no being, neither in thee, nor in me, nor in anybody, nor were created for me by thy truth, but devised merely by mine own vain conceit, fancying out a body. And I demanded of thy faithful little ones, my fellow

Digitized by Google

CAP. XV meis, a quibus nesciens exulabam, dicebam illis garrulus et ineptus: "cur ergo errat anima, quam fecit deus?" et mihi nolebam dici: "cur ergo errat deus?" et contendebam magis inconmutabilem tuam substantiam coactam errare, quam meam mutabilem sponte deviasse, et poena errare confitebar.

Et eram aetate annorum fortasse viginti sex aut septem, cum illa volumina scripsi, volvens apud me corporalia figmenta obstrepentia cordis mei auribus, quas intendebam, dulcis veritas, in interiorem melodiam tuam, cogitans de pulchro et apto, et stare cupiens et audire te et gaudio gaudere propter vocem sponsi, et non poteram, quia vocibus erroris mei rapiebar foras, et pondere superbiae meae in ima decidebam. non enim dabas auditui meo gaudium et laetitiam, aut exultabant ossa, quae humiliata non erant.

Digitized by Google

citizens, (from whom unbeknowing to myself I stood exiled) I put the question to them I say, (prating and foolish man that I was!) Why therefore doth the soul err, which God hath created? But I would not that any one should demand of me, Why therefore doth God err? And I stiffly maintained, that thy unchangeable substance rather did err upon constraint, than be brought to confess mine own changeable substance to have gone astray voluntarily, or that my error was my punishment. CHAP. XV

I was at that time perchance six or seven and twenty years old, when I composed those volumes; canvassing up and down with myself these corporeal fictions, which were still buzzing in the ears of my heart, (which ears I was straining rather, O sweet truth, to hearken after thy inward melody) plodding all this time upon my Fair and Fit, and desiring to stand, and to hearken to thee, and to rejoice exceedingly at the voice of thy Spouse, but could not bring myself to it; for by the calls of mine own errors, I was drawn out of myself, and oppressed with the weight of mine own proud conceit, I sunk into the lowest pit. For thou didst not make me to hear joy and gladness, nor did my bones rejoice, for they were not yet humbled.

Digitized by Google

XVI

CAP. XVI Et quid mihi proderat, quod annos natus ferme viginti, cum in manus meas venissent Aristotelica quaedam, quas appellant decem categorias—quarum nomine, cum eas rhetor Carthaginiensis, magister meus, buccis typho crepantibus commemoraret et alii qui docti habebantur, tamquam in nescio quid magnum et divinum suspensus inhiabam—legi eas solus et intellexi? quas cum contulissem cum eis, qui se dicebant vix eas, magistris eruditissimis non loquentibus tantum, sed multa in pulvere depingentibus, intellexisse, nihil inde aliud mihi dicere potuerunt, quam ego solus apud me ipsum legens cognoveram; et satis aperte mihi videbantur loquentes de substantiis, sicuti est homo, et quae in illis essent, sicuti est figura hominis, qualis sit, et statura, quot pedum sit, aut cognatio, cuius frater sit, aut ubi sit constitutus aut quando natus, aut stet an sedeat, aut calciatus vel armatus sit, aut aliquid faciat aut patiatur aliquid, et quaecumque in his novem generibus, quorum exempli gratia quaedam posui, vel in ipso substantiae genere innumerabilia reperiuntur.

Quid hoc mihi proderat, quando et oberat, cum etiam te, deus meus, mirabiliter simplicem atque

Digitized by Google

XVI

The admirable Aptness to Learning, and the great Understanding St. Augustine had

AND what was I the better for it, when scarce twenty years old, that book of Aristotle's Ten Categories falling into my hands, (of which my rhetoric master of Carthage, and others esteemed very good scholars, would be cracking with full mouths,) I earnestly and with such suspense gaped upon it at first, as upon I know not what deep and divine piece; but read it over afterwards, yea, and attained the understanding of it, by myself alone? And comparing my notes afterwards with theirs, who protesting how hardly they gat to understand the book from very able tutors, not dictating to them only by word of mouth, but taking pains also to delineate out in the dust the schemes and demonstrations of it; they could teach me no more of it, than I had observed before upon mine own reading. And it seemed plain enough to my capacity, when they discoursed of substances, such as man is, and of the accidents inhering to these substances; as for example, the figure of a man, how qualified he was, and of what shape and stature, how many foot high, and his relation to his kindred, whose brother he is, or where placed, or when born, or whether he stands or sits, or be shod or armed, or does or suffers anything: and whatsoever was to be learned besides in these nine classes, of which I have given these former examples; or these other innumerable observations in that chief class of substance. CHAP. XVI

What now did all this further me, seeing withal it as much hindered me whenas I took pains to

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVI incommutabilem, illis decem praedicamentis putans quidquid esset omnino conprehensum, sic intellegere conarer, quasi et tu subiectum esses magnitudini tuae aut pulchritudini, ut illa essent in te quasi in subiecto, sicut in corpore: cum tua magnitudo et tua pulchritudo tu ipse sis, corpus autem non eo sit magnum et pulchrum, quo corpus est, quia etsi minus magnum et minus pulchrum esset, nihilominus corpus esset? falsitas enim erat, quam de te cogitabam, non veritas, et figmenta miseriae meae, non firmamenta beatitudinis tuae. iusseras enim, et ita fiebat in me, ut terra spinas et tribolos pareret mihi, et cum labore pervenirem ad panem meum.

Et quid mihi proderat, quod omnes libros artium, quas liberales vocant, tunc nequissimus malarum cupiditatum servus per me ipsum legi et intellexi, quoscumque legere potui? et gaudebam in eis, et nesciebam, unde esset quidquid ibi verum et certum esset. dorsum enim habebam ad lumen, et ad ea, quae inluminantur, faciem: unde ipsa facies mea, qua inluminata cernebam, non inluminabatur. quidquid de arte loquendi et disserendi, quidquid de dimensionibus figurarum et de musicis et de numeris, sine magna difficultate nullo hominum tradente intellexi, scis tu, domine deus meus, quia et celeritas intellegendi et dispiciendi acumen donum tuum est. sed non inde

Digitized by Google

understand thee, O my God (whose essence is most wonderfully simple and unchangeable): imagining whatsoever had being, to be comprehended under those ten Predicaments; as if thyself had been subject to thine own greatness or beauty; and that these two had an inherence in thee, like accidents in their subject, or as in a body: whereas thy greatness and beauty is in thy essence; but a body is not great or fair in that regard as it is a body, seeing that though it were less great or fair, yet should it be a body notwithstanding. But it was a mere falsehood which of thee I had conceived, and no truth; a very fiction of mine own foolery, and no solid ground of thy happiness. For thou hadst given forth the command, and so it came to pass in me, that my earth should bring forth briars and thorns Gen. iii. 18 in me, and that in the sweat of my brow I should eat my bread.

And what was I the better, that I, the vile slave to wicked affections, read over by myself, and understood all the books of those sciences which they call liberal, as many as I could cast mine eyes upon? And that I took great delight in them, but knew not all this while whence all that came, whatsoever was true or certain in them? For I stood with my back to the light, and with my face towards these things which receive that light; and therefore my face, with which I discerned these things that were illuminated, was not in itself illuminated. Whatever was written, either of the art of rhetoric, of logic, whatever of geometry, music, and arithmetic, I attained the understanding of by myself without any great difficulty, or any instructor at all, as thou knowest, O Lord my God; even because the quickness of conceiving, and the sharpness of disputing is thy

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVI sacrificabam tibi. itaque mihi non ad usum, sed ad perniciem magis valebat, quia tam bonam partem substantiae meae sategi habere in potestate, et fortitudinem meam non ad te custodiebam, sed profectus sum abs te in longinquam regionem, ut eam dissiparem in meretrices cupiditates. nam quid mihi proderat bona res non utenti bene? non enim sentiebam illas artes etiam ab studiosis et ingeniosis difficillime intellegi, nisi cum eis eadem conabar exponere, et erat ille excellentissimus in eis, qui me exponentem non tardius sequeretur.

Sed quid mihi hoc proderat putanti, quod tu, domine deus veritas, corpus esses lucidum et inmensum, et ego frustum de illo corpore? nimia perversitas! sed sic eram; nec erubesco, deus meus, confiteri tibi in me misericordias tuas et invocare te, qui non erubui tunc profiteri hominibus blasphemias meas, et latrare adversum te. quid ergo tunc mihi proderat ingenium, per illas doctrinas agile, et nullo adminiculo humani magisterii tot nodosissimi libri enodati, cum deformiter et sacrilega turpitudine in doctrina pietatis errarem? aut quid tantum oberat parvulis tuis longe tardius ingenium; cum a te longe non recederent, ut in nido ecclesiae tuae tuti plumescerent, et alas caritatis alimento sanae fidei nutrirent? o domine deus noster, in velamento alarum tuarum speremus, et protege nos et porta

Digitized by Google

gift: and yet did I not sacrifice any part of it to thee. All this therefore served not me to any good employment, but to my destruction rather, since I went about to get so good a part of my portion into mine own custody; and I preserved not mine own abilities entire for thy service, but wandered into a far country, to spend it there upon my harlotries. For what good did it me to have good abilities, and not employ them to good uses? For I understood not that those arts were attained with difficulty, even by those that were very studious and intelligent scholars, until that myself going about to interpret them in others' hearing, he was held the most excellent at them, who was able to follow me with least slowness. CHAP. XVI

But what did all this benefit me, thinking all this while that thou, O Lord God of Truth, wert nothing but a vast and bright body, and myself some piece of that body? O extreme perverseness! But in that case was I then; nor do I blush, O my God, to confess thy mercies towards me, and to call upon thee, who blushed not then openly to profess before men mine own blasphemies, and to bark against thee. What good did then my nimble wit, able to run over all those sciences, and all those most knotty volumes, made easy to me without help or light from any tutor: seeing that I erred so foully, and with so much sacrilegious shamefulness in the doctrine of piety? Or what hindrance was a far slower wit to thy little ones; seeing they straggled not so far from thee, but that in the nest of thy Church they might securely plume themselves, and nourish the wings of charity, by the food of solid faith? O Lord our God, under the shadow of thy wings let us hope! Defend thou, and carry us. Thou wilt carry

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVI nos. tu portabis, tu portabis et parvulos et usque ad canos tu portabis: quoniam firmitas nostra quando tu es, tunc est firmitas, cum autem nostra est, infirmitas est. vivit apud te semper bonum nostrum, et quia inde aversi sumus, perversi sumus. revertamur iam, domine, ut non evertamur, quia vivit apud te sine ullo defectu bonum nostrum, quod tu ipse es: et non timemus, ne non sit quo redeamus, quia nos inde ruimus; nobis autem absentibus non ruit domus nostra, aeternitas tua.

Digitized by Google

us, thou wilt so, both while we are little and until we are greyheaded: for our weakness, when 'tis from thee, then is our strength; but when 'tis of ourselves, then it is weakness indeed. Our good still lives with thee; from which because we are averse, therefore are we perverse. Let us now at last, O Lord, return, that we do not overturn: because with thee our good lives without any defect, which good thou art. We shall not need to fear finding a place to return unto, because we fell headlong from it; for however we have been long absent from thence, yet that house of ours shall not fall down, and that is thy Eternity. CHAP. XVI

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK V

Digitized by Google

LIBER QVINTVS

I

CAP. I ACCIPE sacrificium confessionum mearum de manu linguae meae, quam formasti et excitasti, ut confiteatur nomini tuo, et sana omnia ossa mea, et dicant: domine, quis similis tibi? neque enim docet te, quid in se agatur, qui tibi confitetur; quia oculum tuum non excludit cor clausum, nec manum tuam repellit duritia hominum: sed solvis eam, cum voles, aut miserans aut vindicans, et non est qui se abscondat a calore tuo. sed te laudet anima mea, ut amet te, et confiteatur tibi miserationes tuas, ut laudet te. non cessat nec tacet laudes tuas universa creatura tua, nec spiritus omnis hominis per os conversum ad te; nec animalia nec corporalia per os considerantium ea: ut exsurgat in te a lassitudine anima nostra, innitens eis, quae fecisti, et adtransiens ad te, qui fecisti haec mirabiliter: et ibi refectio et vera fortitudo.

Digitized by Google

THE FIFTH BOOK

I

He stirs his own Soul to praise God

RECEIVE here the sacrifice of confessions from the hand of my tongue, which thou hast formed and stirred up to confess unto thy name. Heal thou all my bones and let them say, O Lord, Who is like unto thee? For neither does a man teach thee what is done within himself when he confesses to thee; seeing a closed heart shuts not out thy eye, nor can man's hard-heartedness thrust back thy hand: for thou openest it when thou pleasest, either out of pity or justice to us, and there is nothing can hide itself from thy heat. But let my soul praise thee that it may love thee, and let it confess thine own mercies to thee that it may praise thee. Thy whole creation is never slack or silent in thy praises, nor the spirit of any man by the praise of his mouth converted to thee; no nor yet any animal or corporeal creature, by the mouths of those that well consider of them; that so our soul may toward thee rouse itself up from weariness, leaning itself on those things which thou hast created, and passing over to thyself, who hast made them so wonderfully; where refreshment and true fortitude is.

CHAP. I

Ps. xxxv. 10

Ps. xix. 6

Digitized by Google

II

CAP. II EANT et fugiant a te inquieti iniqui. et tu vides eos et distinguis umbras, et ecce pulchra sunt cum eis omnia, et ipsi turpes sunt. et quid nocuerunt tibi? aut in quo imperium tuum dehonestaverunt, a caelis usque in novissima iustum et integrum? quo enim fugerunt, cum fugerent a facie tua? aut ubi tu non invenis eos? sed fugerunt, ut non viderent te videntem se, atque excaecati in te offenderent—quia non deseris aliquid eorum, quae fecisti—in te offenderent iniusti et iuste vexarentur, subtrahentes se lenitati tuae, et offendentes in rectitudinem tuam, et cadentes in asperitatem tuam. videlicet nesciunt, quod ubique sis, quem nullus circuminscribit locus, et solus es praesens etiam his, qui longe fiunt a te. convertantur ergo et quaerant te, quia non, sicut ipsi deseruerunt creatorem suum, ita tu deseruisti creaturam tuam. ipsi convertantur, et ecce ibi es in corde eorum, in corde confitentium tibi, et proicientium se in te, et plorantium in sinu tuo post vias suas difficiles: et tu facilis tergens lacrimas eorum, et magis plorant et gaudent in fletibus, quoniam tu, domine,

Digitized by Google

II

God's presence can no man avoid, seeing he is everywhere

LET unquiet naughty people run and flee from thee CHAP. II as fast as they will; yet thou seest them well enough, and canst distinguish of shadows: and behold, all seems gay to them, meanwhile themselves be deformed. And what wrong have they done thee by it, or how have they disparaged thy government, which from the highest heavens to this lowest earth, is most just and perfect? But whither are they fled, Ps. cxxxix. 7 when they fled from thy presence? Or in what corner shalt thou not find them out? But they ran away that they might not see thee, who well sawest them, that being so blindfolded, they might stumble upon thee, because thou forsakest nothing that thou hast made; that the unjust, I say, might stumble upon thee, and be justly vexed at it; withdrawing themselves from thy lenity, and stumbling at thy justice, to fall foul upon thy severity. Little know they in truth, that thou art everywhere, whom no place encompasses, and that thou alone art ever near, even to those that set themselves furthest from thee. Let them therefore be turned back, and seek thee; because as they have forsaken thee their Creator, thou hast not so given over thy creature. Let them be turned back; and behold, thou art there in their heart, in the heart of those that confess thee, and that cast themselves upon thee, and that pour forth their tears in thy bosom, after all their tedious wanderings. Then shalt thou most gently wipe away their tears, and they do weep the more, yea, and delight in their weeping; even for that thou, O Lord, and not any

Digitized by Google

CAP. II non aliquis homo, caro et sanguis, sed tu, domine, qui fecisti, reficis et consolaris eos. et ubi ego eram, quando te quaerebam? et tu eras ante me, ego autem et a me discesseram nec me inveniebam: quanto minus te!

III

CAP. III Proloquor in conspectu dei mei annum illum undetricensimum aetatis meae. iam venerat Carthaginem quidam Manichaeorum episcopus, Faustus nomine, magnus laqueus diaboli, et multi inplicabantur in eo per inlecebram suaviloquentiae. quam ego iam tametsi laudabam, discernebam tamen a veritate rerum, quarum discendarum avidus eram, nec quali vasculo sermonis, sed quid mihi scientiae comedendum adponeret nominatus apud eos ille Faustus intuebar. fama enim de illo praelocuta mihi erat, quod esset honestarum omnium doctrinarum peritissi muset adprime disciplinis liberalibus eruditus.

Et quoniam multa philosophorum legeram, memoriae que mandata retinebam, ex eis quaedam comparabam illis Manichaeorum longis fabulis: et mihi probabiliora ista videbantur, quae dixerunt illi, qui tantum potuerunt valere, ut possent aestimare saeculum, quamquam eius dominum minime invenerint. quoniam magnus es, domine, et humilia respicis, excelsa

Digitized by Google

man of flesh and blood, but thou Lord, who madest CHAP. II
them, canst refresh and comfort them. But where-
abouts was I, when I sought after thee? Thou wert directly before me, but I had gone back from thee; nor did I then find myself, much less thee.

III

Of Faustus the Manichee: and of Astrologies

I LAY open before my God that nine and twentieth CHAP. III
year of mine age. There came in those days unto Carthage a certain Bishop of the Manichees, Faustus by name: a great snare of the Devil he was, and many were entangled by him in that gin of his smooth language: which though myself did much commend in him, yet I was able to discern betwixt it, and the truth of those things which I then was earnest to learn: nor had I an eye so much to the curious dish of oratory, as what substance of science their so famous Faustus set before me to feed upon. Report had beforehand highly spoken of him to me; as, that he was a most knowing man in all points of honest learning, and exquisitely skilled in all the liberal sciences.

And for that I had sometimes read many books of the philosophers, and had fresh in memory much of theirs; I presently fell to compare some points of theirs to those long fables of the Manichees: and those things verily which the philosophers had taught, (who could only prevail so far as to make judgment of this lower world, though the Lord of it they could by no means find out) seemed far more probable unto me. For great art thou, O Lord, and hast respect Ps. cxxxviii. 6
unto the humble, but the proud thou beholdest afar

Digitized by Google

CAP. III autem a longe agnoscis: nec propinquas nisi obtritis corde, nec inveniris a superbis, nec si illi curiosa peritia numerent stellas et harenam, et dimetiantur sidereas plagas, et vestigent vias astrorum. mente sua enim quaerunt ista et ingenio, quod tu dedisti eis, et multa invenerunt, et praenuntiaverunt ante multos annos defectus luminarium solis et lunae, quo die, qua hora, quanta ex parte futuri essent, et non eos fefellit numerus. et ita factum est, ut praenuntiaverunt; et scripserunt regulas indagatas, et leguntur hodie; atque ex eis praenuntiatur, quo anno et quo mense anni et quo die mensis et qua hora diei et quota parte luminis sui defectura sit luna vel sol: et ita fiet, ut praenuntiatur. et mirantur haec homines et stupent, qui nesciunt ea, et exultant atque extolluntur qui sciunt, et per impiam superbiam recedentes, et deficientes a lumine tuo, tanto ante solis defectum futurum praevident, et in praesentia suum non vident—non enim religiose quaerunt, unde habeant ingenium, quo ista quaerunt—et invenientes, quia tu fecisti eos, non ipsi se dant tibi, se, ut serves quod fecisti, et quales se ipsi fecerant occidunt se tibi, et trucidant exaltationes suas sicut volatilia, et curiositates suas sicut pisces maris, quibus perambulant secretas semitas abyssi, et luxurias suas

Digitized by Google

off. Nor dost thou draw near, but to the contrite in heart, nor art thou found by those that be proud, no, not though they had the curious skill to number the stars and the sand, and to quarter out the houses of the heavenly constellations, and to find out the courses of the planets. For with their understanding and wit, which thou bestowedst on them, do they search out these things: much they have found out, and foretold many a year, before the eclipses of the lights of the sun and moon, what day and what hour, and how many digits they should be so, nor hath their calculation failed them: and just thus came all to pass as they foretold; and they committed to writing the rules found out by them, which are read this day, and out of them do others foretell in what year, and month of the year, and what day of the month, and what hour of the day, and what part of its light, the moon or the sun is to be eclipsed: and so it shall come to pass as it is foreshewed. At these things men wonder and are astonished, that know not this art; and they that know it, triumph and are extolled; and out of a wicked pride turning back from thee, failing thereby of thy light, they foresee an eclipse of the sun so long beforehand, but perceive not their own which they suffer in the present. For they enquire not religiously enough from whence they are enabled with the wit to seek all this withal: and finding that 'tis thou that made them, they resign not themselves up unto thee, that thou mayest preserve what thou hast made, nor do they kill in sacrifice unto thee, what they have made themselves to be; nor slay their own exalted imaginations, like as the fowls of the air; and their own curiosities, like as the fishes of the sea, in which they wander over the unknown paths of the bottomless

Ps. viii. 8

Digitized by Google

CAP. III sicut pecora campi, ut tu, deus, ignis edax, consumas mortuas curas eorum, recreans eos immortaliter.

Sed non noverunt viam, verbum tuum, per quod fecisti ea quae numerant, et ipsos qui numerant, et sensum, quo cernunt quae numerant, et mentem, de qua numerant; et sapientiae tuae non est numerus. ipse autem unigenitus factus est nobis sapientia et iustitia et sanctificatio, et numeratus est inter nos, et solvit tributum Caesari. non noverunt hanc viam, qua descendant ad illum a se, et per eum ascendant ad eum. non noverunt hanc viam, et putant se excelsos esse cum sideribus et lucidos, et ecce ruerunt in terram, et obscuratum est insipiens cor eorum. et multa vera de creatura dicunt, et veritatem, creaturae artificem, non pie quaerunt, et ideo non inveniunt, aut si inveniunt, cognoscentes deum, non sicut deum honorant, aut gratias agunt, et evanescunt in cogitationibus suis, et dicunt se esse sapientes sibi tribuendo quae tua sunt, ac per hoc student perversissima caecitate etiam tibi tribuere quae sua sunt, mendacia scilicet in te conferentes, qui veritas es, et immutantes gloriam incorrupti dei in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum et quadrupedum et serpentium, et convertunt veritatem tuam in mendacium, et colunt et serviunt creaturae potius quam creatori.

Digitized by Google

pit; and their own luxuriousness, like as the beasts of the field; that thou Lord, who art a consuming fire, mayest burn up those dead cares of theirs, and renew themselves immortally. CHAP. III Deut. iv. 24

But they know not that way, (thy Word) by which thou madest these things which themselves can calculate, and the calculators themselves, and the sense by which they see what they number, and the understanding, out of which they do number it: and of thy wisdom there is no number. But the Only Begotten himself is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and was numbered as one of us, and paid tribute unto Caesar. This way have not these men known, by which they should descend from themselves unto him, and by him again ascend unto him. They verily know not this way, and they conceit themselves to move in an high orb, and to shine amongst the stars; whereas behold they grovel upon the ground, and their foolish heart is darkened. They discourse truly of many things concerning the creature; but the truth, the Architect of the creature, they do not religiously seek after; and therefore do they not find him. Or if they do find him, acknowledging him to be God, yet they glorify him not as God, neither are thankful, but become vain in their imaginations. They give out themselves to be wise, attributing thy works unto their skill: and in this humour with a most perverse blindness, study they on the other side to impute to thee their own follies; entitling thee, who art the Truth itself, unto their lies; changing thus the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things: changing thy truth into a lie, and serving the creature more than the Creator.

1 Cor. i. 30

Rom. i. 21

Rom. i. 21

Rom. i. 23, 25

Digitized by Google

CAP. III Multa tamen ab eis ex ipsa creatura vera dicta retinebam, et occurrebat mihi ratio per numeros et ordinem temporum et visibiles attestationes siderum, et conferebam cum dictis Manichaei, quae de his rebus multa scripsit copiosissime delirans, et non mihi occurrebat ratio nec solistitiorum et aequinoctiorum nec defectuum luminarium nec quidquid tale in libris saecularis sapientiae didiceram. ibi autem credere iubebar, et ad illas rationes numeris et oculis meis exploratas non occurrebat, et longe diversum erat.

IV

CAP. IV Numquid, domine deus veritatis, quisquis novit ista, iam placet tibi? infelix enim homo, qui scit illa omnia, te autem nescit; beatus autem,*qui te scit, etiamsi illa nesciat. qui vero et te et illa novit, non propter illa beatior, sed propter te solum beatus est, si cognoscens te, sicut te glorificet, et gratias agat et non evanescat in cogitationibus suis. sicut enim melior, qui novit possidere arborem et de usu eius tibi gratias agit, quamvis nesciat vel quot cubitis alta sit vel quanta latitudine diffusa, quam ille, qui eam metitur et omnes ramos eius numerat et neque

Digitized by Google

But yet divers observations concerning the creature truly delivered by these philosophers, did I retain in memory, yea, and I found there a reasonable explanation by calculations, the order of times, and the visible testimonies of the stars: and all this I compared with the sayings of Manichaeus, who had written much of these subjects, doting most abundantly; but I found there no reason either of the solstices, or equinoxes, or of the eclipses of the greater lights, nor of any such point as I had learned in the books of secular philosophy. But in his writings was I commanded to believe all, but it did not answer unto those reasons, which had been found true, both by mine own calculatings and eyesight; from all which his was quite contrary. CHAP. III

IV

Only the Knowledge of God makes happy

Tell me, O Lord God of Truth, is whosoever is skilful in these philosophical things thereby acceptable unto thee? Surely most unhappy is the man that knows all these things, and is ignorant of thee: but happy is he that knows thee, though ignorant of these. And he that knows both thee and them, is not the happier for them, but for thee only; upon condition that as he knows thee, so he glorifies thee as thou art, and is thankful, and becomes not vain in his own imaginations. For as he is better that knows how to possess a tree, and returns thanks unto thee for the commodities of it, although he knows not how many cubits high it rises, or how broad it spreads; than he that hath the skill to measure it, and keeps CHAP. IV Rom. i. 21

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV possidet eam, neque creatorem eius novit aut diligit; sic fidelis homo, cuius totus mundus divitiarum est, et quasi nihil habens omnia possidet inhaerendo tibi, cui serviunt omnia, quamvis nec saltem septentrionum gyros noverit, dubitare stultum est, quin utique melior sit quam mensor caeli et numerator siderum et pensor elementorum, et neglegens tui, qui omnia in mensura et numero et pondere disposuisti.

V

CAP. V SED tamen quis quaerebat Manichaeum nescio quem etiam ista scribere, sine quorum peritia pietas disci poterat? dixisti enim homini: ecce pietas est sapientia. quam ille ignorare posset, etiamsi ista perfecte nosset: ista vero quia non noverat, impudentissime audens docere, prorsus illam nosse non posset. vanitas est enim mundana ista etiam nota profiteri, pietas autem tibi confiteri. unde ille devius ad hoc ista multum locutus est, ut convictus ab eis, qui ista vere didicissent, quis esset eius sensus in ceteris, quae abditiora sunt, manifeste cognosceretur. non

Digitized by Google

an account of all the boughs of it, and is neither owner of it, nor knows nor loves him that created it: even so, a faithful man, whose right all this world of wealth is, and who having nothing, yet doth as it were possess all things, even by cleaving unto thee, to whom all things serve, though he knows not so much as the circles of the north, yet it is folly to doubt but he is in better estate than he that can quarter out the heavens and number the stars, and poises the elements, and yet is negligent of thee, who hast made all things in number, weight, and measure. CHAP. IV Wisdom xi. 20

V

The rashness of Faustus, in teaching what he knew not

But yet who requested I know not what Manichean to write even these things, without the skill of which true piety might well have been learned? For thou hast said unto man, Behold, piety is wisdom; of which the Manichean might be utterly ignorant, though perfect at the knowledge of these things: but these things because he knew not, most impudently daring to teach them, he was not able plainly to attain the knowledge of that piety. A great vanity it is verily to profess these worldly things even when known; but it is a pious thing to confess unto thee. From this he had gone astray, and all he got by prating much of these things, was to be confuted by those who had learned the truth of these things, and to be evidently discovered what understanding he had in points that were abstruser. For CHAP. V Job xxviii. 28

Digitized by Google

CAP. V enim parvi se aestimari voluit, sed spiritum sanctum, consolatorem et ditatorem fidelium tuorum, auctoritate plenaria personaliter in se esse persuadere conatus est. itaque cum de caelo ac stellis et de solis ac lunae motibus falsa dixisse deprehenderetur, quamvis ad doctrinam religionis ista non pertineant, tamen ausus eius sacrilegos fuisse satis emineret, cum ea non solum ignorata, sed etiam falsa, tam vesana superbiae vanitate diceret, ut ea tamquam divinae personae tribuere sibi niteretur.

Cum enim audio Christianum aliquem fratrem, illum aut illum, ista nescientem et aliud pro alio sentientem, patienter intueor opinantem hominem; nec illi obesse video, cum de te, domine creator omnium, non credat indigna, si forte situs et habitus creaturae corporalis ignoret. obest autem, si hoc ad ipsam doctrinae pietatis formam pertinere arbitretur, et pertinacius affirmare audeat quod ignorat. sed etiam talis infirmitas in fidei cunabulis a Caritate matre sustinetur, donec assurgat novus homo in virum perfectum, et circumferri non possit omni vento doctrinae. in illo autem, qui doctor, qui auctor, qui dux et princeps eorum, quibus illa suaderet, ita fieri ausus est, ut qui eum sequerentur non quemlibet hominem, sed spiritum tuum sanctum se sequi arbitrarentur, quis tantam dementiam, sicubi falsa dixisse

Digitized by Google

the man would not have himself meanly thought of, CHAP. V
but went about forsooth, to persuade, that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and Enricher of the faithful ones, was with full authority resident within him. Whereas therefore he was found out to have taught falsely of the heavens and stars, and of the courses of the sun and moon, (although those things pertain little to the doctrine of religion), that his presumptions were sacrilegious was apparent enough, seeing that he delivered those things not only which he knew not, but which himself had falsified, and that with so mad a vanity of pride, that he went about to claim them for himself, as the words of a divine person.

Whenever now I hear a Christian brother, (either one or other) that is ignorant enough of these philosophical subtilties, and that mistaketh one thing for another, I can patiently behold such a man delivering his opinion; nor do I see how it can much hinder him, whenas he does not believe anything unworthy of thee, O Lord, the Creator of all, if perchance he be less skilled in the situation or condition of the corporeal creature. But then it hurts him, if so be he imagines this to pertain to the very essence of the doctrine of piety, and will stand too stiffly in a thing he is utterly ignorant of. And yet is even such an infirmity in the infancy of a man's faith withal borne by our Mother Charity, till such time as this new convert grow up into a perfect Eph. iv. 13, 14
man, and not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine: whereas in that Faustus, who was so presumptuous as to make himself the doctor and authority, the ringleader and chief man of all those whom he had inveigled, to the opinion, that whoever became his follower, did not imagine himself to follow a mere man, but thy Holy Spirit; who would

Digitized by Google

CAP. V convinceretur, non detestandam longeque abiciendam esse iudicaret? sed tamen nondum liquido conpereram, utrum etiam secundum eius verba vicissitudines longiorum et breviorum dierum atque noctium, et ipsius noctis et diei, et deliquia luminum, et si quid eius modi in aliis libris legeram, posset exponi, ut, si forte posset, incertum mihi fieret, utrum ita se res haberet an ita, sed ad fidem meam illius auctoritatem propter creditam sanctitatem praeponerem.

VI

CAP. VI Et per annos ferme ipsos novem, quibus eos animo vagabundus audivi, nimis extento desiderio venturum expectabam istum Faustum. ceteri enim eorum, in quos forte incurrissem, qui talium rerum quaestionibus a me obiectis deficiebant, illum mihi promittebant, cuius adventu conlatoque conloquio facillime mihi haec, et si qua forte maiora quaererem, enodatissime expedirentur. ergo ubi venit, expertus sum hominem gratum et iucundum verbis, et ea ipsa, quae illi solent dicere, multo suavius garrientem. sed quid

Digitized by Google

not judge but that so high a degree of madness, when once he had been convicted to have taught falsities, were not to be detested, and utterly rejected? But I had not clearly as yet found out, whether the interchanged alterations of the length and shortness of days and nights, yea of the day and night itself, with the eclipses and wanings of the greater lights, and other things of the like kind which I had read of in other books, might also be so expounded as to stand with his determination of them: but though peradventure it might so be, yet should it remain uncertain to me, whether it were so or not; however, for the great sanctity supposed to be in the man, I was ready to propound to myself his authority, which ought to be enough to make me believe him. CHAP. V

VI

Faustus was eloquent by Nature, rather than by Art

AND by the space almost of those nine years, wherein with an unsettled mind I had been a disciple of the Manichees, with a desire set upon the tenter-hooks had I expected the coming of this Faustus. For all the rest of that sect whom by chance I had lit upon, and had put to a nonplus with my questions and objections about these things, still promised me this Faustus, upon whose coming and conference all these, and greater difficulties, if I had them, would most easily and clearly be satisfied. So soon therefore as he was come, I quickly tasted him to be a very pleasing-languaged man, and one that could prate a great deal more delightfully of those points that CHAP. VI

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI ad meam sitim pretiosorum poculorum decentissimus ministrator? iam rebus talibus satiatae erant aures meae; nec ideo mihi meliora videbantur, quia melius dicebantur; nec ideo vera, quia diserta; nec ideo sapiens anima, quia vultus congruus et decorum eloquium. illi autem, qui eum mihi promittebant, non boni rerum existimatores erant; et ideo illis videbatur prudens et sapiens, quia delectabat eos loquens.

Sensi autem aliud genus hominum etiam veritatem habere suspectam, et ei nolle adquiescere, si compto atque uberi sermone promeretur. me autem iam docueras, deus meus, miris et occultis modis, et propterea credo, quod tu me docueris; quoniam verum est, nec quisquam praeter te alius doctor est veri, ubicumque et undecumque claruerit. iam ergo abs te didiceram, nec eo debere videri aliquid verum dici, quia eloquenter dicitur, nec eo falsum, quia incomposite sonant signa labiorum; rursus nec ideo verum, quia inpolite enuntiatur, nec ideo falsum, quia splendidus sermo est: sed perinde esse sapientiam et stultitiam, sicut sunt cibi utiles et inutiles; verbis autem ornatis et inornatis, sicut vasis urbanis et rusticanis utrosque cibos posse ministrari.

Igitur aviditas mea, qua illum tanto tempore expectaveram hominem, delectabatur quidem motu affectuque disputantis, et verbis congruentibus atque

Digitized by Google

they were wont to talk of. But how should the most spruce cup-bearer slake the thirst I had after those precious cups? Mine ears had been cloyed already with such trash, which did not now therefore seem better to me, because better said; nor therefore true, because eloquent; nor seemed the soul wise, because the face had a good garb, and the language a sweet tone. As for them who had made such promises of him to me, they plainly were no good judges of things; and therefore to them he appeared prudent and wise, for that he could please them in the speaking. CHAP. VI

Another sort of people I had also met withal, who become presently suspicious of the truth itself, and refuse to acknowledge it so, if delivered in a picked and fluent discourse. But thou, O my God, hadst taught me by wonderful and secret ways, and therefore I believe, even because thou hast taught me: for that is the very truth, nor is there besides thee any other teacher of truth, wheresoever or whencesoever he may be famous. Of thyself, therefore, had I now learned, that nothing ought to seem to be truly spoken, because eloquently set off; nor false therefore, because delivered with an untunable pronunciation. Again, nor therefore true, because roughly delivered; nor therefore false, because graced in the speaking: but it fares with wisdom and folly, as it doth with wholesome and unwholesome diet; and with neat and undressed phrases, as with courtly or country vessels; either kind of meats may be served up in either kind of dishes.

That greediness therefore of mine, with which I had so long expected that man, was delighted verily with his carriage and feeling in dispute, and the apt words and fluent which set out his thoughts. I

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI ad vestiendas sententias facile occurrentibus. delectabar autem, et cum multis vel etiam prae multis laudabam ac ferebam; sed moleste habebam, quod in coetu audientium non sinerer ingerere illi, et partiri cum eo curas quaestionum mearum, conferendo familiariter et accipiendo ac reddendo sermonem. quod ubi potui, et aures eius cum familiaribus meis eoque tempore occupare coepi, quo non dedeceret alternis disserere, et protuli quaedam, quae me movebant, expertus sum prius hominem expertem liberalium disciplinarum, nisi grammaticae, atque eius ipsius usitato modo. et quia legerat aliquas Tullianas orationes, et paucissimos Senecae libros, et nonnulla poetarum, et suae sectae si qua volumina latine atque composite conscripta erant, et quia aderat cotidiana sermocinandi exercitatio; inde suppetebat eloquium, quod fiebat acceptius magisque seductorium moderamine ingenii et quodam lepore naturali. itane est, ut recolo, domine deus meus, arbiter conscientiae meae? coram te cor meum et recordatio mea; qui mecum tunc agebas abdito secreto providentiae tuae, et inhonestos errores meos iam convertebas ante faciem meam, ut viderem et odissem.

Digitized by Google

was indeed much taken with him; and with others many, yea and more than those many, did I both praise and extoll him. But this I took ill from him, that in the assembly of his auditors, I might not be suffered to put in now and then, and communicate those questions that troubled me, by a familiar conferring and exchange of arguments with him. Which when I gat opportunity to do, I, with other of my friends, both began to busy his ears, and that at such times too, as had not been undecent for him to have exchanged an argument with me; and I opened myself in such things as did sway much with me: but the man I found at once unskilful in the liberal sciences, save of grammar only, and but ordinarily in that neither. And because he had read some of Tully's Orations, some few books of Seneca, divers of the poets, and those volumes of his own sect which had been written in the Latin tongue, and something handsomely; and for that he was daily practised in speaking upon a subject; thence became he furnished with eloquence, which proved the more pleasing and inveigling, being governed by a good wit, and set off with a kind of gracefulness that was natural unto him. Is it not thus, as I recall, O Lord my God, thou Judge of my conscience? Before thee my heart still is, and my remembrance too; thou who didst at that time direct me by the hidden secret of thy Providence, and didst turn those shameful errors of mine before my face, that I might see and hate them.

CHAP. VI

Ps. l. 21

Digitized by Google

VII

CAP VII

Nam posteaquam ille mihi imperitus earum artium, quibus eum excellere putaveram, satis apparuit, desperare coepi posse mihi eum illa, quae me movebant, aperire atque dissolvere; quorum quidem ignarus posset veritatem tenere pietatis, sed si Manichaeus non esset. libri quippe eorum pleni sunt longissimis fabulis de caelo et de sideribus et sole et luna: quae mihi eum, quod utique cupiebam, conlatis numerorum rationibus, quas alibi ego legeram, utrum potius ita essent, ut Manichaei libris continebatur, an certe vel par etiam inde ratio redderetur, subtiliter explicare posse iam non arbitrabar. quae tamen ubi consideranda et discutienda protuli, modeste sane ille nec ausus est subire ipsam sarcinam. noverat enim se ista non nosse, nec eum puduit confiteri. non erat de talibus, quales multos loquaces passus eram, conantes ea me docere et dicentes nihil. iste vero cor habebat, etsi non rectum ad te, nec tamen nimis incautum ad se ipsum. non usquequaque imperitus erat imperitiae suae, et noluit se temere disputando in ea coartari, unde nec exitus ei ullus nec facilis esset reditus. etiam hinc mihi amplius placuit: pulchrior est enim temperantia confitentis animi, quam illa, quae nosse cupiebam. et

Digitized by Google

VII

He falls off from the Manichees

FOR after that he had sufficiently appeared to me to be thus ignorant of those arts in which I thought he had excelled; I began to despair that he should ever open and untie these difficulties which so much perplexed me; of which though a man were ignorant, he might yet hold fast the truth of piety, provided he were not a Manichee. For their books are fraught with far-fetched fables, of the heaven, and the stars, of the sun and of the moon; which I, having compared with the calculations I had read of otherwhere, did not hereafter hold him any ways able exactly to resolve me in (which I much desired), whether those things should be rather so, as in the Manichees' books they were contained, or that some as sufficient reason might at least be fetched out of them. Which queries when I had offered to be considered upon and discussed, he, modestly, to say truth, had not the boldness to undergo that burden; for he knew of his own ignorance in these arts, nor was he ashamed to confess as much. For none of those prating fellows he was, many of which I had been troubled withal, that would undertake to instruct me in these arts, and at last say nothing to the purpose. But this man bare a mind, though not right towards thee, yet not too rash towards himself: for he was not altogether ignorant of his own ignorance; nor was he willing rashly to engage himself in a dispute, whence he could neither get off, nor retire fairly. And even for this did I like the better of him: for fairer appears the modesty of a confessing mind, than those things which I then desired to be informed of. And

CHAP. VII

Digitized by Google

CAP VII eum in omnibus difficilioribus et subtilioribus quaestionibus talem inveniebam.

Refracto itaque studio, quod intenderam in Manichaei litteras, magisque desperans de ceteris eorum doctoribus, quando in multis, quae me movebant, ita ille nominatus apparuit, coepi cum eo pro studio illius agere vitam, quo ipse flagrabat in eas litteras, quas tunc iam rhetor Karthaginis adulescentes docebam; et legere cum eo, sive quae ille audita desideraret, sive quae ipse tali ingenio apta existimarem. ceterum conatus omnis meus, quî proficere in illa secta statueram, illo homine cognito prorsus intercidit; non ut ab eis omnino separarer, sed quasi melius quicquam non inveniens eo, quo iam quoquo modo inrueram, contentus interim esse decreveram, nisi aliquid forte, quod magis eligendum esset, eluceret. ita ille Faustus, qui multis laqueus mortis extitit, meum quo captus eram relaxare iam coeperat nec volens nec sciens. manus enim tuae, deus meus, in abdito providentiae tuae, non deserebant animam meam, et sanguine cordis matris meae per lacrimas eius diebus et noctibus pro me sacrificabatur tibi, et egisti mecum miris modis. tu illud egisti, deus meus. nam a domino gressus hominis diriguntur, et viam eius volet. aut quae procuratio salutis praeter manum tuam reficientem quae fecisti?

Digitized by Google

at this guard I found him lying, in all those more difficult and more subtle questions. CHAP. VII

My edge being thus taken off, which I had keenly directed towards the Manichee's doctrine; and despairing more of the performance of their other doctors; seeing in divers things which had stumbled me, this so famous Faustus had so appeared; I began with him to take the same course of life, according to that study which he was very hot upon, in that kind of learning, in which at that time being a rhetoric reader in Carthage, I instructed young students; and I began to read with him, either what himself desired to hear, or such stuff as I judged fit for such a wit. But all my endeavour, by which I purposed to proceed in that sect, upon knowledge of that man, began utterly to faint in me; not that I as yet brake with them altogether; but as one not finding anything better than that course, upon which I had some way or other thrown myself, I resolved to stay where I was awhile, until by chance something else might appear, which I should see more cause to make choice of. And thus that Faustus, who had been the very snare of death unto divers, had now, nor willing nor knowing, begun to unbind the snare in which I was fettered. For thy hands, O Lord my God, out of the secret of thy providence, did not now forsake my soul; and out of the blood of my mother's heart, through her tears night and day poured out, hadst thou a sacrifice made for me; and thou proceededst with me by strange and secret ways. It was thy doing, O my God: for the steps of a man are Ps. xxxvii 23 directed by the Lord, and he shall dispose his way. For how shall we procure salvation, but from thy hand, that repairs whatsoever thou hast made?

Digitized by Google

VIII

CAP. VIII Egisti ergo mecum, ut mihi persuaderetur Romam pergere, et potius ibi docere quod docebam Carthagini. et hoc unde mihi persuasum est, non praeteribo confiteri tibi; quoniam et in his altissimi tui recessus et praesentissima in nos misericordia tua cogitanda et praedicanda est. non ideo Romam pergere volui, quod maiores quaestus maiorque mihi dignitas ab amicis, qui hoc suadebant, promittebatur—quamquam et ista ducebant animum tunc meum—sed illa erat causa maxima et paene sola, quod audiebam quietius ibi studere adulescentes et ordinatiore disciplinae cohercitione sedari, ne in eius scholam, quo magistro non utuntur, passim et proterve inruant, nec eos admitti omnino, nisi ille permiserit.

Contra apud Carthaginem foeda est et intemperans licentia scholasticorum: inrumpunt inpudenter et prope furiosa fronte perturbant ordinem, quem quisque discipulis ad proficiendum instituerit. multa iniuriosa faciunt, mira hebetudine et punienda legibus, nisi consuetudo patrona sit, hoc miseriores eos ostendens, quo iam quasi liceat faciunt, quod

Digitized by Google

VIII

He takes a Voyage to Rome, against the will of his Mother

THOU dealtest with me therefore, that I should be persuaded to go to Rome, and teach there, rather than at Carthage. And how I came to be persuaded to this, I will not neglect to confess unto thee; because hereby thy most profound secrets, and thy most ready mercy towards us, may be considered upon and professed. I had no intent for this cause to go towards Rome, that greater gettings, and higher preferments were warranted me by my friends which persuaded me to the journey, (though these hopes likewise drew on my mind at that time); but there was another great reason for it, which was almost the only reason, that I had heard how young men might follow their studies there more quietly, and were kept under a stricter course of discipline; that they might not at their pleasure, and in insolent manner, rush in upon that man's school, where their own master professed not, no nor come within the doors of it, unless he permitted it. CHAP. VIII

But at Carthage, on the other side, reigns a most uncivil and unruly licentiousness amongst the scholars. They break in audaciously, and almost with Bedlam looks, disturb all order which any master hath propounded for the good of his scholars. Divers outrages do they commit, with a wonderful stupidness, deserving soundly to be punished by the laws, were not custom a defendress of them; declaring them to be the more miserable, because they do

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII per tuam aeternam legem numquam licebit; et inpune se facere arbitrantur, cum ipsa faciendi caecitate puniantur, et incomparabiliter patiantur peiora, quam faciunt. ergo quos mores cum studerem meos esse nolui, eos cum docerem cogebar perpeti alienos; et ideo placebat ire, ubi talia non fieri omnes qui noverant indicabant. verum autem tu, spes mea et portio mea in terra viventium, ad mutandum terrarum locum pro salute animae meae et Carthagini stimulos, quibus inde avellerer, admovebas, et Romae inlecebras, quibus adtraherer, proponebas mihi, per homines, qui diligunt vitam mortuam, hinc insana facientes, inde vana pollicentes: et ad corrigendos gressus meos utebaris occulte et illorum et mea perversitate. nam et qui perturbabant otium meum, foeda rabie caeci erant, et qui invitabant ad aliud, terram sapiebant. ego autem, qui detestabar hic veram miseriam, illic falsam felicitatem appetebam.

Sed quare hinc abirem et illuc irem, tu sciebas, deus, nec indicabas mihi nec matri, quae me profectum atrociter planxit, et usque ad mare secuta est. sed fefelli eam violenter me tenentem, ut aut revocaret aut mecum pergeret, et finxi me amicum nolle deserere, donec vento facto navigaret. et

Digitized by Google

as if it were lawful, what by thy eternal law shall never be so: and they suppose they escape unpunished all this while, whereas they be enough punished with the blindness which they do it with, and that they already suffer things incomparably worse than what they do. These men's manners therefore when I was a student, I would never fashion myself unto, though when I set up school I was fain to endure them from others: and for this cause was I desirous to go, where all those that knew it, assured me, that there were no such insolencies committed. But thou, O my Refuge and my Portion in the land of the living, to force me to change my dwelling for the salvation of my soul, didst prick me forward with goads at Carthage, with which I might be driven thence, and madest proffer of certain allurements at Rome, by which I might be drawn thither: even by men who were in love with a dying life, now playing mad pranks, then promising vain hopes: and, for the reforming of my courses, didst thou make secret use both of their perverseness and of mine own too. For both they that disturbed my quiet, were blinded with a base madness, and those that invited me to another course, savoured merely of earth. But I myself, who here detested true misery, aspired there to a false felicity.

CHAP. VIII

Ps. cxlii. 3

But the cause why I went from thence, and went thither, thou knewest, O God; yet didst thou neither discover it to me, nor to my mother, who heavily bewailed my journey, and followed me as far as the seaside. But I deceived her, though holding me by force, that either I should go back with her, or she might go along with me: for I feigned that I had a friend whom I could not leave, till I saw him with a fair wind under sail. Thus I made a lie

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII mentitus sum matri, et illi matri, et evasi; quia et hoc tu dimisisti mihi misericorditer servans me ab aquis maris plenum exsecrandis sordibus usque ad aquam gratiae tuae; qua me abluto siccarentur flumina maternorum oculorum, quibus pro me cotidie tibi rigabat terram sub vultu suo. et tamen recusanti sine me redire vix persuasi, ut in loco, qui proximus nostrae navi erat, memoria beati Cypriani, maneret ea nocte. sed ea nocte clanculo ego profectus sum, illa autem non; mansit orando et flendo. et quid a te petebat, deus meus, tantis lacrimis, nisi ut navigare me non sineres? sed alte consulens, et exaudiens cardinem desiderii eius, non curasti quod tunc petebat, ut me faceres quod semper petebat. flavit ventus et implevit vela nostra, et litus subtraxit aspectibus nostris, in quo mane illa insaniebat dolore et querellis et gemitu implebat aures tuas contemnentis ista, cum et me cupiditatibus raperes ad finiendas ipsas cupiditates, et illius carnale desiderium iusto dolorum flagello vapularet. amabat enim secum praesentiam meam more matrum, sed multis multo amplius; et nesciebat, quid tu illi gaudiorum facturus esses de absentia mea. nesciebat, ideo flebat et eiulabat, atque illis cruciatibus arguebatur in ea

Digitized by Google

to my mother, and to so good a mother too, and so got away from her: for this also hast thou mercifully forgiven me, preserving me from the waters of the sea, then full of execrable filthiness, landing me safe at the water of thy Grace; that so soon as I were purged with this, those floods of my mother's eyes should be dried up, with which for my sake she daily watered the ground under her face, in prayer unto thee. Yet refusing to return without me, I with much ado persuaded her to stay that night in a place hard by our ship, where there was an oratory erected in memory of St. Cyprian. That night I privily stole aboard, but she did not: she tarried behind in weeping and prayer. And what, O Lord, requested she with those tears, but that thou wouldst not suffer me to sail away from her? But thou profoundly providing, and fearing the main point of her desire, didst not at that time regard her petition, that thou mightest bring that to pass in me, which she had always begged of thee. The wind blew fair, and swelled our sails, and the shore withdrew itself from our sight. There on the morrow she fell into an extreme passion of sorrow, and with complaints and lamentations she even filled thine ears, which did for that little seem to regard them: when through the strength of mine own desires, thou didst hurry me away, that thou mightest at once put an end to those same desires: and that her carnal affection towards me might be justly punished by the scourge of sorrows. For she much doted on my company, as mothers use to do, yea much more fondly than many mothers: and little knew she how great a joy thou wert about to work for her out of my absence. She knew nothing of it, therefore did she weep and lament; proving herself by those tortures to be guilty of what Eve left

CHAP. VIII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII reliquiarium Evae, cum gemitu quaerens quod cum gemitu pepererat. et tamen post accusationem fallaciarum et crudelitatis meae, conversa rursum ad deprecandum te pro me abiit ad solita, et ego Romam.

IX

CAP. IX ET ecce excipior ibi flagello aegritudinis corporalis, et ibam iam ad inferos, portans omnia mala, quae conmiseram et in te et in me et in alios, multa et gravia super originalis peccati vinculum, quo omnes in Adam morimur. non enim quicquam eorum mihi donaveras in Christo, nec solverat ille in cruce sua inimicitias, quas tecum contraxeram peccatis meis. quomodo enim eas solveret in cruce phantasmatis, quod de illo credideram? quam ergo falsa mihi videbatur mors carnis eius, tam vera erat animae meae; et quam vera erat mors carnis eius, tam falsa vita animae meae, quae id non credebat. et ingravescentibus febribus, iam ibam et peribam. quo enim irem, si hinc tunc abirem, nisi in ignem atque tormenta digna factis meis in veritate ordinis tui? et hoc illa nesciebat, et tamen pro me orabat absens. tu autem, ubique praesens, ubi erat exaudiebas eam, et ubi eram miserebaris mei, ut recuperarem salutem corporis

Digitized by Google

behind her; with sorrow seeking, what she had brought forth in sorrow. But having at last made an end of accusing me of false and hard dealing with her, she betook herself again to entreat thy favour for me, and returned home: and I went on towards Rome. CHAP. VIII

IX

Of a shrewd Fever that he fell into

BUT lo, there was I welcomed with the rod of bodily sickness, and I was even ready to go to hell, carrying with me all those sins which I had committed, both against thee, and myself, yea, many and grievous offences against others, over and above that bond of original sin, whereby we all die in Adam. For thou hadst not yet forgiven me any of them in Christ, nor had he yet slain that enmity by his Cross which by my sins I had incurred against thee: and how indeed could he on the cross of a phantom, which was my belief of it? How false therefore the death of his flesh seemed unto me, so true was the death of my soul; and how true the death of his body was, so false was the life of my soul, which did not believe the death of his body. My fever now growing more violent upon me, I was at the point of going and perishing: for whither should I have gone, had I died at that time, but into fire and torments such as my misdeeds were worthy of in the truth of thy decree? Of all this nothing knew my mother, yet continued she to pray for me although in absence. But thou who art present everywhere, heardest her where she was, and hadst compassion upon me whereas I was; so that I CHAP. IX Eph. ii. 16

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX adhuc insanus corde sacrilego. neque enim desiderabam in illo tanto periculo baptismum tuum, et melior eram puer, quo illum de materna pietate flagitavi, sicut iam recordatus atque confessus sum. sed in dedecus meum creveram, et consilia medicinae tuae demens irridebam, qui non me sivisti talem bis mori. quo vulnere si feriretur cor matris, numquam sanaretur. non enim satis eloquor, quid erga me habebat animi et quanto maiore sollicitudine me parturiebat spiritu, quam carne pepererat. non itaque video, quomodo sanaretur, si mea talis illa mors transverberasset viscera dilectionis eius. et ubi essent tantae preces, tam crebrae sine intermissione? nusquam nisi ad te. an vero tu, deus misericordiarum, sperneres cor contritum et humiliatum viduae castae ac sobriae, frequentantis elemosynas, obsequentis atque servientis sanctis tuis, nullum diem praetermittentis oblationem ad altare tuum, bis die, mane et vespere, ad ecclesiam tuam sine ulla intermissione venientis, non ad vanas fabulas et aniles loquacitates, sed ut te audiret in tuis sermonibus et tu illam in suis orationibus? huiusne tu lacrimas, quibus non a te aurum et argentum petebat nec aliquod nutabile aut volubile bonum, sed salutem animae filii sui, tu, cuius munere talis erat, contemneres et repelleres ab auxilio tuo? nequaquam, domine, immo

Digitized by Google

recovered health of body thereupon, though sorely CHAP. IX crazed as yet in my sacrilegious heart. For I had not in that danger desired thy baptism, and I was better affected being but a youth when I had begged it of my mother's devotion, as I have before recited and confessed. But I had from thenceforth grown worse and worse, to my own shame: and now stark mad I scoffed at those precepts of that physic of thine, by which thou wouldst not suffer me to die two deaths at once: with which wound should my mother's heart have been gored, it could never have been cured. For I want words to express the affection she bare towards me, and with how much vehementer anguish she was now in labour of me in the spirit, than she had been at her childbearing in the flesh. I cannot possibly see, therefore, how she could have been cured, had so unchristian a death of mine once strucken through the bowels of her love. And where should then have been those passionate prayers of hers, so frequent and incessant in all places? Nowhere but with thee. But wouldst thou, O God of Mercies, have despised that contrite and humble 1 Tim. v. 10 heart of that chaste and sober widow, so frequent in alms-deeds, so obsequious and serviceable to thy saints, who passed no day without her oblation at thine Altar, never missing twice a day morning and evening to come to church; not to listen after idle tales and old wives' chat, but that she might hear thee speaking to her in thy sermons, and thou her, in her prayers? Couldst thou despise and reject without succour those tears of hers, with which she begged no gold or silver of thee, nor any mutable or fading good; but the salvation of her son's soul only? Couldst thou do it, by whose grace she was inspired to do this? By no means, Lord. Yea, thou wert

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX vero aderas et exaudiebas et faciebas ordine, quo praedestinaveras esse faciendum. absit, ut tu falleres eam in illis visionibus et responsionibus tuis, quae iam commemoravi et quae non commemoravi, quae illa fideli pectore tenebat et semper orans tamquam chirographa tua ingerebat tibi. dignaris enim, quoniam in saeculum misericordia tua, eis quibus omnia debita dimittis, etiam promissionibus debitor fieri.

X

CAP. X Recreasti ergo me ab illa aegritudine, et salvum fecisti filium ancillae tuae tunc interim corpore, ut esset cui salutem meliorem atque certiorem dares. et iungebar etiam tunc Romae falsis illis atque fallentibus sanctis: non enim tantum auditoribus eorum, quorum e numero erat etiam is, in cuius domo aegrotaveram et convalueram, sed eis etiam, quos electos vocant. adhuc enim mihi videbatur non esse nos, qui peccamus, sed nescio quam aliam in nobis peccare naturam, et delectabat superbiam meam extra culpam esse, et cum aliquid mali fecissem, non confiteri me fecisse, ut sanares animam meam, quoniam peccabat

Digitized by Google

still at hand, and thou heardest her, and thou didst all in the selfsame order thou hadst predestinated it should be done in. Let it never be thought thou shouldst deceive her in those visions and answers she had of thee; both those which I have already mentioned, and those which I have not mentioned; all which she laid up in her faithful heart, which in her prayers ever and anon she would press thee withal, as with thine own handwriting. For thou (because thy mercy endureth for ever) vouchsafest unto those whose debts thou forgivest thoroughly, even to become a kind of debtor by thy promises. CHAP. IX

X

His Errors before his receiving the Doctrine of the Gospel

Thou recoveredst me therefore of that sickness, and healedst the son of thy handmaid at that time in his body, that he might remain, for thee to bestow upon him a health far better and more certain. And I joined myself in Rome even at that time with those deceiving and deceived holy ones: not only with their disciples, (of whom mine host was one, in whose house I fell sick and recovered) but also with those whom they call the elect. For I was hitherto of the opinion, that it was not we ourselves that sinned, but I know not what other nature in us; and it much delighted my proud conceit, to be set outside of fault; and when I had committed any sin, not to confess I had done any, that thou mightest heal my soul when I had sinned against thee: but I loved to excuse CHAP. X

Digitized by Google

CAP. X tibi, sed excusare me amabam, et accusare nescio quid aliud, quod mecum esset et ego non essem. verum autem totum ego eram, et adversus me inpietas mea me diviserat: et id erat peccatum insanabilius, quo me peccatorem non esse arbitrabar; et execrabilis iniquitas, te, deus omnipotens, te in me ad perniciem meam, quam me a te ad salutem, malle superari.

Nondum ergo posueras custodiam ori meo et ostium continentiae circum labia mea, ut non declinaret cor meum in verba mala, ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis cum hominibus operantibus iniquitatem, et ideo adhuc combinabam cum electis eorum: sed tamen desperans in ea falsa doctrina me posse proficere, eaque ipsa, quibus, si nil melius reperirem, contentus esse decreveram, iam remissius neglegentiusque retinebam.

Etenim suborta est etiam mihi cogitatio, prudentiores illos ceteris fuisse philosophos, quos Academicos appellant, quod de omnibus dubitandum esse censuerant, nec aliquid veri ab homine comprehendi posse decreverant. ita enim et mihi liquido sensisse videbantur, ut vulgo habentur, etiam illorum intentionem nondum intellegenti. nec dissimulavi eundem hospitem meum reprimere a nimia fiducia, quam sensi eum habere de rebus fabulosis, quibus Manichaei libri pleni sunt. amicitia tamen eorum familiarius utebar quam ceterorum hominum, qui in illa haeresi non

Digitized by Google

myself, and to accuse I know not what other corruption that I bare about me, and that was not I. But verily it was I myself altogether, and mine own impiety had made the division in me: and that sin of mine was the more incurable, for that I did not judge myself to be a sinner; and most execrable iniquity it was, that I had rather have thee, O God Almighty, even thee I say, to be overcome by me to mine own destruction, than myself to be overcome of thee, to mine own salvation. CHAP. X

Thou hadst not yet therefore set a watch before my mouth, and kept the door of my lips, that my heart might not incline to wicked speeches, to the making of those excuses of my sins with the men that work iniquity: and even therefore continued I still combined with their elect ones. But yet now as it were despairing much to profit myself in that false doctrine, even those opinions of theirs (with which if I could chance upon no better, I was resolved to rest contented) I began to be something more remiss and careless in the holding. Ps. cxli. 3, 4

For there rose a conceit in me that those philosophers which they call Academics, should be wiser than the rest, for that they held men ought to make a doubt upon everything, and decreed that no truth can be comprehended by man: for thus to me they seemed clearly to have thought, as it is commonly received, even though I did not yet understand their meaning. And as free and open I was to dissuade that host of mine, from that too much confidence, which I perceived him to settle upon those fabulous opinions which the Manichees' books are full of. And yet I made more familiar use of their friendship, than I did of other men's that were not of this heresy. Yet did I not maintain it with my ancient fire,

Digitized by Google

CAP. X fuissent. nec eam defendebam pristina animositate, sed tamen familiaritas eorum—plures enim eos Roma occultabat—pigrius me faciebat aliud quaerere, praesertim desperantem in ecclesia tua, domine caeli et terrae, creator omnium visibilium et invisibilium, posse inveniri verum, unde me illi averterant: multumque mihi turpe videbatur credere figuram te habere humanae carnis, et membrorum nostrorum lineamentis corporalibus terminari. et quoniam cum de deo meo cogitare vellem, cogitare nisi moles corporum non noveram—neque enim videbatur mihi esse quicquam, quod tale non esset—ea maxima et prope sola causa erat inevitabilis erroris mei.

Hinc enim et mali substantiam quandam credebam esse talem, et habere suam molem, tetram et deformem sive crassam, quam terram dicebant, sive tenuem atque subtilem, sicuti est aeris corpus: quam malignam mentem per illam terram repentem imaginantur. et quia deum bonum nullam malam naturam creasse qualiscumque me pietas credere cogebat, constituebam ex adverso sibi duas moles, utramque infinitam, sed malam angustius, bonam grandius, et ex hoc initio pestilentioso me cetera sacrilegia sequebantur. cum enim conaretur animus meus recurrere in catholicam fidem, repercutiebatur, quia non erat catholica fides, quam esse arbitrabar. et magis pius mihi videbar, si te, deus meus, cui confitentur ex me miserationes

Digitized by Google

but yet did my familiarity with that sect (of whom Rome shelters many) make me slower to seek out any other way: especially seeing I now despaired, O Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of all visible and invisible things, to find the truth in thy Church, which they had quite put me out of conceit with. And it then seemed a very unseemly thing to believe thee to have the shape of our human flesh, and to be girt up in the bodily lineaments of our members. And because that when I had a desire to meditate upon my God, I knew not how to think of him, but as of a bulk of bodies, (for that seemed to me not to be anything, which was not such) this was the greatest, and almost the only cause of my inevitable misprision.

For hence it was that I believed evil to have been a kind of substance, and had a bulk of earth belonging to it, either deformed and gross, which they called earth; or else thin and subtle, (like the body of the air): which they imagine to be some ill-natured mind gliding through the earth. And for that I know not what imperfect piety, constrained me to believe that the good God never created any evil nature; I supposed two bulks, contrary to one another, both infinite, but the evil to be lesser, and the good larger: and out of this pestilent foundation, other sacrilegious conceits followed upon me. For when my mind endeavoured to have recourse back unto the Catholic faith, I was still staved off again, for that that indeed was not the Catholic faith which I believed to have been. And I thought myself more reverent, if I should have believed thee, O my God, (to whom thy mercies wrought in me do now confess) to be infinite in other parts, although on that side by which evil was set in opposition unto thee, I

Digitized by Google

CAP. X tuae, vel ex ceteris partibus infinitum crederem, quamvis ex una, qua tibi moles mali opponebatur, cogerer finitum fateri, quam si ex omnibus partibus in corporis humani forma te opinarer finiri. et melius mihi videbar credere nullum malum te creasse—quod mihi nescienti non solum aliqua substantia, sed etiam corporea videbatur, quia et mentem cogitare non noveram nisi eam subtile corpus esse, quod tamen per loci spatia diffunderetur—quam credere abs te esse qualem putabam naturam mali. ipsum quoque salvatorem nostrum, unigenitum tuum, tamquam de massa lucidissimae molis tuae porrectum ad nostram salutem ita putabam, ut aliud de illo non crederem nisi quod possem vanitate imaginari. talem itaque naturam eius nasci non posse de Maria virgine arbitrabar, nisi carni concerneretur. concerni autem et non coinquinari non videbam, quod mihi tale figurabam. metuebam itaque credere incarnatum, ne credere cogerer ex carne inquinatum. nunc spiritales tui blande et amanter ridebunt me, si has confusiones meas legerint; sed tamen talis eram.

Digitized by Google

was constrained to confess thee to be finite, than if in all parts I should imagine thee to be finitely concluded within the shape of an human body. And it seemed safer for me to believe thee to have never created any evil, (which to ignorant me seemed not some substance only, but to be corporeal also: for that I could not hit to think of any mind, unless it should be a subtle body, and that diffused too through space) than to believe anything could come from thee of that condition, which I imagined the nature of evil to be. Yea, and our Saviour himself, thy only Begotten, I thought of as thrust out, as it were, for our salvation, from the most bright mass of thy Substance, in such a way that I could believe no other thing of him, than that I was able to imagine by mine own vain fancy. Such a nature therefore I thought could never be born of the Virgin Mary, unless it were incorporated into her flesh: and how that which I had on this fashion figured out to myself should be incorporated, and not therewithal defiled, I saw not. I feared therefore to believe Christ to be born in the flesh, lest I should be enforced also to believe that he was defiled by the flesh. Now will thy spiritual children in a mild and loving manner laugh at me, when they shall read these my confusions. But such a man I then was.

Digitized by Google

XI

CAP. XI DEINDE quae illi in scripturis tuis reprehenderant defendi posse non existimabam: sed aliquando sane cupiebam cum aliquo illorum librorum doctissimo conferre singula, et experiri, quid inde sentiret. iam enim Elpidii cuiusdam adversus eosdem Manichaeos coram loquentis et disserentis sermones etiam apud Carthaginem movere me coeperant, cum talia de scripturis proferret, quibus resisti non facile posset. et inbecilla mihi responsio videbatur istorum; quam quidem non facile palam promebant, sed nobis secretius: cum dicerent scripturas novi testamenti falsatas fuisse a nescio quibus, qui Iudaeorum legem inserere Christianae fidei voluerunt, atque ipsi incorrupta exemplaria nulla proferrent. sed me maxime captum et offocatum quodam modo, deprimebant corporalia cogitantem moles illae, sub quibus anhelans in auram tuae veritatis liquidam et simplicem respirare non poteram.

Digitized by Google

XI

How he compared the Manichees' Tenets with the Catholics'

CHAP. XI

Furthermore, whatever these Manichees had found fault withal in thy Scriptures, I thought not possible to be defended: but yet verily had I a good will now and then to confer upon these several points with some man that were best skilled in those books, and to make experience what he thought of the matter. For the speech of one Elpidius, speaking and disputing face to face against the said Manichees, had already begun to stir me, even whilst I was at Carthage: when namely he produced such texts out of the Scriptures, which were not easily to be withstood. And the Manichees' answer seemed but very weak unto me: which answer they would not willingly deliver in public hearing, but amongst ourselves only in private: namely whenas they said, that the Scriptures of the New Testament had been corrupted by I know not whom, who were desirous to insert the Law of the Jews into the Christian faith: whereas themselves all this while brought not out any copies that had not been so corrupted. But me, strongly captivated, and stifled, as it were, with my thoughts about these corporeal phantasies, did these bulks keep down; under which struggling for the breath of thy truth, I was not able to take it in pure and untainted.

Digitized by Google

XII

CAP· XII Sedulo ergo agere coeperam, propter quod veneram, ut docerem Romae artem rhetoricam: et prius domi congregare aliquos, quibus et per quos innotescere coeperam. et ecce cognosco alia Romae fieri, quae non patiebar in Africa. nam re vera illas eversiones a perditis adulescentibus ibi non fieri manifestatum est mihi: "sed subito" inquiunt "ne mercedem magistro reddant, conspirant multi adulescentes et transferunt se ad alium, desertores fidei et quibus prae pecuniae caritate iustitia vilis est." oderat etiam istos cor meum, quamvis non perfecto odio. quod enim ab eis passurus eram, magis oderam fortasse quam eo, quod cuilibet inlicita faciebant. certe tamen turpes sunt tales, et fornicantur abs te, amando volatica ludibria temporum et lucrum luteum, quod cum adprehenditur manum inquinat, et amplectendo mundum fugientem, contemnendo te, manentem et revocantem, et ignoscentem redeunti ad te meretrici humanae animae. et nunc tales odi pravos et distortos, quamvis eos corrigendos diligam, ut pecuniae

Digitized by Google

XII

The cunning Tricks put at Rome by Scholars upon their Masters

DILIGENTLY therefore began I to put in practice that for which I came to Rome: that is, to teach rhetoric: and first of all, to draw some to my lodging, to whom, and through whose means, I began to be made known abroad: when lo, I came to know how that other misdemeanours were committed in Rome, which I did not endure in Africa. For those overturnings, 'tis true, committed by desperate young fellows, were not here practised, as it was plain to me: "but yet, said they, to avoid payment of their master's stipend, divers young scholars plot together, and all on a sudden, to avoid due payment to their masters, these promise-breakers, who for the love of money make no account of just dealing, remove themselves to another." These sharking companions my heart hated also, though not with a perfect hatred: for I more hated them, perchance, for that myself was to suffer by them, than for that they played such dishonest pranks with every man. Such verily be but base fellows, and they play false with thee, in loving these fleeting mockeries of the times, and in gripping after this dirty gain, which when it is got hold of, bemires the hand; and in embracing this fleeing world, and in despising thee, who abidest ever, and who callest back, and grantest pardon to man's adulterated soul that returns unto thee. And now I much hate such wicked and perverse natures, though I could well love them

CHAP. XII

Ps. cxxxix. 22

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII doctrinam ipsam, quam discunt, praeferant, ei vero te, deum, veritatem et ubertatem certi boni et pacem castissimam. sed tunc magis eos pati nolebam malos propter me, quam fieri propter te bonos volebam.

XIII

CAP. XIII Itaque posteaquam missum est a Mediolanio Romam ad praefectum urbis, ut illi civitati rhetoricae magister provideretur, inpertita etiam evectione publica, ego ipse ambivi, per eos ipsos Manichaeis vanitatibus ebrios—quibus ut carerem ibam, sed utrique nesciebamus—ut dictione proposita me probatum praefectus tunc Symmachus mitteret. et veni Mediolanium ad Ambrosium episcopum, in optimis notum orbi terrae, pium cultorem tuum, cuius tunc eloquia strenue ministrabant adipem frumenti tui, et laetitiam olei, et sobriam vini ebrietatem, populo tuo. ad eum autem ducebar abs te nesciens, ut per eum ad te sciens ducerer. suscepit me paterne ille homo dei et peregrinationem meam satis episcopaliter dilexit. et eum amare coepi primo quidem non tamquam doctorem

Digitized by Google

were they to be amended; that they might prefer learning before their money; and above their learning esteem of thee, O God, the Truth and Fulness of all assured good, and the most chaste peace. But in those days I was even for mine own sake more unwilling to bear with those that dealt ill with me, than desirous that they should at last become good for thy sake. CHAP. XII

XIII

He goes to Milan to teach Rhetoric, and how St. Ambrose there entertains him

When therefore they of Milan had sent to Rome to the Prefect of the City, desiring to be furnished thence with a rhetoric master for their city, taking order also for the accommodating him in his journey upon the public charges, I put on to stand for the place, by means of those very men, drunken with Manichean vanities, (to be rid of whom I went away, yet did neither of us know it), and I procured that upon my making a public oration for the place, Symmachus (then Prefect of the City) should so far approve of me, as to send me thither. Well; unto Milan I came, to Bishop Ambrose, a man of the best fame all the world over, and thy devout servant; whose eloquent discourse did in those days plentifully dispense the fatness of thy wheat, the gladness of thy oil, and the sober overflowings of thy wine, unto the people. To him was I led by thee, unknowing, that by him I might be brought to thee, knowing it. That man of God entertained me fatherly, and approved of the cause of my coming, as became a bishop. I thenceforth began to love him: not at first verily CHAP. XIII Ps. i. 7, civ. 15

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIII veri, quod in ecclesia tua prorsus desperabam, sed tamquam hominem benignum in me. studiose audiebam disputantem in populo, non intentione, qua debui, sed quasi explorans eius facundiam, utrum conveniret famae suae, an maior minorve proflueret, quam praedicabatur; et verbis eius suspendebar intentus, rerum autem incuriosus et contemptor adstabam : et delectabar sermonis suavitate, quamquam eruditioris, minus tamen hilarescentis atque mulcentis, quam Fausti erat, quod attinet ad dicendi modum. ceterum rerum ipsarum nulla conparatio: nam ille per Manichaeas fallacias aberrabat, ille autem saluberrime docebat salutem. sed longe est a peccatoribus salus, qualis ego tunc aderam. et tamen propinquabam sensim, et nesciens.

XIV

CAP. XIV Cum enim non satagerem discere quae dicebat, sed tantum quemadmodum dicebat audire—ea mihi quippe, desperanti ad te viam patere homini, inanis cura remanserat—veniebant in animum meum simul cum verbis, quae diligebam, res etiam, quas neglegebam. neque enim ea dirimere poteram. et dum

Digitized by Google

as a teacher of the truth, (which I utterly despaired to find in thy Church), but as a man of courteous usage to me. I very diligently heard him preaching to the people; although, not with so good a frame of mind as I ought, but as it were, trying his eloquence, whether it were answerable to the fame that went of him, or whether the stream were more or less than was said of him; and I weighed every word of his very attentively, but of the matter I was careless and scornful. And verily with the sweetness of his discourse I was much delighted: which, however it were more learned, yet was it not so pleasing and inveigling as Faustus his was, the manner of the oratory I mean, though for the matter there was no comparison. For Faustus did but rove up and down amongst his Manichean fallacies; but Ambrose taught salvation most soundly. But salvation is far enough from sinners, such as I was at that instant; and yet I drew by little and little nearer toward it; but how, I knew not. CHAP. XIII

XIV

Upon his hearing of St. Ambrose, he by little and little falls off from his errors

For though I took little heed to hearken to what he spake, but merely to the way how he delivered them: (for that empty care was now only left in me, I despairing utterly to find a way how man should come unto thee): yet together with his words which I liked, the things also themseves which I neglected, stole in upon my mind; for I knew not how to part them: and whilst I opened my heart to entertain, CHAP. XIV

CAP. XIV cor aperirem ad excipiendum, quam diserte diceret, pariter intrabat et quam vera diceret, gradatim quidem. nam primo etiam ipsa defendi posse mihi iam coeperunt videri, et fidem catholicam, pro qua nihil posse dici adversus oppugnantes Manichaeos putaveram, iam non inpudenter asseri existimabam, maxime audito uno atque altero, et saepius aenigmate soluto de scriptis veteribus, ubi, cum ad litteram acciperem, occidebar. spiritaliter itaque plerisque illorum librorum locis expositis, iam reprehendebam desperationem meam illam dumtaxat, qua credideram legem et prophetas detestantibus atque irridentibus resisti omnino non posse. nec tamen iam ideo mihi catholicam viam tenendam esse sentiebam; quia et ipsa poterat habere doctos adsertores suos, qui copiose et non absurde obiecta refellerent: nec ideo iam damnandum illud, quod tenebam, quia defensionis partes aequabantur. ita enim catholica non mihi victa videbatur, ut nondum etiam victrix appareret. tunc vero fortiter intendi animum, si quo modo possem certis aliquibus documentis Manichaeos convincere falsitatis. quod si possem spiritalem substantiam cogitare, statim machinamenta illa omnia solverentur et abicerentur ex animo meo: sed non poteram.

Verum tamen de ipso mundi huius corpore, omnique natura, quam sensus carnis attingeret, multo probabiliora plerosque sensisse philosophos magis

Digitized by Google

how eloquently he expressed it, there also entered with it, only by degrees, how truly he proved it. For first of all the things began to appear unto me as possible to be defended: and the Catholic faith, in defence of which I thought nothing could be answered to the Manichees' arguments, I now concluded with myself, might well be maintained without absurdity: especially after I had heard one or two hard places of the Old Testament resolved now and then; which when I understood literally, I was slain. Many places therefore of those books having been spiritually expounded, I blamed mine own desperate conceit, whereby I had believed, that the Law and the Prophets could no way be upheld against those that hated and scorned them. Yet did I not resolve for all this, that the Catholic way might be held safely; seeing it might have its teachers and maintainers, which might be able both copiously and not absurdly, to answer some objections made against it: nor yet did I conceive that my former way ought to be condemned, because that both sides of the defence were equal. For although the Catholic party seemed to me not to be overthrown, yet it appeared not to be altogether victorious. Earnestly hereupon did I bend my mind, to see if it were possible upon certain proofs to convince the Manichees of falsehood: and could I but once have taken into my thoughts that there should be any spiritual substance, all their strongholds had been beaten down, and cast utterly out of my mind; but I was not able. CHAP. XIV

Notwithstanding, concerning the body of this world, and the whole frame of nature, which the senses of our flesh can reach unto, I now more seriously considering upon, and comparing things together, judged divers of the Philosophers to have

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIV magisque considerans atque comparans iudicabam. itaque Academicorum more, sicut existimantur, dubitans de omnibus atque inter omnia fluctuans, Manichaeos quidem relinquendos esse decrevi; non arbitrans eo ipso tempore dubitationis meae in illa secta mihi permanendum esse, cui iam nonnullos philosophos praeponebam: quibus tamen philosophis, quod sine salutari nomine Christi essent, curationem languoris animae meae committere omnino recusabam. statui ergo tamdiu esse catechumenus in catholica ecclesia mihi a parentibus commendata, donec aliquid certi eluceret, quo cursum dirigerem.

Digitized by Google

held much the more probable opinions. After the manner therefore of the Academics (as they are supposed) doubting now of everything, and wavering up and down between all, I absolutely resolved, that the Manichees were to be abandoned; judging in that very time of my doubt, that I could not safely continue in that sect, before which I now preferred divers of the Philosophers: to which Philosophers notwithstanding, for that they were without the saving Name of Christ, I utterly refused to commit the curing of my languishing soul. This therefore I determined, so long to be a catechumen in the Catholic Church, (which had been so much commended unto me by my parents) till such time as some certain mark should appear, whereto I might steer my course. CHAP. XIV

Digitized by Google

BOOK VI

Digitized by Google

LIBER SEXTVS

I

CAP. I Spes mea a iuventute mea, ubi mihi eras et quo recesseras? an vero non tu feceras me, et discreveras me a quadrupedibus, et volatilibus caeli sapientiorem me feceras? et ambulabam per tenebras et lubricum, et quaerebam te foris a me, et non inveniebam deum cordis mei; et veneram in profundum maris et diffidebam et desperabam de inventione veri. iam venerat ad me mater pietate fortis, terra marique me sequens, et in periculis omnibus de te secura. nam et per marina discrimina ipsos nautas consolabatur, a quibus rudes abyssi viatores, cum perturbantur, consolari solent, pollicens eis perventionem cum salute, quia hoc ei tu per visum pollicitus eras. et invenit me periclitantem quidem graviter desperatione indagandae veritatis: sed tamen ei cum indicassem non me quidem iam esse Manichaeum, sed neque Catholicum Christianum, non, quasi inopinatum aliquid audierit, exiluit laetitia, cum iam secura fieret ex ea parte miseriae meae, in qua me, tamquam mortuum, resuscitandum tibi flebat,

Digitized by Google

THE SIXTH BOOK

I

How St. Augustine was neither Manichee, nor good Catholic

O thou my Hope even from my youth, where wert thou all this while, and whither wert thou gone? For hadst not thou created me, and set a distinction betwixt me and the beasts of the field, and made me wiser than the fowls of the air? Yet did I wander through the dark, and over the slippery, and I groped out of myself after thee, but found not the God of my heart; and drew near even to the bottom of the sea, and I distrusted, and despaired of ever finding out the truth. By this time came my mother unto me, (whom motherly piety had made adventurous) following me over sea and land, confident upon thee in all perils. For in the dangers upon the sea, she comforted even the mariners, (by whom the inexperienced passengers of the deep, use rather to be comforted) assuring them of a safe landing: because so much hadst thou assured her by a vision. She found me grievously endangered by a despair of ever finding out the truth. But when I had once discovered to her that I was no longer now a Manichee, nor fully yet a Catholic Christian, she did not leap for joy, as if she had heard of some unlooked-for news, seeing she had been satisfied before concerning that part of my misery, for which she bewailed me, as one dead, but as if there were good hopes of his reviving: laying me CHAP. I

Digitized by Google

CAP. I et feretro cogitationis offerebat, ut diceres filio viduae; Iuvenis, tibi dico, surge: et revivesceret et inciperet loqui, et traderes illum matri suae. nulla ergo turbulenta exultatione trepidavit cor eius, cum audisset ex tanta parte iam factum, quod tibi cotidie plangebat ut fieret, veritatem me nondum adeptum, sed falsitati iam ereptum: immo vero quia certa erat et quod restabat te daturum, qui totum promiseras, placidissime et pectore pleno fiduciae respondit mihi, credere se in Christo, quod priusquam de hac vita emigraret, me visura esset fidelem catholicum. et hoc quidem mihi. tibi autem, fons misericordiarum, preces et lacrimas densiores, ut accelerares adiutorium et inluminares tenebras meas: et studiosius ad ecclesiam currere et in Ambrosi ora suspendi, ad fontem salientis aquae in vitam aeternam. diligebat autem illum virum sicut angelum dei, quod per illum cognoverat me interim ad illam ancipitem fluctuationem iam esse perductum, per quam transiturum me ab aegritudine ad sanitatem, intercurrente artiore periculo, quasi per accessionem, quam criticam medici vocant, certa praesumebat.

Digitized by Google

forth upon the bier before thee, that thou mightest say unto the son of the widow, Young man, I say unto thee, arise; and he should sit up, and begin to speak, and thou shouldest deliver him to his mother. Her heart, therefore, panted not in any tumultuous kind of rejoicing, when she heard that to be already in so great part done, which she daily with tears desired of thee might be wholly done; namely, that though I had not yet attained the truth, yet that I was rescued from falsehood. Yea, rather, for that she was most certain, that thou wouldst one day perform the rest, who hadst promised the whole; most calmly, and with an heart full of confidence, she replied unto me; how she believed in Christ, that she should yet before she died, see me a true Catholic. And thus much said she to me. But to thee, O Fountain of Mercies, poured she forth more frequent prayers and tears, that thou wouldst hasten thy help, and enlighten my darkness: and more eagerly than ever would she run unto the church, and hang upon the lips of Ambrose, as a fountain of water that springeth up into life everlasting. For that man she loved as an angel of God, because she had heard that I had been brought by him in the mean time to that doubtful state of faith I was now in; and she felt sure that through this I was to pass from sickness unto health, some sharper conflict coming between, in another fit, as it were, which the physicians call the crisis.

CHAP. I

Luke vii. 14

Digitized by Google

II

CAP. II Itaque cum ad memorias sanctorum, sicut in Africa solebat, pultes et panem et merum adtulisset, atque ab ostiario prohiberetur: ubi hoc episcopum vetuisse cognovit, tam pie atque oboedienter amplexa est, ut ipse mirarer, quam facile accusatrix potius consuetudinis suae quam disceptatrix illius prohibitionis effecta sit. non enim obsidebat spiritum eius vinulentia eamque stimulabat in odium veri amor vini, sicut plerosque mares et feminas, qui ad canticum sobrietatis sicut ad potionem aquatam madidi nausiant. sed illa cum attulisset canistrum cum sollemnibus epulis, praegustandis atque largiendis, plus etiam quam unum pocillum pro suo palato satis sobrio temperatum, unde dignationem sumeret, non ponebat: et si multae essent quae illo modo videbantur honorandae memoriae defunctorum, idem ipsum unum, quod ubique poneret, circumferebat, quo iam non solum aquatissimo, sed etiam tepidissimo cum suis praesentibus per sorbitiones exiguas partiretur, quia pietatem ibi quaerebat, non voluptatem.

Digitized by Google

II

His Mother is turned from her country Superstitions

CHAP. II

WHENAS my mother therefore had one time brought unto the oratories erected in memory of the saints, as she was wont to do in Africa, certain cheesecakes, and bread and wine; and had been forbidden to do it by the sexton: so soon as ever she knew that the Bishop had forbidden this, she did so piously and obediently embrace the motion, that I myself wondered at it, that she should so easily be brought rather to blame her own country-custom, than to call the present countermand in question. For no wine bibbing besotted her spirit, nor did the love of wine provoke her to the hatred of the truth, as it doth to many, both men and women, who being a little whittled once, turn the stomach at a song of sobriety, as they would do at a draught of water. But she, when she had brought her basket of these usual junkets, which she meant to eat a little of first, and to give the rest away; never used to allow herself above one small pot of wine, well allayed with water, for her own sober palate, whence she might sip a mannerly draught. And if there were many oratories of the departed saints, that ought to be honoured in like manner, she still carried the selfsame pot about with her, to be used everywhere, which should not only be low allayed with water, but very lukewarm with carrying about: and this would she distribute to those that were about her by small sups: for she came to those places to seek devotion, and not pleasure.

Certain disorders at the memorial feasts had caused a service of song to be put in their place

Digitized by Google

CAP. II Itaque ubi comperit a praeclaro praedicatore atque antistite pietatis praeceptum esse, ista non fieri, nec ab eis qui sobrie facerent, ne ulla occasio se ingurgitandi daretur ebriosis; et quia illa quasi parentalia superstitioni gentilium essent simillima, abstinuit se libentissime: et pro canistro pleno terrenis fructibus, plenum purgatioribus votis pectus ad memorias martyrum afferre didicerat, ut et quod posset daret egentibus, et sic communicatio dominici corporis illic celebraretur, cuius passionis imitatione immolati et coronati sunt martyres.

Sed tamen videtur mihi, domine deus meus—et ita est in conspectu tuo de hac re cor meum—non facile fortasse de hac amputanda consuetudine matrem meam fuisse cessuram, si ab alio prohiberetur, quem non sicut Ambrosium diligebat. quem propter salutem meam maxime diligebat, eam vero ille, propter eius religiosissimam conversationem, qua in bonis operibus tam fervens spiritu frequentabat ecclesiam, ita ut saepe erumperet, cum me videret, in eius praedicationem, gratulans mihi, quod talem matrem haberem, nesciens, qualem illa filium, qui dubitabam de illis omnibus et inveniri posse viam vitae minime putabam.

Digitized by Google

So soon therefore as she found this custom to be countermanded by that most famous preacher, and the most pious prelate Ambrose, yea, forbidden even to those that would use it but soberly, that so no occasion of riot might thereby be given to such as loved drinking too well; and for that these funeral anniversary feasts, as it were, in honour of our dead fathers, did too nearly resemble the superstition of the Gentiles, she most willingly forbare it ever after: and instead of a basket filled with the fruits of the earth, she now had learned to present a breast replenished with purer petitions, at the oratories of the Martyrs; that she might give away what she could spare among the poor, and that the Communion of the Lord's Body might in that place be rightly celebrated, where, after the example of his Passion, these Martyrs had been sacrificed and crowned. CHAP. II

But for all this it seems to me, O Lord my God, and thus thinks my heart of it in thy sight: that my mother would not easily have given way to the breaking of her country-custom, had it been forbidden her by some other man, whom she had not loved so well as she did Ambrose; whom in regard of my salvation, she very entirely affected, and he her again, for her most religious conversation, whereby so full of good works, so fervent in the spirit, she frequented the church. Yea, so well he affected her, that he would very often when he saw me, break forth into her praises; congratulating with me, in that I had such a mother: little knowing in the mean time what a son she had of me; who doubted of all these things, and least of all imagined the way to life could possibly be found out.

Digitized by Google

III

CAP. III Nec iam ingemescebam orando, ut subvenires mihi, sed ad quaerendum intentus et ad disserendum inquietus erat animus meus, ipsumque Ambrosium felicem quendam hominem secundum saeculum opinabar, quem sic tantae potestates honorarent: caelibatus tantum eius mihi laboriosus videbatur. quid autem ille spei gereret, adversus ipsius excellentiae temptamenta quid luctaminis haberet, quidve solaminis in adversis, et occultum os eius, quod erat in corde eius, quam sapida gaudia de pane tuo ruminaret, nec conicere noveram nec expertus eram. nec ille sciebat aestus meos, nec foveam periculi mei. non enim quaerere ab eo poteram quod volebam, sicut volebam, secludentibus me ab eius aure atque ore catervis negotiosorum hominum, quorum infirmitatibus serviebat: cum quibus quando non erat, quod perexiguum temporis erat, aut corpus reficiebat necessariis sustentaculis aut lectione animum. sed cum legebat, oculi ducebantur per paginas et cor intellectum rimabatur, vox autem et lingua quiescebant. saepe, cum adessemus—non enim vetabatur quisquam ingredi aut ei venientem nuntiari mos erat—sic eum legentem vidimus tacite et aliter numquam, sedentesque in diuturno silentio—quis enim tam intento esse oneri

Digitized by Google

III

The Employments and Studies of St. Ambrose

NOR did I hitherto groan in my prayers that thou wouldest help me; but my unquiet mind was altogether intentive to seek for learning, and to dispute upon it. As for Ambrose himself, I esteemed him a very happy man according to the world, whom personages of such authority so much honoured; only his remaining a bachelor seemed a painful course unto me. But what hopes he carried about him, what strugglings he felt against the temptations his very eminence was subject unto, or what comfort he found in his adversities, and how savoury joys that mouth hidden in his heart fed upon in thy Bread, I neither knew how to guess at, nor had I yet any feeling of. As little on the other side knew he of my private heats, nor of the pit of my danger. For I had not the opportunity to make my demands unto him, what I would, or how I would; for that multitude of people full of business, whose infirmities he gave up himself unto, debarred me both from hearing and speaking with him. With whom when he was not taken up, (which was but a little time altogether) he either refreshed his body with necessary sustenance, or his mind with reading. But when he was reading, he drew his eyes along over the leaves, and his heart searched into the sense, but his voice and tongue were silent. Ofttimes when we were present (for no man was debarred of coming to him, nor was it his fashion to be told of anybody that came to speak with him) we still saw him reading to himself, and never otherwise: so that having long sat in silence (for who durst be so

CHAP. III

Digitized by Google

CAP. III auderet?—discedebamus; et coniectabamus eum parvo ipso tempore, quod reparandae menti suae nanciscebatur, feriatum ab strepitu causarum alienarum, nolle in aliud avocari; et cavere fortasse, ne auditore suspenso et intento, si qua obscurius posuisset ille quem legeret, etiam exponere esset necesse aut de aliquibus difficilioribus dissertare quaestionibus; atque huic operi temporibus impensis minus quam vellet voluminum evolveret: quamquam et causa servandae vocis, quae illi facillime obtundebatur, poterat esse iustior tacite legendi. quolibet tamen animo id ageret, bono utique ille vir agebat.

Sed certe mihi nulla dabatur copia sciscitandi quae cupiebam de tam sancto oraculo tuo, pectore illius, nisi cum aliquid breviter esset audiendum. aestus autem illi mei otiosum eum valde, cui refunderentur, requirebant, nec umquam inveniebant. et eum quidem in populo verbum veritatis recte tractantem omni die dominico audiebam; et magis magisque mihi confirmabatur omnes versutarum calumniarum nodos, quos illi deceptores nostri adversus divinos libros innectebant, posse dissolvi. ubi vero etiam conperi ad imaginem tuam hominem a te factum ab spiritalibus filiis tuis, quos de matre catholica per gratiam regenerasti, non sic intellegi, ut humani corporis forma te terminatum[1] crederent atque cogitarent, quamquam

[1] MSS. determinatum.

Digitized by Google

bold as to interrupt him, so intentive to his study?) we were fain to depart. We conjectured, that the small time which he gat for the repairing of his mind, he retired himself from the clamour of other men's businesses, being unwilling to be taken off for any other employment: and he was wary perchance too, lest some hearer being struck into suspense, and eager upon it, if the author he read should deliver anything obscurely, he should be put to it to expound it, or to discuss some of the harder questions; so that spending away his time about this work, he could not turn over so many volumes as he desired: although peradventure the preserving of his voice (which a little speaking used to weaken) might be a just reason for his reading to himself. But with what intent soever he did it, that man certainly had a good meaning in it.

But verily no opportunity could I obtain of propounding my demands, as I desired, to that so holy an oracle of thine, his breast, unless the thing might be heard very briefly. But those commotions in me, required to find him at his best leisure, that I might pour them out before him; but never could they find him so. Yet heard I him every Sunday, preaching the word of truth rightly to the people: by which that apprehension of mine was more and more confirmed in me, that all those knots of crafty calumnies, which those our deceivers had knit in prejudice of the Holy Books, might well enough be untied. But so soon as I understood withal, that man, created by thee after thine own image, was not so understood by thy spiritual sons, (whom of our Catholic Mother thou hast regenerated by thy Grace) as if they once believed or imagined thee to be confined in an human shape: although I had not the least

Digitized by Google

CAP. III quomodo se haberet spiritalis substantia, ne quidem tenuiter atque aenigmate suspicabar, tamen gaudens erubui non me tot annos adversus catholicam fidem, sed contra carnalium cogitationum figmenta latrasse. eo quippe temerarius et impius fueram, quod ea quae debebam quaerendo discere, accusando dixeram. tu autem, altissime et proxime, secretissime et praesentissime, cui membra non sunt alia maiora et alia minora, sed ubique totus es et nusquam locorum es, non es utique forma ista corporea, tamen fecisti hominem ad imaginem tuam, et ecce ipse a capite usque ad pedes in loco est.

IV

CAP. IV Cum ergo nescirem, quomodo haec subsisteret imago tua, pulsans proponerem, quomodo credendum esset, non insultans opponerem, quasi ita creditum esset. tanto igitur acrior cura rodebat intima mea, quid certi retinerem, quanto me magis pudebat, tam diu inlusum et deceptum promissione certorum, puerili errore et animositate tam multa incerta quasi certa garrisse. quod enim falsa essent, postea mihi claruit. certum tamen erat, quod incerta essent et a me aliquando

Digitized by Google

suspicion, nor so much as a confused notion, in what strange manner a spiritual substance should be: yet blushing did I rejoice, that I had not so many years barked against the Catholic faith, but against the fictions of carnal imaginations. But herein had I been rash and impious, that what I ought to have learned by inquiry, I had spoken of as condemning. For thou, O the most High, and the most Near; the most Secret and yet the most present with us; hast not such limbs, of which some be bigger, and some smaller; but art wholely everywhere, circumscribed in no certain place; nor art thou of such corporeal shape; yet hast thou made man after thine own image, and behold from head to foot is he contained in space. CHAP. III

IV

Of the Letter and the Spirit

BEING thus ignorant therefore in what manner this image of thine should subsist; I should have knocked and propounded the doubt, how that was to be believed; not triumphingly to have opposed against it, as if it were so believed. The anxiety therefore of resolving what certainty I was to hold, did so much the more sharply even gnaw my very bowels, by how much the more ashamed I was, that having been so long deceived by the promise of certainties, I had with a childish error and rashness, prated up and down of so many uncertainties, and that as confidently as if they had been certainties. For that they were mere falsehoods, it clearly appeared to me afterwards: yet even already was I certain, that they were at least CHAP. IV

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV pro certis habita fuissent, cum catholicam tuam caecis contentionibus accusarem, etsi nondum compertam vera docentem, non tamen ea docentem, quae graviter accusabam. itaque confundebar et convertebar, et gaudebam, deus meus, quod ecclesia unica, corpus unici tui, in qua mihi nomen Christi infanti est inditum, non saperet infantiles nugas; neque hoc haberet in doctrina sua sana, quod te creatorem omnium in spatium loci, quamvis summum et amplum, tamen undique terminatum, membrorum humanorum figura contruderet.

Gaudebam etiam, quod vetera scripta legis et prophetarum iam non illo oculo mihi legenda proponerentur, quo antea videbantur absurda, cum arguebam tamquam ita sentientes sanctos tuos; verum autem non ita sentiebant. et tamquam regulam diligentissime commendaret, saepe in popularibus sermonibus suis dicentem Ambrosium laetus audiebam: Littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat, cum ea, quae ad litteram perversitatem docere videbantur, remoto mystico velamento spiritaliter aperiret, non dicens quod me offenderet, quamvis ea diceret, quae utrum vera essent adhuc ignorarem. tenebam cor meum ab omni adsensione, timens praecipitium; et suspendio magis necabar. volebam enim eorum quae non viderem ita me certum fieri, ut certus essem, quod septem et tria decem sint. neque enim tam insanus

Digitized by Google

uncertain, and that I had all this while believed them for certain; whenas, namely out of a blind and contentious humour, I accused thy Catholic Church, which though I had not yet found to teach truly, yet found I it not to teach what I heartily accused it for teaching. In this manner was I first confounded, and then converted: and I much rejoiced, O my God, that thy only Church, the Body of thine only Son, (wherein the name of Christ had been put upon me being yet an infant), did not relish these childish toys; nor maintained any such tenets in her sound doctrine as to crowd up the Creator of this all under the shape of human members, into any proportions of a place, which, though never so great and so large, should yet be terminated and surrounded.

And for this I rejoiced also, for that the Old Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets, were laid before me now, to be perused, not with that eye to which they seemed most absurd before, whenas I misliked thy holy ones for thinking so and so: but indeed they did not think so. And with joyful heart I heard Ambrose in his sermons to the people, most diligently oftentimes recommend this text for a rule unto them, The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life: whilst those things which taken according to the letter seemed to teach perverse doctrines, he spiritually laid open to us, having taken off the veil of the mystery; teaching nothing in it that offended me, though such things he taught, as I knew not yet whether they were true or not. For I all this while kept my heart firm from assenting to anything, fearing to fall headlong; but by this hanging in suspense I was the worse killed: for my whole desire was to be made so well assured of those things which I saw not, as I was certain that seven and three make ten.

2 Cor. iii. 6

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV eram, ut ne hoc quidem putarem posse conprehendi, sed sicut hoc, ita cetera cupiebam, sive corporalia, quae coram sensibus meis non adessent, sive spiritalia, de quibus cogitare nisi corporaliter nesciebam. et sanari credendo poteram, ut purgatior acies mentis meae dirigeretur aliquo modo in veritatem tuam, semper manentem et ex nullo deficientem; sed, sicut evenire assolet, ut malum medicum expertus etiam bono timeat se conmittere, ita erat valetudo animae meae, quae utique nisi credendo sanari non poterat, et ne falsa crederet, curari recusabat, resistens manibus tuis, qui medicamenta fidei confecisti, et sparsisti super morbos orbis terrarum, et tantam illis auctoritatem tribuisti.

V

CAP. V Ex hoc tamen quoque, iam praeponens doctrinam Catholicam, modestius ibi minimeque fallaciter sentiebam iuberi, ut crederetur quod non demonstrabatur—sive esset quid, sed cui forte non esset, sive nec quid esset—quam illic temeraria pollicitatione scientiae credulitatem inrideri, et postea tam multa fabulosissima et absurdissima, quia demonstrari non poterant,

Digitized by Google

For I was not so mad yet, as to think that not even this last proposition might by demonstration be comprehended: but I desired to have other things as clearly demonstrated as this; both those things corporeal which were not present before my senses; and spiritual, whereof I knew not yet how to conceive, but after a corporeal manner. But by believing might I have been cured, that so the eyesight of my soul being cleared, might some way or other have been directed toward thy truth, which is the same eternally, and in no point failing. But as it happens usually to him that having had experience of a bad physician, is fearful afterwards to trust himself with a good: so it was with the state of my soul, which could no ways be healed but by believing; and lest it should believe falsehoods, it refused to be cured: resisting in the mean time thy hands, who first prepared for us the medicines of faith, and hast applied them to the diseases of the whole world, and given unto them so great authority. CHAP. IV

V

Of the Authority and necessary Use of the Holy Bible

From henceforth therefore I began first of all to esteem better of the Catholic doctrine, and also to think that it did with more modesty, and without any deceit, command that to be believed, which was not demonstrated (whether it could be so, but not to all, or whether it could not), than the Manichees' doctrine, which with its rash promise of great knowledge, exposed my easiness of belief first of all unto derision, and afterwards commanded me to believe so CHAP. V

Digitized by Google

CAP. V credenda imperari. deinde paulatim tu, domine, manu mitissima et misericordissima pertractans et conponens cor meum, consideranti, quam innumerabilia crederem, quae non viderem neque cum gererentur affuissem: sicut tam multa in historia gentium, tam multa de locis atque urbibus, quae non videram, tam multa amicis, tam multa medicis, tam multa hominibus aliis atque aliis, quae nisi crederentur, omnino in hac vita nihil ageremus, postremo quam inconcusse fixum fide retinerem, de quibus parentibus ortus essem, quod scire non possem, nisi audiendo credidissem: persuasisti mihi, non qui crederent libris tuis, quos tanta in omnibus fere gentibus auctoritate fundasti, sed qui non crederent, esse culpandos; nec audiendos esse, si qui forte mihi dicerent: "unde scis illos libros unius veri et veracissimi dei spiritu esse humano generi ministratos?" id ipsum enim maxime credendum erat: quoniam nulla pugnacitas calumniosarum quaestionum, per tam multa quae legeram inter se confligentium philosophorum, extorquere mihi potuit, ut aliquando non crederem te esse quidquid esses, quod ego nescirem, aut administrationem rerum humanarum ad te pertinere.

Sed id credebam aliquando robustius, aliquando exilius, semper tamen credidi et esse te et curam nostri gerere, etiamsi ignorabam vel quid sentiendum

Digitized by Google

many most fabulous and absurd things, because they could not be demonstrated. Next of all, thou Lord, by little and little, with a gentle and most merciful hand working and rectifying my heart; even while I took into my consideration how innumerable things I otherwise believed, which I had never seen, nor was present at while they were in doing: like as those many reports in the history of several nations, those many relations of places and of cities, which I had never seen: so many reports likewise of friends, so many of physicians, so many of these and these men, which unless we should believe, we should do nothing at all in this life: last of all, I considered, with how unalterable assurance I believed of what parents I was descended; which I could not otherwise come to know, had I not believed it upon hearsay: persuadedst me at last, that not they who believed thy Bible, (which with so great authority thou hast settled among all nations) but those who believed it not, were to be blamed, nor were those men to be listened unto, who would say perchance, How knowest thou those Scriptures to have been imparted unto mankind by the Spirit of the only true and most high God? For this fundamental point was above all the rest to be believed; because no wrangles of all those cavilling questions, whereof I had read so much amongst the Philosophers contradicting each other, could so far enforce me, as that I should at any time not believe thee to be whatsoever thou wert, (though what I knew not) or that the government of human businesses should not belong unto thee. CHAP. V

Thus much though I sometimes believed more strongly, and more weakly other whiles, yet I ever believed, both that thou wert God, and hadst a

Digitized by Google

CAP. V esset de substantia tua, vel quae via duceret aut reduceret ad te. ideoque cum essemus infirmi ad inveniendam liquida ratione veritatem, et ob hoc nobis opus esset auctoritate sanctarum litterarum, iam credere coeperam nullo modo te fuisse tributurum tam excellentem illi scripturae per omnes iam terras auctoritatem, nisi et per ipsam tibi credi et per ipsam te quaeri voluisses. iam enim absurditatem, quae me in illis litteris solebat offendere, cum multa ex eis probabiliter exposita audissem, ad sacramentorum altitudinem referebam; eoque mihi illa venerabilior et sacrosancta fide dignior apparebat auctoritas, quo et omnibus ad legendum esset in promptu, et secreti sui dignitatem in intellectu profundiore servaret, verbis apertissimis et humillimo genere loquendi se cunctis praebens, et exercens intentionem eorum, qui non sunt leves corde; ut exciperet omnes populari sinu, et per angusta foramina paucos ad te traiceret, multo tamen plures, quam si nec tanto apice auctoritatis emineret, nec turbas gremio sanctae humilitatis hauriret. cogitabam haec et aderas mihi, suspirabam et audiebas me, fluctuabam et gubernabas me, ibam per viam saeculi latam nec deserebas.

Digitized by Google

care of us, though I were utterly ignorant, either what was to be thought of thy substance, or what way led or brought back again towards thee. Seeing therefore mankind would prove too weak to find out the truth by the way of evident reason, and for this cause was there need of the authority of Holy Writ: I began now to believe that thou wouldst by no means have stated such excellency of authority upon that book all the world over, had it not been thy express pleasure to have thine own self both believed in by means of it, and sought by it also. For those absurdities which in those Scriptures were wont to offend me, after I had heard divers of them expounded probably, I referred now to the depth of the mystery: yea, and the authority of that Book appeared so much the more venerable, and so much the more worthy of our religious credit, by how much the readier at hand it was for all to read upon, preserving yet the majesty of the secret under the profoundness of the meaning, offering itself unto all in words most open, and in a style of speaking most humble, and exercising the attention of such as are not light of heart; that it might by that means receive all into its common bosom, and through narrow passages, waft over some few towards thee: yet are these few a good many more than they would have been, had it not obtained the eminency of such high authority, nor allured on those companies with a bosom of holy humility. These things then I thought upon, and thou wert with me: I sighed, and thou heardest me: I wavered up and down, and thou didst guide me: I wandered through the broad way of this world, yet didst thou not forsake me.

Digitized by Google

VI

CAP. VI Inhiabam honoribus, lucris, coniugio, et tu inridebas. patiebar in eis cupiditatibus amarissimas difficultates, te propitio tanto magis, quanto minus sinebas mihi dulcescere quod non eras tu. vide cor meum, domine, qui voluisti, ut hoc recordarer et confiterer tibi. nunc tibi inhaereat anima mea, quam de visco tam tenaci mortis exuisti. quam misera erat! et sensum vulneris tu pungebas, ut relictis omnibus converteretur ad te, qui es super omnia et sine quo nulla essent omnia, converteretur et sanaretur. quam ergo miser eram, et quomodo egisti, ut sentirem miseriam meam, die illo, quo, cum pararem recitare imperatori laudes, quibus plura mentirer, et mentienti faveretur ab scientibus, easque curas anhelaret cor meum et cogitationum tabificarum febribus aestuaret, transiens per quendam vicum Mediolanensem, animadverti pauperem mendicum, iam, credo, saturum iocantem atque laetantem. et ingemui et locutus sum cum amicis, qui mecum erant, multos dolores insaniarum nostrarum; quia omnibus talibus conatibus nostris,

Digitized by Google

VI

The Misery of the ambitious, shewn by the example of a Beggar

CHAP. VI

I GAPED after honours, gains, wedlock; and thou laughedst at me. In these desires of mine I underwent most bitter hardships: wherein thou wert so much the more gracious unto me, as thou didst less suffer anything to grow sweet unto me, which was not thou thyself. Behold now my heart, O Lord, who wouldest I should remember all this, that I might now confess it unto thee. Let now my soul cleave fast unto thee, which thou hast freed from that fast-holding birdlime of death. How wretched was it at that time! Thou didst pierce the wound on the quick, that forsaking all other things, it might turn to thee, who art above all, and without whom all things would turn to nothing: that it might, I say, turn and be healed. How miserable therefore was I! And how didst thou deal with me, to make me sensible of my misery! That same day, namely, when I was preparing an oration in praise of the Emperor, wherein I was to deliver many an untruth, and to be applauded for my untruth, even by those that knew I did so. Whilst my heart panted after these cares, and boiled again with the feverishness of these consuming thoughts; walking along one of the streets of Milan, I observed a poor beggar man, half drunk I believe, very jocund and pleasant upon the matter: but I looking mournfully at him, fell to discourse with my friends then in company with me, about the many sorrows occasioned by our own madness;

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI (qualibus tunc laborabam, sub stimulis cupiditatum trahens infelicitatis meae sarcinam, et trahendo exaggerans) nihil vellemus aliud nisi ad securam laetitiam pervenire, quo nos mendicus ille iam praecessisset, numquam illuc fortasse venturos. quod enim iam ille pauculis et emendicatis nummulis adeptus erat, ad hoc ego tam aerumnosis anfractibus et circuitibus ambiebam, ad laetitiam scilicet temporalis felicitatis.

Non enim verum gaudium habebat: sed et ego illis ambitionibus multo falsius quaerebam. et certe ille laetabatur, ego anxius eram, securus ille, ego trepidus. et si quisquam percontaretur me, utrum mallem exultare an metuere, responderem: "exultare"; rursus si rogaret, utrum me talem mallem, qualis ille, an qualis ego tunc essem, me ipsum curis timoribusque confectum eligerem, sed perversitate; numquid veritate? neque enim eo me praeponere illi debebam, quo doctior eram, quoniam non inde gaudebam, sed placere inde quaerebam hominibus, non ut eos docerem, sed tantum et placerem. propterea et baculo disciplinae tuae confringebas ossa mea.

Recedant ergo ab anima mea qui dicunt ei: "interest, unde quis gaudeat." gaudebat mendicus ille vinulentia, tu gloria. qua gloria, domine? quae non est in te. nam sicut verum gaudium non erat, ita nec illa vera gloria; et amplius vertebat mentem

Digitized by Google

for that by all such endeavours of ours, (under CHAP. VI
which I then laboured, and galled by the spurs of desire, dragged after me the burden of mine own infelicity, increasing it by the dragging) we had mind of nothing but how to attain some joy without care, whither that beggar man had arrived before us, who should never perchance come at all thither. For that which he had attained unto by means of a few pence, (and those begged too) the same was I now plotting for, by many a troublesome turning and winding; namely, to compass the joy of a temporary felicity.

For that beggar man verily enjoyed no true joy; but yet I with those my ambitious designs, hunted after a much uncertainer. And certainly that fellow was jocund, but I perplexed; he void of care, I full of fears. But should any man demand of me, whether I had rather be merry or fearful? I would answer, Merry. Again, were I asked, whether I had rather be in that beggar man's case, or in mine own at that time? I would make choice of mine own, though thus overgone with cares and fears; yet was this upon a wilfulness. For was it out of any true reason? For I ought not to prefer myself before that beggar, because I was more learned than he, seeing my learning was not it that made me joyful: but I sought rather to please men by it; not to instruct them, but merely to delight them. For this cause didst thou even break my bones with the staff of thy correction.

Away with those therefore from my soul, who say unto it; There is much difference betwixt the occasions of a man's rejoicing. That beggar man rejoiced in his drunkenness; thou in glory. What glory, Lord? That which is not in thee. For even as his was no true joy, no more was mine any true glory:

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI meam. et ille ipsa nocte digesturus erat ebrietatem suam, ego cum mea dormieram et surrexeram, et dormiturus et surrecturus eram; vide quot dies! interest vero, unde quis gaudeat, scio, et gaudium spei fidelis incomparabiliter distat ab illa vanitate. sed et tunc distabat inter nos: nimirum quippe ille felicior erat, non tantum quod hilaritate perfundebatur, cum ego curis eviscerarer, verum etiam quod ille bene optando adquisiverat vinum, ego mentiendo quaerebam typhum. dixi tunc multa in hac sententia caris meis; et saepe advertebam in his, quomodo mihi esset, et inveniebam male mihi esse; et dolebam et conduplicabam ipsum male; et si quid adrisisset prosperum, taedebat adprehendere, quia paene priusquam teneretur avolabat.

VII

CAP. VII CONGEMESCEBAMUS in his, qui simul amice vivebamus, et maxime cum Alypio et Nebridio ista conloquebar. quorum Alypius ex eodem quo ego eram ortus municipio, parentibus primatibus municipalibus, me minor natu. nam et studuerat apud me, cum in nostro

Digitized by Google

and it turned my head even more. He was that night to digest his drunkenness; but many a night had I slept with mine, and had risen again with it, and was to sleep again, and again to rise with it, how many days! But there is indeed a difference in the grounds of a man's rejoicing. I know there is, and that the joy of a faithful hope is incomparably beyond such a vanity. Yea, and at that very time was there much difference betwixt him and me: for he verily was the happier man; not only for that he was thoroughly drenched in mirth, whenas my bowels were gripped with cares: but also for that by his wishing good luck, he had gotten good store of wine; whereas I, by a flattering oration, sought after a mere puff of pride. Much to this purpose said I at that time to my dear companions: and I marked by them how it fared with me; and I found myself in an ill taking: I grieved for it, by which I doubled my ill taking; and when any prosperity smiled upon me, it irked me to catch at it; for that almost before I could lay hand upon it, away it flew from me. CHAP. VI

VII

He dissuades Alypius from his excessive delight in the Circensian Games

We jointly bemoaned ourselves for this, who lived like friends together; but chiefly and most familiarly did I speak hereof with Alypius and Nebridius: of whom Alypius was born in the same town with me, whose parents were of the chief rank there, and himself younger than I. For he had also studied under me, CHAP. VII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII oppido docere coepi, et postea Carthagini: et diligebat multum, quod ei bonus et doctus viderer, et ego illum, propter magnam virtutis indolem, quae in non magna aetate satis eminebat. gurges tamen morum Carthaginensium, quibus nugatoria fervent spectacula, absorbuerat eum in insaniam circensium. sed cum in eo miserabiliter volveretur, ego autem rhetoricam ibi professus publica schola uterer, nondum me audiebat ut magistrum propter quandam simultatem, quae inter me et patrem eius erat exorta. et compereram, quod circum exitiabiliter amaret, et graviter angebar, quod tantam spem perditurus vel etiam perdidisse mihi videbatur. sed monendi eum et aliqua coercitione revocandi nulla erat copia, vel amicitiae benevolentia vel iure magisterii. putabam enim eum de me cum patre sentire, ille vero non sic erat. itaque postposita in hac re patris voluntate, salutare me coeperat veniens in auditorium meum, et audire aliquid atque abire.

Sed enim de memoria mihi lapsum erat agere cum illo, ne vanorum ludorum caeco et praecipiti studio tam bonum interimeretur ingenium. verum autem, domine, tu, qui praesides gubernaculis omnium, quae creasti, non eum oblitus eras, futurum inter filios tuos antistitem sacramenti tui: et ut aperte tibi tribueretur eius correctio, per me quidem illam, sed nescientem, operatus es. nam quodam die cum sederem

Digitized by Google

first, when I set up school in our own town, and at Carthage afterwards. He loved me very much, because I seemed of a good disposition to him, and well learned: and I loved him again, for his great towardness to virtue, which was eminent enough for one of no great years. But that whirlpit of those Carthaginian fashions, amongst whom those idle spectacles are hotly followed, had already swallowed up him in immoderate delight of the Circensian sports. But mean while that he was miserably tumbled up and down that way, and I professing rhetoric there, had set up a public school: he made no use of me as his master, by reason of some unkindness risen betwixt his father and me. Although therefore I had found how dangerously he doted upon the race-place, and that I were grievously perplexed that he took the course to undo so good a hope as was conceived of him, or rather as methought he had already undone it: yet had I no means, either privately to advise him, and by way of constraint to reclaim him, or by interest of a friendship, or the awe of a master. For I supposed verily, that he had the same opinion of me with his father; but he was not of that mind. Laying aside therefore his father's quarrel, he began to salute me, coming sometimes into my school, to hear a little and be gone.

However, I had forgotten to deal with him, that he should not for a blind and headstrong desire of such vain pastimes undo so good a wit. But thou, O Lord, thou who sittest at the helm of all thou hast created, hadst not forgotten him, who was one day to prove a chief priest of thy Sacraments; and that his amendment might plainly be attributed to thyself, thou truly broughtest it about by my means, who yet knew nothing of it. For whenas one day I sat in my

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII loco solito, et coram me adessent discipuli, venit, salutavit, sedit, atque in ea quae agebantur intendit animum. et forte lectio in manibus erat, quam dum exponerem et oportune mihi adhibenda videretur similitudo circensium, quo illud quod insinuabam et iucundius et planius fieret, et cum inrisione mordaci eorum, quos illa captivasset insania, scis tu, deus noster, quod tunc de Alypio ab illa peste sanando non cogitaverim. at ille in se rapuit, meque illud non nisi propter se dixisse credidit; et quod alius acciperet ad suscensendum mihi, accepit honestus adulescens ad suscensendum sibi, et ad me ardentius diligendum. dixeras enim tu iam olim et innexueras litteris tuis: corripe sapientem, et amabit te.

At illum ego non corripueram, sed utens tu omnibus et scientibus et nescientibus, ordine quo nosti—et ille ordo iustus est—de corde et lingua mea carbones ardentes operatus es, quibus mentem spei bonae adureres tabescentem ac sanares. taceat laudes tuas, qui miserationes tuas non considerat, quae tibi de medullis meis confitentur. etenim vero ille post illa verba proripuit se ex fovea tam alta, qua libenter demergebatur et cum mira voluptate caecabatur, et excussit animum forti temperantia, et resiluerunt omnes circensium sordes ab eo, ampliusque illuc non accessit. deinde patrem reluctantem

Digitized by Google

accustomed place, with my scholars before me, in came he, saluted me, sat him down, and applied his mind to what I then handled. I had by chance a passage then in hand, which that I might the better illustrate, it seemed very seasonable to me to make use of a similitude borrowed from the Circensian races; both to make that which I insinuated more pleasant and more plain, and to give a biting quip withal, at those whom that madness had enthralled. God, thou knowest, that I little thought at that time of curing Alypius of that pestilence. But he took it to himself, and conceived that I merely intended it towards him; and what another man would have made an occasion of being angry with me, that good young man made a reason of being offended at himself, and to love me the more fervently. For thou hadst said it long ago, and put it into thy Book, Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

CHAP. VII

Prov. ix. 8

But for my part, I meant no rebuke towards him: but 'tis thou who makest use of all men, both knowing or not knowing, in that order which thyself knowest, and that order is just. Out of my heart and tongue thou wroughtest burning coals, by which thou mightest set on fire that languishing disposition of his, of which so good hopes had been conceived, and mightest cure it. Let such a one conceal thy praises, who considereth not of thy mercies, which my very marrow confesses unto thee. For he upon that speech, heaved himself out of that pit so deep, wherein he had wilfully been plunged, and was hoodwinked with the wretched pastime of it; and roused up his mind with a well resolved moderation; whereupon all those filths of the Circensian pastimes flew off from him, nor came he ever at them afterwards. Upon this, prevailed

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII evicit, ut me magistro uteretur: cessit ille atque concessit. et audire me rursus incipiens, illa mecum superstitione involutus est, amans in Manichaeis ostentationem continentiae, quam veram et germanam putabat. erat autem illa vecors et seductoria, pretiosas animas captans nondum virtutis altitudinem scientes tangere, et superficie decipi faciles, sed tamen adumbratae simulataeque virtutis.

VIII

CAP. VIII NON sane relinquens incantatam sibi a parentibus terrenam viam, Romam praecesserat, ut ius disceret, et ibi gladiatorii spectaculi hiatu incredibili et incredibiliter abreptus est. cum enim aversaretur et detestaretur talia, quidam eius amici et condiscipuli, cum forte de prandio redeuntibus pervium esset, recusantem vehementer et resistentem, familiari violentia duxerunt in amphitheatrum crudelium et funestorum ludorum diebus, haec dicentem: "si corpus meum in locum illum trahitis, numquid et animum et oculos meos in illa spectacula potestis intendere? adero itaque absens, ac sic et vos et illa superabo." quibus auditis illi nihilo setius eum adduxerunt secum, id ipsum forte explorare

Digitized by Google

he with his unwilling father, that he might be one of my scholars. He yielded and condescended: so that Alypius beginning to be my auditor again, was bemuffled in the same superstition with me, loving that ostentation of continency in the Manichees, which he supposed to be true and unfeigned. But verily no better it was than a senseless and a seducing continency, ensnaring precious souls, not able yet to reach to the height of virtue, and easy to be beguiled with a fair outside, of that which was but a shadowed and a feigned virtue. CHAP. VII

VIII

Alypius is taken with a delight of the Sword-plays, which before he hated

He not forsaking that worldly course which his parents had charmed him to pursue, went before me to Rome, to study the laws, where he was incredibly carried away with an incredible greediness for the sword players. For being utterly against and detesting such spectacles, when he was one day by chance met withal by divers of his acquaintance and fellow-students coming from dinner, they with a familiar kind of violence, haled him (vehemently denying and resisting them) along into the Amphitheatre, on a time when these cruel and deadly shows were exhibited; he thus protesting: "Though you hale my body to that place, and there set me, can you after that force me to give my mind, and lend my eyes to these shows? I shall therefore be absent even while I am present, and so shall I overcome both you and them too." His companions hearing these words, led him on never the slower, CHAP. VIII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII cupientes, utrum posset efficere. quo ubi ventum est et sedibus quibus potuerunt locati sunt, fervebant omnia inmanissimis voluptatibus. ille clausis foribus oculorum interdixit animo, ne in tanta mala procederet. atque utinam et aures opturasset! nam quodam pugnae casu, cum clamor ingens totius populi vehementer eum pulsasset, curiositate victus, et quasi paratus, quidquid illud esset, etiam visum contemnere et vincere, aperuit, et percussus est graviore vulnere in anima quam ille in corpore, quem cernere concupivit, ceciditque miserabilius quam ille, quo cadente factus est clamor: qui per eius aures intravit et reseravit eius lumina, ut esset, qua feriretur et deiceretur audax adhuc potius quam fortis animus, et eo infirmior, quo de se praesumpserat, qui debuit de te. ut enim vidit illum sanguinem, inmanitatem simul ebibit; et non se avertit, sed fixit aspectum, et hauriebat furias et nesciebat, et delectabatur scelere certaminis, et cruenta voluptate inebriabatur. et non erat iam ille, qui venerat, sed unus de turba, ad quam venerat, et verus eorum socius, a quibus adductus erat. quid plura? spectavit, clamavit, exarsit, abstulit inde secum insaniam, qua stimularetur redire, non tantum cum illis, a quibus

Digitized by Google

desirous perchance to try, whether he could be as good as his word or no. When they were come thither, and had taken their places as they could, all that round grew hot with hideous gloating. But Alypius closing up the doors of his eyes, forbade his mind to range abroad after such mischiefs; and I would that he had stopped his ears also. For upon the fall of one in the fight, a mighty cry of the people beating strongly upon him, he (being overcome by curiosity, and as it were prepared, whatsoever it were, to contemn it even when seen, and to overcome it) opened his eyes, and was struck with a deeper wound in his soul, than the other was in his body, whom he desired to behold: and he presently fell more miserably than the sword-player did, upon whose fall that mighty noise was raised. Which noise entered through his ears, and unlocked his eyes, to make way for the striking and beating down of his soul, which was bold rather than valiant heretofore; and so much the weaker, for that it had trusted on itself, which ought only to have trusted on thee. For so soon as he saw the blood, he at the very instant drunk down a kind of savageness; nor did he turn away his head, but fixed his eye upon it, drinking up unawares the very Furies themselves; being much taken with the barbarousness of the sword-fight, and even drunk again with that bloodthirsty joy. Nor was he now the man he was when he came first thither, but become one of the throng he came unto; yea, an entire companion of theirs that brought him thither. What shall I say more? He looked on, he cried out for company, he was inflamed with it, carried home such a measure of madness as spurred him on to come another time: and that not only in their

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII abstractus est, sed etiam prae illis et alios trahens. et inde tamen manu validissima et misericordissima eruisti eum tu, et docuisti eum non sui habere, sed tui fiduciam; sed longe postea.

IX

CAP. IX VERUM tamen iam hoc ad medicinam futuram in eius memoria reponebatur. nam et illud, quod, cum adhuc studeret iam me audiens apud Carthaginem, et medio die cogitarat in foro quod recitaturus erat, sicut exerceri scholastici solent, sivisti eum conprehendi ab aeditimis fori tamquam furem, non arbitror aliam ob causam te permisisse, deus noster, nisi ut ille vir tantus futurus iam inciperet discere, quam non facile in noscendis causis homo ab homine damnandus esset temeraria credulitate. quippe ante tribunal deambulabat solus cum tabulis ac stilo, cum ecce adulescens quidam ex numero scholasticorum, fur verus, securim clanculo apportans, illo non sentiente, ingressus est ad cancellos plumbeos, qui vico argentario desuper praeminent, et praecidere plumbum coepit. sono autem securis audito submurmuraverunt argentarii, qui subter erant, et miserunt qui adprehenderent quem forte invenissent. quorum

Digitized by Google

company who first haled him on, but to run before them too, yea, and hale on others also. Yet out of all this didst thou with a most strong and merciful hand pluck him notwithstanding, and taughtest him to repose no more confidence in himself, but upon thee only. But this was not till a great while after. CHAP. VIII

IX

Alypius was apprehended for suspicion of thievery

But thus much laid he up in his memory for a medicine hereafter: as that also which fell out when he was yet my scholar at Carthage: where meditating at noon time once in the market place, upon something he was to say by heart (as scholars use to be exercised) thou sufferedst him to be apprehended by the officers of the market place for a thief. For no other cause, I suppose, didst thou, O our God, suffer it, but that he, who was hereafter to prove so great a man, should now begin to learn, that in judging of causes man was not to be condemned by man out of a rash credulity. For as he was walking by himself before the place of judgment, with his noting tables and his pen, behold a young man of the number of the students, (who was the right thief indeed) privily bringing a hatchet with him (Alypius never perceiving him) gat in as far as the leaden grate-works which cover the street of the silversmiths, and began to chop in sunder the lead. But the noise of the hatchet being heard, the silversmiths that were underneath began to mutter, and sent forth to apprehend whom ever they should find. But the thief hearing their voices, ran away, leaving his hatchet behind CHAP IX

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX vocibus auditis, relicto instrumento, ille discessit timens, ne cum eo teneretur. Alypius autem, qui non viderat intrantem, exeuntem sensit et celeriter vidit abeuntem, et causam scire cupiens ingressus est locum; et inventam securim stans atque admirans considerabat, cum ecce illi, qui missi erant, reperiunt eum solum ferentem ferrum, cuius sonitu exciti venerant: tenent, adtrahunt, congregatis inquilinis fori tamquam furem manifestum se conprehendisse gloriantur, et inde offerendus iudiciis ducebatur. sed hactenus docendus fuit. statim enim, domine, adfuisti innocentiae, cuius testis eras tu solus. cum enim duceretur, vel ad custodiam vel ad supplicium, fit eis obviam quidam architectus, cuius maxima erat cura publicarum fabricarum. gaudent illi eum potissimum occurrisse, cui solebant in suspicionem venire ablatarum rerum, quae perissent de foro, ut quasi tandem iam ille cognosceret, a quibus haec fierent. verum autem viderat homo saepe Alypium in domo cuiusdam senatoris, ad quem salutandum ventitabat; statimque cognitum manu adprehensa semovit a turbis, et tanti mali causam quaerens, quid gestum esset, audivit, omnesque tumultuantes, qui aderant, et minaciter frementes iussit venire secum. et venerunt ad domum illius adulescentis, qui rem conmiserat. puer vero erat ante ostium, et tam parvus erat, ut nihil exinde domino suo metuens, facile posset

Digitized by Google

him, fearing to be taken with it. Alypius now, who spied him not when he came in, perceived him as he went out, and with what speed he made away, and being desirous to know what the matter was, went into the place; where finding the hatchet, he stood still a while, admiring and considering upon it; when behold, those that were sent, find him alone with the hatchet in his hand, startled by the noise whereof they had made thither: they lay hold upon him, hale him away, and gathering the neighbours dwelling in the market place about them, they congratulate one another for taking so notorious a felon, leading him away to the justice thereupon. But no further was Alypius to be instructed. For presently, O Lord, camest thou to the succour of his innocency, whereof thou wert the only witness. For as he was led along, (either to prison or execution) there encountered them a certain architect, who had the charge of the public buildings. Glad they were to meet him of all the rest, for that they were used to fall under his suspicion of stealing goods, lost out of the market place; that he might take notice at length by whom these kind of cheats were used to be played. But that party had divers times seen Alypius at a certain Senator's house, whom he often came to visit; who presently taking knowledge of him, took him aside by the hand, and privately enquiring the occasion of that mischance, heard the whole carriage of the business from him; and bade all that rabble (all in an uproar, and threatening of Alypius) to go along with him. And to the house they came of that young man who had committed the fact: where, behold, there was a boy before the door, who was so little, as having not the wit to fear doing his master any hurt by it, was likely enough to disclose the

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX totum indicare; cum eo quippe in foro fuit pedisecus. quem posteaquam recoluit Alypius, architecto intimavit. at ille securim demonstravit puero quaerens ab eo, cuius esset. qui confestim "nostra" inquit; deinde interrogatus aperuit cetera. sic in illam domum translata causa, confusisque turbis, quae de illo triumphare iam coeperant, futurus dispensator verbi tui, et multarum in ecclesia tua causarum examinator, experientior instructiorque discessit.

X

CAP. X HUNC ergo Romae inveneram, et adhaesit mihi fortissimo vinculo, mecumque Mediolanium profectus est, ut nec me desereret, et de iure, quod didicerat, aliquid ageret secundum votum magis parentum quam suum. et ter iam adsederat mirabili continentia ceteris, cum ille magis miraretur eos, qui aurum innocentiae praeponerent. temptata est quoque eius indoles, non solum de inlecebra cupiditatis sed etiam stimulo timoris. Romae adsidebat comiti largitionum Italicianarum. erat eo tempore quidam potentissimus senator, cuius et beneficiis obstricti multi et terrori subditi erant. voluit sibi licere

Digitized by Google

whole matter unto them: for he had followed his master to the market place. Whom so soon as ever Alypius remembered, he told the architect of him: and he showing the hatchet to the boy, asked him whose that was? "Ours," quoth he presently; and being further questioned upon the matter, he discovered everything. Thus was the burglary laid upon the master of that house, and the rude multitude ashamed, which had already begun to triumph over Alypius, who was hereafter to be a dispenser of thy Word, and an examiner of many causes in thy Church: who went away now, better experienced and instructed by this accident. CHAP. IX

X

Of the great Integrity of Alypius, and of Nebridius' coming

THIS Alypius therefore I afterwards lit upon at Rome; where he knit in with me with a most strong tie; whence he went with me to Milan, both that he might not break company with me, and that he might withal practise something in the law he had applied himself unto: rather to fulfil his parents' desire, than his own. There had he thrice already sat as an Assessor for Justice, with a freedom from bribery that was the wonder of the rest: he wondering at others rather, who preferred gold before honesty. His disposition was tested besides, not only with a bait of covetousness, but with the spur of fear also. At Rome he had been Assessor to the Count of the Italian Bounties. There was at that time a most potent Senator, to whose favours many stood engaged, whom many also were much afraid of. CHAP. X

Digitized by Google

CAP. X nescio quid ex more potentiae suae, quod esset per leges inlicitum; restitit Alypius. promissum est praemium; inrisit animo. praetentae minae; calcavit, mirantibus omnibus inusitatam animam, quae hominem tantum, et innumerabilibus praestandi nocendique modis ingenti fama celebratum, vel amicum non optaret vel non formidaret inimicum. ipse autem iudex, cui consiliarius erat, quamvis et ipse fieri nollet, non tamen aperte recusabat, sed in istum causam transferens ab eo se non permitti adserebat, quia et re vera, si ipse faceret, iste discederet. hoc solo autem paene iam inlectus erat studio litterario, ut pretiis praetorianis codices sibi conficiendos curaret; sed consulta iustitia, deliberationem in melius vertit, utiliorem iudicans aequitatem, qua prohibebatur, quam potestatem, qua sinebatur. parvum est hoc; sed qui in parvo fidelis est, et in magno fidelis est, nec ullo modo erit inane, quod tuae veritatis ore processit: si in iniusto mamona fideles non fuistis, verum quis dabit vobis? et si in alieno fideles non fuistis, vestrum quis dabit vobis? talis tunc ille inhaerebat mihi, mecumque nutabat in consilio, quisnam esset tenendus vitae modus.

Digitized by Google

This great man would needs by his usual power, have a thing pass the court, which by the laws was utterly forbidden: Alypius crossed it. A bribe was promised him, he with all his heart despised it. Threats were used, he trampled them under foot: all men in the mean time admiring so rare a spirit, which either desired not such a man (so infinitely famed for the innumerable means he had, either to do a man a good or a shrewd turn) to be his friend, or feared not to have him for his enemy. As for the Judge himself, in whose court Alypius was Assessor, although for his own part he were unwilling to have it pass, yet did he not openly cross it, but put the matter off to this Alypius; pretending that by him he was not suffered to do it: for verily if he should have offered it, Alypius would have gone off the bench. But one thing there was that did almost tempt him by his love of learning; that, namely, he might get himself a library at such under-prices as the Praetors had their books at. But consulting with justice, he altered his purpose to the better; esteeming equity to be more gainful, by which he was prohibited that course, than power could be, upon which he might take the liberty. All this hitherto said of him, is but little: but he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much. Nor can that possibly be to no purpose spoken, which proceeded out of the mouth of thy Truth: If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? Such a man as I have described, did he at that time join himself unto me; and wavered in his purpose as I did, what course of life was to be taken.

CHAP. X

Luke xvi. 10

Luke xvi. 11

Luke xvi. 12

Digitized by Google

CAP. X Nebridius etiam, qui relicta patria vicina Carthagini atque ipsa Carthagine, ubi frequentissimus erat, relicto paterno rure optimo, relicta domo et non secutura matre, nullam ob aliam causam Mediolanium venerat, nisi ut mecum viveret in flagrantissimo studio veritatis atque sapientiae, pariter suspirabat pariterque fluctuabat, beatae vitae inquisitor ardens, et quaestionum difficillimarum scrutator acerrimus. et erant ora trium egentium, et inopiam suam sibimet invicem anhelantium, et ad te expectantium, ut dares eis escam in tempore opportuno. et in omni amaritudine, quae nostros saeculares actus de misericordia tua sequebatur, intuentibus nobis finem, cur ea pateremur, occurrebant tenebrae, et aversabamur gementes et dicebamus: "quamdiu haec?" et hoc crebro dicebamus et dicentes non relinquebamus ea, quia non elucebat certum aliquid, quod illis relictis adprehenderemus.

XI

CAP. XI Et ego maxime mirabar satagens et recolens, quam longum tempus esset ab undevicensimo anno aetatis meae, quo fervere coeperam studio sapientiae,

Digitized by Google

CHAP. X

Nebridius also, who having left his native country near Carthage, yea and Carthage itself, where for the most part he lived; leaving his father's lands, which were very rich; leaving his own house, and a mother behind, who was not ready to follow after him; was by this time come to Milan, and for no other reason neither, but that he might bestow himself with me in a most ardent desire after truth and wisdom. Together with me he sighed, and with me he wavered; still continuing a most ardent searcher after happiness, and a most acute examiner of the difficultest questions. Thus were there now gotten together the mouths of three beggars, sighing out their wants one to another, and waiting upon thee, that thou mightest give them their meat in due season. (Ps. cxlv. 15) And in much anguish of spirit (which by the disposing of thy mercy, still followed our worldly affairs) looking towards the end, why we should suffer all this, darkness beclouded us: whereupon we turned away mourning to ourselves, saying: How long will things continue at this stay? This we often said, but in saying so, we yet forsook not our errors; for that we yet discovered no certainty, which when we had forsaken them, we might betake ourselves unto.

XI

He deliberates what course of life he were best to take

CHAP. XI

And I admired extremely (pondering earnestly with myself, and examining of my memory) what a deal of time I had consumed since that nine and twentieth year of mine age, in which I began first to be

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI disponens, ea inventa, relinquere omnes vanarum cupiditatum spes inanes et insanias mendaces. et ecce iam tricenariam aetatem gerebam, in eodem luto haesitans aviditate fruendi praesentibus, fugientibus et dissipantibus me, dum dico: "cras inveniam; ecce manifestum apparebit, et tenebo; ecce Faustus veniet et exponet omnia. o magni viri Academici! nihil ad agendam vitam certi conprehendi potest? immo quaeramus diligentius et non desperemus. ecce iam non sunt absurda in libris ecclesiasticis, quae absurda videbantur, et possunt aliter atque honeste intellegi. figam pedes in eo gradu, in quo puer a parentibus positus eram, donec inveniatur perspicua veritas. sed ubi quaeretur? quando quaeretur? non vacat Ambrosio, non vacat legere. ubi ipsos codices quaerimus? unde aut quando conparamus? a quibus sumimus? deputentur tempora, distribuantur horae pro salute animae. magna spes oborta est: non docet catholica fides, quod putabamus et vani accusabamus. nefas habent docti eius credere deum figura humani corporis terminatum. et dubitamus pulsare, quo aperiantur cetera? antemeridianis horis discipuli occupant; ceteris quid facimus? cur non id agimus? sed quando

Digitized by Google

inflamed with the love of wisdom: resolving, when I had found that, to let pass all those empty hopes, and lying frenzies of vain desires. And behold I was now going of my thirtieth year, still sticking in the same clay; still possessed with a greediness of enjoying things present, they as fast flitting and wasting my soul; I still saying to myself, To-morrow I shall find it out, it will appear very plainly, and I shall understand it: and behold, Faustus the Manichee will come, and clear everything. O you great men, of the Academics' opinion: can no certain course for the ordering of our lives possibly be comprehended? nay, let us rather search the more diligently, and not despair of finding: for behold those things in the ecclesiastical books are not absurd to us now, which sometimes seemed so: for they may be otherwise, yea, and that honestly understood. I will henceforth pitch my foot upon that step, on which, being yet a child, my parents placed me, until such time as the clear truth may be found. But where about shall it be sought for? when shall it be sought for? Ambrose is not at leisure, nor have we ourselves any spare time to read. But where shall we find the books to read in? Whence, or when can we procure them, or from whom borrow them? Let set times be appointed, and certain hours distributed for the health of our souls. We now begin to conceive great hopes: the Catholic faith teaches not what we thought it had, whereof we vainly accused it: the learned men of that faith hold it for a detestable opinion, to believe God to be contained under the figure of a human body: and do we doubt to knock, that all the other mysteries may also be opened unto us? All the forenoons our scholars take up, what shall we do the rest of the

CHAP XI

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI salutamus amicos maiores, quorum suffragiis opus habemus? quando praeparamus quod emant scholastici? quando reparamus nos ipsos relaxando animo ab intentione curarum? pereant omnia et dimittamus haec vana et inania: conferamus nos ad solam inquisitionem veritatis. vita misera est, mors incerta est; subito obrepat—quomodo hinc exibimus? et ubi nobis discenda sunt quae hinc negleximus? ac non potius huius neglegentiae supplicia luenda? quid, si mors ipsa omnem curam cum sensu amputabit et finiet? ergo et hoc quaerendum. sed absit, ut ita sit. non vacat, non est inane, quod tam eminens culmen auctoritatis Christianae fidei toto orbe diffunditur. numquam tanta et talia pro nobis divinitus agerentur, si morte corporis etiam vita animae consumeretur. quid cunctamur igitur, relicta spe saeculi, conferre nos totos ad quaerendum deum et vitam beatam? sed expecta: iucunda sunt etiam ista, habent non parvam dulcedinem suam; non facile ab eis praecidenda est intentio, quia turpe est ad ea rursum redire. ecce iam quantum est, ut inpetretur aliquis honor. et quid amplius in his desiderandum? suppetit amicorum maiorum copia: ut nihil aliud

Digitized by Google

day? Why go we not about this? But when then shall we visit our greater friends, of whose favours we stand in need? What time shall we have to compose some discourse to sell to scholars? When shall we recreate ourselves, and unbend our minds from those cares they are too earnest upon? Let all these thoughts perish, let us give over these vain and empty fancies, and betake ourselves solely to search out the truth. Life is miserable; death uncertain; if it steals upon us on the sudden, in what case shall we go out of the world, and where shall we then learn what we have here neglected? Or rather, shall we not there suffer the due punishment of our negligence? If it be objected, that death will quite cut off both care and sense of all these things, and there's an end of them: then let that be first enquired into. But God forbid that it should be so. It is not for no purpose, 'tis no idle toy, that so eminent a height of authority which the Christian faith hath, is diffused all the world over. Never would such and so great blessings be by the Divine Providence wrought for us, if so be that together with the death of the body, the life of the soul should be brought to nothing also. Wherefore then delay we time any longer, that giving over our hopes of this world, we might give up ourselves wholly to seek after God and a happy life? But stay a while: even these worldly things are sweet, and they have some, and that no small, pleasure. We are not too lightly to divorce our purposes from them, for that it were a foul shame to make love again to them. See, 'tis no such great matter to obtain some office of honour; and what should a man desire more in this world? We have store of potent friends; not to push on for anything too

CHAP. XI

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI multum festinemus, vel praesidatus dari potest. et ducenda uxor cum aliqua pecunia, ne sumptum nostrum gravet, et ille erit modus cupiditatis. multi magni viri et imitatione dignissimi sapientiae studio cum coniugibus dediti fuerunt."

Cum haec dicebam et alternabant hi venti et inpellebant huc atque illuc cor meum, transibant tempora, et tardabam converti ad dominum; et differebam de die in diem vivere in te, et non differebam cotidie in memet ipso mori: amans beatam vitam timebam illam in sede sua, et ab ea fugiens quaerebam eam. putabam enim me miserum fore nimis, si feminae privarer amplexibus, et medicinam misericordiae tuae ad eandem infirmitatem sanandam non cogitabam, quia expertus non eram; et propriarum virium credebam esse continentiam, quarum mihi non eram conscius, cum tam stultus essem, ut nescirem, sicut scriptum est, neminem posse esse continentem, nisi tu dederis. utique dares, si gemitu interno pulsarem aures tuas et fide solida in te iactarem curam meam.

Digitized by Google

much, even a governor's place may be bestowed upon us: then a wife should be wedded with a good portion to ease our charges; and this shall be the full point of our desires. Many great persons, and those worthy of our imitation, have addicted themselves to the study of wisdom in the state of marriage. CHAP. XI

Whilst these things I discoursed of, and these winds of uncertainties changed up and down, and drove my heart this way and that way: the time still passed on, but I was slow to be converted to my Lord God; and from one day to another I deferred to live in thee, but deferred not daily to die within myself. Being thus in love with an happy life, yet feared I to find it in its proper place, and fleeing from it, I sought after it. I thought I should be too miserable, should I be debarred of the embracements of a woman: as for that medicine of thy mercy which should cure that infirmity, I never thought of it; and all because I had no experience of it. As for continency, I supposed it to be in the liberty of our own power, which I for my part felt that I had not; being so foolish withal, that I knew not it was written, that no man can preserve his chastity unless thou give it. And thou verily wouldst have given it, if with cordial groanings I should have knocked at thine ears, and with a settled faith have cast my cares upon thee.

Digitized by Google

XII

CAP XII PROHIBEBAT me sane Alypius ab uxore ducenda, cantans nullo modo nos posse securo otio simul in amore sapientiae vivere, sicut iam diu desideraremus, si id fecissem. erat enim ipse in ea re etiam tunc castissimus, ita ut mirum esset; quia vel experientiam concubitus ceperat in ingressu adulescentiae suae, sed non haeserat, magisque doluerat et spreverat, et deinde iam continentissime vivebat. ego autem resistebam illi exemplis eorum, qui coniugati coluissent sapientiam, et promeruissent deum, et habuissent fideliter ac dilexissent amicos. a quorum ego granditate quidem animi longe aberam: et deligatus morbo carnis mortifera suavitate trahebam catenam meam, solvi timens, et quasi concusso vulnere, repellens verba bene suadentis tamquam manum solventis.

Insuper etiam per me ipsi quoque Alypio loquebatur serpens, et innectebat atque spargebat per linguam meam dulces laqueos in via eius, quibus illi honesti et expediti pedes inplicarentur. cum enim me ille miraretur, quem non parvi penderet, ita haerere visco illius voluptatis, ut me adfirmarem, quotienscumque inde inter nos quaereremus, caelibem vitam nullo modo posse degere, atque ita

Digitized by Google

XII

A Contention between Alypius and Augustine, about Marriage and Single Life

ALYPIUS indeed was the man that kept me from marrying of a wife; alleging, that by no means could we enjoy so much undistracted leisure as to live together in the love of wisdom (as we long since had desired) should I take that course. For he himself was so chaste that way, that it was a wonder to see: for he had made a trial of that act in the beginning of his youth; but having not engaged himself by it, he was sorry for it rather, and despised it; living from that time until this present most continently. For my part I opposed him with the examples of such men as in the state of matrimony had professed wisdom, and were acceptable unto God, and conversed faithfully and lovingly with their acquaintances: of the greatness of whose spirit I was far enough short. Thus I, bound fast with the disease of the flesh, and with the deadly sweetness of it, drew my shackles along with me, much afraid to have them knocked off: and as if my wound had been too hard rubbed by it, I put back his good persuasions, as it were the hand of one that would unchain me. CHAP. XII

Moreover, even by me did the serpent speak unto Alypius, preparing and laying by my tongue most pleasurable snares in his way, in which his honest and yet free feet might be entangled. For whenas he much admired at me, (whom he slightly esteemed not of) for sticking so fast in the birdlime of that pleasure, as resolutely to affirm, so oft as we had speech about it, that I could by no means lead a single life: and

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII me defenderem, cum illum mirantem viderem, ut dicerem multum interesse inter illud, quod ipse raptim et furtim expertus esset, quod paene iam ne meminisset quidem atque ideo nulla molestia facile contemneret, et delectationes consuetudinis meae; ad quas si accessisset honestum nomen matrimonii, non eum mirari oportere, cur ego illam vitam nequirem spernere: coeperat et ipse desiderare coniugium, nequaquam victus libidine talis voluptatis, sed curiositatis. dicebat enim scire se cupere, quidnam esset illud, sine quo vita mea, quae illi sic placebat, non mihi vita, sed poena videretur. stupebat enim liber ab illo vinculo animus servitutem meam, et stupendo ibat in experiendi cupidinem, venturus in ipsam experientiam atque inde fortasse lapsurus in eam quam stupebat servitutem, quoniam sponsionem volebat facere cum morte, et qui amat periculum, incidet in illud. neutrum enim nostrum, si quod est coniugale decus in officio regendi matrimonii et suscipiendorum liberorum, ducebat nisi tenuiter. magna autem ex parte atque vehementer consuetudo satiandae insatiabilis concupiscentiae me captum excruciabat, illum autem admiratio capiendum trahebat. sic eramus, donec tu, altissime, non deserens humum nostram, miseratus miseros, subvenires miris et occultis modis.

Digitized by Google

that I used this for an argument (when I saw him so CHAP XII
much wonder at the matter) that there was a great difference betwixt the pleasure which he had tried by stealth and snatches, (which he scarce now remembered, and might easily therefore despise) and the delights of my daily habit: into which might but the honest name of marriage be added, he should not wonder then, why I had not the power to contemn that course of living: even he began to desire to be married; not as if overcome with the lust of so poor a pleasure, as all out of a curiosity: for he desired, as he said, to know what manner of content that should be, without which my life, which pleased him so, seemed not a life but a punishment unto me. For his mind, that was free as yet from that clog, stood amazed at my thraldom; and out of that amazement, he proceeded to an itch of trying: like enough to have come to the experience of it, and from the bare experience, to fall perchance into that bondage he in me so much admired at; seeing he was so willing to enter into a covenant with death; and he that loves danger shall fall into it. For the conjugal honour (if there be any) in the office of well ordering the duties of a married life, and of having of children, moved neither of us but little. But that which for the most part did most violently afflict me, already made a slave to it, was the custom of satisfying an insatiable lust; but him, that was hereafter to be enslaved, did an admiration screw up to it. In this case we continued, until thou, O most High, not forsaking our lowliness, having compassion of us that stood in need of it, didst at length fetch us off, by admirable and secret devices.

Digitized by Google

XIII

CAP. XIII Et instabatur inpigre, ut ducerem uxorem. iam petebam, iam promittebatur, maxime matre dante operam, quo me iam coniugatum baptismus salutaris ablueret, quo me in dies gaudebat aptari, et vota sua ac promissa tua in mea fide conpleri animadvertebat. cum sane et rogatu meo et desiderio suo forti clamore cordis abs te deprecaretur cotidie, ut ei per visum ostenderes aliquid de futuro matrimonio meo, numquam voluisti. et videbat quaedam vana et phantastica, quo cogebat inpetus de hac re satagentis humani spiritus, et narrabat mihi non cum fiducia, qua solebat, cum tu demonstrabas ei, sed contemnens ea. dicebat enim discernere se nescio quo sapore, quem verbis explicare non poterat, quid interesset inter revelantem te et animam suam somniantem. instabatur tamen, et puella petebatur, cuius aetas ferme biennio minus quam nubilis erat, et quia ea placebat, exspectabatur.

Digitized by Google

XIII

Augustine lays out for a Wife

AND much ado there was to get me a wife. Now went I a wooing, and then was the wench promised me: my mother taking most pains to beat the bargain: her purpose in it being, that when I were once married, the wholesome waters of Baptism might cleanse me, towards which she much rejoiced to see me daily fitting myself; observing that all her own desires, and thy promises, were to be fulfilled in my embracing of the faith. At which time verily, both by mine own entreaties, and her desires, and with very strong cries of her heart, did she daily beg of thee, that thou wouldst vouchsafe by some vision to discover something unto her concerning my future marriage, but thou wouldst never do it. Yet saw she indeed certain vain and fantastical things, driven by the earnestness of the human spirit, so busied about this matter. These she told me of; yet not with that confidence she was wont when thyself afforded any visions unto her, but slighting them, as it were. For she could, as she said, (through I know not what relish she had, which in words she could not express) easily enough discern how much difference there was betwixt thy revelations, and the dreams of her own spirit. Yet went she forward earnestly, and the parents' goodwill was asked; but the maid wanted two years of being marriageable. Yet, for that I had a good liking to her, I was content to stay so long for her. CHAP. XIII

Digitized by Google

XIV

CAP. XIV Et multi amici agitaveramus animo, et conloquentes ac detestantes turbulentas humanae vitae molestias, paene iam firmaveramus remoti a turbis otiose vivere, id otium sic moliti, ut, si quid habere possemus, conferremus in medium, unamque rem familiarem conflaremus ex omnibus, ut per amicitiae sinceritatem non esset aliud huius et aliud illius, sed quod ex cunctis fieret unum, et universum singulorum esset et omnia omnium; cum videremur nobis esse posse decem ferme homines in eadem societate, essentque inter nos praedivites, Romanianus maxime communiceps noster, quem tunc graves aestus negotiorum suorum ad comitatum adtraxerant, ab ineunte aetate mihi familiarissimus. qui maxime instabat huic rei, et magnam in suadendo habebat auctoritatem, quod ampla res eius multum ceteris anteibat. et placuerat nobis, ut bini annui tamquam magistratus omnia necessaria curarent, ceteris quietis. sed posteaquam coepit cogitari, utrum hoc mulierculae sinerent, quas et alii nostrum iam habebant et nos habere volebamus, totum illud placitum, quod bene formabamus, dissiluit in manibus, atque confractum et abiectum est. inde ad suspiria et gemitus et gressus ad

Digitized by Google

XIV

A new Plot is laid and broken

AND we were many friends, which debated together, conferring about the detesting these turbulent molestations of human life; and we had now almost resolved to sequester ourselves from company, and to live at peace: we hoped so to obtain that peace, by putting together what stock every man was able to make, and making one household of all: that through the plain dealing of a common friendship, one thing should not be this man's, and another thing that man's; but what stock should be made up out of every man's particular, should in the whole belong unto the interest of every single person, and all together, unto all in general. It seemed to us, that there might near be some ten persons in this brotherhood: some of which were very rich men; and Romanianus especially, our townsman (from his childhood a very familiar friend of mine) whom the hot pursuit of his business had brought up to Court: who was most earnest of all for this project: and therein was his voice of great authority, because his wealth was much greater than the rest. And we had set it down that two officers should be yearly chosen, for the making of necessary provisions, whilst the rest were quiet. But so soon as we began to consider better of it, whether our wives, (which some of us had already, and I resolved to have shortly) would endure all this or no; all that so well laid plot fell to pieces in our hands, and was utterly dashed and cast aside. Thence returned we again to our old sighings, and groanings, and

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIV sequendas latas et tritas vias saeculi, quoniam multae cogitationes erant in corde nostro, consilium autem tuum manet in aeternum. ex quo consilio deridebas nostra et tua praeparabas nobis, daturus escam in opportunitate, et aperturus manum, atque impleturus animas nostras benedictione.

XV

CAP. XV INTEREA mea peccata multiplicabantur, et avulsa a latere meo, tamquam inpedimento coniugii, cum qua cubare solitus eram, cor, ubi adhaerebat, concisum et vulneratum mihi erat et trahebat sanguinem. et illa in Africam redierat, vovens tibi alium se virum nescituram, relicto apud me naturali ex illa filio meo. at ego infelix nec feminae imitator, dilationis inpatiens, tamquam post biennium accepturus eam quam petebam, quia non amator coniugii sed libidinis servus eram, procuravi aliam, non utique coniugem, quo tamquam sustentaretur et perduceretur, vel integer vel auctior, morbus animae meae satellitio perdurantis consuetudinis in regnum uxorium. nec sanabatur vulnus illud meum, quod

Digitized by Google

wanderings, and to our former following those broad and beaten ways of the world: for that many thoughts were in our hearts, but thy counsel standeth for ever. Out of which counsel didst thou deride ours, and laid the groundwork for thine own; purposing to give us meat in due season, and to open thy hand, and to fill our souls with thy blessing.

CHAP. XIV

Matt. vii. 13

Ps. xxxiii. 11

Ps. cxlv. 15, 16

XV

How his old Concubine goes away from him, and he gets another

My sins in the mean time were multiplied, and that mistress of mine which was wont to be my bedfellow, the hinderer as it were of my marriage, being plucked away from my side, my heart cleaving unto her, was broken by this means, and wounded, yea, and blood drawn from it. Home again went she into Africa, (vowing to thee never to know man more) leaving a bastard son with me, which I had begotten of her. But unhappy I, who had not the heart to imitate a woman, impatient now of all delay as if it were two long years before I was to enjoy her whom I went a wooing to, (being not so much a lover of wedlock as a slave to lust) quickly procured another (though not a wife) by whom that disease of my soul might be nursed up, and kept alive, either as vigorous as it was, or more fierce upon it, under the convoy of inveterate custom into the kingdom of marriage. Nor was that wound of mine as yet cured, which had been made by the cutting away of my former concubine; but after most

CHAP. XV

Digitized by Google

CAP. XV prioris praecisione factum erat, sed post fervorem doloremque acerrimum putrescebat, et quasi frigidius, sed desperatius dolebat.

XVI

CAP. XVI Tibi laus, tibi gloria, fons misericordiarum! ego fiebam miserior et tu propinquior. aderat iam iamque dextera tua, raptura me de caeno et ablutura, et ignorabam. nec me revocabat a profundiore voluptatum carnalium gurgite, nisi metus mortis et futuri iudicii tui, qui per varias quidem opiniones, numquam tamen recessit de pectore meo. et disputabam cum amicis meis Alypio et Nebridio de finibus bonorum et malorum, Epicurum accepturum fuisse palmam in animo meo, nisi ego credidissem post mortem restare animae vitam et tractus meritorum, quod Epicurus credere noluit. et quaerebam, si essemus inmortales et in perpetua corporis voluptate sine ullo amissionis terrore viveremus, cur non essemus beati, aut quid aliud quaereremus: nesciens id ipsum ad magnam miseriam pertinere, quod ita demersus et caecus cogitare non possem lumen honestatis et gratis amplectendae pulchritudinis, quam non videt oculus carnis, et videtur ex intimo.

Digitized by Google

eager burning and anguish it festered; and still it pained me, though after a more dull, yet after a more desperate manner. CHAP. XV

XVI

Of the Immortality of the Soul

PRAISE be to thee, glory be to thee, O Fountain of Mercies! I became more miserable, and thou nearer unto me. Thy right hand was ready by and by to pluck me out of the mire, and to wash me throughly, but I knew not yet of it. Nor did anything call me back from that deeper gulf of carnal pleasures, but only the fear of death, and of thy judgment to come: which, although divers opinions I conceived of it, yet never went it utterly out of my breast. I disputed in those days with my friends Alypius and Nebridius concerning the limits of good and evil: determining, that Epicurus in my judgment should have won the garland, had I not verily believed that there remained a life for the soul after the body was dead, and the fruits of our deservings, which Epicurus would not believe. And I put the question, that suppose we were to be immortal, and were to live in perpetual enjoyment of bodily pleasures, and that without fear of losing, why should we not then be fully happy, and wherefore should we seek for any other thing? Little knowing that even this very thing was a part of my great misery, that being thus drowned and blinded, I could not discern that light of honesty and of beauty, (to be embraced for its own sake), which the eye of the flesh cannot ken, it being only by the inner man to be discerned. Nor did I CHAP. XVI

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVI nec considerabam miser, ex qua vena mihi manaret, quod ista ipsa, foeda, tamen cum amicis dulciter conferebam, nec esse sine amicis poteram beatus etiam secundum sensum, quem tunc habebam, quantalibet afluentia carnalium voluptatum. quos utique amicos gratis diligebam, vicissimque ab eis me diligi gratis sentiebam. o tortuosas vias! vae animae meae audaci, quae speravit, si a te recessisset, se aliquid melius habituram! versa et reversa in tergum et in latera et in ventrem, et dura sunt omnia, et tu solus requies. et ecce ades et liberas a miserabilibus erroribus et constitues nos in via tua, et consolaris et dicis: "currite, ego feram et ego perducam et ibi ego feram."

Digitized by Google

consider, wretch that I was, out of what vein it flowed, that even these conceits, (filthy ones as they were) I with such pleasure conferred of with my friends, nor could I be happy without friends, even according to the opinion I then was of, how great abundance soever of carnal pleasures beside I enjoyed. Which friends verily I loved for their own sakes, and I found myself to be in like manner beloved of them again. Out upon these intricate ways! Woe unto that audacious soul of mine, which hoped, that had it forsaken thee, it should have had some better thing! Turned it hath, and turned again, upon back, sides, and belly, yet found all places to be hard; and that thou art her rest only. And behold, thou art near at hand; and from our wretched errors thou deliverest us, and settlest us in thine own way, and dost comfort, and say thus unto us: Run on, I will carry you: yea, I will bring you to your journey's end, and there also will I carry you. CHAP. XVI

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK VII

Digitized by Google

LIBER SEPTIMVS

I

CAP. I IAM mortua erat adulescentia mea mala et nefanda, et ibam in iuventutem, quanto aetate maior, tanto vanitate turpior, qui cogitare aliquid substantiae nisi tale non poteram, quale per hos oculos videri solet. non te cogitabam, deus, in figura corporis humani: ex quo audire aliquid de sapientia coepi, semper hoc fugi, et gaudebam me hoc reperire in fide spiritalis matris nostrae, Catholicae tuae; sed quid te aliud cogitarem non occurrebat. et conabar cogitare te homo, et talis homo, summum et solum et verum deum, et te incorruptibilem et inviolabilem et inconmutabilem totis medullis credebam, quia nesciens, unde et quomodo, plane tamen videbam et certus eram, id quod corrumpi potest, deterius esse quam id quod non potest, et quod violari non potest, incunctanter praeponebam violabili, et quod nullam patitur mutationem, melius esse quam id quod mutari potest. clamabat violenter cor meum adversus omnia phantasmata mea, et hoc uno ictu conabar abigere circumvolantem turbam inmunditiae

Digitized by Google

THE SEVENTH BOOK

I

How rejecting corporeal Images, he began to know God to be incorporeal

By this time was that wicked and abominable time of my youth dead, and I went on into a more solid age: by how much the elder in years, so much the fouler in vanity; who could not imagine any other kind of substance than what I saw with these eyes. Yet thought I not thee, O God, to be comprehended under the figure of an human body; since the time I began to hear anything of wisdom, I always avoided that: and I rejoiced to have found thus much in the faith of our spiritual Mother thy Catholic Church. But what else I should think thee to be, I knew not. And I being but a man, (and so mean a man too) yet set I myself to believe thee to be the sovereign and only true God: and that thou wert incorruptible, and inviolable, and unchangeable, with all the powers of my soul did I believe: because not knowing how nor which way, yet clearly did I behold, and very sure I was, that that which may be corrupted, must needs be worse than that which cannot be corrupted; and that which cannot be violated, did I without any sticking at prefer before that which was subject to be violated: and that which suffers no change, I judged to be much better than that which may suffer change. My heart passionately cried out upon all my phantasms; and with one blow I laid about me to beat away all that fluttering troop of unclean fancies, CHAP. I

Digitized by Google

CAP. I ab acie mentis meae: et vix dimota in ictu oculi, ecce conglobata rursus aderat, et inruebat in aspectum meum et obnubilabat eum, ut quamvis non forma humani corporis, corporeum tamen aliquid cogitare cogerer per spatia locorum, sive infusum mundo sive etiam extra mundum per infinita diffusum, etiam ipsum incorruptibile et inviolabile et incommutabile, quod corruptibili et violabili et commutabili praeponebam: quoniam quidquid privabam spatiis talibus, nihil mihi esse videbatur, sed prorsus nihil, ne inane quidem, tamquam si corpus auferatur loco et maneat locus omni corpore vacuatus, et terreno et humido et aerio et caelesti, sed tamen sit locus inanis, tamquam spatiosum nihil.

Ego itaque incrassatus corde, nec mihimet ipsi vel ipse conspicuus, quidquid non per aliquanta spatia tenderetur, vel diffunderetur vel conglobaretur vel tumeret, vel tale aliquid caperet aut capere posset, nihil prorsus esse arbitrabar. per quales enim formas ire solent oculi mei, per tales imagines ibat cor meum, nec videbam hanc eandem intentionem, qua illas ipsas imagines formabam, non esse tale aliquid: quae tamen ipsas non formaret, nisi esset magnum aliquid. ita etiam te, vita vitae meae, grandem per infinita spatia undique cogitabam penetrare totam mundi molem, et extra eam quaquaversum per inmensa sine termino, ut haberet te terra, haberet

Digitized by Google

from the eye of my mind. And lo, being yet scarce CHAP. put off by the space of the twinkling of an eye, they I came in multitudes again about me, they pressed upon my sight, and so beclouded it, that though I thought thee not to be of the shape of a human body, yet was I constrained to imagine thee to be some corporeal substance, taking up vast spaces of place: and that, either infused into this world, or else diffused indefinitely without it: yea, even of that incorruptible, and invisible, and unchangeable, which I preferred before corruptible, and violable, and changeable, did I imagine thus. Because that whatsover I deprived of these spaces, seemed to be nothing unto me; yea, altogether nothing, not so much as an emptiness verily; just as if a body were taken out of its place, and the place should remain empty of any body at all, either earthly, or watery, or airy, or heavenly; but should remain a void space, as it were a spacious nothing.

I therefore being thus gross hearted (for I was not even able to discern my very self); whatsoever was not stretched out over certain spaces, nor diffused abroad, nor amassed up into bulk, nor swelled into breadth, or which did not or could not receive some form of these dimensions, I thought to be a just nothing. For such forms as my eyes are wont to range over, even such like images did my heart now rove after: nor did I yet observe that this very attention of mine, by which I formed these images, was not any such corporeal substance; which yet could not have formed them, had not itself been some great thing. In like manner did I conceive thee, O thou Life of my life, to be some huge corporeal substance, on every side piercing through the whole globe of this world; yea, and diffused every way without it, and

Digitized by Google

CAP. I caelum, haberent omnia et illa finirentur in te, tu autem nusquam. sicut autem luci solis non obsisteret aeris corpus, aeris huius, qui supra terram est, quominus per eum traiceretur, penetrans eum non dirrumpendo aut concidendo, sed implendo eum totum: sic tibi putabam non solum caeli et aeris et maris, sed etiam terrae corpus, pervium et ex omnibus maximis minimisque partibus penetrabile ad capiendam praesentiam tuam, occulta inspiratione intrinsecus et extrinsecus administrante omnia, quae creasti. ita suspicabar, quia cogitare aliud non poteram; nam falsum erat. illo enim modo maior pars terrae maiorem tui partem haberet, et minorem minor, atque ita te plena essent omnia, ut amplius tui caperet elephanti corpus quam passeris, quo esset isto grandius grandioremque occuparet locum, atque ita frustatim partibus mundi magnis magnas, brevibus breves partes tuas praesentes faceres. non est autem ita. sed nondum inluminaveras tenebras meas.

Digitized by Google

that by infinite spaces, though unbounded: so that the earth should have thee, the heaven should have thee, all things should have thee, and that they should be bounded in thee, but thou nowhere. For as the body of the air which is above the earth, hindereth not the light of the sun from passing through it, which pierceth it, not by bursting or cutting, but by filling of it: so thought I, that not only the body of the heaven, the air and sea only, but of the earth too, to be at pleasure passable unto thee, yea easy to be pierced by thee in all its greatest and smallest parts, that all might receive thy presence, while a secret inspiration both inwardly and outwardly governeth all things which thou hast created. Thus I suspected, because any other thing I could not think of: and yet was this false too. For by this means should a greater part of the earth have contained a larger portion of thee, and the less, a lesser: and then should all things in such sort have been full of thee, as that the body of an elephant should contain so much more of thee than the body of a sparrow, by how much that should be bigger than this, and take up more room; by which conceit shouldst thou make thy parts present unto the several parts of the world by bits, as it were, great gobbets to great parts, little bits to little parts of the world. But thus thou art not present. But thou hadst not as yet enlightened my darkness.

Digitized by Google

II

CAP. II SAT erat mihi, domine, adversus illos deceptos deceptores et loquaces mutos, quoniam non ex eis sonabat verbum tuum, sat erat ergo illud, quod iam diu ab usque Carthagine a Nebridio proponi solebat, et omnes, qui audiebamus, concussi sumus: quid erat tibi factura nescio qua gens tenebrarum, quam ex adversa mole solent proponere, si tu cum ea pugnare noluisses? si enim responderetur, aliquid fuisse nocituram, violabilis tu et corruptibilis fores. si autem nihil ea nocere potuisse diceretur, nulla afferretur causa pugnandi, et ita pugnandi, ut quaedam portio tua et membrum tuum vel proles de ipsa substantia tua misceretur adversis potestatibus et non a te creatis naturis, atque in tantum ab eis corrumperetur et commutaretur in deterius, ut a beatitudine in miseriam verteretur, et egeret auxilio, quo erui purgarique posset; et hanc esse animam, cui tuus sermo, servienti liber, et contaminatae purus, et corruptae integer, subveniret, sed et ipse corruptibilis, quia ex una eademque substantia. itaque si te, quidquid es, id est

Digitized by Google

II

Nebridius confutes the Manichees

I HAD answer enough, Lord, to oppose against those deceived deceivers, those dumb praters (therefore dumb because they sounded not forth thy word): I had answer enough, I say, in that which long ago, whiles we were at Carthage, Nebridius used to propound; at which all we that heard it were much staggered; namely: What that imaginary nation of darkness, which the Manichees were wont to set in opposition against thee, would have done unto thee, hadst thou refused to fight with it? For, had they answered, it would have done thee some hurt; then shouldst thou have been subject to violence and corruption: but if they answered, it could do thee no hurt, then would there have been no reason brought for thy fighting with it: especially for such a fighting, in which some certain portion or member of thine, or some offspring of thy substance should have been mingled with those contrary powers, those natures not created by thee; by whom it should so far have been corrupted and changed to the worse, that it should have been turned from happiness into misery, and should have stood in need of some assistance, by which it must both be delivered and purged: and that this offspring of thy substance was our soul; which, being enthralled, thy Word that was free; which being defiled, thy Word that was pure; which being maimed, thy Word that was entire, might every way relieve: and yet that Word itself also be corruptible, because it was the offspring of one and the same substance. Therefore should they affirm thee, CHAP. II

Digitized by Google

CAP. II substantiam tuam, qua es, incorruptibilem dicerent, falsa esse illa omnia et exsecrabilia; si autem corruptibilem, id ipsum iam falsum et prima voce abominandum. sat erat ergo istuc, adversus eos omni modo evomendos a pressura pectoris, quia non habebant, qua exirent, sine horribili sacrilegio cordis et linguae, sentiendo de te ista et loquendo.

III

CAP. III Sed et ego adhuc, quamvis incontaminabilem et inconvertibilem et nulla ex parte mutabilem dicerem firmeque sentirem dominum nostrum, deum verum, qui fecisti non solum animas nostras sed etiam corpora, nec tantum nostras animas et corpora, sed omnes et omnia; non tenebam explicitam et enodatam causam mali. quaecumque tamen esset, sic eam quaerendam videbam, ut non per illam constringerer deum incommutabilem mutabilem credere, ne ipse fierem quod quaerebam. itaque securus eam quaerebam, et certus non esse verum quod illi dicerent, quos toto animo fugiebam; quia videbam quaerendo, unde malum, repletos malitia, qua opinarentur tuam potius substantiam male pati quam suam male facere.

Digitized by Google

whatsoever thou art, that is, thy substance, to be incorruptible; then were all these fancies of theirs most false and execrable. But if they should affirm thee to be corruptible; even that were most false, and to be abhorred at the first hearing. This argument therefore of Nebridius verily had been enough against those, who deserved wholly to be spewed out of my over-charged stomach; for that they had no evasion to betake themselves unto, without most horrible blasphemy both of heart and tongue, thinking and speaking of thee in this fashion. CHAP. II

III

Free Will is the cause of Sin

But I as yet, although I both said and thought most confidently, that thou our Lord the true God, (who madest not only our souls but our bodies; and not only both souls and bodies, but us all, and all things else besides) wert neither to be corrupted nor altered one way or other; yet understood I not clearly and without difficulty the cause of evil. And yet whatever it were, I perceived I ought in that sense to enquire after it, that I might not be constrained to believe that the incommutable God could be altered by it: lest myself should be made the thing that I was seeking. After this therefore I sought it without anxiety; being very certain that the Manichees' tenet (whom I dissented from with my whole heart) was no way true: for that I discovered them, whilst they enquired the cause of evil, to be most full of maliciousness; they thinking that thy substance did rather suffer ill than their own commit evil. CHAP. III

That is, a cause of evil

Digitized by Google

CAP. III Et intendebam, ut cernerem quod audiebam, liberum voluntatis arbitrium causam esse, ut male faceremus, et rectum iudicium tuum ut pateremur, et eam liquidam cernere non valebam. itaque aciem mentis de profundo educere conatus, mergebar iterum, et saepe conatus mergebar iterum atque iterum. sublevabat enim me in lucem tuam, quod tam sciebam me habere voluntatem quam me vivere. itaque cum aliquid vellem aut nollem, non alium quam me velle ac nolle certissimus eram, et ibi esse causam peccati mei iam iamque advertebam. quod autem invitus facerem, pati me potius quam facere videbam, et id non culpam, sed poenam esse iudicabam, qua me non iniuste plecti te iustum cogitans cito fatebar. sed rursus dicebam: "quis fecit me? nonne deus meus, non tantum bonus, sed ipsum bonum? unde igitur mihi male velle et bene nolle? ut esset, cur iuste poenas luerem? quis in me hoc posuit et insevit mihi plantarium amaritudinis, cum totus fierem a dulcissimo deo meo? si diabolus auctor, unde ipse diabolus? quod si et ipse perversa voluntate ex bono angelo diabolus factus est, unde et in ipso voluntas mala, qua diabolus fieret, quando totus angelus a conditore optimo factus esset?" his cogitationibus deprimebar iterum et suffocabar, sed non usque ad illum infernum subducebar erroris, ubi nemo tibi confitetur, dum tu potius mala pati quam homo facere putatur.

Digitized by Google

Whereupon I applied my industry to understand the truth of what I had heard, how that Free Will should be the cause of our evil doing: and thy just judgment, that we suffer evil. But I was not able clearly to discern it. Endeavouring therefore to draw the eye of my soul out of that pit, I was again plunged into it; and endeavouring often, I was plunged as often. For this raised me a little up towards thy light, that I now knew as well that I had a will, as that I had a life: and when therefore I did either will or nill anything, I was most sure of it, that I and no other did will and nill: and there was the cause of my sin, as I perceived presently. But what I did against my will, that I seemed to suffer rather than to do: that judged I not to be my fault, but my punishment; whereby, I holding thee most just, quickly confessed myself to be not unjustly punished. But I objected to myself again: Who made me? Did not my God, who is not only good, but Goodness itself? Whence then came it that I can both will evil and nill good? that there might be cause found why I should be justly punished for it? Who was it that set this in me, that ingrafted into my stem this scion of bitterness, seeing I was wholly made up by my most sweet God? If the Devil were the author, whence is that same Devil? And if he himself by his own perverse will, of a good angel became a devil, whence then proceeded that perverse will in him, to make him a devil, seeing that he had been made all angel by that most good Creator? And by such thoughts as these was I again cast down and overwhelmed: yet not so far brought down was I as the hell of that error, where no man confesseth unto thee, when thou art rather thought to suffer evil, than man to do evil.

CHAP. III

Digitized by Google

IV

CAP. IV Sic enim nitebar invenire cetera, ut iam inveneram melius esse incorruptibile quam corruptibile, et ideo te, quidquid esses, esse incorruptibilem confitebar. neque enim ulla anima umquam potuit poteritve cogitare aliquid, quod sit te melius, qui summum et optimum bonum es. cum autem verissime atque certissime incorruptibile corruptibili praeponatur, sicut ego iam praeponebam, poteram iam cogitatione aliquid adtingere, quod esset melius deo meo, nisi tu esses incorruptibilis. ubi igitur videbam incorruptibile corruptibili esse praeferendum, ibi te quaerere debebam, atque inde advertere, ubi sit malum, id est unde sit ipsa corruptio, qua violari substantia tua nullo modo potest. nullo enim prorsus violat corruptio deum nostrum, nulla voluntate, nulla necessitate, nullo inproviso casu, quoniam ipse est deus, et quod sibi vult, bonum est, et ipse est idem bonum; corrumpi autem non est bonum. nec cogeris invitus ad aliquid, quia voluntas tua non est maior quam potentia tua. esset autem maior, si te ipso tu ipse maior esses: voluntas enim et potentia dei deus ipse est. quid improvisum tibi, qui nosti omnia? et nulla natura est, nisi quia nosti eam. et ut quid multa dicimus, cur non sit corruptibilis substantia, quae deus est, quando, si hoc esset, non esset deus?

Digitized by Google

IV

God cannot be compelled

In this sort did I endeavour now to find out the rest, as I had already found, that what was incorruptible must needs be better than that which was corruptible: and thee, therefore, whatsoever thou wert, did I acknowledge to be incorruptible. For never yet soul was, nor ever shall be able to think upon anything which may be better than thou, who art the sovereign and the best good. But whereas most truly and certainly, that which is incorruptible is to be preferred before what is corruptible, (like as I did then prefer it), I might very well have reached in my thoughts to something that should be better than my God, hadst thou not been incorruptible. Seeing therefore that incorruptible ought to be preferred before corruptible, at that point ought I to have sought out thee, and thence set out to observe where evil is; that is, even whence corruption comes; by which thy substance can by no means be infected. For corruption does no ways infect our God; by no will, by no necessity, by no unlooked for chance: because he is God, and what he wills, is good; and he himself is that Good; but to be corrupted is not good. Nor art thou, O God, against thy will constrained to anything, for that thy will is not greater than thy power. But greater should it be, were thyself greater than thyself. For the will and power of God, is God himself. And what chance can surprize thee unlooked for, who knowest all things? Nor is there any nature of things, but because thou knowest it. And why should we use more arguments to prove, why that substance which God is should not be corruptible, seeing if it were so, it should not be God?

CHAP. IV

Digitized by Google

V

CAP. V Et quaerebam, unde malum, et male quaerebam et in ipsa inquisitione mea non videbam malum. et constituebam in conspectu spiritus mei universam creaturam, quidquid in ea cernere possumus (sicuti est terra et mare et aer et sidera et arbores et animalia mortalia), et quidquid in ea non videmus (sicut firmamentum caeli insuper et omnes angelos et cuncta spiritalia eius, sed etiam ipsa, quasi corpora essent, locis et locis ordinata, ut imaginatio mea); et feci unam massam grandem, distinctam generibus corporum, creaturam tuam, sive re vera quae corpora erant, sive quae ipse pro spiritibus finxeram; et eam feci grandem, non quantum erat, quod scire non poteram, sed quantum libuit, undiqueversum sane finitam: te autem, domine, ex omni parte ambientem et penetrantem eam, sed usquequaque infinitum; tamquam si mare esset, ubique et undique per inmensa infinitum solum mare, et haberet intra se spongiam quamlibet magnam, sed finitam tamen, plena esset utique spongia illa ex omni sua parte ex inmenso mari: sic creaturam tuam finitam te infinito plenam putabam, et dicebam: "ecce deus, et ecce quae creavit deus, et bonus deus atque his validissime longissime-

Digitized by Google

V

He pursues his enquiries after the root of sin

AND I sought whence evil should be, and I sought ill: nor did I see that evil which was in this very enquiry of mine. I set now before the eyes of my spirit the whole creation, and whatsoever I could discern in it; as the sea, the earth, the air, the stars, the trees, the mortal creatures; yea, and whatever else in it we do not see, as the firmament of the heaven; all the angels moreover, and all the spiritual inhabitants thereof, but yet as if all these had been bodies, disposed in such and such places, as my fancy took me. And I made one great mass of all thy creatures, distinguished by their several kinds of bodies; those that were bodies indeed, or those that I had myself feigned instead of spirits. And this mass I made huge enough, not yet so great as in itself it was, (which I could not come to the knowledge of) but as big as I thought convenient, yet every way finite. But thee, O Lord, I imagined on every part environing and penetrating it, though every way infinite. As if there were supposed to be a sea, which everywhere and on every side, by a most unmeasurable infiniteness should be only a sea; and that sea should contain in it some huge sponge, but yet finite; which sponge must needs be everywhere and on every side filled with that unmeasurable sea. So thought I thy whole creation to be in itself finite, filled by thee who art infinite; and I said, Behold God, and behold what God hath created; and God is good, yea, most mightily and incomparably better than all these: and God,

Digitized by Google

CAP. V que praestantior; sed tamen bonus bona creavit: et ecce quomodo ambit atque implet ea? ubi ergo malum et unde et qua huc inrepsit? quae radix eius et quod semen eius? an omnino non est? cur ergo timemus et cavemus quod non est? aut si inaniter timemus, timor ipse malum est, quo incassum stimulatur et excruciatur cor; et tanto gravius malum, quanto non est, quod timeamus, et timemus. idcirco aut est malum, quod timemus, aut hoc malum est, quia timemus. unde est igitur, quia deus fecit haec omnia, bonus bona? maius quidem et summum bonum minora fecit bona, sed tamen et creans et creata bona sunt omnia. unde est malum? an unde fecit ea, materies aliqua mala erat, et formavit atque ordinavit eam, sed reliquit aliquid in illa, quod in bonum non converteret? cur et hoc? an inpotens erat totam vertere et conmutare, ut nihil mali remaneret, cum sit omnipotens? postremo cur inde aliquid facere voluit, ac non potius eadem omnipotentia fecit, ut nulla esset omnino? aut vero exsistere poterat contra eius voluntatem? aut si aeterna erat, cur tam diu per infinita retro spatia temporum sic eam sivit esse, ac tanto post placuit aliquid ex ea facere? aut iam, si aliquid subito voluit agere, hoc potius ageret omnipotens, ut illa non esset, atque ipse solus esset totum verum et summum et infinitum bonum? aut

Digitized by Google

being himself good, created all them good; and see how he environeth and fulfils them all. Where is evil then, and from whence, and how crept it in hither? What is the root, and what the seed of it? Or hath it at all no being? Why then do we fear and beware of that which hath no being? Or if we fear it in vain, then surely is that very fear an evil, which in vain so gores and torments the soul. Yea, and so much a greater evil, by how much there wants of being anything, which we should stand in fear of, and yet we do fear. Therefore is there some evil thing which we fear, or else the very act of fearing is evil. Whence is evil therefore, seeing God who is good, hath created all these things good; that is, the greater and chiefest Good hath created these lesser goods; yet both he creating, and they created, are all good? Whence now is evil? Was there some evil matter, of which God made it, and as God formed and ordered it, did he leave anything in it which he did not convert into good? But why did he so? Was he not able so to turn and change the whole lump, that no evil should have remained in it, seeing he is able to do anything? Lastly, why would he make anything at all of that, and did not by the same omnipotency rather cause that there should be no such thing at all? Or, indeed, was it able to be of itself against his will? Or if that evil matter had been from eternity, why suffered he it so long to continue through infinite spaces of times past, and was pleased so long while after to make something out of it? Or if he were suddenly pleased now to go about some work, this rather should the Omnipotent have done, have caused (namely) that this evil matter should not at all have been, and that he himself should have been alone, that sovereign and infinite

CHAP. V

Digitized by Google

CAP. V si non erat bene, ut non aliquid boni etiam fabricaretur et conderet qui bonus erat, illa sublata et ad nihilum redacta materie, quae mala erat, bonam ipse institueret, unde omnia crearet? non enim esset omnipotens, si condere non posset aliquid boni, nisi ea quam non ipse condiderat adiuvaretur materia." talia volvebam pectore misero, ingravidato curis mordacissimis de timore mortis et non inventa veritate; stabiliter tamen haerebat in corde meo in Catholica ecclesia fides Christi tui, domini et salvatoris nostri, in multis quidem adhuc informis et praeter doctrinae normam fluitans; sed tamen non eam relinquebat animus, immo in dies magis magisque inbibebat.

VI

CAP. VI Iam etiam mathematicorum fallaces divinationes et inpia deliramenta reieceram. confiteantur etiam hinc tibi de intimis visceribus animae meae miserationes tuae, deus meus! tu enim, tu omnino—nam quis alius a morte omnis erroris revocat nos, nisi vita, quae mori nescit, et sapientia mentes indigentes inluminans, nullo indigens lumine, qua mundus administratur usque ad arborum volatica folia?—tu procurasti pervicaciae meae, qua obluctatus sum Vindiciano

Digitized by Google

CHAP. V

Good. Or if it had not been good that he who was good should not frame and create something also that were good; then, that evil matter being first taken away, and brought into nothing, should he immediately have taken order for some good matter, whereof he might create all things. For he should not be omnipotent, if he were not able to create something that were good of itself, unless he were assisted by that matter which himself had not created. These thoughts tossed I up and down in my miserable heart, overcharged with biting cares, through the fear of death, and not finding out the truth; yet did the faith of thy Christ our Lord and Saviour, professed in the Catholic Church, firmly continue in my heart, though in divers particulars verily not yet perfected, and swerving from the right rule of doctrine; yet did not my mind utterly leave it off, but every day took in more and more of it.

VI

Divinations made by the Mathematicians are vain

CHAP. VI

By this time also had I rejected those deceitful divinations, and impious dotages of the astrologers. Let thine own mercies, out of the most inward bowels of my soul, confess unto thee for this, O my God. For thou, thou altogether (for who else is it that calls us back from the death of all errors, but even that life which knows not how to die; and that wisdom which enlightens those minds that need it, itself needing no light: by which the whole world is governed, even to the fluttering leaves of the trees?) thou tookest order for that stiff opinion of mine, by which I struggled with Vindicianus, that

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI acuto seni, et Nebridio adulescenti mirabilis animae, illi vehementer adfirmanti, huic cum dubitatione quidem aliqua, sed tamen crebro dicenti, non esse illam artem futura praevidendi, coniecturas autem hominum habere saepe vim sortis, et multa dicendo dici pleraque ventura, nescientibus eis, qui dicerent, sed in ea non tacendo incurrentibus: procurasti tu ergo hominem amicum, non quidem segnem consultorem mathematicorum, nec eas litteras bene callentem, sed, ut dixi, consultorem curiosum, et tamen scientem aliquid, quod a patre suo se audisse dicebat: quod quantum valeret ad illius artis opinionem evertendam, ignorabat. is ergo vir nomine Firminus, liberaliter institutus et excultus eloquio, cum me tamquam carissimum de quibusdam suis rebus, in quas saecularis spes eius intumuerat, consuleret, quid mihi secundum suas quas constellationes appellant videretur, ego autem, qui iam de hac re in Nebridii sententiam flecti coeperam, non quidem abnuerem conicere, ac dicere quod nutanti occurrebat; sed tamen subicerem, prope iam esse mihi persuasum ridicula illa esse et inania: tum ille mihi narravit, patrem suum fuisse librorum talium curiosissimum et habuisse amicum aeque illa simulque sectantem. qui pari studio et conlatione flagrabant in eas nugas igne cordis sui, ita ut mutorum quoque animalium, si quae domi parerent, observarent momenta nascentium atque ad ea caeli positionem

Digitized by Google

sharpsighted old man, and with Nebridius that admirable spirited young man: the first vehemently affirming, the latter often (though with some doubtfulness) saying, that there was no art whereby things to come might be foreseen: but that men's conjectures had oftentimes the help of fortune; and that by talking many things, something to come was oft-times perchance forespoken of; the parties that spake little knowing of it, but stumbling now and then upon the right, by their not saying nothing. Thou, therefore, providedst a friendly man for me, and he no negligent consulter with the astrologers: yet not throughly skilled in those arts, but, as I said, a curious consulter with them; and one that knew something, which he had heard of his father, as he said: which how far it might prevail to overthrow the opinion of that art, he knew not. This man therefore, Firminus by name, having been finely bred, and well taught; asking my advice, as a dear friend of his, concerning divers affairs of his own, which his worldly hopes were big swollen withal; and what I conjectured of him by his constellations, as they call them: I, who now began to incline in this particular towards Nebridius' opinion, did not, to say troth, refuse to make conjecture upon it, and to tell him as much as came in my unresolved mind: but told him withal, that I was even almost persuaded in my heart that these were but vain and ridiculous follies. He thereupon up and told me, how his father had been very curious after such books, and how he had a friend as earnest as himself at them. These with joint study and conference were hot upon these toys, by the fire of their hearty affection, insomuch that they would observe even the very minutes of the bringing forth of young, of those dumb creatures which they kept

CHAP. VI

CAP. VI notarent, unde illius quasi artis experimenta colligerent. itaque dicebat audisse se a patre suo, quod, cum eundem Firminum praegnans mater esset, etiam illius paterni amici famula quaedam pariter utero grandescebat. quod latere non potuit dominum, qui etiam canum suarum partus examinatissima diligentia nosse curabat; atque ita factum esse, ut cum iste coniugis, ille autem ancillae dies et horas minutioresque horarum articulos cautissima observatione numerarent, enixae essent ambae simul; ita ut easdem constellationes usque ad easdem minutias utrique nascenti facere cogerentur, iste filio, ille servulo. nam cum mulieres parturire coepissent, indicaverunt sibi ambo, quid sua cuiusque domo ageretur, et paraverunt quos ad se invicem mitterent, simul ut natum quod parturiebatur esset cuique nuntiatum: quod tamen ut continuo nuntiaretur, tamquam in regno suo facile effecerant. atque ita qui ab alterutro missi sunt, tam ex paribus domorum intervallis sibi obviam factos esse dicebat, ut aliam positionem siderum aliasque particulas momentorum neuter eorum notare sineretur. et tamen Firminus amplo apud suos loco natus, dealbatiores vias saeculi cursitabat, augebatur divitiis, sublimabatur honoribus: servus autem ille, conditionis iugo nullatenus relaxato, dominis serviebat: ipso indicante, qui noverat eum.

Digitized by Google

about their houses, and made observations withal of the position of the heavens at those minutes, to the intent to gather experiments of this art, as it were. So he said how he had heard of his father, that what time as his mother was big with him, the said Firminus, a certain maid servant of that friend of his father's was big with child also; which her master could not be ignorant of, who took care with most diligent examination to get knowledge even of his very bitches. And how it so fell out, that when one for his wife, and the other for his servant, with the carefullest observation reckoned the days, yea, the hours, nay, the very least particles of the hours, that both of them were brought to bed at the same instant: insomuch that both of them were constrained to allow the very same horoscope, even to the very smallest points, he for his son's birth, and the other for his little servant. For so soon as the women began to fall in labour, they both gave notice to one another of what was fallen out in either of their houses, and had messengers ready to send to one another, so soon as each had notice of the child's being born, which they could easily procure to have instant notice of, as being in their own kingdom. And he said that the messengers sent from one another, met by the way, in such equal distance from either house, that neither of the calculators could observe any other position of the stars, or seconds of minutes, than the other had done. And yet Firminus born to a fair fortune in his parents' house, ran his course through brighter ways of the world, throve well in riches, raised himself to honour: whereas that little servant, not able any way to free himself of the yoke of slavery he was born unto, continued to serve his masters; as himself told the story, who well enough knew him. CHAP. VI

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI His itaque auditis et creditis—talis quippe narraverat—omnis illa reluctatio mea soluta concidit: et primo Firminum ipsum conatus sum ab illa curiositate revocare, cum dicerem, constellationibus eius inspectis ut vera pronuntiarem, debuisse me utique videre ibi parentes inter suos esse primarios, nobilem familiam propriae civitatis, natales ingenuos, honestam educationem liberalesque doctrinas; at si me ille servus ex eisdem constellationibus—quia et illius ipsae essent—consuluisset, ut eidem quoque vera proferrem, debuisse me rursus ibi videre abiectissimam familiam, conditionem servilem, et cetera longe a prioribus aliena longeque distantia. unde autem fieret, ut eadem inspiciens diversa dicerem, si vera dicerem—si autem eadem dicerem, falsa dicerem—inde certissime colligi, ea quae vera consideratis constellationibus dicerentur, non arte dici, sed sorte, quae autem falsa, non artis inperitia, sed sortis mendacio.

Hinc autem accepto aditu ipse mecum talia ruminando, ne quis eorundem delirorum, qui talem quaestum sequerentur, quos iam iamque invadere atque inrisos refellere cupiebam, mihi ita resisteret, quasi aut Firminus mihi aut illi pater falsa narraverit, intendi considerationem in eos qui gemini nascuntur,

Digitized by Google

Upon the hearing and believing of these things, for that such a man of credit had told them; all that former resolute reluctancy of mine fell quite to the ground. And first of all I endeavoured to reclaim Firminus from that curiosity, by telling him, that for me, upon the inspection of his constellation, to foretell what should truly happen to him, I ought verily first to have seen in them, how his parents had been eminent persons among their neighbours, and that he had been descended of a noble family in his own city, that he was free born, educated like a gentleman, and very well studied. But if that servant, upon the same constellations, which were common to him too, had asked me to tell him his true fortune; I ought on the other side to have seen in them the baseness of his lineage, the slavishness of his condition, and those other particulars so much different, and so far distant from the other Gentleman's. Since then it came to pass, that looking upon the same constellations, I should read divers fortunes, if I should speak the truth; and if I should pronounce the same fortunes, I should lie falsely: therefore did I also collect most certainly, that whatever upon consideration of these constellations was foretold truly, was not spoken out of art, but chance: and whatever was delivered falsely, was not out of the unskilfulness of the art, but out of the falsehood of the chance. CHAP. VI

Being thus entered into the business, and thinking with myself more seriously upon suchlike arguments; that no one of those dotards (who lived by such shifts, whom I had an itch even out of hand to cope withal, and with derision to confute) might hereafter confront me so, as if either Firminus had informed me falsely, or his father him: I bent my

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI quorum plerique ita post invicem funduntur ex utero, ut parvum ipsum temporis intervallum, quantamlibet vim in rerum natura habere contendant, colligi tamen humana observatione non possit litterisque signari omnino non valeat, quas mathematicus inspecturus est, ut vera pronuntiet. et non erunt vera, quia easdem litteras inspiciens eadem debuit dicere de Esau et Iacob; sed non eadem utrique acciderunt. falsa ergo diceret aut, si vera diceret, non eadem diceret: at eadem inspiceret. non ergo arte, sed sorte vera diceret. tu enim, domine, iustissime moderator universitatis, consulentibus consultisque nescientibus occulto instinctu agis, ut, dum quisque consulit, hoc audiat, quod eum oportet audire occultis meritis animarum ex abysso iusti iudicii tui. cui non dicat homo: "quid est hoc?" "ut quid hoc?" non dicat, non dicat; homo est enim.

Digitized by Google

consideration upon those that are born twins, who for the most part come out of the womb so near one to another, as that small distance of time between them (how much force soever in reality these fellows avow it to have) yet cannot be estimated by any observation of man, nor can it be set down in the tables which the astrologer is to look into, to pronounce the truth. Nor shall they ever tell truth: for then, he that had looked upon the same figures, must have told the same fortunes both of Esau and of Jacob; whereas the same things no ways happened to them both. Needs therefore must he have said falsely: or if he had said truly, he must not have said the same things, whereas he looked upon the same figures. Had he therefore pronounced truly, it should have been by chance, and not by art. For thou, O Lord most Just, the Ruler of the universe, (even while they that ask the advice, and those that give it too, know not what they do) workest by so hidden an instinct for both, that he who consults hears what he ought to hear, out of the unsearchable bottom of thy just judgment, in respect of the hidden deservings of the souls. To whom, let not man say, what is this, or what is that? Let him not say so, never let him say so: seeing he is but a man.

Digitized by Google

VII

CAP. VII IAM itaque me, adiutor meus, illis vinculis solveras, et quaerebam, unde malum, et non erat exitus. sed me non sinebas ullis fluctibus cogitationis auferri ab ea fide, qua credebam et esse te, et esse inconmutabilem substantiam tuam, et esse de hominibus curam et iudicium tuum; et in Christo, filio tuo, domino nostro, atque scripturis sanctis, quas ecclesiae tuae Catholicae commendaret auctoritas, viam te posuisse salutis humanae ad eam vitam, quae post hanc mortem futura est. his itaque salvis atque inconcusse roboratis in animo meo, quaerebam aestuans, unde sit malum. quae illa tormenta parturientis cordis mei, qui gemitus, deus meus! et ibi erant aures tuae nesciente me. et cum in silentio fortiter quaererem, magnae voces erant ad misericordiam tuam, tacitae contritiones animi mei. tu sciebas, quid patiebar, et nullus hominum. quantum enim erat, quod inde digerebatur per linguam meam in aures familiarissimorum meorum! numquid tumultus animae meae, cui nec tempora nec os meum sufficiebat, sonabat eis? totum tamen ibat in auditum tuum, quod rugiebam a gemitu cordis mei, et ante te erat desiderium meum et lumen oculorum

Digitized by Google

VII

He is miserably tortured in his Enquiry after the Root of Evil

AND now, O my Helper, hadst thou discharged me from those fetters: and presently enquired I whence evil should be, but found no way out of my question. But thou sufferedst me not to be carried away from the faith by any waves of those thoughts; by which faith I believed both that thou wert, and that thy substance was unchangeable, and that thou hadst a care of, and passedst thy judgment upon men: and that in Christ thy Son, our Lord, and thy holy Scriptures which the authority of thy Church should acknowledge, thou hast laid out a way of man's salvation, to pass to that life which is to come after death. These grounds remaining safe and irremoveably settled in my mind, I with much anxiety sought, from what root the nature of evil should proceed. What torments did my teeming heart then endure, and what groans, O my God! Yet even to them were thine ears open, and I knew it not: and when in silence I so vehemently enquired after it, those silent contritions of my soul were strong cries for thy mercy. Thou, and no man, knewest how much I suffered. For, how little was that which my tongue sent forth into the ears of my most familiar friends! Did I disclose to them the whole tumult of my soul, for which neither my time nor tongue had been sufficient? Yet did all of it ascend into thy hearing, which I roared out from the groans of my heart; yea, my whole desires were laid up before thee, nor was

CHAP. VII

Ps. xxxviii. 9

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII meorum non erat mecum. intus enim erat, ego autem foris, nec in loco illud. at ego intendebam in ea, quae locis continentur, et non ibi inveniebam locum ad requiescendum, nec recipiebant me ista, ut dicerem: "sat est et bene est," nec dimittebant redire, ubi mihi satis esset bene. superior enim eram istis, te vero inferior, et tu gaudium verum mihi subdito tibi, et tu mihi subieceras quae infra me creasti. et hoc erat rectum temperamentum et media regio salutis meae, ut manerem ad imaginem tuam et tibi serviens dominarer corpori. sed cum superbe contra te surgerem et currerem adversus dominum in cervice crassa scuti mei, etiam ista infima supra me facta sunt et premebant, et nusquam erat laxamentum et respiramentum. ipsa occurrebant undique acervatim et conglobatim cernenti, cogitanti autem imagines corporum ipsae opponebantur redeunti, quasi diceretur: "quo is, indigne et sordide?" et haec de vulnere meo creverant, quia humiliasti tamquam vulneratum superbum, et tumore meo separabar abs te, et nimis inflata facies claudebat oculos meos.

Digitized by Google

I master of so much as of the light of mine own eyes: for that was all turned inward, but I outward; nor was that in its place: but I bent myself to those things that are contained in places, and there I found no place to rest in; nor did those places so entertain me, that I could say, It is enough, and 'Tis well: nor did they yet suffer me to turn back, where I might find well being enough. For to these things was I superior, but inferior to thee: and thou art the true Joy of me thy subject: and thou hast subjected under me those things which thou createdst below me. And this was the happy mean, and the middle region of my safety, where I might remain conformable to thine image, and by serving thee, get the dominion over mine own body. But whenas I rose up proudly against thee, and when I ran upon my Lord with the thick neck of my buckler; then were these inferior things made my overmatches, and kept me under, nor could I get either releasement or space of breathing. They ran on all sides by heaps and troops upon me, broad-looking on them; but when I thought, these corporeal images waylaid me as I turned back, as if they should say unto me; Whither goest thou, O thou unworthy and base creature? And all these had grown out of my wound; for thou hast humbled the proud like as him that is wounded, and through my own swelling was I set further off from thee; yea, my cheeks, too big swollen, even blinded up mine eyes.

CHAP. VII

Job xv. 26

Ps. lxxxix. 10

Digitized by Google

VIII

CAP. VIII Tu vero, domine, in aeternum manes, et non in aeternum irasceris nobis, quoniam miseratus es terram et cinerem, et placuit in conspectu tuo reformare deformia mea. et stimulis internis agitabas me, ut inpatiens essem, donec mihi per interiorem aspectum certus esses. et residebat tumor meus ex occulta manu medicinae tuae, aciesque conturbata et contenebrata mentis meae acri collyrio salubrium dolorum de die in diem sanabatur.

IX

CAP. IX Et primo volens ostendere mihi, quam resistas superbis, humilibus autem des gratiam, et quanta misericordia tua demonstrata sit hominibus via humilitatis, quod verbum caro factum est et habitavit inter homines: procurasti mihi per quendam hominem, inmanissimo typho turgidum, quosdam Platonicorum libros ex graeca lingua in latinum versos; et ibi legi non quidem his verbis, sed hoc idem omnino multis et multiplicibus suaderi rationibus, quod in principio erat verbum et verbum erat apud deum et deus erat

Digitized by Google

VIII

How the Mercy of God at length relieved him

Thou, Lord, art the same for ever: nor art thou angry with us for ever, because thou hast pity upon dust and ashes: and it was pleasing in thy sight to reform my deformities; and by inward gallings didst thou startle me, that I should become unquiet, till such time as it might be assured unto my inward sight, that it was thou thyself. Thus, by the secret hand of thy medicining was my swelling abated; and that troubled and bedimmed eyesight of my soul, by the smart eye-salve of mine own wholesome dolours, daily began more and more to be cleared. CHAP. VIII

IX

What he found in some Books of the Platonists, agreeable to the Christian Doctrine

And thou being desirous first of all to shew unto me how thou resistest the proud, but givest grace unto the humble; and with what great mercy of thine the way of humility is traced out unto men, in that thy Word was made flesh, and dwelt among men: thou procuredst for me, by means of a certain man, puffed up with a most unreasonable pride, to see certain books of the Platonists, translated out of Greek into Latin. And therein I read, not indeed in the self-same words, but to the very same purpose, persuaded by many reasons, and of several kinds, that In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and that Word was God; the same was in the CHAP. IX James iv. 6 John i. 1–12

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX verbum: hoc erat in principio apud deum; omnia per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil; quod factum est, in eo vita est, et vita erat lux hominum; et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebrae eam non conprehenderunt; et quia hominis anima, quamvis testimonium perhibeat de lumine, non est tamen ipsa lumen, sed verbum, deus ipse, est lumen verum, quod inluminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum; et quia in hoc mundo erat, et mundus per eum factus est, et mundus eum non cognovit. quia vero in sua propria venit et sui eum non receperunt, quotquot autem receperunt eum, dedit eis potestatem filios dei fieri, credentibus in nomine eius, non ibi legi.

Item legi ibi, quia verbum, deus, non ex carne, non ex sanguine, neque ex voluntate viri, neque ex voluntate carnis, sed ex deo natus est; sed quia verbum caro factus est et habitavit in nobis, non ibi legi. indagavi quippe in illis litteris varie dictum et in multis modis, quod sit filius in forma patris non rapinam arbitratus esse aequalis deo, quia naturaliter id ipsum est: sed quia semet ipsum exinanivit formam servi accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus et habitu inventus ut homo, humiliavit se factus oboediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis; propter quod deus eum exaltavit a mortuis, et donavit ei nomen, quod est super omne nomen, ut in nomine Iesu omne genu flectatur caelestium, terrestrium et infernorum et omnis lingua confiteatur, quia dominus Iesus in gloria est dei patris, non habent illi libri.

Digitized by Google

beginning with God. All things were made by him, CHAP. IX
and without him was nothing made. In that which
was made, was life, and the life was the light of men.
And the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. And for that the soul of
man, though it gives testimony of the light, yet itself
is not that light, but the Word, God himself, is John i. 9
that true light that lighteth every man that cometh
into the world; and that he was in the world, and John i. 10
the world was made by him, and the world knew
him not. But that he came unto his own, and his John i. 11
own received him not, but as many as received him,
to them gave he power to become the sons of God, John i. 12
as many as believed in his name: all this did I not
read there.

There also did I read that God the Word was not
born of flesh nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor
of the will of the flesh, but of God. But that the
Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, did I not
read there. I found out in those books, though it was
otherwise and divers ways said, that the Son being in Phil. ii. 6
the form of the Father, thought it no robbery to be
equal with God, for that in nature he was the same
with him. But that he made himself of no reputation, Phil. ii. 7
taking upon him the form of a servant, and was
made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion Phil. ii. 8
as a man, and humbled himself, and became obedient
unto death, even the death of the Cross: wherefore Phil. ii. 9
God hath highly exalted him (from the dead) and
given him a name over every name, that at the name Phil. ii. 10
of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven,
and things in earth, and things under the earth; and
that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ Phil. ii. 11
is Lord, to the glory of God the Father: those
books have not. Agsin, that thy only begotten Son,

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX quod autem ante omnia tempora et supra omnia tempora inconmutabiliter manet unigenitus filius tuus, coaeternus tibi, et quia de plenitudine eius accipiunt animae, ut beatae sint, et quia participatione manentis in se sapientiae renovantur, ut sapientes sint, est ibi; quod autem secundum tempus pro impiis mortuus est, et filio unico tuo non pepercisti, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidisti eum, non est ibi. abscondisti enim haec a sapientibus et revelasti ea parvulis, ut venirent ad eum laborantes et onerati et reficeret eos, quoniam mitis est et humilis corde, et dirigit mites in iudicio, et docet mansuetos vias suas, videns humilitatem nostram et laborem nostrum et dimittens omnia peccata nostra. qui autem cothurno tamquam doctrinae sublimioris elati non audiunt dicentem: Discite a me, quoniam mitis sum et humilis corde, et invenietis requiem animabus vestris, et si cognoscunt deum, non sicut deum glorificant, aut gratias agunt, sed evanescunt in cogitationibus suis, et obscuratur insipiens cor eorum; dicentes se esse sapientes stulti fiunt.

Et ideo legebam ibi etiam inmutatam gloriam incorruptionis tuae in idola et varia simulacra, in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum et quadrupedum et serpentium, videlicet Aegyptium cibum, quo Esau perdidit primogenita sua, quoniam caput quadrupedis pro te honoravit populus primogenitus, conversus corde in Aegyptum et curvans imaginem tuam, animam suam, ante imaginem vituli manducantis faenum. inveni haec ibi et non manducavi. placuit enim tibi, domine,

Digitized by Google

co-eternal with thee, was before all times, and beyond CHAP. IX
all times remains unchangeable, and that of his fulness all souls receive what makes them blessed; and that by participation of that wisdom which remains in them, they are renewed, that they may be made wise, is there. But that he in due time died for the wicked; and that thou sparedst not thine only Son, Rom. viii. 32
but deliveredst him for us all, is not there. For thou hast hid these things from the wise, and hast revealed them unto babes; that they that labour and are Matt. xi. 28
heavy laden, might come unto him, and he might refresh them, because he is meek and lowly in heart: and the meek he directeth in judgment, and such as be mild he teacheth his ways, beholding our humility and labour, and forgiving us all our sins. But such as tower high in the buskin of a sublimer learning, hear not him saying unto them, Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall Matt. xi. 29
find rest to your souls; and, If they know God, yet Rom. i. 21
they glorify him not as God, nor give thanks unto him, but wax vain in their imaginations; and their foolish heart is darkened; and professing that they Rom. i. 22
are wise, they become fools.

And there also did I read, that they had changed Rom. i. 23
the glory of thy incorruptible nature into idols, and divers shapes, into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and birds, and beasts, and serpents; yea verily, into that Egyptian food, for which Esau Gen. xxv.
sold his birthright; for that that people, which was thy firstborn, worshipped the head of a four-footed beast instead of thee, turning in their heart back towards Egypt; and bowing thy image (their own soul) before the image of a calf that eateth hay. Ps. cvi. 20
These things found I there; but I fed not on them. For it pleased thee, O Lord, to take away the reproach

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX auferre opprobrium diminutionis ab Iacob, ut maior serviret minori, et vocasti gentes in hereditatem tuam. et ego ad te veneram ex gentibus; et intendi in aurum, quod ab Aegypto voluisti ut auferret populus tuus, quoniam tuum erat, ubicumque erat. et dixisti Atheniensibus per apostolum tuum, quod in te vivimus et movemur et sumus, sicut et quidam secundum eos dixerunt, et utique inde erant illi libri. et non adtendi in idola Aegyptiorum, quibus de auro tuo ministrabant, qui transmutaverunt veritatem dei in mendacium, et coluerunt et servierunt creaturae potius quam creatori.

X

CAP. X Et inde admonitus redire ad memet ipsum, intravi in intima mea, duce te, et potui, quoniam factus es adiutor meus. intravi et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae supra eundem oculum animae meae, supra mentem meam, lucem incommutabilem: non hanc vulgarem et conspicuam omni carni, nec quasi ex eodem genere grandior erat, tamquam si ista multo multoque clarius claresceret totumque occuparet magnitudine. non hoc illa erat, sed aliud,

Digitized by Google

of humbling from Jacob, that the elder brother should serve the younger: and thou hast called the Gentiles into thine inheritance. And I myself had come unto thee from among the Gentiles; and I set my mind earnestly upon that gold which thou willedst thy people to take from the Egyptians, seeing thine it was, wheresoever it were. And to the Athenians thou saidst by thy Apostle, That in thee we live, and move, and have our being, as certain of their own poets had said. And surely it was from Athens these books came. But I set not my mind towards the idols of Egypt, which they made of thy gold; even they who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.

CHAP. IX

Exod. iii. 22

Acts xvii. 28

Rom. i. 25

X

Divine things are more clearly discovered unto him

CHAP. X

And being hence admonished to return to myself, I entered even into mine own inwards, thou being my Leader: and able I was to do it, for thou wert now become my Helper. Into myself I went, and with the eyes of my soul (such as it was) I discovered over the same eye of my soul, over my mind, the unchangeable light of the Lord: not this vulgar light, which all flesh may look upon, nor yet another greater of the same kind; as if this should shine much and much more clearly, and with its greatness take up all the room. This light was none of that,

Digitized by Google

CAP. X

aliud valde ab istis omnibus. nec ita erat supra mentem meam, sicut oleum super aquam, nec sicut caelum super terram; sed superior, quia ipsa fecit me, et ego inferior, quia factus ab ea. qui novit veritatem, novit eam, et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem. caritas novit eam. o aeterna veritas et vera caritas et cara aeternitas! tu es deus meus, tibi suspiro die ac nocte. et cum te primum cognovi, tu assumsisti me, ut viderem esse, quod viderem, et nondum me esse, qui viderem. et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei, radians in me vehementer, et contremui amore et horrore: et inveni longe me esse a te in regione dissimilitudinis, tamquam audirem vocem tuam de excelso: "cibus sum grandium: cresce et manducabis me. nec tu me in te mutabis sicut cibum carnis tuae, sed tu mutaberis in me." et cognovi, quoniam pro iniquitate erudisti hominem, et tabescere fecisti sicut araneam animam meam, et dixi: "numquid nihil est veritas, quoniam neque per finita neque per infinita locorum spatia diffusa est?" et clamasti de longinquo: ego sum qui sum. et audivi, sicut auditur in corde, et non erat prorsus unde dubitarem, faciliusque dubitarem vivere me, quam non esse veritatem, quae per ea, quae facta sunt, intellecta conspicitur.

Digitized by Google

but another, yea clean another from all these. Nor was it in that manner above my mind, as oil is upon water, nor yet as the heaven is above the earth: but superior to my soul, because it made me; and I was inferior to it, because I was made by it. He that knows what truth is, knows what that light is; and he that knows it, knows eternity. Charity knows it. O eternal Truth! and true Charity! and dear Eternity! Thou art my God, to thee do I sigh day and night. Thee when first I saw, thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was something which I might see; and that as yet I was not the man to see it. And thou didst beat back the infirmity of my own sight, darting thy beams of light upon me most strongly, and I trembled both with love and horror: and I perceived myself to be far off from thee in the region of utter unlikeness, as if I heard this voice of thine from on high: I am the food of strong men, grow apace, and thou shalt feed on me; nor shalt thou convert me like common food into thy substance, but thou shalt be changed into me. And I learned thereupon, that thou with rebukes hast corrected man for iniquity, thou madest my soul to consume away like a moth. And I said: Is truth therefore nothing at all, seeing it is neither diffused by infinite spaces, nor by finite? But thou criedst to me from afar off: Yea, verily, I Am that I Am. This voice I heard, (as things are heard in the heart) nor was there any suspicion at all, why I should doubt of it: yea, I should sooner doubt that I did not live, than that Truth is not, which is clearly to be seen by those things which are made.

CHAP. X

Ps. xxxix. 11

Exod. iii.

Rom. i. 20

Digitized by Google

XI

CAP. XI Et inspexi cetera infra te, et vidi nec omnino esse nec omnino non esse: esse quidem, quoniam abs te sunt, non esse autem, quoniam id quod es non sunt. id enim vere est, quod incommutabiliter manet. mihi autem inhaerere deo bonum est, quia, si non manebo in illo, nec in me potero. ille autem in se manens innovat omnia; et dominus meus es, quoniam bonorum meorum non eges.

XII

CAP. XII Et manifestatum est mihi, quoniam bona sunt, quae corrumpuntur, quae neque si summa bona essent, corrumpi possent, neque nisi bona essent, corrumpi possent: quia, si summa bona essent, incorruptibilia essent, si autem nulla bona essent, quid in eis corrumperetur, non esset. nocet enim corruptio, et nisi bonum minueret, non noceret. aut igitur nihil nocet corruptio, quod fieri non potest, aut, quod certissimum est, omnia, quae corrumpuntur, privantur

Digitized by Google

XI

How Creatures are, and yet are not

And I cast mine eyes upon those other creatures beneath thee, and I perceived, that they neither have any absolute being, nor yet could they be said to have no being. A being they have, because they are from thee; and yet no being, because what thou art, they are not. For that truly hath a being, which remains unchangeably. It is good then for me to hold fast unto God: for if I remain not in him, I shall never be able to do it in myself: whereas he remaining in himself, reneweth all things. And thou art my Lord, since thou dost not stand in need of my goods.

CHAP. XI

Ps. lxxiii. 28

Ps. xvi. 2

XII

All that is, is Good

And manifested unto me it was, that even those things be good, which yet are corrupted; which, were they sovereignly good, could never be corrupted, nor could they be corrupted, unless they were good: because if sovereignly good they were, they must needs be incorruptible; and if they held no goodness in them at all, neither should they have anything in them to be corrupted. For corruption hurts everything, but unless there were goodness to diminish, it could not hurt. Either therefore corruption does at all no hurt, (which cannot be), or, which is most certain, all which is corrupted, is deprived

CHAP. XII

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII bono. si autem omni bono privabuntur, omnino non erunt. si enim erunt et corrumpi iam non poterunt, meliora erunt, quia incorruptibiliter permanebunt. et quid monstrosius quam ea dicere omni bono amisso facta meliora? ergo si omni bono privabuntur, omnino nulla erunt: ergo quamdiu sunt, bona sunt. ergo quaecumque sunt, bona sunt, malumque illud, quod quaerebam unde esset, non est substantia, quia, si substantia esset, bonum esset. aut enim esset incorruptibilis substantia, magnum utique bonum, aut substantia corruptibilis esset, quae nisi bona esset, corruptibilis non esset. itaque vidi et manifestatum est mihi, quia omnia bona tu fecisti, et prorsus nullae substantiae sunt, quas tu non fecisti. et quoniam non aequalia omnia fecisti, ideo snnt omnia, quia singula bona sunt, et simul omnia valde bona, quoniam fecit deus noster omnia bona valde.

XIII

CAP. XIII Et tibi omnino non est malum, non solum tibi sed nec universae creaturae tuae, quia extra non est aliquid, quod inrumpat et corrumpat ordinem, quem inposuisti ei. in partibus autem eius quaedam quibusdam quia non conveniunt, mala putantur; et

Digitized by Google

of goodness. If things then shall be deprived of all their goodness, they shall have at all no being. For if they shall still be, and shall not be at all corrupted, they shall thereby become better, because they remain ever incorruptibly. What more absurd now than to affirm those things that have lost all their goodness, to be made the better by it? Therefore, whenever they shall be deprived of all their goodness, they shall also lose all their being. So long therefore as they are, they are good: therefore, whatsoever are, are good, and that evil which I sought, whence it should be, is not any substance: for were it a substance, it should be good. For either it should be an incorruptible substance, that is to say, of the chief sorts of good; or else should it be some corruptible substance; which unless it were some way or other good, it could not be corrupted. I perceived therefore, and it was made plain unto me, that all things are good which thou hast made, nor is there any substance at all, which thou hast not made. And because all which thou hast made are not equal, therefore are all things; for each is good, and at the same time all together very good, because thou our God hast made all things very good.

CHAP. XII

"Therefore are all things," and not one only: goodness is the essence of things, diversity of goodness their difference

Gen. i. 31

XIII

All created Things praise God

And to thee is there nothing at all evil: yea, not only to thee, but also not to thy creatures in general; because there is not anything which is without, which can break in, or discompose that order which thou hast settled. But in some particulars of thy creation, for that some things there be which so well

CHAP. XIII

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIII eadem ipsa conveniunt aliis et bona sunt, et in semet ipsis bona sunt. et omnia haec, quae sibimet invicem non conveniunt, conveniunt inferiori parti rerum, quam terram dicimus, habentem caelum suum nubilosum atque ventosum congruum sibi. et absit, ut dicerem iam: "non essent ista," quia etsi sola ista cernerem, desiderarem quidem meliora, sed iam etiam de solis istis laudare te deberem: quoniam laudandum te ostendunt de terra dracones et omnes abyssi, ignis, grando, nix, glacies, spiritus tempestatis, quae faciunt verbum tuum, montes et omnes colles, ligna fructifera et omnes cedri, bestiae et omnia pecora, reptilia et volatilia pinnata; reges terrae et omnes populi, principes et omnes iudices terrae, iuvenes et virgines, seniores cum iunioribus laudent nomen tuum. cum vero etiam de caelis te laudent, laudent te, deus noster, in excelsis omnes angeli tui, omnes virtutes tuae, sol et luna, omnes stellae et lumen, caeli caelorum et aquae, quae super caelos sunt, laudent nomen tuum: non iam desiderabam meliora, quia omnia cogitabam, et meliora quidem superiora quam inferiora, sed meliora omnia quam sola superiora iudicio saniore pendebam.

Digitized by Google

agree not with some other things, they are conceived to be evil: whereas those very things suit well enough with some other things, and are good; yea, and in themselves are good. And all these things which do not mutually agree one with another, do yet suit well enough with this inferior part, which we call earth; which hath such a cloudy and windy region of air hanging over it, as is in nature agreeable to it. God forbid now, that I should ever say, These things ought not to be; for should I see nothing but these, verily I should want the better, yet even only for these ought I to praise thee; for that thou art to be praised, these things of the earth do shew: dragons, and all deeps, fire, hail, snow, ice, and stormy wind, which fulfil thy word; mountains, and all hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowls; kings of the earth and all people; princes and all judges of the land; young men and maidens; old men and children, let them praise thy name. Seeing also these in heaven praise thee, praise thee, O our God, in the heights, thine angels and all thy hosts, sun and moon, all the stars and light, the heaven of heavens, and the waters that be above the heavens, seeing that these praise thy name, I did not now desire better, because I had now thought upon them all: and that those superior things were better than these inferior things, but yet all things together better than those superior by themselves, I resolved upon in my bettered judgment.

CHAP. XIII

Ps. cxlviii. 1–12

Digitized by Google

XIV

CAP. XIV Non est sanitas eis, quibus displicet aliquid creaturae tuae, sicut mihi non erat, cum displicerent multa, quae fecisti. et quia non audebat anima mea, ut ei displiceret deus meus, nolebat esse tuum quidquid ei displicebat. et inde ierat in opinionem duarum substantiarum, et non requiescebat et aliena loquebatur. et inde rediens fecerat sibi deum per infinita spatia locorum omnium, et eum putaverat esse te, et eum collocaverat in corde suo, et facta erat rursus templum idoli sui abominandum tibi. sed posteaquam fovisti caput nescientis, et clausisti oculos meos, ne viderent vanitatem, cessavi de me paululum, et consopita est insania mea; et evigilavi in te et vidi te infinitum aliter, et visus iste non a carne trahebatur.

XV

CAP. XV Et respexi alia, et vidi tibi debere quia sunt, et in te cuncta finita, sed aliter, non quasi in loco, sed quia tu es omnitenens manu veritate, et omnia vera sunt,

Digitized by Google

XIV

To a sober Mind, none of God's Creatures are displeasing

They are not well in their wits, to whom anything which thou hast created is displeasing, nor more than I myself was, whenas many things which thou hadst made, did not like me. And because my soul durst not take distaste at my God, it would not suffer that aught should be accounted thine, which displeased it. Hence fell it upon the opinion of two substances, and no rest did it take, but talked idly. And turning from thence, it fancied a God to itself, which took up infinite measures of all places; and him did it think to be thee; and him it placed in its heart: so that it became once again the temple of its own idol, which was to thee so abominable. But after thou hadst refreshed my head, (I not knowing of it) and hadst shut up mine eyes that they should not behold vanity; I began to be quieted a little from myself, and my mad fit was gone asleep: out of which I awaked in thee, and then discerned thee to be infinite another manner of way. But this sight was not derived from any powers of my flesh. CHAP. XIV

XV

How there is truth and falsehood in the Creatures

And I looked upon other things; and I saw how they owed their being to thee; and that all finite things are in thee, but in a different manner; not as in space, but because thou containest all things in CHAP. XV

Digitized by Google

CAP. XV in quantum sunt, nec quicquam est falsitas, nisi cum putatur esse quod non est. et vidi, quia non solum locis sua quaeque suis conveniunt sed etiam temporibus; et quia tu, qui solus aeternus es, non post innumerabilia spatia temporum coepisti operari, quia omnia spatia temporum, quae praeterierunt et quae praeteribunt, nec abirent nec venirent nisi te operante et manente.

XVI

CAP. XVI ET sensi expertus non esse mirum, quod palato non sano poena est et panis, qui sano suavis est, et oculis aegris odiosa lux, quae puris amabilis. et iustitia tua displicet iniquis, nedum vipera et vermiculus, quae bona creasti, apta inferioribus creaturae tuae partibus, quibus et ipsi iniqui apti sunt, quanto dissimiliores sunt tibi, apti autem superioribus, quanto similiores fiunt tibi. et quaesivi, quid esset iniquitas, et non inveni substantiam, sed a summa substantia, te deo, detortae in infima voluntatis perversitatem proicientis intima sua et tumescentis foras.

Digitized by Google

thine hand in thy truth. All things are true so far forth as they have a being; nor is falsehood anything, unless while a thing is thought to be, which is not. And I marked how that all things did agree respectively, not to their places only, but to their seasons also. And that thou, who only art eternal, didst not begin to work after innumerable spaces of time spent; for that all spaces of times, both those which are passed already, and those which are to pass hereafter, should neither go nor come, but by thee, who art still working and still remaining. CHAP. XV

XVI

All Things are good, though to some Things not fit

And I both found and tried it to be no wonder that the same bread is lothsome to a distempered palate, which is pleasant to a sound one: and that to sore eyes, that light is offensive, which to the clear is delightful. And thy justice gives disgust unto the wicked: so do much more the viper and smallest vermin, which thou hast created good, and fit enough to these inferior portions of thy creation, to which these very wicked are also fit; and that so much the more fit, by how much they be unlike thee, but so much fitter for the superior parts, by how much they become liker thee. And I enquired what iniquity should be: but I found it not to be a substance, but a swerving merely of the will, crooked quite away from thee, O God, (who art the supreme substance) towards these lower things; casting away its inward parts, and puffed up outwardly. CHAP. XVI

Ecclesiasticus x. 10, which A. interprets allegorically

Digitized by Google

XVII

CAP. XVII Et mirabar, quod iam te amabam, non pro te phantasma: et non stabam frui deo meo, sed rapiebar ad te decore tuo, moxque diripiebar abs te pondere meo, et ruebam in ista cum gemitu; et pondus hoc consuetudo carnalis. sed mecum erat memoria tui, neque ullo modo dubitabam esse, cui cohaererem, sed nondum me esse, qui cohaererem: quoniam corpus, quod corrumpitur, adgravat animam, et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem. eramque certissimus, quod invisibilia tua a constitutione mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur, sempiterna quoque virtus et divinitas tua. quaerens enim, unde adprobarem pulchritudinem corporum sive caelestium sive terrestrium, et quid mihi praesto esset integre de mutabilibus, iudicanti et dicenti, "hoc ita esse debet, illud non ita": hoc ergo quaerens, unde iudicarem, cum ita iudicarem, inveneram incommutabilem et veram veritatis aeternitatem supra mentem meam conmutabilem. atque ita gradatim a corporibus ad sentientem per corpus animam, atque inde ad eius interiorem vim, cui sensus corporis

Digitized by Google

XVII

What things hinder us of God's Knowledge

AND I wondered not a little that I was now come to love thee, and no phantasm instead of thee: nor did I delay to enjoy my God, but was ravished to thee by thine own beauty; and yet by and by I violently fell off again, even by mine own weight; rushing with sorrow enough upon these inferior things. This weight I spake of was my own fleshly custom. Yet had I still a remembrance of thee; nor did I any way doubt, that there was one to whom I ought to cleave; but I thought I was not yet able to cleave unto thee: for that the body which is corrupted, presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. And most certain was I that thy invisible works are clearly seen from the constitution of the world, being understood by the things that are made; and also thine eternal power and Godhead. For studying now, by what reasons to make good the beauty of corporeal things, either celestial or terrestrial, and what proof I had at hand solidly to pass sentence upon these mutable things, in pronouncing, This ought to be thus, and This must be so; plodding, I say, on this, upon what ground namely I ought to judge, seeing I did thus judge: I had by this time found the unchangeable and true eternity of truth, residing above this changeable mind of mine. And thus by degrees passing from bodies to the soul, which makes use of the senses of the body to perceive by; and from thence to its inner faculties, unto which the senses of the body are to represent their outward objects; and so forward, as

CHAP. XVII

Wisdom ix. 15

Rom. i. 20

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVII exteriora nuntiaret, et quousque possunt bestiae, atque inde rursus ad ratiocinantem potentiam, ad quam refertur iudicandum, quod sumitur a sensibus corporis. quae se quoque in me comperiens mutabilem, erexit se ad intellegentiam suam, et abduxit cogitationem a consuetudine, subtrahens se contradicentibus turbis phantasmatum, ut inveniret, quo lumine aspargeretur; cum sine ulla dubitatione clamaret incommutabile praeferendum esse mutabili, unde nosset ipsum inconmutabile—quod nisi aliquo modo nosset, nullo modo illud mutabili certa praeponeret—et pervenit ad id, quod est, in ictu trepidantis aspectus. tunc vero invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi, sed aciem figere non evalui, et repercussa infirmitate redditus solitis, non mecum ferebam nisi amantem memoriam et quasi olefacta desiderantem, quae comedere nondum possem.

XVIII

CAP. XVIII Et quaerebam viam conparandi roboris, quod esset idoneum ad fruendum te, nec inveniebam, donec amplecterer mediatorem dei et hominum, hominem

Digitized by Google

far as the irrational creatures are able to go: thence again I passed on to the reasoning faculties, unto which whatever is received from the senses of the body is referred to be judged. This also finding itself to be variable in me, betook itself towards its own understanding, drawing away my thoughts from custom, and withdrawing itself from these confused multitudes of phantasies, which contradict one another; that so it might find out that light, which now bedewed it, when without all further doubting, it cried out, that what was unchangeable was to be preferred before what was changeable, by which it had come to know that unchangeable (which unless by some means or other it had known, it could never have had sure ground for the preferring of it before the changeable): thus by a flash of the twinkling eyesight it came so far as that which is. And now came I to have a sight of those invisible things of thee, which are understood by those things which are made. But I was not able to fix mine eye long upon them: but my infirmity being beaten back again, I was turned to my wonted fancies; carrying along with me no more but a liking of those new thoughts in my memory, and an appetite, as it were, to the meat I had smelt; which as yet I was not able to eat of.

CHAP. XVII

XVIII

Only Christ is the Way to Salvation

CHAP. XVIII

Then set I myself to seek a means of gaining so much strength, as should be sufficient to enjoy thee; but I could not find it, until I embraced that

Digitized by Google

CAP. XVIII Christum Iesum, qui est super omnia deus benedictus in saecula, vocantem et dicentem: ego sum via veritatis et vita, et cibum, cui capiendo invalidus eram, miscentem carni: quoniam verbum caro factum est, ut infantiae nostrae lactesceret sapientia tua, per quam creasti omnia. non enim tenebam deum meum Iesum humilis humilem, nec cuius rei magistra esset eius infirmitas noveram. verbum enim tuum, aeterna veritas, superioribus creaturae tuae partibus supereminens, subditos erigit ad se ipsam, in inferioribus autem aedificavit sibi humilem domum de limo nostro, per quam subdendos deprimeret a se ipsis et ad se traiceret, sanans tumorem et nutriens amorem, ne fiducia sui progrederentur longius, sed potius infirmarentur, videntes ante pedes suos infirmam divinitatem ex participatione tunicae pelliciae nostrae, et lassi prosternerentur in eam, illa autem surgens levaret eos.

XIX

CAP. XIX Ego vero aliud putabam: tantumque sentiebam de domino Christo meo, quantum de excellentis sapientiae viro, cui nullus posset aequari, praesertim quia

Digitized by Google

Mediator betwixt God and man, the Man Jesus Christ; who is over all, God blessed for evermore, then calling unto me, and saying: I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: who mingled that Food which I was unable to take (his own flesh) unto our flesh. For the Word was made flesh, that by thy wisdom, by which thou createdst all things, he might suckle our infancy. For I, not yet humble enough, did not apprehend my Lord Jesus Christ, who had made himself humble; nor did I yet know what lesson that infirmity of his would teach us. For thy Word, the eternal Truth, being so highly exalted above the highest of thy creatures, reaches up those that were cast down, unto itself: having here below built for itself a lowly cottage of our clay, by which he intended to abate from the height of their own imaginations, those that were to be cast down; that so he might bring them about unto himself; allaying the swelling of their pride, and cherishing of their love: to the end they might go on no further in the confidence of themselves, but might find their own weakness rather; seeing the divinity itself enfeebled at our feet, by taking our coats of skin upon him: that so being weary at length, they might cast down themselves upon it, and that rising, might raise up them together with it.

CHAP. XVIII

1 Tim. ii. 5
Rom. ix. 5
John xiv. 6
John i. 14
2 Cor. x. 5
Gen. iii. 21

XIX

What he thought of Christ's Incarnation

CHAP. XIX

But I had before far other thoughts: conceiving only of my Lord Christ as of a man of excellent wisdom, whom no man could be equalled unto; and in this regard especially, for that being so wonderfully

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIX mirabiliter natus ex virgine (ad exemplum contemnendorum temporalium prae adipiscenda immortalitate) divina pro nobis cura tantam auctoritatem magisterii meruisse videbatur. quid autem sacramenti haberet verbum caro factum, ne suspicari quidem poteram. tantum cognoveram ex his, quae de illo scripta traderentur, quia manducavit et bibit, dormivit, ambulavit, exhilaratus est, contristatus est, sermocinatus est, non haesisse carnem illam verbo tuo nisi cum anima et mente humana. novit hoc omnis, qui novit incommutabililatem verbi tui, quam ego iam noveram, quantum poteram, nec omnino quicquam inde dubitabam. etenim nunc movere membra corporis per voluntatem, nunc non movere; nunc aliquo affectu affici, nunc non affici; nunc proferre per signa sapientes sententias, nunc esse in silentio: propria sunt mutabilitatis animae et mentis. quae si falsa de illo scripta essent, etiam omnia periclitarentur mendacio, neque in illis litteris ulla fidei salus generi humano remaneret. quia itaque vera scripta sunt, totum hominem in Christo agnoscebam: non corpus tantum hominis aut cum corpore sine mente animum, sed ipsum hominem, non persona veritatis, sed magna quadam naturae humanae excellentia et perfectiore participatione sapientiae praeferri ceteris arbitrabar.

Alypius autem deum carne indutum ita putabat credi a Catholicis, ut praeter deum et carnem non esset in

Digitized by Google

born of a Virgin, (giving us an example how to contemn the worldly things for the obtaining of immortality ;) by that divine care of his he seemed to have deserved so much authority, as to be the master over us. But what mystery this might carry with it, The Word was made flesh, I could not so much as imagine. Thus much I collected out of what is come to us, being written of him (how that he did eat, and drink, and sleep, and walk, and rejoiced in spirit, and was heavy, and preached): that the flesh did not cleave unto thy Word, without a human soul and mind. Everybody knows thus much, that knoweth the unchangeableness of thy Word: which I myself now knew, as well as I could, nor did I at all make any doubt of it. For, for him to move the limbs of his body by his will, and otherwhiles not to move them; now to be stirred by some affection, and at another time not to be affected; now to deliver wise sentences, and another while to keep silence: all these be properties of a soul and mind that are mutable. And should these things be falsely written of him, all the rest verily would be in suspicion of being a lie, nor should there be left at all in those Books any safeness of faith for mankind. Because therefore truths are there written, I there acknowledged a perfect man to be in Christ. Not the body of a man only, or a sensitive soul without a rational, but a very man, whom, not for his being the form of truth, but for a certain extraordinary excellency of human nature that was in him, I judged worthy to be preferred before all other men.

The Manichees thought that he was a form of truth

As for Alypius, he imagined the Catholics to have believed God to be so clothed with flesh, that besides God and the flesh, there was no soul at all in Christ, and that they had preached there was no

Digitized by Google

CAP. XIX Christo anima, mentemque hominis non existimabat in eo praedicari. et quoniam bene persuasum tenebat ea, quae de illo memoriae mandata sunt, sine vitali et rationali creatura non fieri, ad ipsam Christianam fidem pigrius movebatur. sed postea haereticorum Apollinaristarum hunc errorem esse cognoscens, Catholicae fidei conlaetatus et contemperatus est. ego autem aliquanto posterius didicisse me fateor, in eo, quod verbum caro factum est, quomodo Catholica veritas a Photini falsitate dirimatur. improbatio quippe haereticorum facit eminere, quid ecclesia tua sentiat et quid habeat sana doctrina. oportuit enim et haereses esse, ut probati manifesti fierent inter infirmos.

XX

CAP. XX Sed tunc, lectis Platonicorum illis libris, posteaquam inde admonitus quaerere incorpoream veritatem, invisibilia tua per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspexi; et repulsus sensi, quid per tenebras animae meae contemplari non sinerer, certus esse te et infinitum esse, nec tamen per locos finitos infinitosve diffundi, et vere te esse, qui semper idem ipse esses, ex nulla parte nulloque motu alter aut aliter, cetera vero ex te esse omnia, hoc solo firmissimo documento, quia sunt: certus quidem in istis eram, nimis tamen infirmus

Digitized by Google

soul of man in him. And because he was verily persuaded, that those actions which were recorded of him could not be performed but by a vital and a rational creature, he was the slower therefore in moving towards the Christian faith. But understanding afterwards, that this was the error of the Apollinarian heretics, he was better pleased with the Catholic faith, and better complied with it. But something later it was, I confess, ere I learned how in this sentence, The Word was made flesh, the Catholic truth could be cleared of the heresy of Photinus. For, the confuting of the heretics makes the opinions of the Church more eminent, and the tenet which the sound doctrine maintaineth. For there must be also heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among the weak. 1 Cor. xi. 19

CHAP. XIX

XX

Of divers Books of the Platonists

CHAP. XX

But having read as then these books of the Platonists, having once gotten the hint from them, and falling upon the search of incorporeal truth; I came to get a sight of these invisible things of thine, which are understood by those things which are made: and being put back again, I perceived how that the darkness of mine own mind was it which so hindered my contemplation: I became certain, that thou wert both infinite, and yet not diffused over finite and infinite places: and that thou art truly the same that thou art ever, nor in any part, nor by any motion, different or otherwise: and that all other things are from thee, taught so by this one most firm demonstration, that they are. Of these things I was certain

Digitized by Google

CAP XX ad fruendum te. garriebam plane quasi peritus et, nisi in Christo, salvatore nostro, viam tuam quaererem, non peritus, sed periturus essem. iam enim coeperam velle videri sapiens, plenus poena mea et non flebam, insuper autem inflabar scientia. ubi enim erat illa aedificans caritas a fundamento humilitatis, quod est Christus Iesus? aut quando illi libri me docerent eam? in quos me propterea, priusquam scripturas tuas considerarem, credo voluisti incurrere, ut inprimeretur memoriae meae, quomodo ex eis affectus essem, et cum postea in libris tuis mansuefactus essem, et curantibus digitis tuis contrectarentur vulnera mea, discernerem atque distinguerem, quid interesset inter praesumptionem et confessionem, inter videntes, quo eundum sit, nec videntes, qua, et viam ducentem ad beatificam patriam, non tantum cernendam sed et habitandam. nam si primo sanctis tuis litteris informatus essem, et in earum familiaritate obdulcuisses mihi, et post in illa volumina incidissem, fortasse aut abripuissent me a solidamento pietatis, aut si in affectu, quem salubrem inbiberam, perstitissem, putarem etiam ex illis libris eum posse concipi, si eos solos quisque didicisset.

Digitized by Google

enough, yet too weak to comprehend thee. I prated altogether as I were a skilful fellow; but had I not sought thy way in Christ our Saviour, I had been like to prove not skilled but killed. For now, forsooth, I began to be desirous to seem wise: full of mine own punishment, yet could not weep for it, but became more and more puffed up with my knowledge. For where was that charity that should build me up from that foundation of humility which is in Christ Jesus? Or when would these books have taught me that? Yet upon these, I believe it was thy pleasure that I should first fall, before I took thy Scriptures into my consideration; that I might print in memory, how far those books wrought upon my affections: and that when afterwards I should come to be made tractable by thy Books, thine own fingers undertaking the cure of me, and my wounds dressed, I might discern at last and distinguish how main a difference there was betwixt presumption and confession; betwixt those that saw whither they were to go, but knew nothing of the way: and that path which leads unto that blessed country, not only to be looked upon, but dwelt in. For had I first been brought up in thy holy Scriptures, and in the familiar use of them thyself had grown sweet unto me, and had I fallen upon these philosophical volumes afterwards; they might either have withdrawn me from the solid ground of piety, or if I had stood firm in that wholesome disposition which I had there tasted, I might perchance have thought, that a man, even out of these Platonic books might have gotten the same, had he studied them only.

Digitized by Google

XXI

CAP. XXI Itaque avidissime arripui venerabilem stilum spiritus tui, et prae ceteris apostolum Paulum. et perierunt illae quaestiones, in quibus mihi aliquando visus est adversari sibi, et non congruere testimoniis legis et prophetarum textus sermonis eius: et apparuit mihi una facies eloquiorum castorum, et exultare cum tremore didici. et coepi et inveni, quidquid illac verum legeram, hac cum conmendatione gratiae tuae dici: ut qui videt non sic glorietur, quasi non acceperit non solum quod videt, sed etiam ut videat—quid enim habet quod non accepit?—et ut te, qui es semper idem, non solum admoneatur ut videat, sed etiam sanetur ut teneat; et qui de longinquo videre non potest, viam tamen ambulet, qua veniat et videat et teneat: quia, etsi condelectetur homo legi dei secundum interiorem hominem, quid faciet de alia lege in membris suis, repugnante legi mentis suae, et se captivum ducente in lege peccati, quae est in membris eius? quoniam iustus es, domine; nos autem peccavimus, inique fecimus, inpie gessimus, et gravata est super nos manus tua, et iuste traditi sumus antiquo peccatori, praeposito mortis, quia persuasit voluntati nostrae similitudinem

Digitized by Google

XXI

What he found in the Holy Scriptures, which was not in the Platonists

Most greedily therefore laid I hold upon that venerable writing of thy Spirit: and upon the Apostle Paul above all the rest. Whereupon those difficulties quite vanished away, in which he sometimes seemed to me to contradict himself; and wherein the text of his discourse seemed not to agree with the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets. And there appeared unto me but one face in that chaste eloquence; and I learned to rejoice with trembling. So I began; and found whatsoever truth I had there read, to be said here with the praise of thy grace. So he that sees should not so glory as if he had not received, not only that which he doth see, but also the power to see. For what hath he, which he hath not received? So he is put in mind not only to see thee, who art ever the same, but that he may be made strong to hold thee: and that he who from afar off is not able to see his way, may yet walk on that way, whereby he may at last arrive, and see, and comprehend. For though a man be delighted with the law of God after the inner man, yet how shall he do with that other law in his members, which wars against the law of his mind, and bringeth him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members? For, thou art righteous, O Lord, but we have sinned and committed iniquity, and done wickedly, and thy hand is grown heavy upon us, and we are justly delivered over unto that old sinner the president of death: for he hath wrought our will to become like his will, whereby he departed from thy truth.

CHAP. XXI

Ps. ii. 11

1 Cor. iv. 7

Rom. vii. 22

Rom. vii. 23

Dan. ix. 5

Digitized by Google

CAP. XXI voluntatis suae, qua in veritate tua non stetit. quid faciet miser homo? quis eum liberabit de corpore mortis huius, nisi gratia tua per Iesum Christum dominum nostrum, quem genuisti coaeternum et creasti in principio viarum tuarum; in quo princeps huius mundi non invenit quicquam morte dignum, et occidit eum; et evacuatum est chirographum, quod erat contrarium nobis? hoc illae litterae non habent. non habent illae paginae vultum pietatis illius, lacrimas confessionis, sacrificium tuum, spiritum contribulatum, cor contritum et humiliatum, populi salutem, sponsam civitatem, arram spiritus sancti, poculum pretii nostri. nemo ibi cantat: Nonne deo subdita erit anima mea? ab ipso enim salutare meum: etenim ipse deus meus et salutaris meus, susceptor meus: non movebor amplius. nemo ibi audit vocantem: Venite ad me, qui laboratis. dedignantur ab eo discere, quoniam mitis est et humilis corde. abscondisti enim haec a sapientibus et prudentibus et revelasti ea parvulis. et aliud est de silvestri cacumine videre patriam pacis, et iter ad eam non invenire, et frustra conari per invia, circum obsidentibus et insidiantibus fugitivis desertoribus, cum principe suo leone et dracone: et aliud tenere viam illuc ducentem, cura caelestis imperatoris munitam, ubi non latrocinantur qui caelestem militiam deseruerunt; vitant enim eam sicut supplicium. haec mihi inviscerabantur miris modis, cum minimum apostolorum tuorum legerem, et consideraveram opera tua et expaveram.

Digitized by Google

What shall wretched man do? Who shall deliver CHAP.
him from the body of this death, but only thy grace, XXI
through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom thou hast Rom. vii. 24
begotten co-eternal to thyself, and possessedst in Prov. viii.
the beginning of thy ways: in whom the prince of 22
this world found nothing worthy of death, yet killed John xiv.
he him; whereby the handwriting was blotted out, 30
which was contrary to me? None of all this do these Col. ii. 14
Platonic writings contain. Those leaves can show
nothing of this face of pity, those tears of confession,
that sacrifice of thine, a troubled spirit, a broken Ps. li.
and a contrite heart, the salvation of thy people, the
Spouse, the city, the earnest of the Holy Ghost, the
Cup of our Redemption. No man sings there, Shall
not my soul wait upon God, seeing from him cometh Ps. lxii. 1
my salvation? For he is my God, and my Salvation, Ps. lxii. 2
my Defence; I shall be no more moved. No man
in those books hears him calling: Come unto me all Matt. xi. 28
ye that labour; Yea, they scorn to learn of him
because he is meek and lowly in heart. For these Matt. xi. 29
things hast thou hid from the wise and prudent, and Matt. xi. 25
hast revealed them unto babes. For it is one thing
from the woody top of a mountain to see the land of Deut.
peace, and not to find the way thither; and in vain xxxii. 49
to travel through ways unpassable, round about beset
with these fugitive spirits, forsakers of their God lying
in ambush with that ring-leader of theirs, the Lion and
the Dragon: and another to keep on the way that
leads thither, which is guarded by the care of our
heavenly General: where there are none that forsook
the heavenly army to exercise robberies; which they
abhor as much as their very torment. These things
did by wonderful means sink into my very bowels,
whenas I read that least of thy Apostles, and
had considered upon thy works and trembled.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BOOK VIII

Digitized by Google

LIBER OCTAVVS

I

CAP. I Deus meus, recorder in gratiarum actione tibi, et confitear misericordias tuas super me. perfundantur ossa mea dilectione tua, et dicant: Domine, quis similis tibi? dirrupisti vincula mea: sacrificem tibi sacrificium laudis. quomodo dirrupisti ea, narrabo, et dicent omnes, qui adorant te, cum audient haec: Benedictus dominus in caelo et in terra; magnum et mirabile nomen eius. inhaeserant praecordiis meis verba tua, et undique circumvallabar abs te. de vita tua aeterna certus eram, quamvis eam in aenigmate et quasi per speculum videram; dubitatio tamen omnis de incorruptibili substantia, quod ab illa esset omnis substantia, ablata mihi erat, nec certior de te, sed stabilior in te esse cupiebam. de mea vero temporali vita nutabant omnia, et mundandum erat cor a fermento veteri; et placebat via, ipse salvator, et ire per eius angustias adhuc pigebat. et inmisisti in mentem meam, visumque est bonum in conspectu meo, pergere ad Simplicianum, qui mihi bonus apparebat servus tuus, et lucebat in eo gratia

Digitized by Google

THE EIGHTH BOOK

I

How being inflamed with the Love of Heavenly Things, he goeth to Simplicianus

Give me leave, O my God, with thanksgiving to CHAP.
remember, and to confess unto thee thine own I
mercies bestowed upon me. Let my bones be filled
with thy love, and let them say unto thee, Who is Ps. lxxxvi.
like unto thee, O Lord? Thou hast broken my 8
bonds in sunder, I will offer unto thee the sacrifice Ps. cxvi.
of thanksgiving. And how thou hast broken them 16, 17
will I now declare; and all men who worship thee,
when they hear of it shall say: Blessed be the Lord,
both in heaven and in earth, great and wonderful is
his name. Thy words had stuck fast even to the
very roots of my heart, and I was hedged round about Job i. 10
by thee. Of the eternity of thy life I was now
become certain, though I had no more than seen in 1 Cor. xiii.
a glass as it were darkly. All my former doubtings, 12
concerning an incorruptible substance, and that all
other substance should come from that, was now
quite taken away from me; nor did I desire as now
to be made more certain of thee, but to stand firmer
in thee. As for mine own temporal life, all things
were as yet unresolved; my heart was to be purged 1 Cor. v. 7
from the old leaven. The Way (our Saviour him- John xiv. 6
self) I very well liked of: but it still irked me to
follow him through its straitness. Thou didst put
into my mind, and it seemed good in mine own eyes,
to go unto Simplicianus, who seemed to me a faithful

Digitized by Google

CAP. I tua. audieram etiam, quod a iuventute sua devotissime tibi viveret; iam vero tunc senuerat; et longa aetate in tam bono studio sectandae viae tuae multa expertus, multa edoctus mihi videbatur: et vere sic erat. unde mihi ut proferret volebam conferenti secum aestus meos, quis esset aptus modus sic affecto, ut ego eram, ad ambulandum in via tua.

Videbam enim plenam ecclesiam, et alius sic ibat, alius autem sic. mihi autem displicebat, quod agebam in saeculo, et oneri mihi erat valde, non iam inflammantibus cupiditatibus, ut solebant, spe honoris et pecuniae ad tolerandam illam servitutem tam gravem. iam enim me illa non delectabant, prae dulcedine tua et decore domus tuae, quam dilexi; sed adhuc tenaciter alligabar ex femina, nec me prohibebat apostolus coniugari, quamvis exhortaretur ad melius, maxime volens omnes homines sic esse, ut ipse erat. sed ego infirmior eligebam molliorem locum; et propter hoc unum volvebar in ceteris, languidus et tabescens curis marcidis, quod et in aliis rebus, quas nolebam pati, congruere cogebar vitae coniugali, cui deditus obstringebar. audieram ex ore veritatis esse spadones, qui se ipsos absciderunt propter regnum caelorum; sed, qui potest, inquit, capere, capiat. vani sunt

Digitized by Google

servant of thine, and that thy grace shined in him: CHAP. I
of whom I had further heard, that from his very youth he had lived most devoutly towards thee. He was now grown into years; and by reason of so great an age, spent in so good a purpose as following thy ways, he seemed to me to have gained experience of many things, and to have been taught many things: and verily so he had Out of which skill of his, I desired him to afford me some directions, (making him acquainted with my troubles) which should be the readiest way for a man in my case to walk in thy paths.

For, the Church I saw to be full, and one went this way, and another that way. But very unpleasant to me it was, that I led the life of a worldling: yea, a very grievous burden it was, those desires after the hopes of honour and profit inflaming me now no longer as they were wont to do, nor helping me to bear so heavy a bondage. For in respect of the sweetness and the beauty of thy house which I loved, those thoughts delighted me no longer. But very strongly yet was I enthralled with the love of a woman: nor had thine Apostle forbidden me to marry, though he (1 Cor. vii. 8) advised me to do better, earnestly wishing that all men were as himself then was. But I being weak, made choice of the softer place: and because of this alone, was languishing I tumbled up and down in the rest; yea, I pined away with withering cares, because in other matters which I was unwilling to undergo, I was constrained to accommodate myself to a married life, unto which I stood enthralled. I had understood from the mouth of Truth itself, that there were some eunuchs which have made (Matt. xix. 12) themselves so for the kingdom of heaven's sake: but, quoth he, let him receive this saying that is able.

Digitized by Google

CAP. I certe omnes homines, quibus non inest dei scientia, nec de his, quae videntur bona, potuerunt invenire eum, qui est. at ego iam non eram in illa vanitate; transcenderam eam, et contestante universa creatura, inveneram te creatorem nostrum, et verbum tuum apud te deum, tecumque unum deum, per quod creasti omnia. et est aliud genus inpiorum, qui cognoscentes deum non sicut deum glorificaverunt aut gratias egerunt. in hoc quoque incideram, et dextera tua suscepit me et inde ablatum posuisti, ubi convalescerem, quia dixisti homini: Ecce pietas est sapientia, et: Noli velle videri sapiens, quoniam dicentes se esse sapientes stulti facti sunt. et inveneram iam bonam margaritam, et venditis omnibus, quae haberem, emenda erat, et dubitabam.

II

CAP. II Perrexi ergo ad Simplicianum, patrem in accipienda gratia tunc episcopi Ambrosii, et quem vere ut patrem diligebat. narravi ei circuitus erroris mei. ubi autem commemoravi legisse me quosdam libros Platonicorum, quos Victorinus, quondam rhetor urbis Romae, quem Christianum defunctum esse audieram, in Latinam linguam transtulisset, gratulatus est mihi, quod non

Digitized by Google

All those men verily are vain, in whom the knowledge of God is not; and who could not out of these things which seem good, find out him that is good indeed. But I was no longer in that vanity; I was now gotten beyond it; and by the testimony of all thy creatures, had I found thee our Creator, and thy Word God together with thee, and together one God with thee, by which Word thou createdst all things. There is yet another kind of wicked men, who knowing God, did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful: upon these also was I fallen, but thy right hand sustained me, and delivering me out of their company, thou placedst me where I might grow better. For thou hast said unto man: Behold, the fear of the Lord is wisdom: and, Be not desirous to seem wise in thine own eyes, because they who affirmed themselves to be wise, became fools. But I had now found that Pearl of price, which I ought to have bought, though I sold all that I had. But I was yet in a quandary what to do.

CHAP. I

2 Wisdom xiii. 1

Rom. i. 21

Job xxviii. 28

Prov. iii. 7

Rom. i. 22

Matt. xiii. 46

II

How Victorinus, the famous Orator, was converted

Unto Simplicianus therefore I went, the father at that time of Bishop Ambrose in his receiving of thy grace; whom verily Ambrose loved as his own father. To him I discovered the winding course of my error. But when I told him that I had read over certain books of the Platonists, which Victorinus, sometime rhetoric professor of Rome, (who died a Christian as I had heard) had translated into Latin, he much rejoiced over me, for that I had not fallen upon

CHAP. II

Digitized by Google

CAP. II in aliorum philosophorum scripta incidissem, plena fallaciarum et deceptionum, secundum elementa huius mundi, in istis autem omnibus modis insinuari deum et eius verbum. deinde, ut me exhortaretur ad humilitatem Christi, sapientibus absconditam et revelatam parvulis, Victorinum ipsum recordatus est, quem, Romae cum esset, familiarissime noverat, deque illo mihi narravit quod non silebo. habet enim magnam laudem gratiae tuae confitendam tibi, quemadmodum ille doctissimus senex, et omnium liberalium doctrinarum peritissimus, quique philosophorum tam multa legerat et diiudicaverat, doctor tot nobilium senatorum, qui etiam ob insigne praeclari magisterii, quod cives huius mundi eximium putant, statuam Romano foro meruerat et acceperat, usque ad illam aetatem venerator idolorum, sacrorumque sacrilegorum particeps, quibus tunc tota fere Romana nobilitas inflata, spirabat prodigia iam et omnigenum deum monstra et Anubem latratorem, quae aliquando

contra Neptunum et Venerem contraque Minervam

tela tenuerant, et a se victis iam Roma supplicabat, quae iste senex Victorinus tot annos ore terricrepo defensitaverat, non erubuerit esse puer Christi tui, et infans fontis tui, subiecto collo ad humilitatis iugum, et edomita fronte ad crucis opprobrium.

O domine, domine, qui inclinasti caelos et descendisti, tetigisti montes et fumigaverunt, quibus

Digitized by Google

any other philosophers' writings, which use to be full of fallacies and vain deceits, after the rudiments of this world: whereas in the Platonists, God and his word are everywhere implied. And the better to exhort me to Christ's humility, (hidden from the wise, and revealed to little ones) he mentioned Victorinus himself, whom whilst he was at Rome he had familiarly known: and of him he told this story, which I will not here conceal. For it affords matter of much praise of thy grace, which ought to be confessed unto thee, to hear how this most learned old man, most skilful in all the liberal sciences; one who had read, and weighed so many of the philosophers; one that had been master to so many noble Senators, who also as a mark of high office nobly filled, had (which worldlings esteem such an honour) both deserved and obtained a statue in the Roman Forum; he remaining even till his old age a worshipper of idols, and a copartner of such sacrilegious solemnities, with which almost all the nobility and people of Rome were inspired, and had portents on their lips of that monstrous rabble of the gallimaufry of gods, and of Anubis the Barker, which had sometime maintained the bucklers against Neptune, Venus, and Minerva, whom Rome having once conquered, now worshipped, all which this old Victorinus with his thundering eloquence, had so many years been the champion of: how, I say, he blushed not to become the child of thy Christ, and an infant at thy font, submitting his neck to the yoke of humility, and subduing his forehead to the ignominy of the Cross.

CHAP. II

Col. ii. 8

Matt. xi. 25

Verg. Aen. viii. 698

O Lord, O Lord, which hast bowed the heavens and come down, touched the mountains and they did smoke: by what means didst thou convey

Ps. cxliv. 5

Digitized by Google

CAP. II modis te insinuasti illi pectori? legebat, sicut ait Simplicianus, sanctam scripturam, omnesque Christianas litteras investigabat studiosissime et perscrutabatur, et dicebat Simpliciano non palam, sed secretius et familiarius: "Noveris iam me esse Christianum." et respondebat ille: "Non credam nec deputabo te inter Christianos, nisi in ecclesia Christi videro." ille autem inridebat dicens: "Ergo parietes faciunt Christianos?" et hoc saepe dicebat, iam se esse Christianum, et Simplicianus illud saepe respondebat, et saepe ab illo parietum inrisio repetebatur. amicos enim suos reverebatur offendere, superbos daemonicolas, quorum ex culmine Babylonicae dignitatis quasi ex cedris Libani, quas nondum contriverat dominus, graviter ruituras in se inimicitias arbitrabatur. sed posteaquam legendo et inhiando hausit firmitatem, timuitque negari a Christo coram angelis sanctis, si eum timeret coram hominibus confiteri, reusque sibi magni criminis adparuit, erubescendo de sacramentis humilitatis verbi tui, et non erubescendo de sacris sacrilegis superborum daemoniorum, quae imitator superbus acceperat, depuduit vanitati et erubuit veritati, subitoque et inopinatus ait Simpliciano, ut ipse narrabat: "Eamus in ecclesiam: Christianus volo fieri." at ille non se capiens laetitia, perrexit cum eo. ubi autem imbutus est primis instructionis sacramentis, non multo post

Digitized by Google

thyself into that man's breast? He read, as Simplicianus said, the Holy Scriptures, most studiously sought after and searched through all the writings of the Christians, and said unto Simplicianus, (not openly, but after a private and familar manner) You shall now understand that I am a Christian. Simplicianus answered him: I will never believe, nor will I rank you among the Christians, unless I see you in the Church of Christ. Whereunto, he smiling upon him, replied: Is it the walls then that make Christians? And this he often reiterated, that he was now a Christian: and Simplicianus making the same answer, the conceit of the walls was as often returned. For he feared to offend his friends, which were proud devil-worshippers, from the height of whose Babylonian dignity, as from the top of the cedars of Libanus, which the Lord had not yet brought down, he supposed a storm of ill will would shower upon him. But when by reading and earnestness he had gathered strength, and that he feared to be denied by Christ before his angels, (Luke ix. 26) should he now be afraid to confess him before men; and that he appeared guilty to himself of a mighty crime, in being ashamed of the Sacraments of the humility of thy Word, whereas he had not been ashamed of the sacrilegious sacrifices of those proud devils (of which he himself had proudly partaken); he became bold-faced against vanity, and shamefaced towards the truth: yea, all on the sudden, when Simplicianus thought nothing of it, he says unto him, (as himself told me) Come, let us go to the church, I resolve to be made a Christian. But he, not able to contain himself for joy, went along with him: where, so soon as he was instructed in the first mysteries of religion, he not long after gave in

Digitized by Google

CAP. II nomen dedit, ut per baptismum regeneraretur, mirante Roma, gaudente ecclesia. superbi videbant et irascebantur, dentibus suis stridebant et tabescebant: servo autem tuo dominus deus erat spes eius, et non respiciebat in vanitates et insanias mendaces.

Denique ut ventum est ad horam profitendae fidei, quae verbis certis conceptis retentisque memoriter, de loco eminentiore, in conspectu populi fidelis, Romae reddi solet ab eis, qui accessuri sunt ad gratiam tuam, oblatum esse dicebat Victorino a presbyteris, ut secretius redderet, sicut nonnullis, qui verecundia trepidaturi videbantur, offerri mos erat; illum autem maluisse salutem suam in conspectu sanctae multitudinis profiteri. non enim erat salus, quam docebat, in rhetorica, et tamen eam publice professus erat. quanto minus ergo vereri debuit mansuetum gregem tuum, pronuntians verbum tuum, qui non verebatur in verbis suis turbas insanorum? itaque ubi ascendit, ut redderet, omnes sibimet invicem, quisque ut eum noverat, instrepuerunt nomen strepitu gratulationis. quis autem ibi non eum noverat? et sonuit presso sonitu per ora cunctorum conlaetantium: "Victorinus, Victorinus." cito sonuerunt exultatione, quia videbant eum, et cito siluerunt intentione, ut

Digitized by Google

CHAP. II

his name, that he might be regenerated by Baptism: the city of Rome wondering, and the Church rejoicing. The proud beheld it, and were enraged, gnashing upon him with their teeth, and even pining away with envy at it. But the Lord God was the hope of his servant, who took no regard to vanities and lying madness. Ps. xxxix. 5

To conclude, when the hour was come wherein he was to make a profession of his faith, (which in Rome it was the custom of those that were shortly to come unto thy grace to do, in a set form of words gotten by heart, and standing aloft upon a more eminent place, where they might well be seen of all the faithful people;) there was an offer made, as he said, by the priests unto Victorinus, that he might make his profession more privately, as the custom was to offer that courtesy to some others, who were likely to be bashful and fearful at the matter: but he chose rather to profess his salvation in the presence of the holy assembly. For whereas that was no salvation which he had taught in rhetoric, and yet had he made public profession of that: how much less therefore ought he to dread that meek flock of thine, in the pronouncing of thy word, who in the delivering of his own words, had not feared the fullest audience of mad men? So soon therefore as he was mounted up aloft to make his profession; every one that knew him whispered his name one to another with the voice of congratulation. And who was there that did not know him? And there ran a soft whisper through all the mouths of the rejoicing multitude, Victorinus, Victorinus. Quickly spake they of him with triumphing, for that they saw him; and as quickly were they whisted again, that they might now hear him. He

Digitized by Google

CAP. II audirent eum. pronuntiavit ille fidem veracem praeclara fiducia, et volebant eum omnes rapere intro in cor suum. et rapiebant amando et gaudendo: hae rapientium manus erant.

III

CAP. III Deus bone, quid agitur in homine, ut plus gaudeat de salute desperatae animae et de maiore periculo liberatae, quam si spes ei semper affuisset aut periculum minus fuisset? etenim tu quoque, misericors pater, plus gaudes de uno paenitente, quam de nonaginta novem iustis, quibus non opus est paenitentia. et nos cum magna iucunditate audimus, cum audimus quam exsultantibus pastoris umeris reportetur ovis, quae erraverat, et drachma referatur in thesauros tuos conlaetantibus vicinis mulieri, quae invenit: et lacrimas excutit gaudium sollemnitatis domus tuae, cum legitur in domo tua de minore filio tuo, quoniam mortuus fuerat et revixit, perierat et inventus est. gaudes quippe in nobis, et in angelis tuis sancta caritate sanctis. nam tu semper idem, quia ea quae non semper nec eodem modo sunt eodem modo semper nosti omnia.

Digitized by Google

pronounced aloud the true faith with an excellent boldness, and every man would gladly have plucked him to them into their very heart: yea, greedily did they snatch him in, by loving of him, and rejoicing for him. These were the hands by which they snatched him. CHAP. II

III

That God and his Angels do rejoice the more, at the conversion of a greater Sinner

Good God! what is that which is wrought in man, that he should more rejoice at the salvation of such a soul as was in a desperate condition, and which hath been delivered out of the greater danger, than if there had always been conceived good hopes of him, or whose danger had been lesser? Yea, even thou also, O most merciful Father, dost more rejoice over one sinner repenting, than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance. And with much joyfulness do we hearken so often as we hear it, how the lost sheep is brought home again upon the Shepherd's shoulder rejoicing: and that the lost groat is put again into thy treasury, her friends and neighbours rejoicing with the woman that had found it. Yea, and the joy conceived at the solemn service of thy house makes the tears come out of our eyes, whenas the parable of thy younger son is read in it, how he was dead, but made alive again; he was lost, but found again. For thou rejoicest both over us, as also over thy Angels, who continue holy, in holy charity. For thou art ever the same, because thou knowest after the selfsame manner, all those things which of themselves neither continue the same ever, nor after the same manner. CHAP. III Luke xv. 7 Luke xv. 5

Digitized by Google

CAP III Quid ergo agitur in anima, cum amplius delectatur inventis aut redditis rebus, quas diligit, quam si eas semper habuisset? contestantur enim et cetera, et plena sunt omnia testimoniis clamantibus: "ita est." triumphat victor imperator; et non vicisset, nisi pugnavisset: et quanto maius periculum fuit in proelio, tanto est gaudium maius in triumpho. iactat tempestas navigantes minaturque naufragium; omnes futura morte pallescunt: tranquillatur caelum et mare, et exultant nimis, quoniam timuerunt nimis. aeger est carus, et vena eius malum renuntiat; omnes, qui eum salvum cupiunt, aegrotant simul animo: fit ei recte, et nondum ambulat pristinis viribus, et fit iam tale gaudium, quale non fuit, cum antea salvus et fortis ambularet. easque ipsas voluptates humanae vitae etiam non inopinatis et praeter voluntatem inruentibus, sed institutis et voluntariis molestiis homines adquirunt. edendi et bibendi voluptas nulla est, nisi praecedat esuriendi et sitiendi molestia. et ebriosi quaedam salsiuscula comedunt, quo fiat molestus ardor, quem dum exstinguit potatio, fit delectatio. et institutum est, ut iam pactae sponsae non tradantur statim, ne vile habeat maritus datam, quam non suspiraverit sponsus dilatam.

Digitized by Google

What is that therefore which is wrought in the soul whenas it is more delighted to have either found or regained those things which it loved, than if it had always possessed them? Yea, and other creatures bear witness hereunto; and all things are full of testimonies still crying out, that so it is. The general triumpheth when he is a conqueror; yet had he never overcome, had he not fought: and how much the more danger was in the battle, so much the more rejoicing is there in the triumph. The storm tosses the passengers, and threatens shipwreck, and everybody waxes pale at his death approaching: but the sky clears up, and the sea grows calm again, and they are as much rejoiced as they were over scared. A dear friend of ours is sick, and his blood-letting shows the malignity of his disease: all that wish his good health are thereupon sick in mind with him. He proves well again, though not able to walk up and down so strongly as he was wont to do; yet there is so great an expression of joy made, as never had been, whenas before his sickness he was able to walk perfectly, sound, and lustily. Yea, the very pleasures of our human life do we procure by preceding difficulties: nor these only which fall upon us unlooked for, and against our wills, but even purposed by us and desired. There is no pleasure at all in eating and drinking, unless the pinching of hunger and thirst go before it. Drunkards eat certain saltish meats, with purpose to procure a thirsty hotness in the mouth, which whilst the drink quenches, the pleasure is procured. The order also it is, that the spouse already affianced uses not instantly to be given to her sweetheart: for fear lest when he is an husband he should less esteem of her for being so soon obtained, whom whilst he was a wooer he sighed not after, thinking her too long delayed.

CHAP. III

Digitized by Google

CAP. III Hoc in turpi et exsecranda laetitia, hoc in ea, quae concessa et licita est, hoc in ipsa sincerissima honestate amicitiae, hoc in eo, qui mortuus erat et revixit, perierat et inventus est: ubique maius gaudium molestia maiore praeceditur. quid est hoc, domine deus meus, cum tu aeternum tibi, tu ipse sis gaudium, et quaedam de te circa te semper gaudeant? quid est, quod haec rerum pars alternat defectu et profectu, offensionibus et conciliationibus? an is est modus earum, et tantum dedisti eis, cum a summis caelorum usque ad ima terrarum, ab initio usque in finem saeculorum, ab angelo usque ad vermiculum, a motu primo usque ad extremum, omnia genera bonorum et omnia iusta opera tua suis quaeque sedibus locares, et suis quaeque temporibus ageres? ei mihi, quam excelsus es in excelsis, et quam profundus in profundis! et nusquam recedis, et vix redimus ad te.

Digitized by Google

This is observable in such joy as is dishonest, and to be abhorred; seen also in that joy which is consented unto, and lawful; seen likewise in the most sincere honesty of friendship; seen lastly, in him who was dead, and afterwards revived; who was lost and is found. The greatest joy is everywhere ushered in by the greatest painfulness. What means this, O Lord my God, whereas thou art an everlasting joy unto thee, even thine own self, and some things around thee are ever rejoicing in thee? What means this, that this division of things thus alters up and down, with going backwards and forwards, with fallings out, and making friends again? Is this the fashion of them, and is this that proportion thou then assignedst to them; whenas even from the highest heavens down to the lowest of the earth, from the beginning of the world to the last end of it; from the angel to the worm; from the first thing that moveth even unto the last; thou didst settle all kinds of good things, and all thine own just works in their proper places, and accomplishedst all in their due seasons? Alas for me! how high art thou in the highest things, and how profound in the lowest! And thou dost nowhere depart from us, and we hardly return unto thee.

CHAP. III

The angels. Compare xii. 11, xiii. 10

Digitized by Google

IV

CAP. IV Age, domine, fac excita et revoca nos, accende et rape, fragra, dulcesce: amemus, curramus. nonne multi, ex profundiore tartaro caecitatis quam Victorinus, redeunt ad te et accedunt, et inluminantur recipientes lumen, quod si qui recipiunt, accipiunt a te potestatem, ut filii tui fiant? sed si minus noti sunt populis, minus de illis gaudent etiam qui noverunt eos. quando enim cum multis gaudetur, et in singulis uberius est gaudium; quia fervefaciunt se et inflammantur ex alterutro. deinde, quod multis noti, multis sunt auctoritati ad salutem, et multis praeeunt secuturis: ideoque multum de illis et qui eos praecesserunt laetantur, quia non de solis laetantur. absit enim, ut in tabernaculo tuo prae pauperibus accipiantur personae divitum, aut prae ignobilibus nobiles; quando potius infirma muudi elegisti, ut confuuderes fortia, et ignobilia huius mundi elegisti et contemptibilia, et ea quae non sunt, tamquam siut, ut ea quae sunt evacuares. et tameu idem ipse minimus apostolorum tuorum, per cuius lingnam tua ista verba sonuisti, cum Paulus pro consule, per eius militiam debellata superbia, sub lene iugum Christi tui missus esset, regis magni provincialis effectus, ipse

Digitized by Google

IV

Why we are more to rejoice in the Conversion of a great Sinner

CHAP. IV

Go on, O Lord, and make an end of it, stir us up, and call us back; kindle us and pluck us to thee, be fragrant, and grow sweet unto us: let us love, let us run. Do not many a man out of a deeper dungeon of blindness than Victorinus was in, return unto thee, and are enlightened with the beams they receive from thee; which they that once receive, receive power also from thee to become thy sons? who yet (John i. 12) if they be less known among people, even those that do know them are less joyful for them: seeing that when a many rejoice together, the joy of every single man is fuller; even for that they warm themselves, and are inflamed by one another. Again, because those that are generally known, are authors of salvation to many, and give many example to follow them: and even therefore those also which have gone before rejoice much for them, because they rejoice not for them alone. Far be it from our thoughts, that in thy Tabernacle the persons of the rich should be accepted of before the poor, or the noble before the common people: seeing thou hast chosen the weak things of (1 Cor. i. 27) the world, to confound the mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised hast thou chosen; and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. And yet even that least of thy Apostles, by whose tongue thou soundedst out these words, whenas Paulus the Deputy had his pride beaten down by the spiritual warfare of that Apostle, and was set to draw in the easy yoke of Christ, now made a

Digitized by Google

CAP. IV quoque ex priore Saulo Paulus vocari amavit ob tam magnae insigne victoriae. plus enim hostis vincitur in eo, quem plus tenet et de quo plures tenet. plus autem superbos tenet nomine nobilitatis, et de his plures nomine auctoritatis. quanto igitur gratius cogitabatur Victorini pectus, quod tam inexpugnabile receptaculum diabolus obtinuerat, Victorini lingua, quo telo grandi et acuto multos peremerat, abundantius exultare oportuit filios tuos, quia rex noster alligavit fortem, et videbant vasa eius erepta mundari, et aptari in honorem tuum, et fieri utilia domino ad omne opus bonum.

V

CAP. V Sed ubi mihi homo tuus Simplicianus de Victorino ista narravit, exarsi ad imitandum: ad hoc enim et ille narraverat. posteaquam vero et illud addidit, quod imperatoris Iuliani temporibus, lege data prohibiti sunt Christiani docere litteraturam et oratoriam —quam legem ille amplexus, loquacem scholam deserere maluit quam verbum tuum, quo linguas infantium facis disertas—non mihi fortior quam felicior

Digitized by Google

humble subject of the Great King: he also instead of Saul, which was his name before, desired to be called Paul afterwards, in testimony of so great a victory. For the enemy is more overcome by wringing a man from him, of whom he had more hold, and by whom he hath hold of many others. And such as be proud he hath the surer hold of, by reason of their title of nobility, and of many more through them, by reason of their authority. How much more welcome therefore the heart of Victorinus was esteemed, which the Devil had made himself master of, as of an invincible place of retreat; and the tongue of Victorinus, with which as with a mighty and most keen weapon he had slain many: so much the more abundantly became it thy sons to rejoice, for that our King hath bound the strong man, and that they saw his vessels taken from him and cleansed, and to be made serviceable for the Lord, unto every good work.

CHAP. IV

Matt. xii. 29

2 Tim. ii. 21

V

What hindered his Conversion

CHAP. V

But so soon as thy man Simplicianus had made an end of his story of Victorinus, I was all on fire to be imitating of him: yea, this was the end he told it for. After which when he had subjoined this relation of himself: how that in the days of the Emperor Julian, when there was a law made, whereby the Christians were forbidden to teach the liberal sciences or oratory, and how he obeying this law, chose rather to give over his wordy schools than thy word, by which thou makest eloquent the tongues of

Digitized by Google

CAP. V visus est, quia invenit occasionem vacandi tibi. cui rei ego suspirabam, ligatus non ferro alieno, sed mea ferrea voluntate. velle meum tenebat inimicus; et inde mihi catenam fecerat et constrinxerat me. quippe voluntate perversa facta est libido, et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo, et dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas. quibus quasi ansulis sibimet innexis—unde catenam appellavi—tenebat me obstrictum dura servitus. voluntas autem nova, quae mihi esse coeperat, ut te gratis colere fruique te vellem, deus, sola certa iucunditas, nondum erat idonea ad superandam priorem vetustate roboratam. ita duae voluntates meae, una vetus, alia nova, illa carnalis, illa spiritalis, confligebant inter se, atque discordando dissipabant animam meam.

Sic intellegebam me ipso experimento id quod legeram, quomodo caro concupisceret adversus spiritum et spiritus adversus carnem: ego quidem in utroque, sed magis ego in eo, quod in me approbabam, quam in eo, quod in me improbabam. ibi enim magis iam non ego, quia ex magna parte id patiebar invitus quam faciebam volens. sed tamen consuetudo adversus me pugnacior ex me facta erat, quoniam volens quo nollem perveneram. et quis iure contradiceret, cum peccantem iusta poena sequeretur? et non erat iam illa excusatio, qua videri

Digitized by Google

infants: he seemed unto me not to have been more valiant, than happy in it; for that by this means he found the opportunity to attend upon thee only. Which opportunity myself also sighed for, thus bound as I was, not with another man's irons, but with mine own iron will. My willingness was the enemy master of; by which he made a chain for me, and had therewith bound me. Because that of a froward will, was a lust made; and a lust ever obeyed, became a custom; and a custom not resisted, brought on a necessity. By which links as it were hanging one upon another, for which I have called it a chain, did a very hard bondage hold me enthralled. As for that new will which I now began to have towards the free worshipping and enjoying of thee, O God, the only assured Sweetness; it was not able as yet to overcome my former wilfulness, now hardened in me by so long continuance. Thus did my two wills, one new and tother old, that carnal, and this spiritual, try masteries within me, and by their disagreeing wasted out my soul. CHAP. V

Thus came I to understand (myself affording me the experiment) what I had sometimes read: how the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. I myself was in both; yet of the two, in that rather which I approved of in myself, than in that which I disallowed. For in this, I was now no more; because much of it I suffered rather against my will, than did it with my will. And yet was custom now by mine own assistance become more sturdy against me, even because I was come willingly, whither I would not have come. And who then can with any equity speak against it, if just punishment follows upon the sinner? Nor had I now that fair excuse, upon pretence of which I heretofore seemed (Gal. v. 17)

Digitized by Google

CAP. V mihi solebam propterea me nondum contempto saeculo servire tibi, quia incerta mihi esset perceptio veritatis: iam enim et ipsa certa erat. ego autem adhuc terra obligatus, militare tibi recusabam; et inpedimentis omnibus sic timebam expediri, quemadmodum inpediri timendum est.

Ita sarcina saeculi, velut somno assolet, dulciter premebar; et cogitationes, quibus meditabar in te, similes erant conatibus expergisci volentium, qui tamen superati soporis altitudine remerguntur. et sicut nemo est, qui dormire semper velit, omniumque sano iudicio vigilare praestat, differt tamen plerumque homo somnum excutere, cum gravis torpor in membris est, eumque iam displicentem carpit libentius, quamvis surgendi tempus advenerit: ita certum habebam, esse melius, tuae caritati me dedere, quam meae cupiditati cedere; sed illud placebat et vincebat, hoc libebat et vinciebat. non enim erat quod tibi responderem dicenti mihi: Surge qui dormis, et exsurge a mortuis, et inluminabit te Christus; et undique ostendenti vera te dicere, non erat omnino, quid responderem veritate convictus, nisi tantum verba lenta et somnolenta: "modo," "ecce modo," "sine paululum." sed "modo et modo" non habebat modum et "sine paululum" in longum ibat. frustra

Digitized by Google

to myself, not as yet able to forsake the world and to attend to thy service, for that the knowledge of the truth was hitherto uncertain unto me: seeing now I stood assured of it. But I being enlisted by the earth, refused to fight under thy banner. Yea, as much afraid I was to be freed of what did hinder my march towards thee, as I ought to have been afraid of what might hinder it. CHAP. V

Thus with the baggage of this present world was I as sweetly overladen, as a man uses to be in a dream: and those thoughts with which I meditated upon thee, were like the struggles of such as would get up; who being yet overcome with a deep sleep, fall again into it. And like as there is no man who desires to sleep always, (for that in any sober man's judgment it is much better to keep waking;) yet does a man oftentimes defer to shake off his drowsiness, when he finds a heavy sluggishness all his body over, and angry at himself for it, yet he willingly takes another nap, notwithstanding it be high time for him to be stirring: in like manner assured I was, that much better it were for me to give up myself to thy charity, than to give over myself to mine own sensuality. But notwithstanding that former course pleased, and convinced my mind, yet this latter seized my will and held me confined. Nor had I anything now to answer thee calling to me: Arise, thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light: and whereas thou on all sides showedst me, that what thou saidst was true; I had nothing at all to answer for myself, being convinced by that truth; but certain lither and drowsy words only: Anon, see, I come by and by: let me sleep a little while. But my now and anon had no measure with them, and my little Eph. v. 14

Digitized by Google

CAP. V condelectabatur legi tuae secundum interiorem hominem, cum alia lex in membris meis repugnaret legi mentis meae, et captivum me duceret in lege peccati, quae in membris meis erat. lex enim peccati est violentia consuetudinis, qua trahitur et tenetur etiam invitus animus, eo merito, quo in eam volens inlabitur. miserum ergo me quis liberaret de corpore mortis huius, nisi gratia tua per Iesum Christum, dominum nostrum?

VI

CAP. VI Et de vinculo quidem desiderii concubitus, quo artissimo tenebar, et saecularium negotiorum servitute quemadmodum exemeris, narrabo et confitebor nomini tuo, domine, adiutor meus et redemptor meus. agebam solita crescente anxitudine, et cotidie suspirabam tibi; frequentabam ecclesiam tuam, quantum vacabat ab eis negotiis, sub quorum pondere gemebam. mecum erat Alypius, otiosus ab opere iuris peritorum post assessionem tertiam, expectans, quibus iterum consilia venderet; sicut ego vendebam dicendi facultatem, si qua docendo praestari potest. Nebridius autem amicitiae nostrae cesserat, ut omnium nostrum familiarissimo Verecundo, Mediolanensi et civi et grammatico, subdoceret, vehementer desideranti et

Digitized by Google

CHAP. V

while drove out into a mighty length. I in vain delighted in thy law according to the inner man, when another law in my members rebelled against the law of my mind, leading me captive in the law of sin which was in my members. That law of sin now is the violence of custom, by which the mind of man is drawn and holden even against its will; deserving to be so holden, for that it so willingly slides into that custom. Wretched I therefore, who could deliver me from the body of this death; but thy grace only, through Jesus Christ our Lord?

Rom. vii. 22

Rom. vii. 23

VI

Ponticianus relates the Life of St. Anthony

CHAP. VI

AND the manner how thou deliveredst me out of the bonds of desire, which I had unto carnal concupiscence, (wherewith I was most straitly fettered) and from the drudgery of worldly business; will I now declare and confess unto thy name, O Lord my Helper and my Redeemer. My wonted unsettledness of mind grew more and more upon me; and I daily sent up sighs unto thee. Thy church I resorted frequently unto, as my business (under the burden of which I groaned) would give me leave. Alypius was now in company with me; at leisure now from his law business, after the third time as Assessor, expecting other clients whom he might sell his counsels unto; as I used to sell the skill of pleading; if any such can be taught. Nebridius had now so far condescended to our friendly requests, as to lecture under Verecundus (a very familiar friend to all of us) a citizen and a grammarian of Milan; who

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI familiaritatis iure flagitanti de numero nostro fidele adiutorium, quo indigebat nimis. non itaque Nebridium cupiditas conmodorum eo traxit—maiora enim posset, si vellet, de litteris agere—sed officio benevolentiae petitionem nostram contemnere noluit, amicus dulcissimus et mitissimus. agebat autem illud prudentissime, cavens innotescere personis secundum hoc saeculum maioribus, devitans in eis omnem inquietudinem animi, quem volebat habere liberum, et quam multis posset horis feriatum, ad quaerendum aliquid vel legendum vel audiendum de sapientia.

Quodam igitur die—non recolo causam, qua erat absens Nebridius—cum ecce ad nos domum venit ad me et Alypium Ponticianus quidam, civis noster, in quantum Afer, praeclare in palatio militans: nescio quid a nobis volebat, et consedimus, ut conloqueremur. et forte supra mensam lusoriam, quae ante nos erat, adtendit codicem: tulit, aperuit, invenit apostolum Paulum, inopinate sane; putaverat enim aliquid de libris, quorum professio me conterebat. tum vero arridens, meque intuens, gratulatorie miratus est, quod eas et solas prae oculis meis litteras repente conperisset. Christianus quippe et fidelis erat, et saepe tibi, deo nostro, prosternebatur in ecclesia crebris et diuturnis orationibus. cui ego cum indicassem illis

Digitized by Google

vehemently requested, and by the right of friendship did even challenge such a friendly aid from our company, as he very much stood in need of. Nebridius therefore was not drawn to that pains by any desire of profit (for he might have done better with literature if he had pleased) but being a most sweet and tractable companion, out of his respects of courtesy, would not slight the request we made to him. But he carried it very discreetly, still wary of being known to those personages whom the world esteemed great; declining thereby all breaking off the quiet of his own mind, which he resolved to reserve free to himself, and at leisure as many hours as might be, for the seeking, or reading, or hearing something concerning wisdom.

Upon a certain day therefore (I do not now remember why Nebridius was absent) behold, there came home unto me and Alypius, one Ponticianus a countryman of ours, an African, who had an office of good in the Emperor's Court. He wanted something or other from us: and down together we sat, so that into discourse we fell. It so happened that upon the table before us, which we used to play upon, he espied a book lying; up he took, and opened it; and quite besides his expectation, found it to be St. Paul's Epistles, whereas he rather thought it had been some of those books which I ware out myself in teaching of. At which he smiling to himself, and looking upon me, in a congratulating manner as it were, wondered not a little, that he had so unexpectedly found such a kind of book, and only such a one lying before me. For he was both a Christian and faithful too; and one that often used to prostrate himself before thee our God in the Church, in frequent and long prayers. Whom therefore when

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI me scripturis curam maximam inpendere, ortus est sermo ipso narrante de Antonio Aegyptio monacho, cuius nomen excellenter clarebat apud servos tuos, nos autem usque in illam horam latebat. quod ille ubi comperit, immoratus est in eo sermone, insinuans tantum virum ignorantibus, et admirans eandem nostram ignorantiam. stupebamus autem, audientes tam recenti memoria et prope nostris temporibus testatissima mirabilia tua, in fide recta et Catholica ecclesia. omnes mirabamur, et nos, quia tam magna erant, et ille, quia inaudita nobis erant.

Inde sermo eius devolutus est ad monasteriorum greges, et mores suaveolentiae tuae, et ubera deserta heremi, quorum nos nihil sciebamus. et erat monasterium Mediolanii, plenum bonis fratribus, extra urbis moenia, sub Ambrosio nutritore, et non noveramus. pertendebat ille et loquebatur adhuc, et nos intenti tacebamus. unde incidit, ut diceret, nescio quando se et tres alios contubernales suos, nimirum apud Treveros, cum imperator pomeridiano circensium spectaculo teneretur, exisse deambulatum in hortos muris contiguos; atque illic, ut forte combinati spatiabantur, unum secum seorsum et alios duos itidem seorsum pariterque digressos; sed illos vagabundos

Digitized by Google

I had once told, how that I bestowed much pains upon those writings; there began a speech, (himself being the relater) of Anthony the monk of Egypt: whose name was in most high reputation among thy servants, though for our part we had not so much as once heard of him to that hour. Which when he had discovered, he insisted the more upon that discourse, hinting the knowledge of so famous a man unto us, and admiring at that our ignorance of him. But we stood amazed, on the other side, hearing such wonderful works of thine; so generally testified, so fresh in memory, and almost in our own times, to be done in the true faith and Church Catholic. We all wondered; we to hear such great things reported; and he, that we had never heard them. CHAP. VI

From this story of Anthony, took he occasion to discourse of the companies of monasteries, and the fashions of thine own sweet-smelling savour and the fruitful desert of the wilderness: of all which we knew nothing. And there was at that same time a monastery at Milan, full of good brethren, without the walls of the city, under Ambrose the nourisher of it, and yet we knew nothing of it. He went on with his tale, and we listened to him with great silence. Hereupon took he occasion to tell, how himself (I know not at what time) and three other of his comrades (and it was at Trier, whenas the Emperor was taken up with seeing of the Circensian chariot races) one afternoon went out to walk into the gardens next the city walls; where as it fell out, they sorted themselves into two companies, one of the three keeping with him, and the other two walking at large also by themselves. But as these two were ranging up and down, they stumbled by

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI inruisse in quandam casam, ubi habitabant quidam servi tui spiritu pauperes, qualium est regnum caelorum, et invenisse ibi codicem, in quo scripta erat vita Antonii. quam legere coepit unus eorum, et mirari et accendi, et inter legendum meditari arripere talem vitam et relicta militia saeculari servire tibi. erant autem ex eis, quos dicunt Agentes in Rebus. tum subito repletus amore sancto, et sobrio pudore iratus sibi, coniecit oculos in amicum et ait illi: "dic, quaeso te, omnibus istis laboribus nostris quo ambimus pervenire? quid quaerimus? cuius rei causa militamus? maiorne esse poterit spes nostra in palatio, quam ut amici imperatoris simus? et ibi quid non fragile plenumque periculis? et per quot pericula pervenitur ad grandius periculum? et quando istuc erit? amicus autem dei, si voluero, ecce nunc fio." dixit hoc, et turbidus parturitione novae vitae reddidit oculos paginis: et legebat et mutabatur intus, ubi tu videbas, et exuebatur mundo mens eius, ut mox apparuit. namque dum legit et volvit fluctus cordis sui, infremuit aliquando et discrevit decrevitque meliora: iamque tuus ait amico suo: "ego iam abrupi me ab illa spe nostra, et

Digitized by Google

chance upon a certain little house, inhabited by divers of thy servants, poor in spirit, of whom is the Kingdom of God: where they found a little book, wherein the life of Anthony was described. One of them began to read, wonder at it, and to be inflamed with it; and even in the very reading to devise with himself upon the taking such a life upon him, and by giving over his secular employments, to betake himself into thy service. And these men were of those whom they style Agents for the Public Affairs. Then suddenly being filled with an holy love, and a sober shamefastness, even angry at himself again, he cast his eyes upon his friend, saying: Tell me, I entreat thee, what preferment is that unto which all these labours of ours aspire? What aim we at? What is it we serve the State for? Can our hopes in Court rise higher than to be the Emperor's friends? In which place what is there not brittle and full of perils? And by how many dangers arrive we at last unto one danger greater than all the rest? And how long shall we be in getting thus high? Whereas if I be desirous to become the friend of God, lo, I am even now made it. Thus he said: and all in pain in the travail of newness of life, he turned his eyes again upon the book: and he read on, and was inwardly changed where thou didst discern him, and his mind was quite dispossessed of worldly cares, as presently after it appeared. For as he read forward, and rolled up and down those waves of his heart, he made expression of some indignation at himself, felt an inward conflict, and resolved finally of much better courses. And thus now become wholly thine, he saith unto his friend: Even now have I broke loose from those ambitious hopes of ours, and am fully resolved to

CHAP. VI

Matt. v. 3

Digitized by Google

CAP. VI deo servire statui; et hoc ex hac hora, in hoc loco aggredior. te si piget imitari, noli adversari." respondit ille, adhaerere se socium tantae mercedis tantaeque militiae. et ambo, iam tui, aedificabant turrem sumptu idoneo, relinquendi omnia sua et sequendi te. tum Ponticianus et qui cum eo per alias horti partes deambulabant, quaerentes eos devenerunt in eundem locum, et invenientes admonuerunt, ut redirent, quod iam declinasset dies. at illi narrato placito et proposito suo, quoque modo in eis talis voluntas orta est atque firmata, petiverunt, ne sibi molesti essent, si adiungi recusarent. isti autem nihil mutati a pristinis, fleverunt se tamen, ut dicebat, atque illis pie congratulati sunt et conmendaverunt se orationibus eorum, et trahentes cor in terra abierunt in palatium; illi autem affigentes cor caelo manserunt in casa; et habebant ambo sponsas: quae posteaquam hoc audierunt, dicaverunt etiam ipsae virginitatem tibi.

Digitized by Google

serve God only; and this, from this hour forward, in this very place, will I enter upon: as for thee, if it irks thee to imitate me, yet do not offer to dissuade me. Whereunto the other answered, that he also would closely stick unto him, as his partner in so ample a reward, and his fellow in so honourable a service. Thus both of them now become thine, reared up a spiritual tower, with that treasure as is only able to do it, of forsaking all and following thee. Ponticianus then, and the other that was with him, that had walked over other parts of the garden in search of them, came in the very nick into the same place, where they were; and having there found them, put them in mind of going homewards, for that it began to grow something late. But they discovering their resolution and purpose unto them, and by what means that will began, and came to be settled in them; humbly desired they would not be troublesome to them, if so be they refused to join themselves unto them. But Ponticianus and his friend no whit altered from their old wont, did yet bewail themselves with tears, as he affirmed, piously congratulating with them, and recommended themselves to their prayers; and turning their hearts towards earthly things, returned into the Court. But the other two setting their affections upon heavenly, remained in that cottage. And both of them were contracted to sweethearts; who having once heard of this business, dedicated also their own virginity unto God. CHAP. VI

Digitized by Google

VII

CAP. VII NARRABAT haec Ponticianus. tu autem, domine, inter verba eius retorquebas me ad me ipsum, auferens me a dorso meo, ubi me posueram, dum nollem me adtendere; et constituebas me ante faciem meam, ut viderem, quam turpis essem, quam distortus et sordidus, maculosus et ulcerosus. et videbam et horrebam, et quo a me fugerem non erat. et si conabar a me avertere aspectum, narrabat ille quod narrabat; et tu me rursus opponebas mihi, et inpingebas me in oculos meos, ut invenirem iniquitatem et odissem. noveram eam, sed dissimulabam et cohibebam et obliviscebar.

Tunc vero quanto ardentius amabam illos, de quibus audiebam salubres affectus, quod se totos tibi sanandos dederant, tanto exsecrabilius me conparatum eis oderam: quoniam multi mei anni mecum effluxerant—forte duodecim anni—ex quo, ab undevicensimo anno aetatis meae, lecto Ciceronis Hortensio, excitatus eram studio sapientiae, et differebam contempta felicitate terrena ad eam investigandam vacare, cuius non inventio, sed vel sola inquisitio, iam praeponenda erat etiam inventis thesauris regnisque gentium, et ad nutum circumfluentibus corporis

Digitized by Google

VII

He was out of Love with himself upon this Story

THIS was Ponticianus his story. But thou, O Lord, all the while that he was speaking, didst turn me back to reflect upon myself; taking me from behind my back, where I had heretofore placed myself, whenas I had no list to observe mine own self: and thou now settedst me before mine own face, that I might discern how filthy, and how crooked, and sordid, and bespotted, and ulcerous I was. And I beheld and abhorred myself, nor could I find any place whither to flee from myself. And if I went about to turn mine eyes from off myself, he went on telling his tale; and thou thereupon opposedst myself unto myself, and thrustedst me ever and anon into mine own eyes, to make me find at last mine own iniquity, and to loathe it. I had heretofore taken notice of it; but I had again dissembled it, winked at it, and forgotten it. CHAP. VII

But at this time, how much the more ardently I loved those two whose wholesome purposes I heard tell of, even for that they had resigned up themselves unto thee to be cured: so much the more detestably did I hate myself in comparison of them. Because I had already lost so many years, (twelve or thereabouts) since that nineteenth of mine age, when upon the reading of Cicero's Hortensius, I was first stirred up to the study of wisdom: and still I was deferring to despise all earthly felicity, and to search out that, whose not finding alone, but the bare seeking, ought to have been preferred before all the treasures and kingdoms of this world already found, and before

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII voluptatibus. at ego adulescens miser valde, miserior in exordio ipsius adulescentiae, etiam petieram a te castitatem et dixeram: "da mihi castitatem et continentiam, sed noli modo." timebam enim, ne me cito exaudires et cito sanares a morbo concupiscentiae, quem malebam expleri quam exstingui. et ieram per vias pravas superstitione sacrilega; non quidem certus in ea, sed quasi praeponens eam ceteris, quae non pie quaerebam, sed inimice oppugnabam.

Et putaveram me propterea differre de die in diem contempta spe saeculi te solum sequi, quia non mihi apparebat certum aliquid, quo dirigerem cursum meum. et venerat dies, quo nudarer mihi et increparet in me conscientia mea: "ubi est lingua mea? nempe tu dicebas, propter incertum verum nolle te abicere sarcinam vanitatis. ecce iam certum est, et illa te adhuc premit; umerisque liberioribus pinnas recipiunt, qui neque ita in quaerendo adtriti sunt nec decennio et amplius ista meditati." ita rodebar intus et confundebar pudore horribili vehementer, cum Ponticianus talia loqueretur. terminato autem sermone et causa, qua venerat, abiit ille, et ego ad me quae non in me dixi? quibus sententiarum verberibus

Digitized by Google

all the pleasures of the body, though to be commanded for a nod. But I, wretched young fellow that I was, more wretched even in the very entrance into my youth, had even then begged chastity at thy hands, and said: Give me chastity and continency, but do not give it yet. For I was afraid that thou wouldst hear me too soon, and too soon deliver me from my disease of incontinency; which my desire was, rather to have satisfied than extinguished. Yea, I had wandered with a sacrilegious superstition through most wicked ways of Manicheism: not yet sure that it was right, but preferring that, as it were, before those others which I did not so much seek after religiously, as oppose maliciously. CHAP. VII

And this was the reason, as I think, why I deferred from day to day to contemn all hopes in this world, and to follow thee only, for that there did not appear any certain end, which I was to direct my course unto. But now was the day come wherein I was to be set naked before myself, and when mine own conscience was to rebuke me: Where is thy tongue? Surely thou wert wont to say, how that for an uncertain truth thou wouldst not yet cast off the baggage of vanity. See, certainty hath appeared now, and yet does that burden still overload thee: whereas behold, others have gotten wings to free their shoulders by flying from under it; others, I say, who neither have so much worn out themselves with seeking after that certainty, nor yet spent ten whole years and more, in thinking how to do it. Thus felt I a corrosive within, yea most vehemently confounded I was with a horrible shame, whenas Ponticianus was a telling that story. And he having done both his tale and the business he came for, went his way, and I into myself. What said I not within myself!

Digitized by Google

CAP. VII non flagellavi animam meam, ut sequeretur me conantem post te ire? et renitebatur, recusabat et non se execusabat. consumpta erant et convicta argumenta omnia: remanserat muta trepidatio, et quasi mortem formidabat restringi a fluxu consuetudinis, quo tabescebat in mortem.

VIII

CAP. VIII TUM in illa grandi rixa interioris domus meae, quam fortiter excitaveram cum anima mea in cubiculo nostro, corde meo, tam vultu quam mente turbatus invado Alypium, exclamo: "quid patimur? quid est hoc, quod audisti? surgunt indocti et caelum rapiunt, et nos cum doctrinis nostris ecce ubi volutamur in carne et sanguine! an quia praecesserunt, pudet sequi, et non pudet nec saltem sequi?" dixi nescio qua talia, et abripuit me ab illo aestus meus, cum taceret attonitus me intuens. neque enim solita sonabam. plus loquebantur animum meum frons, genae, oculi, color, modus vocis, quam verba, quae

Digitized by Google

With what scourges of condemning sentences lashed I not mine own soul, to make it follow me, endeavouring now to go after thee! And it drew back: it refused, but gave no reason to excuse its refusal by. All its arguments were already spent and confuted, there remained a silent trembling; and it feared, like the death, to be restrained from the sore of custom, which made it pine away even to the very death. CHAP. VII

VIII

What he did in the Garden

In the midst then of all this vast tempest of my inner house, which I had so stoutly raised up against mine own soul, in our chamber, my heart; all over troubled both in mind and countenance, upon Alypius I set, crying out: What ails us? What is this, that thou heardest? The unlearned start up and take heaven by violence, and we with all our learning, see how we wallow us in flesh and blood! Because others are gone before, is it a shame for us to come after? Is it not a shame not even to go after them? Some such words as these I then uttered: and in that heat away I flung from him, while with silence and astonishment he looked upon me. For my speeches sounded not now in the key they were wont to do: yea, my forehead, my cheeks, my eyes, my colour, and the accent of my voice, spake out my mind more emphatically than the words did which I CHAP. VIII

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII promebam. hortulus quidam erat hospitii nostri, quo nos utebamur sicut tota domo: nam hospes ibi non habitabat, dominus domus. illuc me abstulerat tumultus pectoris, ubi nemo impediret ardentem litem, quam mecum aggressus eram, donec exiret, qua tu sciebas, ego autem non: sed tantum insaniebam salubriter et moriebar vitaliter, gnarus, quid mali essem, et ignarus, quid boni post paululum futurus essem. abscessi ergo in hortum et Alypius pedem post pedem. neque enim secretum meum non erat, ubi ille aderat. et quando me sic affectum desereret? sedimus quantum potuimus remoti ab aedibus. ego fremebam spiritu, indignans indignatione turbulentissima, quod non irem in placitum et pactum tecum, deus meus, in quod eundum esse omnia ossa mea clamabant et in caelum tollebant laudibus: et non illuc ibatur navibus aut quadrigis aut pedibus, quantum saltem de domo in eum locum ieram, ubi sedebamus. nam non solum ire, verum etiam pervenire illuc, nihil erat aliud quam velle ire, sed velle fortiter et integre, non semisauciam hac atque hac versare et iactare voluntatem, parte adsurgente cum alia parte cadente luctantem.

Denique tam multa faciebam corpore in ipsis cunctationis aestibus, quae aliquando volunt homines et non valent, si aut ipsa membra non habeant aut ea vel conligata vinculis vel resoluta languore vel quo-

Digitized by Google

uttered. A garden there was belonging to our lodging, which we had the liberty of, as well as of any other part of the house; for the master of the house, our host, lived not there. Thither had the tempest within my breast now hurried me, where no man might come to non-suit that fiery action which I had entered against myself, until it came to a good issue; but which way, God thou knewest, I did not. Only I was for the time most soberly mad, and dying, to live: sensible enough what piece of misery for the present I now was, but utterly ignorant how good I shortly was to grow. Into that garden went I, and Alypius followed me foot by foot: for I was no less secret when he was near; and how could he forsake me, in such a state? Down we sat us, as far from the house as possibly we could. I fretted in the spirit, angry at myself with a most tempestuous indignation, for that I went not into thy will and covenant, my God, which all my bones cried out upon me to do, extolling it to the very skies. That way we go not in ships, or chariots, or upon our own legs, no not so small a part of the way to it, as I had come from the house into that place, where we were now sitting. For, not to go towards only, but to arrive fully at that place, required no more but the will to go to it, but yet to will it resolutely and thoroughly; not to stagger and tumble down an half wounded will, now on this side, and anon on that side; setting the part advancing itself to struggle with another part that is falling. CHAP. VIII

Finally, in these vehement passions of my delay, many of those things performed I with my body, which men sometimes would do, but cannot; if either they have not the limbs to do them withal; or if those limbs be bound with cords, weakened

Digitized by Google

CAP. VIII quo modo impedita sint. si vulsi capillum, si percussi frontem, si consertis digitis amplexatus sum genu, quia volui, feci. potui autem velle et non facere, si mobilitas membrorum non obsequeretur. tam multa ergo feci, ubi non hoc erat velle quod posse: et non faciebam, quod et incomparabili affectu amplius mihi placebat, et mox, ut vellem, possem, quia mox, ut vellem, utique vellem. ibi enim facultas ea, quae voluntas, et ipsum velle iam facere erat; et tamen non fiebat, faciliusque obtemperabat corpus tenuissimae voluntati animae, ut ad nutum membra moverentur, quam ipsa sibi anima ad voluntatem suam magnam in sola voluntate perficiendam.

IX

CAP. IX Vnde hoc monstrum? et quare istuc? luceat misericordia tua, et interrogem, si forte mihi respondere possint latebrae poenarum hominum et tenebrosissimae contritiones filiorum Adam. unde hoc monstrum? et quare istuc? imperat animus corpori, et paretur statim: imperat animus sibi, et resistitur. imperat animus, ut moveatur manus, et

Digitized by Google

with infirmity, or be any other ways hindered. If I tare myself by the hair, beat my forehead, if locking my fingers one within another I beclasped my knee; all this I did because I would. But I might have willed it, and yet not have done it, if so be the motion of my limbs had not been pliable enough to have performed it. So many things therefore I now did, at such time as the will was not all at one with the power; and something on the other side I then did not, which did incomparably more affect me with pleasure, which yet so soon as I had the will to do, I had the power also; because so soon as ever I willed, I willed it thoroughly: for at such a time the power is all one with the will; and the willing is now the doing: and yet was not the thing done, and more easily did my body obey the weakest willing of my mind in the moving of its limbs at her beck, than my mind had obeyed itself in carrying out this great will that could be done in the will alone. CHAP. VIII

IX

Why the Mind is so slow to Goodness

WHENCE now is this portent, and to what purpose? Let thy mercy enlighten me that I may put this question: if so be those concealed anguishes which men feel, and those most undiscoverable pangs of contrition of the sons of Adam, may perhaps afford me a right answer. Whence is this portent, and to what end? The mind commands the body, and is presently obeyed: the mind commands itself, and is resisted. The mind gives the word commanding the CHAP. IX

Digitized by Google

CAP. IX tanta est facilitas, ut vix a servitio discernatur imperium: et animus animus est, manus autem corpus est. imperat animus, ut velit animus, nec alter est nec facit tamen. unde hoc monstrum? et quare istuc? imperat, inquam, ut velit, qui non imperaret, nisi vellet, et non facit quod imperat. sed non ex toto vult: non ergo ex toto imperat. nam in tantum imperat, in quantum vult, et in tantum non fit quod imperat, in quantum non vult, quoniam voluntas imperat, ut sit voluntas, nec alia, sed ipsa. non itaque plena imperat; ideo non est, quod imperat. nam si plena esset, nec imperaret, ut esset, quia iam esset. non igitur monstrum partim velle, partim nolle, sed aegritudo animi est, quia non totus assurgit veritate sublevatus, consuetudine praegravatus. et ideo sunt duae voluntates, quia una earum tota non est, et hoc adest alteri, quod deest alteri.

X

CAP. X PEREANT a facie tua, deus, sicuti pereunt, vaniloqui et mentis seductores, qui cum duas voluntates in deliberando animadverterint, duas naturas duarum

Digitized by Google

hand to be moved; and such readiness there is, that the command is scarcely to be discerned from the execution. Yet the mind is mind, whereas the hand is body. The mind commands mind to will; it is the same, and yet it does not. Whence is this portent, and to what purpose? I say it commands that itself would will a thing; which never would give the command, unless it willed it: yet it does not that, which is commanded. But it willeth not entirely: therefore doth it neither command entirely. For so far forth it commandeth, as it willeth: and, so far forth is not the thing done which is commanded, as it willeth it not, because the will commandeth that there be a will; not another will but the same. But it doth not command fully, therefore is not the thing done, which it commanded. For were the willing full, it would never command it to be, because it would already be. 'Tis therefore no portent partly to will, and partly to nill; only an infirmity of our soul it is, that it being overloaded with ill custom, cannot entirely rise up together, though supported by verity. Hence is it that there be two wills, for that one of them is not entire; and the one is supplied with that, wherein the other lacks. CHAP. IX

X

The Will of Man is various

Let them perish out of thy sight, O God, (and they do perish, those vain babblers, and seducers of the soul) who because they have observed that there are two wills in the act of deliberating, affirm CHAP. X

Digitized by Google

CAP. X mentium esse asseverant, unam bonam, alteram malam. ipsi vere mali sunt, cum ista mala sentiunt, et idem ipsi boni erunt, si vera senserint verisque consenserint, ut dicat eis apostolus tuus: fuistis aliquando tenebrae, nunc autem lux in domino. illi enim dum volunt esse lux non in domino, sed in se ipsis, putando animae naturam hoc esse, quod deus est, ita facti sunt densiores tenebrae, quoniam longius a te recesserunt horrenda arrogantia, a te, vero lumine inluminante omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum. adtendite, quid dicatis, et erubescite: et accedite ad eum et inluminamini, et vultus vestri non erubescent. ego cum deliberabam, ut servirem domino deo meo, sicut diu disposueram, ego eram, qui volebam, ego, qui nolebam; ego eram. nec plene volebam nec plene nolebam. ideo mecum contendebam et dissipabar a me ipso, et ipsa dissipatio me invito quidem fiebat, nec tamen ostendebat naturam mentis alienae, sed poenam meae. et ideo non iam ego operabar illam, sed quod habitat in me peccatum, de supplicio liberioris peccati, quia eram filius Adam.

Nam si tot sunt contrariae naturae, quot voluntates sibi resistunt, non iam duae, sed plures erunt. si deliberet quisquam, utrum ad conventiculum eorum pergat an ad theatrum, clamant isti: "ecce duae naturae, una bona hac ducit, altera mala illac

Digitized by Google

thereupon, that there are two kinds of natures, of two kinds of souls, one good and the other bad. Themselves are truly bad, whenas they believe these bad opinions: and the same men shall become good, if they shall come to believe true opinions, and shall consent unto the true, that thy Apostle may say unto them, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. But these fellows would be light indeed, not in the Lord, but in themselves; imagining the nature of the soul to be the same that God is. Thus are they made more gross darkness; for that they went back farther from thee, through a horrid arrogancy; from thee the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into this world. Take heed what you say, and blush for shame: draw near unto him and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed. Myself when sometime I deliberated upon serving of the Lord my God, (as I long had purposed) it was myself who willed it, and myself who nilled it; it was I myself. I neither willed entirely, nor yet nilled entirely. Therefore was I at strife with myself, and distracted by mine own self. Which distracting befell me much against my mind, nor yet shewed it forth the nature of another man's mind, but the punishment of mine own. I therefore myself was not the causer of it, but the sin that dwells in me: from the punishment of that more voluntary sin, because I was a son of Adam.

CHAP. X

Eph. v. 8

John i. 9

Ps. xxxiv. 5

For if there be so many contrary natures in man, as there be wills resisting one another; there shall not now be two natures alone, but many. Suppose a man should deliberate with himself whether he should go to their conventicle, or go to see a play; presently they cry out: Behold, here are two natures;

CAP. X reducit. nam unde ista cunctatio sibimet adversantium voluntatum?" ego autem dico ambas malas, et quae ad illos ducit et quae ad theatrum reducit. sed non credunt nisi bonam esse, qua itur ad eos. quid? si ergo quisquam noster deliberet, et secum altercantibus duabus voluntatibus fluctuet, utrum ad theatrum pergat an ad ecclesiam nostram, nonne et isti quid respondeant fluctuabunt? aut enim fatebuntur, quod nolunt, bona voluntate pergi in ecclesiam nostram, sicut in eam pergunt qui sacramentis eius imbuti sunt atque detinentur, aut duas malas naturas et duas malas mentes in uno homine confligere putabunt, et non erit verum quod solent dicere, unam bonam, alteram malam; aut convertentur ad verum et non negabunt, cum quisque deliberat, animam unam diversis voluntatibus aestuare.

Iam ergo non dicant, cum duas voluntates in homine uno adversari sibi sentiunt, duas contrarias mentes, de duabus contrariis substantiis, et de duobus contrariis principiis contendere, unam bonam, alteram malam. nam tu, deus verax, improbas eos et redarguis atque convincis eos, sicut in utraque mala voluntate, cum quisque deliberat, utrum hominem veneno interimat an ferro, utrum fundum alienum

Digitized by Google

one good, which draws this way; and another bad, which draws back that way. Else whence is this mammering of the wills thus thwarting one another? But I answer, that both these wills be bad: that as ill, which draws to their conventicle, as that which draws back unto the theatre. But they will not believe that will to be other than good, which brings men to them. Suppose then one of us should deliberate, and through the dispute of his two wills should be in a quandary, whether he should go see a play, or come to our church: will not they be as much in a quandary what to answer? For either must they confess, (which they will never grant) that the will which leads to our church is good, as it is in them which go to their church, who are partakers of her sacraments, and detained in her obedience; or else must they suppose that there be two evil natures, and two evil souls in one man, which combat one another; and it will not be true which they are wont to affirm, that there is one good, and the other bad; or must they be converted to the truth, and no more deny, that in the acts of one man's deliberation there is one soul distracted between two contrary wills. CHAP. X

Let them no more say, therefore, that whenas they perceive two wills to be contrary one to another in one man, that there be two contrary souls, made of two contrary substances, from two contrary principles, one good, and the other bad, contending one with another. For thou, O true God, dost disprove, check, and convince them; like as when both wills being bad, a man deliberates with himself, whether he should kill a man by poison or by the sword? Whether he should take in this piece, or that, of

Digitized by Google

CAP. X illum an illum invadat, quando utrumque non potest, utrum emat voluptatem luxuria an pecuniam servet avaritia, utrum ad circum pergat an ad theatrum, si uno die utrumque exhibeatur; addo etiam tertium, an ad furtum de domo aliena, si subest occasio; addo et quartum, an ad committendum adulterium, si et inde simul facultas aperitur, si omnia concurrant in unum articulum temporis, pariterque cupiuntur omnia, quae simul agi nequeunt: discerpunt enim animum sibimet adversantibus quattuor voluntatibus vel etiam pluribus, in tanta copia rerum, quae appetuntur: nec tamen tantam multitudinem diversarum substantiarum solent dicere. ita et in bonis voluntatibus. nam quaero ab eis, utrum bonum sit delectari lectione apostoli, et utrum bonum sit delectari psalmo sobrio, et utrum bonum sit evangelium disserere. respondebunt ad singula: "bonum." quid? si ergo pariter delectent omnia simulque uno tempore, nonne diversae voluntates distendunt cor hominis, dum deliberatur, quid potissimum arripiamus? et omnes bonae sunt et certant secum, donec eligatur unum, quo feriatur tota voluntas una, quae in plures dividebatur. ita etiam, cum aeternitas delectat superius et temporalis boni voluptas retentat inferius, eadem anima est non tota voluntate illud

Digitized by Google

another man's ground, whenas he cannot do both? Whether he should purchase pleasure with prodigality, or keep close his money by covetousness? Whether he should go to the chariot race, or to the theatre, if they were both to be seen upon one day? I add also a third instance; whether he should rob another man's house, had he the opportunity: and a fourth I add, or whether he should commit adultery if the means is opened from that side also at the same time; if all these concurred in the same instant of time, and if all these acts be equally desired, which cannot possibly be all at one time acted. For verily they tear in sunder the soul amongst four different wills, clean contrary to one another, perchance among more than four: in such variety of things which are desirable, yet use they not to affirm that there is any such multitude of divers substances. Thus also is it in such wills as are good. For I demand of them, whether it be a good thing to be delighted in reading of the Apostle? And whether it be a good mind to be delighted in a sober Psalm? and, whether it be a good act to discourse upon the Gospel? They will answer to each of these, that it is good. What now if all these equally delight us, and all together at the same time? Do not divers wills then rack the mind, whenas a man is deliberating which of all these we should chiefly take? Yet are all these wills good, although they all contend with one another; till such time as one of them be made choice of, whereby the whole will is set at rest and united, which was before divided into many. Thus also, when eternity delights the superior parts, and the pleasure of some temporal good holds fast the inferior; it is but one and the same soul which willeth not this or that with an entire will; and is therefore CHAP. X

Digitized by Google

CAP. X aut hoc volens; et ideo discerpitur gravi molestia, dum illud veritate praeponit, hoc familiaritate non ponit.

XI

CAP. XI Sic aegrotabam et excruciabar, accusans memet ipsum solito acerbius nimis, ac volvens et versans me in vinculo meo, donec abrumperetur totum, quo iam exiguo tenebar. sed tenebar tamen. et instabas tamen in occultis meis, domine, sevèra misericordia flagella ingeminans timoris et pudoris, ne rursus cessarem et non abrumperetur id ipsum exiguum et tenue, quod remanserat, et revalesceret iterum, et me robustius alligaret. dicebam enim apud me intus: "ecce modo fiat, modo fiat," et cum verbo iam ibam in placitum. iam paene faciebam, et non faciebam; nec relabebar tamen in pristina, sed de proximo stabam et respirabam. et item conabar, et paulo minus ibi eram et paulo minus, iam iamque adtingebam et tenebam: et non ibi eram nec adtingebam nec tenebam, haesitans mori morti et vitae vivere; plusque in me valebat deterius inolitum, quam melius insolitum; punctumque ipsum temporis, quo aliud futurus eram, quanto propius admovebatur,

Digitized by Google

torn in sunder with grievous perplexity, because truth makes it put this first, while habit suffers it not to put that away. CHAP. X

XI

The Combat in him betwixt the Spirit and the Flesh

CHAP. XI

THUS soul-sick I was, and in this manner tormented; accusing myself much more eagerly than I was wont, turning and winding myself in my chain, till that which held me might be utterly broken; which though but little, yet held it me fast enough notwithstanding. And thou, O Lord, pressedst upon me in my inward parts, by a most severe mercy redoubling my lashes of fear and shame, lest I should give way again, and lest that small and tender tie, which now only was left, should not break off but recover strength again, and hamper me again the faster. For I said within myself: Behold, let it be done now, let it be done now. And no sooner had I said the word, but that I began to put on the resolution. Now I even almost did it, yet indeed I did it not: yet notwithstanding, fell I not quite back to my old wont, but stood in the degree next to it, to fetch new breath. Yea, I set upon it again, and I wanted but very little of getting up to it, and within a very little, even by and by obtained I to touch and lay hold of it; and yet could I not get up to it, nor come to touch, or lay full hold of it, still fearing to die unto death, and to live unto life: and the worse which I had been anciently inured unto, prevailed more with me than the better, to which I was unused: yea, the very instant of time wherein I was to become something else, the nearer it

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI tanto ampliorem incutiebat horrorem; sed non recutiebat retro nec avertebat, sed suspendebat.

Retinebant nugae nugarum et vanitates vanitatum, antiquae amicae meae, et succutiebant vestem meam carneam et submurmurabant: "dimittisne nos?" et "a momento isto non erimus tecum ultra in aeternum" et "a momento isto non tibi licebit hoc et illud ultra in aeternum." et quae suggerebant in eo, quod dixi "hoc et illud," quae suggerebant, deus meus? avertat ab anima servi tui misericordia tua! quas sordes suggerebant, quae dedecora! et audiebam eas iam longe minus quam dimidius, non tamquam libere contradicentes eundo in obviam, sed velut a dorso mussitantes et discedentem quasi furtim vellicantes, ut respicerem. retardabant tamen cunctantem me abripere atque excutere ab eis et transilire quo vocabar, cum diceret mihi consuetudo violenta: "putasne sine istis poteris?"

Sed iam tepidissime hoc dicebat. aperiebatur enim ab ea parte, qua intenderam faciem et quo transire trepidabam, casta dignitas continentiae, serena et non dissolute hilaris, honeste blandiens, ut venirem neque dubitarem, et extendens ad me suscipiendum et amplectendum pias manus, plenas gregibus bonorum

Digitized by Google

approached to me, the greater horror did it strike into me. But for all this did it not strike me utterly back, nor turned me quite off, but kept me in suspense only. CHAP. XI

The very toys of all toys, and vanities of vanities, (those ancient favourites of mine) were they which so fast withheld me: they plucked softly at this fleshly garment, and spake softly in mine ears: Canst thou thus part with us? And shall we no more accompany thee from this time for ever? And from this time forth shall it no more be lawful for thee to do this or that for ever? And what were those things which they suggested to me in that phrase this or that, as I said, what were those which they suggested, O my God? Such, as let thy mercy utterly turn away from the soul of thy servant. Oh what impurities, oh what most shameful things did they suggest! And now I much less than half heard them, nor now so freely contradicting me face to face; but muttering as it were softly behind my back, and giving me a privy pluck as I went from them that I might look once more back: yet for all this as I hesitated they did hold me back from snatching away myself, and shaking them off, and leaping from them to the place I was called unto; for violent custom thus rowned me in the ear: Thinkest thou to be ever able to live without all that?

But by this time it spake very faintly. For on that side which I set my face towards, and whither I trembled to go, was that chaste dignity of Continency discovered; cheerful was she, but not dissolutely pleasant, honestly coaxing me to come to her, and doubt nothing: yea stretching forth those devout hands of hers, so full of the multitudes of good examples, both to receive and to embrace me. There

Digitized by Google

CAP. XI exemplorum. ibi tot pueri et puellae, ibi iuventus multa, et omnis aetas, et graves viduae et virgines anus, et in omnibus ipsa continentia, nequaquam sterilis, sed fecunda mater filiorum, gaudiorum de marito te, domine. et inridebat me inrisione hortatoria, quasi diceret: "tu non poteris, quod isti, quod istae? an vero isti et istae in se ipsis possunt ac non in domino deo suo? dominus deus eorum me dedit eis. quid in te stas et non in te stas? proice te in eum, noli metuere; non se subtrahet, ut cadas: proice te securus, excipiet et sanabit te." et erubescebam nimis, quia illarum nugarum murmura adhuc audiebam, et cunctabundus pendebam. et rursus illa, quasi diceret: "obsurdesce adversus inmunda illa membra tua, ut mortificentur. narrant tibi delectationes, sed non sicut lex domini dei tui." ista controversia in corde meo non nisi de me ipso adversus me ipsum. at Alypius affixus lateri meo inusitati motus mei exitum tacitus opperiebatur.

Digitized by Google

were in company with her very many both young men CHAP. XI
and maidens, a multitude of youth and of all ages: both grave widows and ancient virgins, and Continence herself in every one of them, not barren at all, but a fruitful mother of children, her joys, by thee her Ps. cxiii. 9
husband, O Lord. And she was pleasant with me with a kind of exhorting quip, as if she should have said: Canst not thou perform what these of both sexes have performed? Or can any of these perform thus much of themselves, not rather by the Lord their God? The Lord their God gave me unto them. Why standest thou on thyself, and on thyself standest not? Cast thyself upon him; fear not, he will not slip away and make thee fall. Cast thyself boldly upon him, he will receive thee, and he will heal thee. I blushed all this while to myself very much, for that I yet heard the muttering of those toys, and that I yet hung in suspense. Whereupon she seemed to say again: Stop thine ears against those unclean members of thine, that they Col. iii. 5
may be mortified. They tell thee of delights indeed, but not such as the law of the Lord thy God tells thee of. This was the controversy I felt in my heart, about nothing but myself, against myself. But Alypius sitting by my side, in silence expected the issue of my unaccustomed agitation.

Digitized by Google

XII

CAP. XII Vbi vero a fundo arcano alta consideratio traxit et congessit totam miseriam meam in conspectu cordis mei, oborta est procella ingens, ferens ingentem imbrem lacrimarum. et ut totum effunderem cum vocibus suis, surrexi ab Alypio—solitudo mihi ad negotium flendi aptior suggerebatur—et secessi remotius, quam ut posset mihi onerosa esse etiam eius praesentia. sic tunc eram, et ille sensit: nescio quid enim, puto, dixeram, in quo apparebat sonus vocis meae iam fletu gravidus, et sic surrexeram. mansit ergo ille ubi sedebamus nimie stupens. ego sub quadam fici arbore stravi me nescio quomodo, et dimisi habenas lacrimis, et proruperunt flumina oculorum meorum, acceptabile sacrificium tuum, et non quidem his verbis, sed in hac sententia multa dixi tibi: "et tu, domine, usquequo? usquequo, domine, irasceris in finem? ne memor fueris iniquitatum nostrarum antiquarum." sentiebam enim eis me teneri. iactabam voces miserabiles: "quamdiu, quamdiu 'cras et cras'? quare non modo? quare non hac hora finis turpitudinis meae?"

Dicebam haec, et flebam, amarissima contritione cordis mei. et ecce audio vocem de vicina domo cum

Digitized by Google

XII

How he was converted by a voice

So soon therefore as a deep consideration even from the secret bottom of my soul, had drawn together and laid all my misery upon one heap before the eyes of my heart; there rose up a mighty storm, bringing as mighty a shower of tears with it; which that I might pour forth with such expressions as suited best with them, I rose from Alypius: for I conceived that solitariness was more fit for a business of weeping. So far off then I went, as that even his presence might not be troublesome unto me. Thus disposed was I at that time, and he perceived of it; something I believe I had said before, which discovered the sound of my voice to be big with weeping, and in that case I rose from him. He thereupon stayed alone where we sat together, most extremely astonished. I flung down myself I know not how, under a certain fig tree, giving all liberty to my tears: whereupon the floods of mine eyes gushed out, an acceptable sacrifice to thee, O Lord. And though not perchance in these very words, yet much to this purpose said I unto thee: And thou, O Lord, how long, how long, Lord, wilt thou be angry, for ever? Remember not our former iniquities: (for I found myself to be still enthralled by them). Yea, I sent up these miserable exclamations, How long? how long still "to-morrow," and "to-morrow"? Why not now? Wherefore even this very hour is there not an end put to my uncleanness?

CHAP. XII

Ps. vi. 3

Ps. lxxix. 8

Thus much I uttered, weeping, in the most bitter contrition of my heart: whenas behold I heard a

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII cantu dicentis, et crebro repetentis, quasi pueri an puellae, nescio: "tolle lege, tolle lege." statimque mutato vultu intentissimus cogitare coepi, utrumnam solerent pueri in aliquo genere ludendi cantitare tale aliquid, nec occurrebat omnino audisse me uspiam: repressoque impetu lacrimarum surrexi, nihil aliud interpretans divinitus mihi iuberi, nisi ut aperirem codicem et legerem quod primum caput invenissem. audieram enim de Antonio, quod ex evangelica lectione, cui forte supervenerat, admonitus fuerit, tamquam sibi diceretur quod legebatur: vade, vende omnia, quae habes, da pauperibus et habebis thesaurum in caelis; et veni, sequere me: et tali oraculo confestim ad te esse conversum. itaque concitus redii in eum locum, ubi sedebat Alypius: ibi enim posueram codicem apostoli, cum inde surrexeram. arripui, aperui et legi in silentio capitulum, quo primum coniecti sunt oculi mei: non in comissationibus et ebrietatibus, non in cubilibus et inpudicitiis, non in contentione et aemulatione, sed induite dominum Iesum Christum, et carnis providentiam ne feceritis in concupiscentiis. nec ultra volui legere, nec opus erat. statim quippe cum fine huiusce sententiae, quasi luce securitatis infusa cordi meo, omnes dubitationis tenebrae diffugerunt.

Tum interiecto aut digito aut nescio quo alio signo, codicem clausi, et tranquillo iam vultu indicavi Alypio.

Digitized by Google

voice from some neighbour's house, as it had been CHAP. XII
of a boy or girl, I know not whether, in a singing tune saying, and often repeating: Take up and read, Take up and read. Instantly changing my countenance thereupon, I began very heedfully to bethink myself, whether children were wont in any kind of playing to sing any such words: nor could I remember myself ever to have heard the like Whereupon refraining the violent torrent of my tears, up I gat me; interpreting it no other way, but that I was from God himself commanded to open the book, and to read that chapter which I should first light upon. For I had heard of Anthony, that by hearing of the Gospel which he once chanced to come in upon, he took himself to be admonished, as if what was read, had purposely been spoken unto him: Go, and sell Matt. xix. 21
that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me: and by such a miracle that he was presently converted unto thee. Hastily therefore went I again to that place where Alypius was sitting; for there had I laid the Apostle's book whenas I rose from thence. I snatched it up, I opened it, and in silence I read that chapter which I had first cast mine eyes upon: Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and Rom. xiii. 13
wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ; and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. No further would I read; nor needed I. For instantly even with the end of this sentence, by a light as it were of confidence now darted into my heart, all the darkness of doubting vanished away.

Shutting up the book thereupon, and putting my finger between, or I know not what other mark, with a well-quieted countenance I discovered all this unto

Digitized by Google

CAP. XII at ille quid in se ageretur—quod ego nesciebam—sic indicavit. petit videre quid legissem: ostendi, et adtendit etiam ultra quam ego legeram, et ignorabam quid sequeretur. sequebatur autem: infirmum vero in fide recipite. quod ille ad se rettulit mihique aperuit. sed tali admonitione firmatus est, placitoque ac proposito bono (et congruentissimo suis moribus, quibus a me in melius iam olim valde longeque distabat), sine ulla turbulenta cunctatione coniunctus est. inde ad matrem ingredimur, indicamus: gaudet. narramus, quemadmodum gestum sit: exultat et triumphat, et benedicebat tibi, qui potens es ultra quam petimus aut intellegimus facere, quia tanto amplius sibi a te concessum de me videbat, quam petere solebat miserabilibus flebilibusque gemitibus. convertisti enim me ad te, ut nec uxorem quaererem nec aliquam spem saeculi huius, stans in ea regula fidei, in qua me ante tot annos ei revelaveras: et convertisti luctum eius in gaudium, multo uberius, quam voluerat, et multo carius atque castius, quam de nepotibus carnis meae requirebat.

Digitized by Google

Alypius. And he again in this manner revealed unto me what also was wrought in his heart, which I verily knew nothing of. He requested to see what I had read: I shewed him the place; and he looked further than I had read, nor knew I what followed. This followed: Him that is weak in faith, receive: which he applied to himself, and shewed it to me. And by this admonition was he strengthened, and unto that good resolution and purpose (which was most agreeable to his disposition, wherein he did always very far differ from me, to the better) without all turbulent delaying did he now apply himself. From thence went we into the house unto my mother: we discover ourselves, she rejoices for it; we declare in order how everything was done; she leaps for joy, and triumpheth, and blessed thee, who art able to do above that which we ask or think; for that she perceived thee to have given her so much more concerning me, than she was wont to beg by her pitiful and most doleful groanings. For so thou convertedst me unto thyself, as that I sought now no more after a wife, nor any other hopes in this world: standing thus upon the same rule of faith, in which thou hadst shewed me unto her in a vision, so many years before. Thus didst thou convert her mourning into rejoicing, and that much more plentifully than she had desired, and with a much dearer and a chaster joy, than she erst required from any grandchildren of my body.

CHAP. XII

Rom. xiv. 1

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INDEX

ACADEMICS, 245
Adeodatus, 325
Aeneas, 39
Agens in Rebus, 434
All is good, 375
Alypius, 291, 297, 301, 305, 391, 429, 461
Ambition, 289
Ambrose, 255, 257, 267, 273, 407
Anthony, the monk of Egypt, 433
Apollinaristae, 332
Aristotle, 197
Assessor, 305
Astrology, 153
Athenian literature, 371
Augustine:
- childhood, 25
- school, 27
- studies of Greek and Latin 39, 43
- theft, 57
- youthful sins, 65
- leaves school at sixteen, 71
- robs a pear-tree, 77
- goes to Carthage, 99
- studies law and rhetoric, 107
- reads Cicero, 109
- joins the Manichees, 115
- life from nineteen to twenty-eight years of age, 147
- his mistress, 149
- studies astrology, 153

Augustine (*continued*):
- his friend, 159
- goes to Carthage again, 169
- writes "De Pulchro," 185
- reads Aristotle, 197
- meets Faustus, 211
- teaches rhetoric at Carthage, 231
- goes to Rome, 235
- his fever, 239
- teaches rhetoric at Rome, 253
- goes to Milan to teach, 255
- his progress towards faith, 265
- seeks a wife, 321
- his son, 325
- changes his mistress, 325
- reads in the Platonists, 365
- goes to Simplicianus, 403
- crisis in the garden, 443, 457

BEAUTY, 179, 183
Beggar, story of, 287
Bishop's answer about the dream, 141

CARTHAGE:
- life at, 99, 169, 211, 231
- disorders amongst scholars, 233

Categories, the Ten, 197
Cicero, 109, 227
Comes largitionum Italicarum, 304

Digitized by Google

INDEX

Consiliarius, 306
Corporeal and spiritual, 191, 193

"De Pulchro et Apto," 185
Dido, 39
Dream of Augustine's mother, 137
Duality, 191

Eclipses foretold, 213, 217
Epicurus, 327
Equinox, 217
Eversores, 108
Evil, source of, 121
a substance, 247

Father of Augustine, 71, 73
Faustus, a Manichean, 211, 219, 223
Firminus, 353
Food, Manichean view of, 147
offered at the saints' oratories, 269
Free will, 341
Friend's death, 159, 165

Games, Circensian, 293
Garden, the crisis in a, 443
Gladiators, 297
Greek language, 39, 43
Grief for the dead, 161, 163, 167

"H" dropt in pronunciation, 55
Hierius, 185
Hippocrates, 155
Homer, 43, 47
Horoscopes, folly of, 355
"Hortensius" of Cicero, 109

Idolatry, 369
Infancy, 15, 21

Julian, Emperor, 423
Juno, 51
Jupiter, 47

Law, study of, 107
Learning by compulsion, 37
Letter and spirit, 277
Love, 183

Madaura, 71
Manichees, 115, 135, 211, 215, 231, 259, 339, 341, 451
Marriage, 317
Medea, 119
Milan, 255
Mistress, his, 149, 325
Monastery at Milan, 433
Mother of Augustine, 73
her dream, 137
wishes to accompany him to Rome, 237
her kindly country ways, 269
seeks a wife for her son, 321
Mythology, 47, 49

Nebridius, 157, 291, 309, 339, 429

Overturners, the, 109

Paul and Saul, 421
Paul's Epistles, 431
Pear-tree robbed, 77
why he did it, 91
Philosophy, 111
Photinus, 393
Platonists, 365, 393
Ponticianus, 431

Rhetoric teacher at Carthage, 231
Romanianus, 323
Rome, 233, 235, 243

Digitized by Google

INDEX

St. Cyprian, chapel of, 237
Saul and Paul, 423
Schooldays, 27
Seneca, 227
Simplicianus, 403, 411
Sinfulness in infancy, 21
Solomon, 121
Solstice, 217
Son, Augustine's, 325
Speak, learning to, 25, 43
Stage-plays, 101
Symmachus, 255

Tears, the mother's, 145
Terence, 49
Thagaste, 71, 169
Theft in childhood, 57, 77
Thievery detected, 301
Three and seven, 131
Time's cure, 169
Trees' consciousness, 187
Trier, 433

Unity, 191

Verecundus, 429
Verse-writing, 125
Victorinus, conversion of, 407, 413
Vindicianus, 351
Virgil, 43

Wizard, 151

Printed at the Ballantyne Press London

Digitized by Google

878.9 .A7cw C.1
St. Augustine's ConfessAKA5706
Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 045 019 879

Digitized by Google