

0330-0395 – Gregorius Nyssenus – On the Soul and the Resurrection

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31. Some such doctrine as this the great apostle also teaches us in his Epistle to the Corinthians, when he says, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things¹⁷⁴⁵”; not that the soul which arises in the man is different from that which we know to be in the boy, and the childish intellect fails while the manly intellect takes its being in us; but that the same soul displays its imperfect condition in the one, its perfect state in the other.

32. For we say that those things are alive which spring up and grow, and no one would deny that all things that participate in life and natural motion are animate, yet at the same time one cannot say that such life partakes of a perfect soul,—for though a certain animate operation exists in plants, it does not attain to the motions of sense; and on the other hand, though a certain further animate power exists in the brutes, neither does this attain perfection, since it does not contain in itself the grace of reason and intelligence.

33. And even so we say that the true and perfect soul is the human soul, recognized by every operation; and anything else that shares in life we call animate by a sort of customary misuse of language, because in these cases the soul does not exist in a perfect condition, but only certain parts of the operation of the soul, which in man also (according to Moses’ mystical account of man’s origin) we learn to have accrued when he made himself like this sensuous world. Thus Paul, advising those who were able to hear him to lay hold on perfection, indicates also the mode in which they may attain that object, telling them that they must “put off the old man,” and put on the man “which is renewed after the image of Him that created him¹⁷⁴⁶.”

34. Now may we all return to that Divine grace in which God at the first created man, when He said, “Let us make man in our image and likeness”; to Whom be glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.



On the Soul and the Resurrection.

Argument.

THE mind, in times of bereavement, craves a certainty gained by reasoning as to the existence of the soul after death.

First, then: Virtue will be impossible, if deprived of the life of eternity, her only advantage.

¹⁷⁴⁵ 1 Cor. xiii. 11.

¹⁷⁴⁶ Col. iii. 9, 10.

But this is a moral argument. The case calls for speculative and scientific treatment.

How is the objection that the nature of the soul, as of real things, is material, to be met?

Thus; the truth of this doctrine would involve the truth of Atheism; whereas Atheism is refuted by the fact of the wise order that reigns in the world. In other words, the spirituality of God cannot be denied: and this proves the possibility of spiritual or immaterial existence: and therefore, that of the soul.

But is God, then, the same thing as the soul?

No: but man is “a little world in himself;” and we may with the same right conclude from this Microcosm to the actual existence of an immaterial soul, as from the phenomena of the world to the reality of God’s existence.

A Definition of the soul is then given, for the sake of clearness in the succeeding discussion. It is a *created, living, intellectual being*, with the power, as long as it is provided with organs, of sensuous perception. For “the mind sees,” not the eye; take, for instance, the meaning of the phases of the moon. The objection that the “organic machine” of the body produces all thought is met by the instance of the water-organ. Such machines, if thought were really an attribute of matter, ought to build themselves spontaneously: whereas they are a direct proof of an *invisible* thinking power in man. A work of Art means mind: there is a thing perceived, and a thing not perceived.

But still, what *is* this thing not perceived?

If it has no sensible quality whatever—Where is it?

The answer is, that the same question might be asked about the Deity (Whose existence is not denied).

Then the Mind and the Deity are identical?

Not so: in its substantial existence, as separable from matter, the soul is *like* God; but this likeness does not extend to sameness; it resembles God as a copy the original.

As being “simple and uncompounded” the soul survives the dissolution of the composite body, whose scattered elements it will continue to accompany, as if watching over its property till the Resurrection, when it will clothe itself in them anew.

The soul was defined “an *intellectual* being.” But anger and desire are not of the body either. Are there, then, two or three souls?—Answer. Anger and desire do *not* belong to the essence of the soul, but are only among its varying states; they are not originally part of ourselves, and we can and must rid ourselves of them, and bring them, as long as they continue to mark our community with the brute creation, into the service of the good. They are the “tares” of the heart, while they serve any other purpose.

But where will the soul “accompany its elements”?—Hades is not a particular spot; it means the Invisible; those passages in the Bible in which the regions under the earth are alluded to are explained as allegorical, although the partizans of the opposite interpretation need not be combated.

But how will the soul know the scattered elements of the once familiar form? This is answered by two illustrations (not analogies). The skill of the painter, the force that has united numerous colours to form a single tint, will, if (by some miracle) that actual tint was to fall back into those



various colours, be cognizant of each one of these last, *e.g.* the tone and size of the drop of gold, of red, &c.; and could at will recombine them. The owner of a cup of clay would know its fragments (by their shape) amidst a mass of fragments of clay vessels of other shapes, or even if they were plunged again into their native clay. So the soul knows its elements amidst their “kindred dust”; or when each one has flitted back to its own primeval source on the confines of the Universe.

But how does this harmonize with the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus?

The bodies of both were in the grave: and so all that is said of them is in a *spiritual* sense. But the *soul* can suffer still, being cognizant, not only of the elements of the whole body, but of those that formed each member, *e.g.* the tongue. By the relations of the Rich Man are meant the impressions made on his soul by the things of flesh and blood.

But if we must have no emotions in the next world, how shall there be virtue, and how shall there be love of God? For anger, we saw, contributed to the one, desire to the other.

We shall be like God so far that we shall always contemplate the Beautiful in Him. Now, God, in contemplating Himself, has no desire and hope, no regret and memory. The moment of fruition is always present, and so His Love is perfect, without the need of any emotion. So will it be with us. God draws “that which belongs to Him” to this blessed passionlessness; and in this very drawing consists the torment of a passion-laden soul. Severe and long-continued pains in eternity are thus decreed to sinners, not because God hates them, nor for the sake alone of punishing them; but “because what belongs to God must *at any cost* be preserved for Him.” The degree of pain which must be endured by each one is necessarily proportioned to the measure of the wickedness.

God will thus be “all in all”; yet the loved one’s form will then be woven, though into a more ethereal texture, of the same elements as before. (This is not Nirvana.)

Here the doctrine of the Resurrection is touched. The Christian Resurrection and that of the heathen philosophies coincide in that the soul is re clothed from *some* elements of the Universe. But there are fatal objections to the latter under its two forms:

Transmigration pure and simple;
The Platonic Soul-rotation.

The first—

1. Obliterates the distinction between the mineral or vegetable, and the spiritual, world.
2. Makes it a sin to eat and drink.

Both—

3. Confuse the moral choice.
4. Make heaven the cradle of vice, and earth of virtue.
5. Contradict the truth that they assume, that there is no change in heaven.
6. Attribute every birth to a vice, and therefore are either Atheist or Manichæan.
7. Make a life a chapter of accidents.
8. Contradict facts of moral character.

God *is* the cause of our life, both in body and soul.

But *when* and *how* does the soul come into existence?

The *how* we can never know.

There are objections to seeking the material for any created thing either in God, or outside God. But we may regard the whole Creation as the *realized thoughts* of God. (Anticipation of Malebranche.)

The *when* may be determined. Objections to the existence of soul *before* body have been given above. But soul is necessary to life, and the embryo lives.

Therefore soul is not born *after* body. So body and soul are born together.

As to the number of souls, Humanity itself is a thought of God not yet completed, as these continual additions prove. When it is completed, this “progress of Humanity” will cease, by there being no more births: and no births, no deaths.

Before answering objections to the Scriptural doctrine of the Resurrection, the passages that contain it are mentioned: especially Psalm cxviii. 27 (LXX.).

The various objections to it, to the Purgatory *to follow*, and to the Judgment, are then stated; especially that

A man is not the same being (physically) two days together. Which phase of him, then, is to rise again, be tortured (if need be), and judged?

They are all answered by a Definition of the Resurrection, i.e. *the restoration of man to his original state*. In that, there is neither age nor infancy; and the “coats of skins” are laid aside.

When the process of purification has been completed, the better attributes of the soul appear—imperishability, life, honour, grace, glory, power, and, in short, all that belongs to human nature as the image of Deity.



On the Soul and the Resurrection.

BASIL, great amongst the saints, had departed from this life to God; and the impulse to mourn for him was shared by all the churches. But his sister the Teacher was still living; and so I journeyed to her¹⁷⁴⁷, yearning for an interchange of sympathy over the loss of her brother. My soul was right

¹⁷⁴⁷ Gregory himself tells us, in his life of S. Macrina, that he went to see her after the Council of Antioch. (This and Basil’s death occurred in the year 379: so that this Dialogue was probably composed in 380.) “The interval during which the circumstances of our times of trials prevented any visits had been long.” He goes on to say (p. 189 B.); “And that she might cause me no depression of spirits, she somehow subdued the noise and concealed the difficulty of her breathing, and assumed perfect

sorrow-stricken by this grievous blow, and I sought for one who could feel it equally, to mingle my tears with. But when we were in each other's presence the sight of the Teacher awakened all my pain; for she too was lying in a state of prostration even unto death. Well, she gave in to me for a little while, like a skilful driver, in the ungovernable violence of my grief; and then she tried to check me by speaking, and to correct with the curb of her reasonings the disorder of my soul. She quoted the Apostle's words about the duty of not being "grieved for them that sleep"; because only "men without hope" have such feelings. With a heart still fermenting with my pain, I asked—

¹⁷⁴⁸ How can that ever be practised by mankind? There is such an instinctive and deep-seated abhorrence of death in all! Those who look on a death-bed can hardly bear the sight; and those whom death approaches recoil from him all they can. Why, even the law that controls us puts death highest on the list of crimes, and highest on the list of punishments. By what device, then, can we bring ourselves to regard as nothing a departure from life even in the case of a stranger, not to mention that of relations, when so be they cease to live? We see before us the whole course of human life aiming at this one thing, viz. how we may continue in this life; indeed it is for this that houses have been invented by us to live in; in order that our bodies may not be prostrated in their environment¹⁷⁴⁹ by cold or heat. Agriculture, again, what is it but the providing of our sustenance? In fact all thought about how we are to go on living is occasioned by the fear of dying. Why is medicine so honoured amongst men? Because it is thought to carry on the combat with death to a certain extent by its methods. Why do we have corslets, and long shields, and greaves, and helmets,

cheerfulness: she not only started pleasant topics herself, but suggested them as well by the questions which she asked. The conversation led naturally to the mention of our great Basil. While my very soul sank and my countenance was saddened and fell, she herself was so far from going with me into the depths of mourning, that she made the mention of that saintly name all opportunity for the most sublime philosophy. Examining human nature in a scientific way, disclosing the divine plan that underlies all afflictions, and dealing, as if inspired by the Holy Spirit, with all the questions relating to a future life, she maintained such a discourse that my soul seemed to be lifted along with her words almost beyond the compass of humanity, and, as I followed her argument, to be placed within the sanctuary of heaven." Again (p. 190 B): "And if my tract would not thereby be extended to an endless length, I would have reported everything in its order; *i.e.* how her argument lifted her as she went into the philosophy both of the soul, and of the causes of our life in the flesh, and of the final cause of Man and his mortality, and of death and the return thence into life again. In all of it her reasoning continued clear and consecutive: it flowed on so easily and naturally that it was like the water from some spring falling unimpeded downwards."

¹⁷⁴⁸ Two grounds are here given why this practice of grief for the departed is difficult to give up. One lies in the natural abhorrence of death, showing itself in two ways, viz. in our grief over others dying, and in recoiling from our own death, expressed by two evenly balanced sentences, οὔτε τῶν ὀρώντων...οἷς τε ἄν...; in the latter a second οὔτε might have been expected; but such an anacoluthon is frequent in dialogue. Oehler is wrong in giving to the second τε an intensive force, *i.e.* "much more." The other ground lies in the attitude of the law towards death.

¹⁷⁴⁹ Reading περιέχοντι: the same word is used below, "as long as the breath within was held in by the enveloping substance"(see p. 432, note 8). Here it means "the air": as in Marcus Antoninus, Lib. iv. 39.

and all the defensive armour, and inclosures of fortifications, and iron-barred gates, except that we fear to die? Death then being naturally so terrible to us, how can it be easy for a survivor to obey this command to remain unmoved over friends departed?

Why, what is the especial pain you feel, asked the Teacher, in the mere necessity itself of dying? This common talk of unthinking persons is no sufficient accusation.

What! is there no occasion for grieving, I replied to her, when we see one who so lately lived and spoke becoming all of a sudden lifeless and motionless, with the sense of every bodily organ extinct, with no sight or hearing in operation, or any other faculty of apprehension that sense possesses; and if you apply fire or steel to him, even if you were to plunge a sword into the body, or cast it to the beasts of prey, or if you bury it beneath a mound, that dead man is alike unmoved at any treatment? Seeing, then, that this change is observed in all these ways, and that principle of life, whatever it might be, disappears all at once out of sight, as the flame of an extinguished lamp which burnt on it the moment before neither remains upon the wick nor passes to some other place, but completely disappears, how can such a change be borne without emotion by one who has no clear ground to rest upon? We *hear* the departure of the spirit, we *see* the shell that is left; but of the part that has been separated we are ignorant, both as to its nature, and as to the place whither it has fled; for neither earth, nor air, nor water, nor any other element can show as residing within itself this force that has left the body, at whose withdrawal a corpse only remains, ready for dissolution.

Whilst I was thus enlarging on the subject, the Teacher signed to me with her hand¹⁷⁵⁰, and said: Surely what alarms and disturbs your mind is not the thought that the soul, instead of lasting for ever, ceases with the body's dissolution!

I answered rather audaciously, and without due consideration of what I said, for my passionate grief had not yet given me back my judgment. In fact, I said that the Divine utterances seemed to me like mere commands compelling us to believe that the soul lasts for ever; not, however, that we were led by them to this belief by any reasoning. Our mind within us appears slavishly to accept the opinion enforced, but not to acquiesce with a spontaneous impulse. Hence our sorrow over the departed is all the more grievous; we do not exactly know whether this vivifying principle is anything by itself; where it is, or how it is; whether, in fact, it exists in any way at all anywhere. This uncertainty¹⁷⁵¹ about the real state of the case balances the opinions on either side; many adopt the one view, many the other; and indeed there are certain persons, of no small philosophical reputation amongst the Greeks, who have held and maintained this which I have just said.

¹⁷⁵⁰ Reading κατασείσασα τῆ χειρὶ, instead of the vox nihili μετασείσασα of the two Paris Editions, which can be accounted for by μετα being repeated in error from μεταξυ. The question which this gesture accompanied is one to which it would be very appropriate. The reading adopted is that of the Codex Uffenbach, and this phrase, κατασεΐειν τῆ χειρὶ, is unimpeachable for "commanding silence," being used by Polybius, and Xenophon (without χειρὶ). Wolf and Krabinger prefer this reading to that of most of the Codd., κατασιγήσασα: and doubtless Sifanus read it ("manu silentio imperato").

¹⁷⁵¹ ἴσας...ἀδηλία. This is Krabinger's reading (for ἴσως...ἡ δειλία in the Parisian Editions) with abundant MS. authority.

Away, she cried, with that pagan nonsense! For therein the inventor of lies fabricates false theories only to harm the Truth. Observe this, and nothing else; that such a view about the soul amounts to nothing less than the abandoning of virtue, and seeking the pleasure of the moment only; the life of eternity, by which alone virtue claims the advantage, must be despaired of.

And pray how, I asked, are we to get a firm and unmovable belief in the soul's continuance? I, too, am sensible of the fact that human life will be bereft of the most beautiful ornament that life has to give, I mean virtue, unless an undoubting confidence with regard to this be established within us. What, indeed, has virtue to stand upon in the case of those persons who conceive of this present life as the limit of their existence, and hope for nothing beyond?

Well, replied the Teacher, we must seek where we may get a beginning for our discussion upon this point; and if you please, let the defence of the opposing views be undertaken by yourself; for I see that your mind is a little inclined to accept such a brief. Then, after the conflicting belief has been stated, we shall be able to look for the truth.

When she made this request, and I had deprecated the suspicion that I was making the objections in real earnest, instead of only wishing to get a firm ground for the belief about the soul by calling into court¹⁷⁵² first what is aimed against this view, I began—

Would not the defenders of the opposite belief say this: that the body, being composite, must necessarily be resolved into that of which it is composed? And when the coalition of elements in the body ceases, each of those elements naturally gravitates towards its kindred element with the irresistible bias of like to like; the heat in us will thus unite with heat, the earthy with the solid, and each of the other elements also will pass towards its like. Where, then, will the soul be after that? If one affirm that it is in those elements, one will be obliged to admit that it is identical with them, for this fusion could not possibly take place between two things of different natures. But this being granted, the soul must necessarily be viewed as a complex thing, fused as it is with qualities so opposite. But the complex is not simple, but must be classed with the composite, and the composite is necessarily dissoluble; and dissolution means the destruction of the compound; and the destructible is not immortal, else the flesh itself, resolvable as it is into its constituent elements, might so be called immortal. If, on the other hand, the soul is something other than these elements, where can our reason suggest a place for it to be, when it is thus, by virtue of its alien nature, not to be discovered in those elements, and there is no other place in the world, either, where it may continue, in harmony with its own peculiar character, to exist? But, if a thing can be found nowhere, plainly it has no existence.



¹⁷⁵² ἀντιπιπτόνων πρὸς τὸν σκοπὸν τοῦτον ὑποκληθέντων: the reading of the Parisian Editions. But the preponderance of ms. authority is in favour of ὑπεκλυθέντων, “si quæ ad hoc propositum opponuntur soluta fuerint,” Krabinger. The force of ὑπὸ will then be “by way of rejoinder.” The idea in σκοπὸν seems to be that of a butt set up to be shot at. All the mss. but not the Paris Editions, have the article before ἀντιπιπτόνων: but it is not absolutely necessary, for Gregory not unfrequently omits it before participles, when his meaning is general, *i.e.* “Everything that,” &c.

The Teacher sighed gently at these words of mine, and then said; Maybe these were the objections, or such as these, that the Stoics and Epicureans collected at Athens made in answer to the Apostle. I hear that Epicurus carried his theories in this very direction. The framework of things was to his mind a fortuitous¹⁷⁵³ and mechanical affair, without a Providence penetrating its operations; and, as a piece with this, he thought that human life was like a bubble, existing only as long as the breath within was held in by the enveloping substance¹⁷⁵⁴, inasmuch as our body was a mere membrane, as it were, encompassing a breath; and that on the collapse of the inflation the imprisoned essence was extinguished. To him the visible was the limit of existence; he made our senses the only means of our apprehension of things; he completely closed the eyes of his soul, and was incapable of seeing anything in the intelligible and immaterial world, just as a man, who is imprisoned in a cabin whose walls and roof obstruct the view outside, remains without a glimpse of all the wonders of the sky. Verily, everything in the universe that is seen to be an object of sense is as an earthen wall, forming in itself a barrier between the narrower souls and that intelligible world which is ready for their contemplation; and it is the earth and water and fire alone that such behold; whence comes each of these elements, in what and by what they are encompassed, such souls because of their narrowness cannot detect. While the sight of a garment suggests to any one the weaver of it, and the thought of the shipwright comes at the sight of the ship, and the hand of the builder is brought to the mind of him who sees the building, these little souls gaze upon the world, but their eyes are blind to Him whom all this that we see around us makes manifest; and so they propound their clever and pungent doctrines about the soul's evanishment;—body from elements, and elements from body, and, besides, the impossibility of the soul's self-existence (if it is not to be one of these elements, or lodged in one); for if these opponents suppose that by virtue of the soul not being akin to the elements it is nowhere after death, they must propound, to begin with, the absence of the soul from the fleshly life as well, seeing that the body itself is nothing but a concourse of those elements; and so they must not tell us that the soul is to be found there either, independently vivifying their compound. If it is not possible for the soul to exist *after* death, though the elements do, then, I say, according to this teaching our life as well is proved to be nothing else

¹⁷⁵³ ὡς τυχαία, κ.τ.λ. It is better to connect this directly with Epicurus himself, than to refer it, by bracketing the preceding sentence (with Oehler), to his followers. Macrina infers from the opinions known to her of Epicurus, what he must have said about the human soul: *i.e.* that it was a bubble; and then what his followers probably said. There is no evidence that Epicurus used this actual figure: still Gregory *may* be recording his very words.—Lucian (*Charon*, 68) enlarges on such a simile: and his ὠκύμορον φύσημα, as a description of man, is reproduced by Gregory himself in *Orat. de Beatitud.* p. 768 D.

¹⁷⁵⁴ τῷ περιέχοντι. Sifanus takes this of the surrounding atmosphere. So also Krabinger, “aere circumfuso,” just as above (182 A.) it does certainly mean the air, and Wolf quotes a passage to that effect from Marcus Antoninus and the present instance also. Still there is no reason that it should not here mean the body of the man, which is as it were a case retentive of the vital breath within; and the sense seems to require it. As to the construction, although πομφόλυξ is sometimes masculine in later Greek, yet it is much more likely that περιταθέντος (not περιτεθέντος of the Paris Editt.) is the genitive absolute with τοῦ σώματος; τῷ περιέχοντι would then very naturally refer to this.

but death. But if on the other hand they do not make the existence of the soul now in the body a question for doubt, how can they maintain its evanishment when the body is resolved into its elements? Then, secondly, they must employ an equal audacity against the God in this Nature too. For how can they assert that the intelligible and immaterial Unseen can be dissolved and diffused into the wet and the soft, as also into the hot and the dry, and so hold together the universe in existence through being, though not of a kindred nature with the things which it penetrates, yet not thereby incapable of so penetrating them? Let them, therefore, remove from their system the very Deity Who upholds the world.

That is the very point, I said, upon which our adversaries cannot fail to have doubts; viz. that all things depend on God and are encompassed by Him, or, that there is any divinity at all transcending the physical world.

It would be more fitting, she cried, to be silent about such doubts, and not to deign to make any answer to such foolish and wicked propositions; for there is a Divine precept forbidding us to answer a fool in his folly; and he must be a fool, as the Prophet declares, who says that there is no God. But since one needs must speak, I will urge upon you an argument which is not mine nor that of any human being (for it would then be of small value, whosoever spoke it), but an argument which the whole Creation enunciates by the medium of its wonders to the audience¹⁷⁵⁵ of the eye, with a skilful and artistic utterance that reaches the heart. The Creation proclaims outright the Creator; for the very heavens, as the Prophet says, declare the glory of God with their unutterable words. We see the universal harmony in the wondrous sky and on the wondrous earth; how elements essentially opposed to each other are all woven together in an ineffable union to serve one common end, each contributing its particular force to maintain the whole; how the unmingling and mutually repellent do not fly apart from each other by virtue of their peculiarities, any more than they are destroyed, when compounded, by such contrariety; how those elements which are naturally buoyant move downwards, the heat of the sun, for instance, descending in the rays, while the bodies which possess weight are lifted by becoming rarefied in vapour, so that water contrary to its nature ascends, being conveyed through the air to the upper regions; how too that fire of the firmament so penetrates the earth that even its abysses feel the heat; how the moisture of the rain infused into the soil generates, one though it be by nature, myriads of differing germs, and animates in due proportion each subject of its influence; how very swiftly the polar sphere revolves, how the orbits within it move the contrary way, with all the eclipses, and conjunctions, and measured intervals¹⁷⁵⁶ of the planets. We see all this with the piercing eyes of mind, nor can we fail to be taught by means of such a spectacle that a Divine power, working with skill and method, is manifesting itself in this



¹⁷⁵⁵ But Dr. Hermann Schmidt sees even more than this in this bold figure. The Creation preaches, as it were, and its tones are first heard in our hearts (ἐνιχοῦντος τῆ καρδιᾷ): and these tones are then reflected back from the heart to the contemplating eye, which thus becomes not a seeing only, but a hearing (ἄκροατῆς γίνεται) organ, in its external activity.

¹⁷⁵⁶ ἐναρμονίους ἀποστάσεις, *i.e.* to which the music of the spheres was due: see Macrobius, *Somnium Scipionis*, c. 4: for the “retrograde” motion of the planets above, see Joannes de Sacro Bosco, *Sphaera* (1564), p. 47, sqq.

actual world, and, penetrating each portion, combines those portions with the whole and completes the whole by the portions, and encompasses the universe with a single all-controlling force, self-centred and self-contained, never ceasing from its motion, yet never altering the position which it holds.

And pray how, I asked, does this belief in the existence of God prove along with it the existence of the human soul? For God, surely, is not the same thing as the soul, so that, if the one were believed in, the other must necessarily be believed in.

She replied: It has been said by wise men that man is a little world¹⁷⁵⁷ in himself and contains all the elements which go to complete the universe. If this view is a true one (and so it seems), we perhaps shall need no other ally than it to establish the truth of our conception of the soul. And our conception of it is this; that it exists, with a rare and peculiar nature of its own, independently of the body with its gross texture. We get our exact knowledge of this outer world from the apprehension of our senses, and these sensational operations themselves lead us on to the understanding of the super-sensual world of fact and thought, and our eye thus becomes the interpreter of that almighty wisdom which is visible in the universe, and points in itself to the Being Who encompasses it. Just so, when we look to our inner world, we find no slight grounds there also, in the known, for conjecturing the unknown; and the unknown there also is that which, being the object of thought and not of sight, eludes the grasp of sense.

I rejoined, Nay, it may be very possible to infer a wisdom transcending the universe from the skilful and artistic designs observable in this harmonized fabric of physical nature; but, as regards the soul, what knowledge is possible to those who would trace, from any indications the body has to give, the unknown through the known?

Most certainly, the Virgin replied, the soul herself, to those who wish to follow the wise proverb and know themselves, is a competent¹⁷⁵⁸ instructress; of the fact, I mean, that she is an immaterial and spiritual thing, working and moving in a way corresponding to her peculiar nature, and evincing these peculiar emotions through the organs of the body. For this bodily organization exists the same even in those who have just been reduced by death to the state of corpses, but it remains without motion or action because the force of the soul is no longer in it. It moves only when there is sensation in the organs, and not only that, but the mental force by means of that sensation penetrates with its own impulses and moves whither it will all those organs of sensation.

What then, I asked, is the soul? Perhaps there may be some possible means of delineating its nature; so that we may have some comprehension of this subject, in the way of a sketch.

Its definition, the Teacher replied, has been attempted in different ways by different writers, each according to his own bent; but the following is our opinion about it. The soul is an essence created, and living, and intellectual, transmitting from itself to an organized and sentient body the

¹⁷⁵⁷ See *On the Making of Man*, c. viii. 5.

¹⁷⁵⁸ ἱκανῆ. This is the reading of Codd. A and B (of Krabinger, but the common reading is εἰ κἄν ἦ!

power of living and of grasping objects of sense, as long as a natural constitution capable of this holds together.

Saying this she pointed to the physician¹⁷⁵⁹ who was sitting to watch her state, and said: There is a proof of what I say close by us. How, I ask, does this man, by putting his fingers to feel the pulse, hear in a manner, through this sense of touch, Nature calling loudly to him and telling him of her peculiar pain; in fact, that the disease in the body is an inflammatory one¹⁷⁶⁰, and that the malady originates in this or that internal organ; and that there is such and such a degree of fever? How too is he taught by the agency of the eye other facts of this kind, when he looks to see the posture of the patient and watches the wasting of the flesh? As, too, the state of the complexion, pale somewhat and bilious, and the gaze of the eyes, as is the case with those in pain, involuntarily inclining to sadness, indicate the internal condition, so the ear gives information of the like, ascertaining the nature of the malady by the shortness of the breathing and by the groan that comes with it. One might say that even the sense of smell in the expert is not incapable of detecting the kind of disorder, but that it notices the secret suffering of the vitals in the particular quality of the breath. Could this be so if there were not a certain force of intelligence present in each organ of the senses? What would our hand have taught us of itself, without thought conducting it from feeling to understanding the subject before it? What would the ear, as separate from mind, or the eye or the nostril or any other organ have helped towards the settling of the question, all by themselves? Verily, it is most true what one of heathen culture is recorded to have said, that it is the mind that sees and the mind that hears¹⁷⁶¹. Else, if you will not allow this to be true, you must tell me why, when you look at the sun, as you have been trained by your instructor to look at him, you assert that he is not in the breadth of his disc of the size he appears to the many, but that he exceeds by many times the measure of the entire earth. Do you not confidently maintain that it is so, because you have arrived by reasoning through phenomena at the conception of such and such a movement, of such distances of time and space, of such causes of eclipse? And when you look at the waning and waxing moon you are taught other truths by the visible figure of that heavenly body, viz. that it is in itself devoid of light, and that it revolves in the circle nearest to the earth, and that it is lit by light from the sun; just as is the case with mirrors, which, receiving the sun upon them, do not

¹⁷⁵⁹ It may be noticed that besides the physician several others were present. Cf. 242 D, τοῖς πολλοῖς παρακαθημένοις

¹⁷⁶⁰ Krabinger's Latin "in intentione," though a literal translation, hardly represents the full force of this passage, which is interesting because, the terms being used specially, if not only, of fevers or inflammation, it is evident that the speaker has her own illness in mind, and her words are thus more natural than if she spoke of patients generally. If ἐν ἐπίτασει is translated "at its height," this will very awkwardly anticipate what follows, ἐπὶ τοσόνδε...ἢ ἐπίτασις. The doctor is supposed simply to class the complaint as belonging to the order of those which manifest themselves δι' ἐπιτάσεως, as opposed to those which do so δι' ἀνέσεως; he then descends to particulars, *i.e.* ἐπὶ τοσόνδε. The demonstrative in τῶνδε τῶν σπλάγχων has the same force as in τὸ ἐν τῶδε θέρμον, 214 C, "such and such;" the nobler organs (viscera thoracis) of course are here meant. Gregory himself gives a list of them, 250 C.

¹⁷⁶¹ A trochaic line to this effect from the comedian Epicharmus is quoted by Theodoret, *De Fide*, p. 15.

reflect rays of their own, but those of the sun, whose light is given back from their smooth flashing surface. Those who see this, but do not examine it, think that the light comes from the moon herself. But that this is not the case is proved by this; that when she is diametrically facing the sun she has the whole of the disc that looks our way illuminated; but, as she traverses her own circle of revolution quicker from moving in a narrower space, she herself has completed this more than twelve times before the sun has once travelled round his; whence it happens that her substance is not always covered with light. For her position facing him is not maintained in the frequency of her revolutions; but, while this position causes the whole side of the moon which looks to us to be illumined, directly she moves sideways her hemisphere which is turned to us necessarily becomes partially shadowed, and only that which is turned to him meets his embracing rays; the brightness, in fact, keeps on retiring from that which can no longer see the sun to that which still sees him, until she passes right across the sun's disc and receives his rays upon her hinder part; and then the fact of her being in herself totally devoid of light and splendour causes the side turned to us to be invisible while the further hemisphere is all in light; and this is called the completion¹⁷⁶² of her waning. But when again, in her own revolution, she has passed the sun and she is transverse to his rays, the side which was dark just before begins to shine a little, for the rays move from the illumined part to that so lately invisible. You see what the eye does teach; and yet it would never of itself have afforded this insight, without something that looks through the eyes and uses the data of the senses as mere guides to penetrate from the apparent to the unseen. It is needless to add the methods of geometry that lead us step by step through visible delineations to truths that lie out of sight, and countless other instances which all prove that apprehension is the work of an intellectual essence deeply seated in our nature, acting through the operation of our bodily senses.

But what, I asked, if, insisting on the great differences which, in spite of a certain quality of matter shared alike by all elements in their visible form, exist between each particular kind of matter (motion, for instance, is not the same in all, some moving up, some down; nor form, nor quality either), some one were to say that there was in the same manner incorporated in, and belonging to, these elements a certain force¹⁷⁶³ as well which effects these intellectual insights and operations by

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¹⁷⁶² ὅπερ δὴ παντελῆς τοῦ στοιχείου μείωσις λέγεται, “perfecta elementi diminutio;” ὅπερ referring to the dark “new” moon just described, which certainly is the consummation of the waning of the moon: though it is not itself a μείωσις.—This last consideration, and the use of δὴ, and the introduction of τοῦ στοιχείου, favour another meaning which might be given, *i.e.* by joining παντελῆς with τοῦ στοιχείου, and making ὅπερ refer to the whole passage of the moon from full to new, “which indeed is commonly (but erroneously) spoken of as a *substantial* diminution of the elementary body *itself*,” as if it were a true and real decrease of bulk.

¹⁷⁶³ εἴ τινα τούτων κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον συνουσιωμένην τις εἶναι λέγοι δύναμιν, κ.τ.λ. The difficulty here is in τούτων, which Krabinger takes as a partitive genitive after εἶναι, and refers to the “elements”; and this is perhaps the best way of taking it. But still, as Schmidt points out, it is rather the human body than the elements themselves that ought here to be spoken of as the efficient cause of thought: and so he would either refer τούτων to τὸν αὐτὸν (“in the same way as these instances just given”),

a purely natural effort of their own (such effects, for instance, as we often see produced by the mechanists, in whose hands matter, combined according to the rules of Art, thereby imitates Nature, exhibiting resemblance not in figure alone but even in motion, so that when the piece of mechanism sounds in its resonant part it mimics a human voice, without, however, our being able to perceive anywhere any mental force working out the particular figure, character, sound, and movement); suppose, I say, we were to affirm that all this was produced as well in the organic machine of our natural bodies, without any intermixture of a special thinking substance, but owing simply to an inherent motive power of the elements within us accomplishing¹⁷⁶⁴ by itself these operations—to nothing else, in fact, but an impulsive movement working for the cognition of the object before us; would not then the fact stand proved of the absolute nonexistence¹⁷⁶⁵ of that intellectual and impalpable Being, the soul, which you talk of?

Your instance, she replied, and your reasoning upon it, though belonging to the counter-argument, may both of them be made allies of our statement, and will contribute not a little to the confirmation of its truth.

Why, how can you say that?

Because, you see, so to understand, manipulate, and dispose the soulless matter, that the art which is stored away in such mechanisms becomes almost like a soul to this material, in all the various ways in which it mocks movement, and figure, and voice, and so on, may be turned into a proof of there being something in man whereby he shows an innate fitness to think out within himself, through the contemplative and inventive faculties, such thoughts, and having prepared such mechanisms in theory, to put them into practice by manual skill, and exhibit in matter the product of his mind. First, for instance, he saw, by dint of thinking, that to produce any sound there is need of some wind; and then, with a view to produce wind in the mechanism, he previously ascertained by a course of reasoning and close observation of the nature of elements, that there is no vacuum at all in the world, but that the lighter is to be considered a vacuum only by comparison with the heavier; seeing that the air itself, taken as a separate subsistence, is crowded quite full. It is by an abuse of language that a jar is said to be “empty”; for when it is empty of any liquid it is none the less, even in this state, full, in the eyes of the experienced. A proof of this is that a jar when put into a pool of water is not immediately filled, but at first floats on the surface, because the air it contains helps to buoy up its rounded sides; till at last the hand of the drawer of the water forces it down to the bottom, and, when there, it takes in water by its neck; during which process it is shown not to have been empty even before the water came; for there is the spectacle of a sort

and compares Eurip. *Helen.*, ὄνομα δὲ ταῦτόν τῆς ἐμῆς ἔχουσα τις δάμαρτος ἄλλη (Matt. Gr. p. 706); or else would join τούτων with the preceding διάφορος (with Codd. Mon. D, E).

¹⁷⁶⁴ Cod. Mon. D, ἀποτελούσης. This seems a better reading than that preferred by Krabinger, ἀποτέλεσμα εἶναι: for ἀποτέλεσμα must be pressed to mean, in order to preserve the sense, “mere result,” *i.e.* something secondary, and not itself a principle or cause: the following ἢ, besides, cannot without awkwardness be referred to ἐνέργειαν

¹⁷⁶⁵ Reading οὐσίαν οὐκ ἂν ἀποδεικνύοιτο ἢ τὸ μηδ' ὅλως εἶναι;

of combat going on in the neck between the two elements, the water being forced by its weight into the interior, and therefore streaming in; the imprisoned air on the other hand being straitened for room by the gush of the water along the neck, and so rushing in the contrary direction; thus the water is checked by the strong current of air, and gurgles and bubbles against it. Men observed this, and devised in accordance with this property of the two elements a way of introducing air to work their mechanism¹⁷⁶⁶. They made a kind of cavity of some hard stuff, and prevented the air in it from escaping in any direction; and then introduced water into this cavity through its mouth, apportioning the quantity of water according to requirement; next they allowed an exit in the opposite direction to the air, so that it passed into a pipe placed ready to hand, and in so doing, being violently constrained by the water, became a blast; and this, playing on the structure of the pipe, produced a note. Is it not clearly proved by such visible results that there is a mind of some kind in man, something other than that which is visible, which, by virtue of an invisible thinking nature of its own, first prepares by inward invention such devices, and then, when they have been so matured, brings them to the light and exhibits them in the subservient matter? For if it were possible to ascribe such wonders, as the theory of our opponents does, to the actual constitution of the elements, we should have these mechanisms building themselves spontaneously; the bronze would not wait for the artist, to be made into the likeness of a man, but would become such by an innate force; the air would not require the pipe, to make a note, but would sound spontaneously by its own fortuitous flux and motion; and the jet of the water upwards would not be, as it now is, the result of an artificial pressure forcing it to move in an unnatural direction, but the water would rise into the mechanism of its own accord, finding in that direction a natural channel. But if none of these results are produced spontaneously by elemental force, but, on the contrary, each element is employed at will by artifice; and if artifice is a kind of movement and activity of mind, will not the very consequences of what has been urged by way of objection show us Mind as something other than the thing perceived?

That the thing perceived, I replied, is not the same as the thing not perceived, I grant; but I do not discover any answer to our question in such a statement; it is not yet clear to me what we are to think that thing not-perceived to be; all I have been shown by your argument is that it is not anything material; and I do not yet know the fitting name for it. I wanted especially to know what it is, not what it is not.

We do learn, she replied, much about many things by this very same method, inasmuch as, in the very act of saying a thing is “not so and so,” we by implication interpret the very nature of the thing in question¹⁷⁶⁷. For instance, when we say a “guileless,” we indicate a good man; when we say “unmanly,” we have expressed that a man is a coward; and it is possible to suggest a great many

¹⁷⁶⁶ According to an author quoted by Athenæus (iv. 75), the first organist (ὄδραύλης), or rather organ-builder, was Ctesibius of Alexandria, about B.C. 200.

¹⁷⁶⁷ Remove comma after ζητούμενου, in Paris Editit.

things in like fashion, wherein we either convey the idea of goodness by the negation of badness¹⁷⁶⁸, or *vice versâ*. Well, then, if one thinks so with regard to the matter now before us, one will not fail to gain a proper conception of it. The question is,—What are we to think of Mind in its very essence? Now granted that the inquirer has had his doubts set at rest as to the existence of the thing in question, owing to the activities which it displays to us, and only wants to know what it is, he will have adequately discovered it by being told that it is not that which our senses perceive, neither a colour, nor a form, nor a hardness, nor a weight, nor a quantity, nor a cubic dimension, nor a point, nor anything else perceptible in matter; supposing, that is,¹⁷⁶⁹ that there does exist a something beyond all these.

Here I interrupted her discourse: If you leave all these out of the account I do not see how you can possibly avoid cancelling along with them the very thing which you are in search of. I cannot at present conceive to what, as apart from these, the perceptive activity is to cling. For on all occasions in investigating with the scrutinizing intellect the contents of the world, we must, so far as we put our hand¹⁷⁷⁰ at all on what we are seeking, inevitably touch, as blind men feeling along the walls for the door, some one of those things aforesaid; we must come on colour, or form, or quantity, or something else on your list; and when it comes to saying that the thing is none of them, our feebleness of mind induces us to suppose that it does not exist at all.

Shame on such absurdity! said she, indignantly interrupting. A fine conclusion this narrow-minded, grovelling view of the world brings us to! If all that is not cognizable by sense is to be wiped out of existence, the all-embracing Power that presides over things is admitted by this same assertion not to be; once a man has been told about the non-material and invisible nature of the Deity, he must perforce with such a premise reckon it as absolutely non-existent. If, on the other hand, the absence of such characteristics in His case does not constitute any limitation of His existence, how can the Mind of man be squeezed out of existence along with this withdrawal one by one of each property of matter?

Well, then, I retorted, we only exchange one paradox for another by arguing in this way; for our reason will be reduced to the conclusion that the Deity and the Mind of man are identical, if it be true that neither can be thought of, except by the withdrawal of all the data of sense.

¹⁷⁶⁸ *or vice versâ*, i.e. the idea of badness by the negation of goodness. Krabinger appositely quotes a passage from Plotinus: “Who could picture to himself evil as a specific thing, appearing as it does only in the absence of each good?...it will be necessary for all who are to know what evil is to have a clear conception about good: since even in dealing with real species the better take precedence of the worse; and evil is not even a species, but rather a negation.” Cf. Origen, *In Johan.* p. 66 A, *πᾶσα ἡ κακία οὐδὲν ἔστιν, ἐπεὶ καὶ οὐκ ὄν τυγχάνει*. See also Gregory’s *Great Catechism*, cap. v. and vii.

¹⁷⁶⁹ *supposing, that is*. This only repeats what was said above: “granted that the inquirer has had his doubts set at rest as to the existence of the thing.” It is the reading of Krabinger (εἰ δὲ τί), and the best. Sifanus follows the less supported reading οἶδεν ὅτι, which is open to the further objection that it would be absurd to say, “when a man learns that A is not B he knows that it is something else.” The reading of the Paris. Editt. ἴδῃ is unintelligible.

¹⁷⁷⁰ (καθ’) ὅσον τε...θιγγάνομεν



Say not so, she replied; to talk so also is blasphemous. Rather, as the Scripture tells you, say that the one is *like* the other. For that which is “made in the image” of the Deity necessarily possesses a likeness to its prototype in every respect; it resembles it in being intellectual, immaterial, unconnected with any notion of weight¹⁷⁷¹, and in eluding any measurement of its dimensions¹⁷⁷²; yet as regards its own peculiar nature it is something different from that other. Indeed, it would be no longer an “image,” if it were altogether identical with that other; but¹⁷⁷³ where we have *A* in that uncreate prototype we have *a* in the image; just as in a minute particle of glass, when it happens to face the light, the complete disc of the sun is often to be seen, not represented thereon in proportion to its proper size, but so far as the minuteness of the particle admits of its being represented at all. Thus do the reflections of those ineffable qualities of Deity shine forth within the narrow limits of our nature; and so our reason, following the leading of these reflections, will not miss grasping the Mind in its essence by clearing away from the question all corporeal qualities; nor on the other hand will it bring the pure¹⁷⁷⁴ and infinite Existence to the level of that which is perishable and little; it will regard this essence of the Mind as an object of thought only, since it is the “image” of an Existence which is such; but it will not pronounce this image to be identical with the prototype. Just, then, as we have no doubts, owing to the display of a Divine mysterious wisdom in the universe, about a Divine Being and a Divine Power existing in it all which secures its continuance (though if you required a definition of that Being you would therein find the Deity completely sundered from every object in creation, whether of sense or thought, while in these last, too, natural distinctions are admitted), so, too, there is nothing strange in the soul’s separate existence as a substance (whatever we may think that substance to be) being no hindrance to her actual existence, in spite of the elemental atoms of the world not harmonizing with her in the definition of her being. In the case of our living bodies, composed as they are from the blending of these atoms, there is no sort of communion, as has been just said, on the score of substance, between the simplicity and invisibility of the soul, and the grossness of those bodies; but, notwithstanding that, there is not a doubt that there is in them the soul’s vivifying influence exerted by a law which it is beyond the human

¹⁷⁷¹ *weight*(ὄγκου). This is a Platonic word: it means the weight, and then (morally) the burden, of the body: *not* necessarily connected with the idea of swelling, even in Empedocles, v. 220; its Latin equivalent is “onus” in both meanings. Cf. Heb. xii. 1; ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα, “every weight,” or “all cumbrance.”

¹⁷⁷² Reading διαστηματικὴν. Cf. 239 A.

¹⁷⁷³ ἀλλ’ ἐν οἷς...ἐκέϊνο...τοῦτο.

¹⁷⁷⁴ *pure*(ἀκηράτω). *perishable*(ἐπίκηρον). The first word is a favourite one with the Platonists; such as Plotinus, and Synesius. Gregory uses it in his funeral speech over Flacilla, “she passes with a soul unstained to the pure and perfect life”; and both in his treatise *De Mortuis*, “that man’s grief is real, who becomes conscious of the blessings he has lost; and contrasts this perishing and soiled existence with the perfect blessedness above.”

understanding to comprehend¹⁷⁷⁵. Not even then, when those atoms have again been dissolved¹⁷⁷⁶ into themselves, has that bond of a vivifying influence vanished; but as, while the framework of the body still holds together, each individual part is possessed of a soul which penetrates equally every component member, and one could not call that soul hard and resistant though blended with the solid, nor humid, or cold, or the reverse, though it transmits life to all and each of such parts, so, when that framework is dissolved, and has returned to its kindred elements, there is nothing against probability that that simple and incomposite essence which has once for all by some inexplicable law grown with the growth of the bodily framework should continually remain beside the atoms with which it has been blended, and should in no way be sundered from a union once formed. For it does not follow that because the composite is dissolved the incomposite must be dissolved with it¹⁷⁷⁷.

That those atoms, I rejoined, should unite and again be separated, and that this constitutes the formation and dissolution of the body, no one would deny. But we have to consider this. There are great intervals between these atoms; they differ from each other, both in position, and also in qualitative distinctions and peculiarities. When, indeed, these atoms have all converged upon the given subject, it is reasonable that that intelligent and undimensional essence which we call the soul should cohere with that which is so united; but once these atoms are separated from each other, and have gone whither their nature impels them, what is to become of the soul when her vessel¹⁷⁷⁸ is thus scattered in many directions? As a sailor, when his ship has been wrecked and gone to pieces,

¹⁷⁷⁵ λόγῳ τινὶ κρείττονι τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης κατανόησεως. So just below ἀρρήτῳ τινὶ λόγῳ. The *mode* of the union of soul and body is beyond our comprehension. To refer these words to the Deity Himself (“incomprehensible cause”), as Oehler, would make of them, as Schmidt well remarks, a “mere showy phrase.”

¹⁷⁷⁶ ἀναλυθέντων. Krabinger reads ἀναλυσάντων, *i.e.* “returning”; as frequently in this treatise, and in N.T. usage.

¹⁷⁷⁷ *i.e.* as we have already seen (p. 433). The fact of the continuity of the soul was there deduced from its being incomposite. So that the γὰρ here does not give the ground for the statement immediately preceding.

Gregory (p. 431) had suggested two alternatives:—1. That the soul dissolves with the body. This is answered by the soul’s “incompositeness.” 2. That the union of the immaterial soul with the still material atoms after death cannot be maintained. This is answered by the analogy given in the present section, of God’s presence in an uncongenial universe, and that of the soul in the still living body. The γὰρ therefore refers to the answer to 1, without which the question of the soul continuing in the atoms could not have been discussed at all.

¹⁷⁷⁸ *her vessel*. Of course this is not the “vehicle” of the soul (after death) which the later Platonists speak of, but the body itself. The word ὄχημα is used in connection with a ship, Soph. *Trach.* 656; and though in Plato (*Timæus*, p. 69), whose use of this word for the body was afterwards followed, it is not clear whether a car or a ship is most thought of, yet that the latter is Gregory’s meaning appears from his next words.



cannot float upon all the pieces at once¹⁷⁷⁹ which have been scattered this way and that over the surface of the sea (for he seizes any bit that comes to hand, and lets all the rest drift away), in the same way the soul, being by nature incapable of dissolution along with the atoms, will, if she finds it hard to be parted from the body altogether, cling to some one of them; and if we take this view, consistency will no more allow us to regard her as immortal for living in one atom than as mortal for not living in a number of them.

But the intelligent and undimensional, she replied, is neither contracted nor diffused¹⁷⁸⁰ (contraction and diffusion being a property of body only); but by virtue of a nature which is formless and bodiless it is present with the body equally in the contraction and in the diffusion of its atoms, and is no more narrowed by the compression which attends the uniting of the atoms than it is abandoned by them when they wander off to their kindred, however wide the interval is held to be which we observe between alien atoms. For instance, there is a great difference between the buoyant and light as contrasted with the heavy and solid; between the hot as contrasted with the cold; between the humid as contrasted with its opposite; nevertheless it is no strain to an intelligent essence to be present in each of those elements to which it has once cohered; this blending with opposites does not split it up. In locality, in peculiar qualities, these elemental atoms are held to be far removed from each other; but an undimensional nature finds it no labour to cling to what is locally divided, seeing that even now it is possible for the mind at once to contemplate the heavens above us and to extend its busy scrutiny beyond the horizon, nor is its contemplative power at all distracted by these excursions into distances so great. There is nothing, then, to hinder the soul's presence in the body's atoms, whether fused in union or decomposed in dissolution. Just as in the amalgam of gold and silver a certain methodical force is to be observed which has fused the metals, and if the one be afterwards smelted out of the other, the law of this method nevertheless continues to reside in each, so that while the amalgam is separated this method does not suffer division along with it (for you cannot make fractions out of the indivisible), in the same way this intelligent essence of the soul is observable in the concourse of the atoms, and does not undergo division when they are dissolved; but it remains with them, and even in their separation it is co-extensive with them, yet not itself dissevered nor discounted¹⁷⁸¹ into sections to accord with the number of the atoms. Such a condition belongs to the material and spacial world, but that which is intelligent and undimensional is not liable to the circumstances of space. Therefore the soul exists in the actual atoms which she has once animated, and there is no force to tear her away from her cohesion with them. What cause for melancholy, then, is there herein, that the visible is exchanged for the invisible; and wherefore is it that your mind has conceived such a hatred of death?

¹⁷⁷⁹ *at once*. Reading (with Codd. A, B, C, and Uff.) κατὰ ταῦτόν.

¹⁷⁸⁰ οὔτε διαχεῖται. Oehler translates wrongly “noch dehnt es sich aus”; because the faculty of *extension* is ascribed to the intelligence (cf. ἐκτείνεσθαι, διατεινόμενον, παρεκτεινομένη, below), but *diffusion* is denied of it, both here, and in the words διασχίζεται (above and below), διάκρισις, and διασπᾶται, *i.e.* separation in space.

¹⁷⁸¹ κατακερματίζεται

Upon this I recurred to the definition which she had previously given of the soul, and I said that to my thinking her definition had not indicated¹⁷⁸² distinctly enough all the powers of the soul which are a matter of observation. It declares the soul to be an intellectual essence which imparts to the organic body a force of life by which the senses operate. Now the soul is not thus operative only in our scientific and speculative intellect; it does not produce results in that world only, or employ the organs of sense only for this their natural work. On the contrary, we observe in our nature many emotions of desire and many of anger; and both these exist in us as qualities of our kind, and we see both of them in their manifestations displaying further many most subtle differences. There are many states, for instance, which are occasioned by desire; many others which on the other hand proceed from anger; and none of them are of the body; but that which is not of the body is plainly intellectual. Now¹⁷⁸³ our definition exhibits the soul as something intellectual; so that one of two alternatives, both absurd, must emerge when we follow out this view to this end; either anger and desire are both second souls in us, and a plurality of souls must take the place of the single soul, or the thinking faculty in us cannot be regarded as a soul either (if *they* are not), the intellectual element adhering equally to all of them and stamping them all as souls, or else excluding every one of them equally from the specific qualities of soul.

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You are quite justified, she replied, in raising this question, and it has ere this been discussed by many elsewhere; namely, what we are to think of the principle of desire and the principle of anger within us. Are they consubstantial with the soul, inherent in the soul's very self from her first

¹⁷⁸² ἐνδεδειχθαι. Gregory constantly uses ἐνδείκνυσθαι (middle) transitively, e.g. 202 C, 203 A, C, 208 B, and above, 189 A, so that it is possible that we have here, in the passive form, a deponent (transitive) perfect; moreover the sense seems to require it. Gregory objects that in what has been said *all* the powers which analysis finds in the soul have not been set forth with sufficient fulness: an *exhaustive* account of them has not been given; and he immediately proceeds to name other δυνάμεις and ἐνέργειαι which have not been taken into consideration. That this view of the passage is correct is further shown by 202 C, where, the present objection having been treated at length, it is concluded that there is no real ground for quarrelling with the definition of soul ὡς ἐλλειπῶς ἐνδειξαμένῳ τὴν φύσιν. Krabinger therefore is right in dropping ἐννοουμένῳ, which two of his MSS. exhibit, and which Sifanus translates as governing τὰς...δυνάμεις, as if the sense were, "When I consider all the powers of the soul, I do not think that your definition has been made good."

¹⁷⁸³ The syllogism implied in the following words is this:—
The emotions are something intellectual (because incorporeal).
Therefore the emotions are soul (or souls).

This conclusion is obviously false; logically, by reason of the fallacy of "the undistributed middle"; ontologically, because it requires a false premise additional (*i.e.* "everything intellectual is soul") to make it true. Macrina directly after this piece of bad logic deprecates the use of the syllogism. Is this accidental? It looks almost like an excuse for not going into technicalities and exposing this fallacy, which she has detected in her opponent's statement. Macrina actually answers as if Gregory had urged his objection thus. "The emotions are not purely intellectual, but are conditioned by the bodily organism: but they do belong to the expression and the substance of the soul: the soul therefore is dependent on the organism and will perish along with it."

organization¹⁷⁸⁴, or are they something different, accruing to us afterwards? In fact, while all equally allow that these principles are to be detected in the soul, investigation has not yet discovered exactly what we are to think of them so as to gain some fixed belief with regard to them. The generality of men still fluctuate in their opinions about this, which are as erroneous as they are numerous. As for ourselves, if the Gentile philosophy, which deals methodically with all these points, were really adequate for a demonstration, it would certainly be superfluous to add¹⁷⁸⁵ a discussion on the soul to those speculations. But while the latter proceeded, on the subject of the soul, as far in the direction of supposed consequences as the thinker pleased, we are not entitled to such licence, I mean that of affirming what we please; we make the Holy Scriptures the rule and the measure of every tenet; we necessarily fix our eyes upon that, and approve that alone which may be made to harmonize with the intention of those writings. We must therefore neglect the Platonic chariot and the pair of horses of dissimilar forces yoked to it, and their driver, whereby the philosopher allegorizes these facts about the soul; we must neglect also all that is said by the philosopher who succeeded him and who followed out probabilities by rules of art¹⁷⁸⁶, and diligently investigated the very question now before us, declaring that the soul was mortal¹⁷⁸⁷ by reason of these two principles; we must neglect all before and since their time, whether they philosophized in prose or in verse, and we will adopt, as the guide of our reasoning, the Scripture, which lays it down as an axiom that there is no excellence in the soul which is not a property as well of the Divine nature. For he who declares the

¹⁷⁸⁴ παρὰ τὴν πρώτην (*i.e.* ὄραν understood). This is the reading of all the Codd. for the faulty παρὰ τὴν αὐτὴν of the Editions.

¹⁷⁸⁵ προσιθέναι. Sifanus translates “illorum commentationi de animâ adjicere sermonem,” which Krabinger wonders at. The Greek could certainly bear this meaning: but perhaps the other reading is better, *i.e.* προσιθέναι, “to propose for consideration.”

¹⁷⁸⁶ *i.e.* the syllogism.

¹⁷⁸⁷ *that the soul was mortal.* Aristotle, guided only by probabilities as discoverable by the syllogism, does indeed define the soul, “*the first entelechy of a physical, potentially living, and organic body.*” Entelechy is more than mere potentiality: it is “developed force” (“dormant activity;” see W. Archer Butler’s *Lectures*, ii. p. 393), capable of manifestation. The human soul, uniting in itself all the faculties of the other orders of animate existence, is a Microcosm. The other parts of the soul are inseparable from the body, and are hence perishable (*De Animâ*, ii. 2); but the νοῦς exists before the body, into which it enters from without as something divine and immortal (*De Gen. Animal.* ii. 3). But he makes a distinction between the form-receiving, and the form-giving νοῦς; substantial eternal existence belongs only to the latter (*De Animâ*, iii. 5). The secret of the difference between him and Plato, with whom “all the soul is immortal” (*Phædrus*, p. 245 C), lies in this; that Plato regarded the soul as always in motion, while Aristotle denied it, in itself, any motion at all. “It is one of the things that are impossible that motion should exist in it” (*De Animâ*, i. 4). It cannot be moved at all; therefore it cannot move itself. Plotinus and Porphyry, as well as Nemesius the Platonizing Bishop of Emesa (whose treatise *De Animâ* is wrongly attributed to Gregory), attacked this teaching of an “entelechy.” Cf. also Justin Martyr (*ad Græc. cohort.* c. 6, p. 12); “Plato declares that all the soul is immortal; Aristotle calls her an ‘entelechy,’ and not immortal. The one says she is ever-moving, the other that she is never-moving, but prior to all motion.” Also Gregory Naz., *Orat.* xxvii. “Away with Aristotle’s calculating Providence, and his art of logic, and his dead reasonings about the soul, and purely human doctrine!”

soul to be God's likeness asserts that anything foreign to Him is outside the limits of the soul; similarity cannot be retained in those qualities which are diverse from the original. Since, then, nothing of the kind we are considering is included in the conception of the Divine nature, one would be reasonable in surmising that such things are not consubstantial with the soul either. Now to seek to build up our doctrine by rule of dialectic and the science which draws and destroys conclusions, involves a species of discussion which we shall ask to be excused from, as being a weak and questionable way of demonstrating truth. Indeed, it is clear to every one that that subtle dialectic possesses a force that may be turned both ways, as well for the overthrow of truth¹⁷⁸⁸ as for the detection of falsehood; and so we begin to suspect even truth itself when it is advanced in company with such a kind of artifice, and to think that the very ingenuity of it is trying to bias our judgment and to upset the truth. If on the other hand any one will accept a discussion which is in a naked unsyllogistic form, we will speak upon these points by making our study of them so far as we can follow the chain¹⁷⁸⁹ of Scriptural tradition. What is it, then, that we assert? We say that the fact of the reasoning animal man being capable of understanding and knowing is most surely¹⁷⁹⁰ attested by those outside our faith; and that this definition would never have sketched our nature so, if it had viewed anger and desire and all such-like emotions as consubstantial with that nature. In any other case, one would not give a definition of the subject in hand by putting a generic instead of a specific quality; and so, as the principle of desire and the principle of anger are observed equally in rational and irrational natures, one could not rightly mark the specific quality by means of this generic one. But how can that which, in defining a nature, is superfluous and worthy of exclusion be treated as a part of that nature, and, so, available for falsifying the definition? Every definition of an essence looks to the specific quality of the subject in hand; and whatever is outside that speciality is set aside as having nothing to do with the required definition. Yet, beyond question, these faculties of anger and desire are allowed to be common to all reasoning and brute natures; anything common is not identical with that which is peculiar; it is imperative therefore that we should not range these faculties amongst those whereby humanity is exclusively meant: but just as one may perceive the principle¹⁷⁹¹ of sensation, and that of nutrition and growth in man, and yet not shake thereby the given definition of his soul (for the quality A being in the soul does not prevent the quality B being in it too), so, when one detects in humanity these emotions of anger and desire, one cannot on that account fairly quarrel with this definition, as if it fell short of a full indication of man's nature.



¹⁷⁸⁸ *for the overthrow of the truth.* So c. Eunom. iii. (ii. 500).

¹⁷⁸⁹ εἰμὸν.

¹⁷⁹⁰ *most surely*, ᾧ. This is the common reading: but the Codd. have mostly καὶ.

¹⁷⁹¹ Aristotle, *Ethic.* i. 13, dwells upon these principles. Of the last he says, *i.e.* the common vegetative, the principle of nutrition and growth: "One would assume such a power of the soul in everything that grows, even in the embryo, and just this very same power in the perfect creatures; for this is more likely than that it should be a different one." Sleep, in which this power almost alone is active, levels all.

What then, I asked the Teacher, are we to think about this? For I cannot yet see how we can fitly repudiate faculties which are actually within us.

You see, she replied, there is a battle of the reason with them and a struggle to rid the soul of them; and there are men in whom this struggle has ended in success; it was so with Moses, as we know; he was superior both to anger and to desire; the history testifying of him in both respects, that he was meek beyond all men (and by meekness it indicates the absence of all anger and a mind quite devoid of resentment), and that he desired none of those things about which we see the desiring faculty in the generality so active. This could not have been so, if these faculties were nature, and were referable to the contents of man's essence¹⁷⁹². For it is impossible for one who has come quite outside of his nature to be in Existence at all. But if Moses was at one and the same time in Existence and not in these conditions, then¹⁷⁹³ it follows that these conditions are something other than nature and not nature itself. For if, on the one hand, that is truly nature in which the essence of the being is found, and, on the other, the removal of these conditions is in our power, so that their removal not only does no harm, but is even beneficial to the nature, it is clear that these conditions are to be numbered amongst externals, and are affections, rather than the essence, of the nature; for the essence is that thing only which it is. As for anger, most think it a fermenting of the blood round the heart; others an eagerness to inflict pain in return for a previous pain; we would take it to be the impulse to hurt one who has provoked us. But none of these accounts of it tally with the definition of the soul. Again, if we were to define what desire is in itself, we should call it a seeking for that which is wanting, or a longing for pleasurable enjoyment, or a pain at not possessing that upon which the heart is set, or a state with regard to some pleasure which there is no opportunity of enjoying. These and such-like descriptions all indicate desire, but they have no connection with the definition of the soul. But it is so with regard to all those other conditions also which we see to have some relation to the soul, those, I mean, which are mutually opposed to each other, such as cowardice and courage, pleasure and pain, fear and contempt, and so on; each of them seems akin to the principle of desire or to that of anger, while they have a separate definition to mark their own peculiar nature. Courage and contempt, for instance, exhibit a certain phase of the irascible impulse; the dispositions arising from cowardice and fear exhibit on the other hand a diminution and weakening of that same impulse. Pain, again, draws its material both from anger and desire. For the impotence of anger, which consists in not being able to punish one who has first given pain, becomes itself pain; and the despair of getting objects of desire and the absence of things upon which the heart is set create in the mind this same sullen state. Moreover, the opposite to pain, I mean the sensation of pleasure¹⁷⁹⁴, like pain, divides itself between anger and desire; for pleasure

¹⁷⁹² οὐσία.

¹⁷⁹³ It is best to keep ἄρα: ἄρα is Krabinger's correction from four Codd.: and he reads ὁ for εἰ above: but only one class of Codd. support these alterations.

¹⁷⁹⁴ *I mean the sensation of pleasure.* This (νόημα) is Krabinger's reading: but Oehler reads from his Codd. νόσημα: and H. Schmidt suggests κίνημα, comparing (205 A) below, "any other such-like emotion of the soul."

is the leading motive of them both. All these conditions, I say, have some relation to the soul, and yet they are not the soul¹⁷⁹⁵, but only like warts growing out of the soul's thinking part, which are reckoned as parts of it because they adhere to it, and yet are not that actual thing which the soul is in its essence.

And yet, I rejoined to the virgin, we see no slight help afforded for improvement to the virtuous from all these conditions. Daniel's desire was his glory; and Phineas' anger pleased the Deity. We have been told, too, that fear is the beginning of wisdom, and learnt from Paul that salvation is the goal of the "sorrow after a godly sort." The Gospel bids us have a contempt for danger; and the "not being afraid with any amazement" is nothing else but a describing of courage, and this last is numbered by Wisdom amongst the things that are good. In all this Scripture shows that such conditions are not to be considered weaknesses; weaknesses would not have been so employed for putting virtue into practice.

I think, replied the Teacher, that I am myself responsible for this confusion arising from different accounts of the matter; for I did not state it as distinctly as I might have, by introducing a certain order of consequences for our consideration. Now, however, some such order shall, as far as it is possible, be devised, so that our essay may advance in the way of logical sequence and so give no room for such contradictions. We declare, then, that the speculative, critical, and world-surveying faculty of the soul is its peculiar property by virtue of its very nature¹⁷⁹⁶, and that thereby the soul preserves within itself the image of the divine grace; since our reason surmises that divinity itself, whatever it may be in its inmost nature, is manifested in these very things,—universal supervision and the critical discernment between good and evil. But all those elements of the soul which lie on the border-land¹⁷⁹⁷ and are capable from their peculiar nature of inclining to either of two opposites (whose eventual determination to the good or to the bad depends on the kind of use they are put to), anger, for instance, and fear, and any other such-like emotion of the soul divested of which human nature¹⁷⁹⁸ cannot be studied—all these we reckon as accretions from without, because in the Beauty which is man's prototype no such characteristics are to be found. Now let the following

¹⁷⁹⁵ *have some relation to the soul, and yet they are not the soul.* Macrina does not mean that the Passions are altogether severed from the soul, as the following shows: and so Oehler cannot be right in reading and translating "Das Alles hat nichts mir der Seele zu schaffen." The Greek *περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν* is to be paralleled by *οἱ περὶ τὸν Περικλέα*, "Pericles' belongings," or "party"; passing, in later Greek, almost into "Pericles himself."

¹⁷⁹⁶ Reading *κατὰ φύσιν αὐτὴν, καὶ τῆς θεοειδοῦς χάριτος, κ. τ. λ.* with Sifanus.

¹⁷⁹⁷ *ὅσα δε τῆς ψυχῆς ἐν μεθορίᾳ 251· κεῖται.* Moller (*Gregorii Nysseni doctrina de hominis naturâ*) remarks rightly that Krabinger's translation is here incorrect: "quæcunque autem in animæ confinio posita sunt"; and that *τῆς ψυχῆς* should on the contrary be joined closely to *ὅσα*. The opposition is not between elements which lie in, and on the confines of the soul, but between the divine and adventitious elements *within* the soul: *μεθορίᾳ 251·* refers therefore to "good and bad," below.

¹⁷⁹⁸ This is no contradiction of the passage above about Moses: there it was stated that the Passions did not belong to the *essence* (*οὐσία*) of man.

statement¹⁷⁹⁹ be offered as a mere exercise (in interpretation). I pray that it may escape the sneers of cavilling hearers. Scripture informs us that the Deity proceeded by a sort of graduated and ordered advance to the creation of man. After the foundations of the universe were laid, as the history records, man did not appear on the earth at once; but the creation of the brutes preceded his, and the plants preceded them. Thereby Scripture shows that the vital forces blended with the world of matter according to a gradation; first, it infused itself into insensate nature; and in continuation of this advanced into the sentient world; and then ascended to intelligent and rational beings. Accordingly, while all existing things must be either corporeal or spiritual, the former are divided into the animate and inanimate. By animate, I mean possessed of life: and of the things possessed of life, some have it with sensation, the rest have no sensation. Again, of these sentient things, some have reason, the rest have not. Seeing, then, that this life of sensation could not possibly exist apart from the matter which is the subject of it, and the intellectual life could not be embodied, either, without growing in the sentient, on this account the creation of man is related as coming last, as of one who took up into himself every single form of life, both that of plants and that which is seen in brutes. His nourishment and growth he derives from vegetable life; for even in vegetables such processes are to be seen when aliment is being drawn in by their roots and given off in fruit and leaves. His sentient organization he derives from the brute creation. But his faculty of thought and reason is incommunicable¹⁸⁰⁰, and is a peculiar gift in our nature, to be considered by itself. However, just as this nature has the instinct acquisitive of the necessaries to material existence—an instinct which, when manifested in us men, we call Appetite—and as we admit this appertains to the vegetable form of life, since we can notice it there too like so many impulses working naturally to satisfy themselves with their kindred aliment and to issue in germination, so all the peculiar conditions of the brute creation are blended with the intellectual part of the soul. To them, she continued, belongs anger; to them belongs fear; to them all those other opposing activities within

¹⁷⁹⁹ ὅδε δὴ. The Teacher introduces this λόγος with some reserve. “We do not lay it down ex cathedrâ, we put it forward as open to challenge and discussion as we might do in the schools (ὡς ἐν γυμνασίᾳ & 251’).” It is best then to take διαφύγοι as a pure optative. Gregory appears in his answer to congratulate her on the success of this “exercise.” “To any one that reflects...your exposition...bears sufficiently upon it the stamp of correctness, and hits the truth.” But he immediately asks for Scripture authority. So that this λόγος, though it refers to Genesis, is not yet based upon Scripture. It is a “consecutive” and consistent account of human nature: but it is virtually identical with that advanced at the end of Book I. of Aristotle’s *Ethics*. It is a piece of secular theorizing. The sneers of cavillers may well be deprecated. Consistent, however, with this view of the λόγος here offered by Macrina, there is another possible meaning in ὡς ἐν γυμνασίᾳ & 251’, κ. τ. λ., *i.e.* “Let us put forward the following account with all possible care and circumspection, as if we were disputing in the schools; so that cavillers may have nothing to find fault with”: ὡς ἄν expressing purpose, not a wish. The cavillers will thus refer to sticklers for Greek method and metaphysics: and Gregory’s congratulation of his sister’s lucidity and grasp of the truth will be all the more significant.

¹⁸⁰⁰ Following the order and stopping of Krabinger, ἄμικτόν ἐστι καὶ ἰδιάζον ἐπὶ ταύτης τῆς φύσεως, ἐφ’ ἑαυτοῦ, κ. τ. λ.



us; everything except the faculty of reason and thought. That alone, the choice product, as has been said, of all our life, bears the stamp of the Divine character. But since, according to the view which we have just enunciated, it is not possible for this reasoning faculty to exist in the life of the body without existing by means of sensations, and since sensation is already found subsisting in the brute creation, necessarily as it were, by reason of this one condition, our soul has touch with the other things which are knit up with it¹⁸⁰¹; and these are all those phænomena within us that we call “passions”; which have not been allotted to human nature for any bad purpose at all (for the Creator would most certainly be the author of evil, if in *them*, so deeply rooted as they are in our nature, any necessities of wrong-doing were found), but according to the use which our free will puts them to, these emotions of the soul become the instruments of virtue or of vice. They are like the iron which is being fashioned according to the volition of the artificer, and receives whatever shape the idea which is in his mind prescribes, and becomes a sword or some agricultural implement. Supposing, then, that our reason, which is our nature’s choicest part, holds the dominion over these imported emotions (as Scripture allegorically declares in the command to men to rule over the brutes), none of them will be active in the ministry of evil; fear will only generate within us obedience¹⁸⁰², and anger fortitude, and cowardice caution; and the instinct of desire will procure for us the delight that is Divine and perfect. But if reason drops the reins and is dragged behind like a charioteer who has got entangled in his car, then these instincts are changed into fierceness, just as we see happens amongst the brutes. For since reason does not preside over the natural impulses that are implanted¹⁸⁰³ in them, the more irascible animals, under the generalship of their anger, mutually destroy each other; while the bulky and powerful animals get no good themselves from their strength, but become by their want of reason slaves of that which has reason. Neither are the activities of their desire for pleasure employed on any of the higher objects; nor does any other instinct to be observed in them result in any profit to themselves. Thus too, with ourselves, if these instincts are not turned by reasoning into the right direction, and if our feelings get the mastery of our mind, the man is changed from a reasoning into an unreasoning being, and from godlike intelligence sinks by the force of these passions to the level of the brute.

Much moved by these words, I said: To any one who reflects indeed, your exposition, advancing as it does in this consecutive manner, though plain and unvarnished, bears sufficiently upon it the stamp of correctness and hits the truth. And to those who are expert only in the technical methods

¹⁸⁰¹ Reading διὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ πρὸς τὰ συνημμένα τούτῳ (for τούτων), with Sifanus.

¹⁸⁰² Cf. *De Hom. Opif.* c. xviii. 5. “So, on the contrary, if reason instead assumes sway over such emotions, each of them is transmuted to a form of virtue: for anger produces courage; terror, caution; fear, obedience; hatred, aversion from vice; the power of love, the desire for what is truly beautiful, &c.” Just below, the allusion is to Plato’s charioteer, *Phaedrus*, p. 253 C, and the old custom of having the reins round the driver’s waist is to be noticed.

¹⁸⁰³ *are implanted*. All the Codd. have ἐγκειμένης here, instead of the ἐγκωμιαζομένης of the Paris Edition, which must be meant for ἐγκωμιαζομένης (itself a vox nihili), “run riot in them.”

of proof a mere demonstration suffices to convince; but as for ourselves, we were agreed¹⁸⁰⁴ that there is something more trustworthy than any of these artificial conclusions, namely, that which the teachings of Holy Scripture point to: and so I deem that it is necessary to inquire, in addition to what has been said, whether this inspired teaching harmonizes with it all.

And who, she replied, could deny that truth is to be found only in that upon which the seal of Scriptural testimony is set? So, if it is necessary that something from the Gospels should be adduced in support of our view, a study of the Parable of the Wheat and Tares will not be here out of place. The Householder there sowed good seed; (and we are plainly the “house”). But the “enemy,” having watched for the time when men slept, sowed that which was useless in that which was good for food, setting the tares in the very middle of the wheat. The two kinds of seed grew up together; for it was not possible that seed put into the very middle of the wheat should fail to grow up with it. But the Superintendent of the field forbids the servants to gather up the useless crop, on account of their growing at the very root of the contrary sort; so as not to root up¹⁸⁰⁵ the nutritious along with that foreign growth. Now we think that Scripture means by the good seed the corresponding impulses of the soul, each one of which, if only they are cultured for good, necessarily puts forth the fruit of virtue within us. But since there has been scattered¹⁸⁰⁶ amongst these the bad seed of the error of judgment as to the true Beauty which is alone in its intrinsic nature such, and since this last has been thrown into the shade by the growth of delusion which springs up along with it (for the active principle of desire does not germinate and increase in the direction of that natural Beauty which was the object of its being sown in us, but it has changed its growth so as to move towards a bestial and unthinking state, this very error as to Beauty carrying its impulse towards this result; and in the same way the seed of anger does not steel us to be brave, but only arms us to fight with our own people; and the power of loving deserts its intellectual objects and becomes completely mad for the immoderate enjoyment of pleasures of sense; and so in like manner our other affections put forth the worse instead of the better growths),—on account of this the wise Husbandman leaves this growth that has been introduced amongst his seed to remain there, so as to secure our not being altogether stripped of better hopes by desire having been rooted out along with that good-for-nothing growth. If our nature suffered such a mutilation, what will there be to lift us up to grasp the heavenly delights? If love is taken from us, how shall we be united to God? If anger is to be extinguished, what arms shall we possess against the adversary? Therefore the Husbandman leaves those bastard

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¹⁸⁰⁴ *we were agreed.* ὠμολογεῖτο: cf. 201 D, “If on the other hand any one will accept a discussion which is in a naked unsyllogistic form, we will speak upon these points by making our study of them as far as we can follow the chain of Scriptural tradition.”

¹⁸⁰⁵ There is a variety of readings from the Codd. here; συνεγκαταλείη, συνεκάλη, συνεκταλείη, συνεκταλαί& 219’, συγκαταλύ& 219’: in two (and on the margins of two others), συνεκτίλη, which Krabinger has adopted. The Paris Editt. have συνεκτίνει

¹⁸⁰⁶ παρενεσάρη, the idea of badness being contained in παρὰ, which in such cases is always the first compound. One Cod. has the curious inversion ἐνπαρεσάρη

seeds within us, not for them always to overwhelm the more precious crop, but in order that the land itself (for so, in his allegory, he calls the heart) by its native inherent power, which is that of reasoning, may wither up the one growth and may render the other fruitful and abundant: but if that is not done, then he commissions the fire to mark the distinction in the crops. If, then, a man indulges these affections in a due proportion and holds them in his own power instead of being held in theirs, employing them for an instrument as a king does his subjects' many hands, then efforts towards excellence more easily succeed for him. But should he become theirs, and, as when any slaves mutiny against their master, get enslaved¹⁸⁰⁷ by those slavish thoughts and ignominiously bow before them; a prey to his natural inferiors, he will be forced to turn to those employments which his imperious masters command. This being so, we shall not pronounce these emotions of the soul, which lie in the power of their possessors for good or ill, to be either virtue or vice. But, whenever their impulse is towards what is noble, then they become matter for praise, as his desire did to Daniel, and his anger to Phineas, and their grief to those who nobly mourn. But if they incline to baseness, then these are, and they are called, bad passions.

She ceased after this statement and allowed the discussion a short interval, in which I reviewed mentally all that had been said; and reverting to that former course of proof in her discourse, that it was not impossible that the soul after the body's dissolution should reside in its atoms, I again addressed her. Where is that much-talked-of and renowned Hades¹⁸⁰⁸, then? The word is in frequent circulation both in the intercourse of daily life, and in the writings of the heathens and in our own; and all think that into it, as into a place of safe-keeping, souls migrate from here. Surely you would not call your atoms that Hades.

Clearly, replied the Teacher, you have not quite attended to the argument. In speaking of the soul's migration from the seen to the unseen, I thought I had omitted nothing as regards the question about Hades. It seems to me that, whether in the heathen or in the Divine writings, this word for a place in which souls are said to be means nothing else but a transition to that Unseen world of which we have no glimpse.

And how, then, I asked, is it that some think that by the underworld¹⁸⁰⁹ is meant an actual place, and that it harbours within itself¹⁸¹⁰ the souls that have at last flitted away from human life, drawing them towards itself as the right receptacle for such natures?

¹⁸⁰⁷ ἑξανδραποδοισθείη; this is adopted by Krabinger from the Haselman Cod. for the common ἐξ ὧν δραποδοισθείη

¹⁸⁰⁸ ἄδου ὄνομα.

¹⁸⁰⁹ τὸν ὑποχθόνιον

¹⁸¹⁰ κάκεινον ἐν αὐτῷ, H. Schmidt's reading, on the authority of 3 Codd. The reading of Krabinger is ἐν ἑαυτῷ τε κάκεινον.

But the underworld is the *only* habitation in question.—οὕτω λέγεσθαι, above, must mean, "is rightly so named."

Well, replied the Teacher, our doctrine will be in no ways injured by such a supposition. For if it *is* true, what you say¹⁸¹¹, and also that the vault of heaven prolongs itself so uninterruptedly that it encircles all things with itself, and that the earth and its surroundings are poised in the middle, and that the motion of all the revolving bodies¹⁸¹² is round this fixed and solid centre, then, I say, there is an absolute necessity that, whatever may happen to each one of the atoms on the upper side of the earth, the same will happen on the opposite side, seeing that one single substance encompasses its entire bulk. As, when the sun shines *above* the earth, the shadow is spread over its lower part, because its spherical shape makes it impossible for it to be clasped all round at one and the same time by the rays, and necessarily, on whatever side the sun's rays may fall on some particular point of the globe, if we follow a straight diameter, we shall find shadow upon the opposite point, and so, continuously, at the opposite end of the direct line of the rays shadow moves round that globe, keeping pace with the sun, so that equally in their turn both the upper half and the under half of the earth are in light and darkness; so, by this analogy, we have reason to be certain that, whatever in our hemisphere is observed to befall the atoms, the same will befall them in that other. The environment of the atoms being one and the same on every side of the earth, I deem it right neither to contradict nor yet to favour those who raise the objection that we must regard either this or the lower region as assigned to the souls released. As long as this objection does not shake our central doctrine of the existence of those souls after the life in the flesh, there need be no controversy about the whereabouts to our mind, holding as we do that place is a property of body only, and that soul, being immaterial, is by no necessity of its nature detained in any place.

But what, I asked, if your opponent should shield himself¹⁸¹³ behind the Apostle, where he says that every reasoning creature, in the restitution of all things, is to look towards Him Who presides over the whole? In that passage in the Epistle to the Philippians¹⁸¹⁴ he makes mention of certain things that are “under the earth” “every knee shall bow” to Him “of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”

¹⁸¹¹ εἰ γὰρ ἀληθὴς ὁ λόγος ὁ κατὰ σέ, καὶ τὸ συνεχῆ τε πρὸς, κ. τ. λ., Krabinger's reading, following the majority of Codd.; ὁ κατὰ σέ being thus opposed to the next words, which others say. But Schmidt points out that the conclusion introduced below by ἀνάγκη πᾶσα does not follow at all from the first, but only from the second of these suppositions, and he would await the evidence of fresh Codd. Sifanus and Augentinus would read εἰ καὶ...κατὰ σέ. Τῷ γὰρ, κ. τ. λ., which would certainly express the sense required.

¹⁸¹² πάντων τῶν κυκλοφορουμένων, *i.e.* the heavenly bodies moving as one (according to the ancient astronomy) round the central earth.

¹⁸¹³ προβάλλοιτο. This is the proper meaning of the middle: “should object,” as Oehler translates (*einwerfen wollte*), would require the active.

¹⁸¹⁴ Philip. ii. 10.

We shall stand by our doctrine, answered the Teacher, even if we should hear them adducing these words. For the existence of the soul (after death) we have the assent of our opponent, and so we do not make an objection as to the place, as we have just said.

But if some were to ask the meaning of the Apostle in this utterance, what is one to say? Would you remove all signification of place from the passage?

I do not think, she replied, that the divine Apostle divided the intellectual world into localities, when he named part as in heaven, part as on earth, and part as under the earth. There are three states in which reasoning creatures can be: one from the very first received an immaterial life, and we call it the angelic: another is in union with the flesh, and we call it the human: a third is released by death from fleshly entanglements, and is to be found in souls pure and simple. Now I think that the divine Apostle in his deep wisdom looked to this, when he revealed the future concord of all these reasoning beings in the work of goodness; and that he puts the unembodied angel-world “in heaven,” and that still involved with a body “on earth,” and that released from a body “under the earth”; or, indeed, if there is any other world to be classed under that which is possessed of reason (it is not left out); and whether any one choose to call this last “demons” or “spirits,” or anything else of the kind, we shall not care. We certainly believe, both because of the prevailing opinion, and still more of Scripture teaching, that there exists another world of beings besides, divested of such bodies as ours are, who are opposed to that which is good and are capable of hurting the lives of men, having by an act of will lapsed from the nobler view¹⁸¹⁵, and by this revolt from goodness personified in themselves the contrary principle; and this world is what, some say, the Apostle adds to the number of the “things under the earth,” signifying in that passage that when evil shall have been some day annihilated in the long revolutions of the ages, nothing shall be left outside the world of goodness, but that even from those evil spirits¹⁸¹⁶ shall rise in harmony the confession of Christ’s Lordship. If this is so, then no one can compel us to see any spot of the underworld in the expression, “things under the earth”; the atmosphere spreads equally over every part of the earth, and there is not a single corner of it left unrobed by this circumambient air.

When she had finished, I hesitated a moment, and then said: I am not yet satisfied about the thing which we have been inquiring into; after all that has been said my mind is still in doubt; and

¹⁸¹⁵ *lapsed from the nobler view* (ὕπολήψεως). This is the common reading: but Krabinger prefers λήξεως, which is used by Gregory (*De Hom. Opif.* c. 17, “the sublime angelic lot”), and is a Platonic word. The other word, “lapsed,” is also Platonic.

¹⁸¹⁶ *from those evil spirits*. So *Great Catechism*, c. 26 (fin.). Here too Gregory follows Origen (*c. Cels.* vi. 44), who declares that the Powers of evil are for a purpose (in answer to Celsus’ objection that the Devil himself, instead of humanity, ought to have been punished). “Now it is a thing which can in no way cause surprise, that the Almighty, Who knows how to use wicked apostates for His own purposes, should assign to such a certain place in the universe, and should thus open an arena, as it were, of virtue, for those to contend in who wish to “strive lawfully” for her prize: those wicked ones were to try them, as the fire tries the gold, that, having done their utmost to prevent the admission of any alloy into their spiritual nature, and having proved themselves worthy to mount to heaven, they might be drawn by the bands of the Word to the highest blessedness and the summit of all Good.” These Powers, as reasoning beings, shall then themselves be “mastered by the Word.” See *c. Cels.* viii. 72.



I beg that our discussion may be allowed to revert to the same line of reasoning as before¹⁸¹⁷, omitting only that upon which we are thoroughly agreed. I say this, for I think that all but the most stubborn controversialists will have been sufficiently convinced by our debate not to consign the soul after the body's dissolution to annihilation and nonentity, nor to argue that because it differs substantially from the atoms it is impossible for it to exist anywhere in the universe; for, however much a being that is intellectual and immaterial may fail to coincide with these atoms, it is in no ways hindered (so far) from existing in them; and this belief of ours rests on two facts: firstly, on the soul's existing in our bodies in this present life, though fundamentally different from them: and secondly, on the fact that the Divine being, as our argument has shown, though distinctly something other than visible and material substances, nevertheless pervades each one amongst all existences, and by this penetration of the whole keeps the world in a state of being; so that following these analogies we need not think that the soul, either, is out of existence, when she passes from the world of forms to the Unseen. But how, I insisted, after the united whole of the atoms has assumed¹⁸¹⁸, owing to their mixing together, a form quite different—the form in fact with which the soul has been actually domesticated—by what mark, when this form, as we should have expected, is effaced along with the resolution of the atoms, shall the soul follow along (them), now that that familiar form ceases to persist?

She waited a moment and then said: Give me leave to invent a fanciful simile in order to illustrate the matter before us: even though that which I suppose may be outside the range of possibility. Grant it possible, then, in the art of painting not only to mix opposite colours, as painters are always doing, to represent a particular tint¹⁸¹⁹, but also to separate again this mixture and to restore to each

1817 The conclusion of which was drawn, 199 C. "Therefore the soul exists in the actual atoms which she has once animated, and there is no force to tear her away from her cohesion with them." It is to the line of reasoning (ἀκολουθία) leading up to this conclusion that Gregory would revert, in order to question this conclusion. What both sides are agreed on is, the existence merely of the soul after death. All between this conclusion and the present break in the discussion has been a digression on the Passions and on Hades. Now Gregory asks, how can the soul possibly recognize the atoms that once belonged to her? Oehler therefore does not translate aright, "ich bitte nur den geführten Beweis...in derselben Folge zu wiederholen:" but Krabinger expresses the true sense, "ut rursus mihi ad eandem consequentiam reducatur oratio," *i.e.* the discussion (not the proof), which is here again, almost in Platonic fashion, personified.

1818 *has assumed*, ἀναλαμβάνων. The construction is accommodated to the sense, not the words; τῆς τῶν στοιχείων ἐνώσεως having preceded.

1819 *tint*, μορφῆς. Certainly in earlier Greek μορφή is strictly used of "form," "shape" (or the beauty of it) only, and colours cannot be said to be mixed in imitation of form. It seems we have here a late use of μορφή as = "outward appearance"; so that we may even speak of the μορφή of a colour, or combinations of colours. So (214 A) the painter "works up (on his palette) a particular tint of colour" (μορφῆν). Here it is the particular hue, in person or picture, which it is desired to imitate. Akin to this question is that of the proper translation of πρὸς τὴν ὁμοιότητα τοῦ προκειμένου, which Sifanus and Krabinger translate "ad similitudinem *argumenti*," and which may either mean (1) "to make the analogy to the subject matter of our question as perfect

of the colours its natural dye. If then white, or black, or red, or golden colour, or any other colour that has been mixed to form the given tint, were to be again separated from that union with another and remain by itself, we suppose that our artist will none the less remember the actual nature of that colour, and that in no case will he show forgetfulness, either of the red, for instance, or the black, if after having become quite a different colour by composition with each other they each return to their natural dye. We suppose, I say, that our artist remembers the manner of the mutual blending of these colours, and so knows what sort of colour was mixed with a given colour and what sort of colour was the result, and how, the other colour being ejected from the composition, (the original colour) in consequence of such release resumed its own peculiar hue; and, supposing it were required to produce the same result again by composition, the process will be all the easier from having been already practised in his previous work. Now, if reason can see any analogy in this simile, we must search the matter in hand by its light. Let the soul stand for this Art of the painter¹⁸²⁰; and let the natural atoms stand for the colours of his art; and let the mixture of that tint compounded of the various dyes, and the return of these to their native state (which we have been allowed to assume), represent respectively the concurrence, and the separation of the atoms. Then, as we assume in the simile that the painter's Art tells him the actual dye of each colour, when it has returned after mixing to its proper hue, so that he has an exact knowledge of the red, and of the black, and of any other colour that went to form the required tint by a specific way of uniting with another kind—a knowledge which includes its appearance both in the mixture, and now when it is in its natural state, and in the future again, supposing all the colours were mixed over again in like fashion—so, we assert, does the soul know the natural peculiarities of those atoms whose concurrence makes the frame of the body in which it has itself grown, even after the scattering of those atoms. However far from each other their natural propensity and their inherent forces of repulsion urge them, and debar each from mingling with its opposite, none the less will the soul be near each by its power of recognition, and will persistently cling to the familiar atoms, until their concurrence after this division again takes place in the same way, for that fresh formation of the dissolved body which will properly be, and be called, resurrection.

You seem, I interrupted, in this passing remark to have made an excellent defence of the faith in the Resurrection. By it, I think, the opponents of this doctrine might be gradually led to consider it not as a thing absolutely impossible that the atoms should again coalesce and form the same man as before.

That is very true, the Teacher replied. For we may hear these opponents urging the following difficulty. "The atoms are resolved, like to like, into the universe; by what device, then, does the warmth, for instance, residing in such and such a man, after joining the universal warmth, again



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as possible," *i.e.* as a parenthesis, or (2) "in imitation of the thing or colour (lying before the painter) to be copied." The last seems preferable ("to form the given tint").

¹⁸²⁰ γραφικῆς τέχνης.

dissociate itself from this connection with its kindred¹⁸²¹, so as to form this man who is being ‘remoulded’? For if the identical individual particle does not return and only something that is homogeneous but not identical is fetched, you will have something else in the place of that first thing, and such a process will cease to be a resurrection and will be merely the creation of a new man. But if the same man is to return into himself, he must be the same entirely, and regain his original formation in every single atom of his elements.”

Then to meet such an objection, I rejoined, the above opinion about the soul will, as I said, avail; namely, that she remains after dissolution in those very atoms in which she first grew up, and, like a guardian placed over private property, does not abandon them when they are mingled with their kindred atoms, and by the subtle ubiquity of her intelligence makes no mistake about them, with all their subtle minuteness, but diffuses herself along with those which belong to herself when they are being mingled with their kindred dust, and suffers no exhaustion in keeping up with the whole number of them when they stream back into the universe, but remains with them, no matter in what direction or in what fashion Nature may arrange them. But should the signal be given by the All-disposing Power for these scattered atoms to combine again, then, just as when every one of the various ropes that hang from one block answer at one and the same moment¹⁸²² to the pull from that centre, so, following this force of the soul which acts upon the various atoms, all these, once so familiar with each other, rush simultaneously together and form the cable of the body by means of the soul, each single one of them being wedded to its former neighbour and embracing an old acquaintance.

The following illustration also, the Teacher went on, might be very properly added to those already brought forward, to show that the soul has not need of much teaching in order to distinguish its own from the alien amongst the atoms. Imagine a potter with a supply of clay; and let the supply be a large one; and let part of it have been already moulded to form finished vessels, while the rest is still waiting to be moulded; and suppose the vessels themselves not to be all of similar shape, but one to be a jug, for instance, and another a wine-jar, another a plate, another a cup or any other useful vessel; and further, let not one owner possess them all, but let us fancy for each a special owner. Now as long as these vessels are unbroken they are of course recognizable by their owners, and none the less so, even should they be broken in pieces; for from those pieces each will know,

¹⁸²¹ ἀμιγῆς τοῦ συγγενοῦς πάλιν ἀποκριθῆναι. Krabinger’s and Oehler’s reading. But Krabinger, more correctly than Oehler, opposes ἐν τῷδε to ἐν τῷ καθ’ ὅλου (quod est hic calidum, si fuerit in universo): though neither he, nor Oehler, nor Schmidt himself appears to have any suspicion that τῷδε may mean “so and so:” and yet it is quite in accordance with Gregory’s usage, and makes better sense, as contrasting the particular and universal heat more completely. Αμιγῆς is proleptic: the genitive may depend either on it or on the verb. Just below ἀναπλασσομένον is read by 5 of Krabinger’s Codd. (including the Hasselmann). This is better than Migne’s ἀπαλλασσομένον, which is hardly supported by 1 Cor. xv. 51.

¹⁸²² same moment. κατὰ ταύτῳν: on the authority of 2 Codd. Mon.

for instance, that this belongs to a jar¹⁸²³, and, again, what sort of fragment belongs to a cup. And if they are plunged again into the unworked clay, the discernment between what has been already worked and that clay will be a more unerring one still. The individual man is as such a vessel; he has been moulded out of the universal matter, owing to the concourse of his atoms; and he exhibits in a form peculiarly his own a marked distinction from his kind; and when that form has gone to pieces the soul that has been mistress of this particular vessel will have an exact knowledge of it, derived even from its fragments; nor will she leave this property, either, in the common blending with all the other fragments, or if it be plunged into the still formless part of the matter from which the atoms have come¹⁸²⁴; she always remembers her own as it was when compact in bodily form, and after dissolution she never makes any mistake about it, led by marks still clinging to the remains.

I applauded this as well devised to bring out the natural features of the case before us; and I said: It is very well to speak like this and to believe that it is so; but suppose some one were to quote against it our Lord's narrative about those who are in hell, as not harmonizing with the results of our inquiry, how are we to be prepared with an answer?

The Teacher answered: The expressions of that narrative of the Word are certainly material; but still many hints are interspersed in it to rouse the skilled inquirer to a more discriminating study of it. I mean that He Who parts the good from the bad by a great gulf, and makes the man in torment crave for a drop to be conveyed by a finger, and the man who has been ill-treated in this life rest on a patriarch's bosom, and Who relates their previous death and consignment to the tomb, takes an intelligent searcher of His meaning far beyond a superficial interpretation. For what sort of eyes has the Rich Man to lift up in hell, when he has left his bodily eyes in that tomb? And how can a disembodied spirit feel any flame? And what sort of tongue can he crave to be cooled with the drop of water, when he has lost his tongue of flesh? What is the finger that is to convey to him this drop? What sort of place is the "bosom" of repose? The bodies of both of them are in the tomb, and their souls are disembodied, and do not consist of parts either; and so it is impossible to make the framework of the narrative correspond with the truth, if we understand it literally; we can do that only by translating each detail into an equivalent in the world of ideas. Thus we must think of the gulf as that which parts ideas which may not be confounded from running together, not as a chasm of the earth. Such a chasm, however vast it were, could be traversed with no difficulty by a disembodied intelligence; since intelligence can in no time¹⁸²⁵ be wherever it will.

What then, I asked, *are* the fire and the gulf and the other features in the picture? Are they not that which they are said to be?

I think, she replied, that the Gospel signifies by means of each of them certain doctrines with regard to our question of the soul. For when the patriarch first says to the Rich Man, "Thou in thy

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¹⁸²³ Reading ὅτι τὸ μὲν τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πίθου, ποῖον δὲ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ ποτηρίου, κ. τ. λ.

¹⁸²⁴ πρὸς τὸ ἀκατέργαστον τῆς τῶν στοιχείων ὕλης. There is the same sort of distinction above, 215 A, *i.e.* between the *kindred dust* first, and then the universe (τὸ πᾶν) into which the atoms may stream back.

¹⁸²⁵ ἀχρόνως.

lifetime receivedst thy good things,” and in the same way speaks of the Poor Man, that he, namely, has done his duty in bearing his share of life’s evil things, and then, after that, adds with regard to the gulf that it is a barrier between them, he evidently by such expressions intimates a very important truth; and, to my thinking, it is as follows. Once man’s life had but one character; and by that I mean that it was to be found only in the category of the good and had no contact with evil. The first of God’s commandments attests the truth of this; that, namely, which gave to man unstinted enjoyment of all the blessings of Paradise, forbidding only that which was a mixture of good and evil and so composed of contraries, but making death the penalty for transgressing in that particular. But man, acting freely by a voluntary impulse, deserted the lot that was unmixed with evil, and drew upon himself that which was a mixture of contraries. Yet Divine Providence did not leave that recklessness of ours without a corrective. Death indeed, as the fixed penalty for breaking the law, necessarily fell upon its transgressors; but God divided the life of man into two parts, namely, this present life, and that “out of the body” hereafter; and He placed on the first a limit of the briefest possible time, while He prolonged the other into eternity; and in His love for man He gave him his choice, to have the one or the other of those things, good or evil, I mean, in which of the two parts he liked: either in this short and transitory life, or in those endless ages, whose limit is infinity. Now these expressions “good” and “evil” are equivocal; they are used in two senses, one relating to mind and the other to sense; some classify as good whatever is pleasant to feeling: others are confident that only that which is perceptible by intelligence is good and deserves that name. Those, then, whose reasoning powers have never been exercised and who have never had a glimpse of the better way soon use up on gluttony in this fleshly life the dividend of good which their constitution can claim, and they reserve none of it for the after life; but those who by a discreet and sober-minded calculation economize the powers of living are afflicted by things painful to sense here, but they reserve their good for the succeeding life, and so their happier lot is lengthened out to last as long as that eternal life. This, in my opinion, is the “gulf”; which is not made by the parting of the earth, but by those decisions in this life which result in a separation into opposite characters. The man who has once chosen pleasure in this life, and has not cured his inconsiderateness by repentance, places the land of the good beyond his own reach; for he has dug against himself the yawning impassable abyss of a necessity that nothing can break through. This is the reason, I think, that the name of Abraham’s bosom is given to that good situation of the soul in which Scripture makes the athlete of endurance repose. For it is related of this patriarch first, of all up to that time born, that he exchanged the enjoyment of the present for the hope of the future; he was stripped of all the surroundings in which his life at first was passed, and resided amongst foreigners, and thus purchased by present annoyance future blessedness. As then figuratively¹⁸²⁶ we call a particular circuit of the ocean a “bosom,” so does Scripture seem to me to express the idea of those measureless blessings above by the word “bosom,” meaning a place into which all virtuous voyagers of this life are, when

¹⁸²⁶ ἐκ καταχρήσεώς τινος; not as usually “by a misuse of words.”



they have put in from hence, brought to anchor in the waveless harbour of that gulf of blessings¹⁸²⁷. Meanwhile the denial of these blessings which they witness becomes in the others a flame, which burns the soul and causes the craving for the refreshment of one drop out of that ocean of blessings wherein the saints are affluent; which nevertheless they do not get. If, too, you consider the “tongue,” and the “eye,” and the “finger,” and the other names of bodily organs, which occur in the conversation between those disembodied souls, you will be persuaded that this conjecture of ours about them chimes in with the opinion we have already stated about the soul. Look closely into the meaning of those words. For as the concourse of atoms forms the substance of the entire body, so it is reasonable to think that the same cause operates to complete the substance of each member of the body. If, then, the soul is present with the atoms of the body when they are again mingled with the universe, it will not only be cognizant of the entire mass which once came together to form the whole body, and will be present with it, but, besides that, will not fail to know the particular materials of each one of the members, so as to remember by what divisions amongst the atoms our limbs were completely formed. There is, then, nothing improbable in supposing that what is present in the complete mass is present also in each division of the mass. If one, then, thinks of those atoms in which each detail of the body potentially inheres, and surmises that Scripture means a “finger” and a “tongue” and an “eye” and the rest as existing, after dissolution, only in the sphere of the soul, one will not miss the probable truth. Moreover, if each detail carries the mind away from a material acceptance of the story, surely the “hell” which we have just been speaking of cannot reasonably be thought a place so named; rather we are there told by Scripture about a certain unseen and immaterial situation in which the soul resides. In this story of the Rich and the Poor Man we are taught another doctrine also, which is intimately connected with our former discoveries. The story makes the sensual pleasure-loving man, when he sees that his own case is one that admits of no escape, evince forethought for his relations on earth; and when Abraham tells him that the life of those still in the flesh is not unprovided with a guidance, for they may find it at hand, if they will, in the Law and the Prophets, he still continues entreating that Just¹⁸²⁸ Patriarch, and asks that a sudden and convincing message, brought by some one risen from the dead, may be sent to them.

What then, I asked, is the doctrine here?

Why, seeing that Lazarus’ soul is occupied¹⁸²⁹ with his present blessings and turns round to look at nothing that he has left, while the rich man is still attached, with a cement as it were, even after death, to the life of feeling, which he does not divest himself of even when he has ceased to live, still keeping as he does flesh and blood in his thoughts (for in his entreaty that his kindred may be exempted from his sufferings he plainly shows that he is not freed yet from fleshly feeling),—in

¹⁸²⁷ There is an anacoluthon here, for τῶ ἀγάθῳ κόλπῳ follows ᾧ above; designed no doubt to bring the things compared more closely together. Oehler, however, would join ἀγάθῳ with the relative, and translates as if τῶ = καί.

¹⁸²⁸ τὸν δίκαιον. Most of Krabinger’s Codd. read τὸν πλούσιον.

¹⁸²⁹ *is occupied with his present blessings* (ἄσχολος τοῖς παροῦσιν); surely not, with Oehler, “is not occupied with the present world”!

such details of the story (she continued) I think our Lord teaches us this; that those still living in the flesh must as much as ever they can separate and free themselves in a way from its attachments by virtuous conduct, in order that after death they may not need a second death to cleanse them from the remnants that are owing to this cement¹⁸³⁰ of the flesh, and, when once the bonds are loosed from around the soul, her soaring¹⁸³¹ up to the Good may be swift and unimpeded, with no anguish of the body to distract her. For if any one becomes wholly and thoroughly carnal in thought, such an one, with every motion and energy of the soul absorbed in fleshly desires, is not parted from such attachments, even in the disembodied state; just as those who have lingered long in noisome places do not part with the unpleasantness contracted by that lengthened stay, even when they pass into a sweet atmosphere. So¹⁸³² it is that, when the change is made into the impalpable Unseen, not even then will it be possible for the lovers of the flesh to avoid dragging away with them under any circumstances some fleshly foulness; and thereby their torment will be intensified, their soul having been materialized by such surroundings. I think too that this view of the matter harmonizes to a certain extent with the assertion made by some persons that around their graves shadowy phantoms of the departed are often seen¹⁸³³. If this is really so, an inordinate attachment of that particular soul to the life in the flesh is proved to have existed, causing it to be unwilling, even when expelled from the flesh, to fly clean away and to admit the complete change of its form into the impalpable; it remains near the frame even after the dissolution of the frame, and though now outside it, hovers regretfully over the place where its material is and continues to haunt it.



¹⁸³⁰ κόλλης. The metaphor is Platonic. “The soul...absolutely bound and glued to the body” (*Phædo*, p. 82 E).

¹⁸³¹ her soaring. Plato first spoke (*Phædrus*, p. 248 C) of “that growth of wing, by which the soul is lifted.” Once these natural wings can get expanded, her flight upwards is a matter of course. This image is reproduced by Plotinus p. 769 A (end of *Enneads*); Libanius, *Pro Socrate*, p. 258; Synesius, *De Providentiâ*, p. 90 D, and *Hymn* i. III, where he speaks of the ἄλμα κοῦφον of the soul, and *Hymn* iii. 42. But there is mixed here with the idea of a flight upwards (*i.e.* ἀναδρομή), that of the running-ground as well (cf. Greg. *De scopo Christian*. III. p. 299, τοῖς τῆς ἀρετῆς δρόμοις), which, as sanctioned in the New Testament, Chrysostom so often uses.

¹⁸³² οὔτως answers to καθάπερ, not to above.

¹⁸³³ shadowy phantoms of the departed are often seen. Cf. Origen *c. Cels.* ii. 60 (in answer to Celsus’ “Epicurean” opinion that ghosts are pure illusion): “He who does believe this (*i.e.* in ghosts) necessarily believes in the immortality, or at all events the long continuance of the soul: as Plato does in his treatise on the soul (*i.e.* the *Phædo*) when he says that the shadowy apparitions of the dead hover round their tombs. These apparitions, then, have some substance: it is the so-called ‘radiant’ frame in which the soul exists. But Celsus, not liking this, would have us believe that people have waking dreams and ‘imagine as true, in accordance with their wishes, a wild piece of unreality.’ In sleep we may well believe that this is the case: not so in waking hours, unless some one is quite out of his senses, or is melancholy mad.” But Origen here quotes Plato in connection with the reality of the Resurrection body of Christ: Gregory refers to ghosts only, with regard to the φιλοσώματα, whose whole condition after death he represents very much in Plato’s words. See *Phædo*, p. 81 B.

Then, after a moment's reflection on the meaning of these latter words, I said: I think that a contradiction now arises between what you have said and the result of our former examination of the passions. For if, on the one hand, the activity of such movements within us is to be held as arising from our kinship with the brutes, such movements I mean as were enumerated in our previous discussion¹⁸³⁴, anger, for instance, and fear, desire of pleasure, and so on, and, on the other hand, it was affirmed that virtue consists in the good employment of these movements, and vice in their bad employment, and in addition to this we discussed the actual contribution of each of the other passions to a virtuous life, and found that through desire above all we are brought nearer God, drawn up, by its chain as it were, from earth towards Him,—I think (I said) that that part of the discussion is in a way opposed to that which we are now aiming at.

How so? she asked.

Why, when every unreasoning instinct is quenched within us after our purgation, this principle of desire will not exist any more than the other principles; and this being removed, it looks as if the striving after the better way would also cease, no other emotion remaining in the soul that can stir us up to the appetence of Good.

To that objection, she replied, we answer this. The speculative and critical faculty is the property of the soul's godlike part; for it is by these that we grasp the Deity also. If, then whether by forethought here, or by purgation hereafter, our soul becomes free from any emotional connection with the brute creation, there will be nothing to impede its contemplation of the Beautiful; for this last is essentially capable of attracting in a certain way every being that looks towards it. If, then, the soul is purified of every vice, it will most certainly be in the sphere of Beauty. The Deity is in very substance Beautiful; and to the Deity the soul will in its state of purity have affinity, and will embrace It as like itself. Whenever this happens, then, there will be no longer need of the impulse of Desire to lead the way to the Beautiful. Whoever passes his time in darkness, he it is who will be under the influence of a desire for the light; but whenever he comes into the light, then enjoyment takes the place of desire, and the power to enjoy renders desire useless and out of date. It will therefore be no detriment to our participation in the Good, that the soul should be free from such emotions, and turning back upon herself should know herself accurately what her actual nature is, and should behold the Original Beauty reflected in the mirror and in the figure of her own beauty. For truly herein consists the real assimilation to the Divine; viz. in making our own life in some degree a copy of the Supreme Being. For a Nature like that, which transcends all thought and is far removed from all that we observe within ourselves, proceeds in its existence in a very different manner to what we do in this present life. Man, possessing a constitution whose law it is to be moving, is carried in that particular direction whither the impulse of his will directs: and so his soul is not affected in the same way towards what lies before it¹⁸³⁵, as one may say, as to what it has left behind; for hope leads the forward movement, but it is memory that succeeds that movement when

¹⁸³⁴ προλαβών; on the authority of five Codd., for προσλαβών

¹⁸³⁵ κατὰ το ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῆς.

it has advanced to the attainment of the hope; and if it is to something intrinsically good that hope thus leads on the soul, the print that this exercise of the will leaves upon the memory is a bright one; but if hope has seduced the soul with some phantom only of the Good, and the excellent Way has been missed, then the memory that succeeds what has happened becomes shame, and an intestine war is thus waged in the soul between memory and hope, because the last has been such a bad leader of the will. Such in fact is the state of mind that shame gives expression to; the soul is stung as it were at the result; its remorse for its ill-considered attempt is a whip that makes it feel to the quick, and it would bring in oblivion to its aid against its tormentor. Now in our case nature, owing to its being indigent of the Good, is aiming always at this which is still wanting to it, and this aiming at a still missing thing is this very habit of Desire, which our constitution displays equally, whether it is balked of the real Good, or wins that which it is good to win. But a nature that surpasses every idea that we can form of the Good and transcends all other power, being in no want of anything that can be regarded as good, is itself the plenitude of every good; it does not move in the sphere of the good by way of participation in it only, but it is itself the substance of the Good (whatever we imagine the Good to be); it neither gives scope for any rising hope (for hope manifests activity in the direction of something absent; but “what a man has, why doth he yet hope for?” as the Apostle asks), nor is it in want of the activity of the memory for the knowledge of things; that which is actually seen has no need of being remembered. Since, then, this Divine nature is beyond any particular good¹⁸³⁶, and to the good the good is an object of love, it follows that when It looks within Itself¹⁸³⁷, It wishes for what It contains and contains that which It wishes, and admits nothing external. Indeed there is nothing external to It, with the sole exception of evil, which, strange as it may seem to say, possesses an existence in not existing at all. For there is no other origin of evil except the negation of the existent, and the truly-existent forms the substance of the Good. That therefore which is not to be found in the existent must be in the non-existent. Whenever the soul, then, having divested itself of the multifarious emotions incident to its nature, gets its Divine form and, mounting above Desire, enters within that towards which it was once incited by that Desire, it offers no harbour within itself either for hope or for memory. It holds the object of the one; the other is extruded from the consciousness by the occupation in enjoying all that is good: and thus the soul copies the life that is above, and is conformed to the peculiar features of the Divine nature; none of its habits are left to it except that of love, which clings by natural affinity to the Beautiful. For this is what love is; the inherent affection towards a chosen object. When, then, the soul, having become simple and single in form and so perfectly godlike, finds that perfectly simple and immaterial good which is really worth enthusiasm and love¹⁸³⁸, it attaches itself to it and blends with it by means of the movement and activity of love, fashioning itself according to that which it is continually



¹⁸³⁶ *any particular good*, not as Oehler, “jenseits alles Guten.” The Divine Being is the complement, not the negation, of each single good.

¹⁸³⁷ ἐν ἑαυτῇ βλέπουσα. But Augustinus and Sifanus seem to have read ἑαυτὴν: and this is supported by three Codd.

¹⁸³⁸ τὸ μόνον τῷ ὄντι ἀγαπητὸν καὶ ἐράσιμον.

finding and grasping. Becoming by this assimilation to the Good all that the nature of that which it participates is, the soul will consequently, owing to there being no lack of any good in that thing itself which it participates, be itself also in no lack of anything, and so will expel from within the activity and the habit of Desire; for this arises only when the thing missed is not found. For this teaching we have the authority of God's own Apostle, who announces a subduing¹⁸³⁹ and a ceasing of all other activities, even for the good, which are within us, and finds no limit for love alone. Prophecies, he says, shall fail; forms of knowledge shall cease; but "charity never faileth;" which is equivalent to its being always as it is: and though¹⁸⁴⁰ he says that faith and hope have endured so far by the side of love, yet again he prolongs its date beyond theirs, and with good reason too; for hope is in operation only so long as the enjoyment of the things hoped for is not to be had; and faith in the same way is a support¹⁸⁴¹ in the uncertainty about the things hoped for; for so he defines it—"the substance¹⁸⁴² of things hoped for"; but when the thing hoped for actually comes, then all other faculties are reduced to quiescence¹⁸⁴³, and love alone remains active, finding nothing to succeed itself. Love, therefore, is the foremost of all excellent achievements and the first of the commandments of the law. If ever, then, the soul reach this goal, it will be in no need of anything else; it will embrace that plenitude of things which are, whereby alone¹⁸⁴⁴ it seems in any way to preserve within itself the stamp of God's actual blessedness. For the life of the Supreme Being is love, seeing that the Beautiful is necessarily lovable to those who recognize it, and the Deity does recognize it, and so this recognition becomes love, that which He recognizes being essentially beautiful. This True Beauty the insolence of satiety cannot touch¹⁸⁴⁵; and no satiety interrupting

¹⁸³⁹ καταστολήν. Cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 8–13.

¹⁸⁴⁰ Schmidt well remarks that there lies in λέγων here not a causal but only a concessive force: and he puts a stop before εϊκότως. Oehler has not seen that ἀγάπη is governed by the preposition σὺν in the verb "by the side of love," and quite mistranslates the passage.

¹⁸⁴¹ ἔρεισμα.

¹⁸⁴² ὑπόστασις Heb. xi. 1.

¹⁸⁴³ *reduced to quiescence*, ἀτρεμούντων. This is the reading adopted by Krabinger, from four Codd., instead of the vox nihili of the editions, εὐτηρεμόντων. The contrast must be between "remaining in activity (ἐνεργεία)," and "becoming idle," and he quotes a passage from Plotinus to show that ἀτρεμείν has exactly this latter sense. Cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 10, καταργηθήσονται, καταργηθήσεται

¹⁸⁴⁴ *whereby alone*, καθ' ὃ δοκεῖ μόνον πως αὐτῆς, κ. τ. λ., the reading of Sifanus.

¹⁸⁴⁵ *the insolence of satiety cannot touch*. Krabinger quotes from two of his Codd. a scholium to this effect: "Then this proves to be nonsense what Origen has imagined about the satiety of minds, and their consequent fall and recall, on which he bases his notorious teaching about the pre-existence and restoration of souls that are always revolving in endless motion, determined as he is, like a retailer of evil, to mingle the Grecian myths with the Church's truth." Gregory, more sober in his idealism, certainly does not follow on this point his great Master. The phrase ὑβριστῆς κόρος is used by Gregory Naz. also in his *Poems* (p. 32 A), and may have been suggested to both by some poet, now lost. "Familiarity breeds contempt" is the modern equivalent.

this continuous capacity to love the Beautiful, God's life will have its activity in love; which life is thus in itself beautiful, and is essentially of a loving disposition towards the Beautiful, and receives no check to this activity of love. In fact, in the Beautiful no limit is to be found so that love should have to cease with any limit of the Beautiful. This last can be ended only by its opposite; but when you have a good, as here, which is in its essence incapable of a change for the worse, then that good will go on unchecked into infinity. Moreover, as every being is capable of attracting its like, and humanity is, in a way, like God, as bearing within itself some resemblances to its Prototype, the soul is by a strict necessity attracted to the kindred Deity. In fact what belongs to God must by all means and at any cost be preserved for Him. If, then, on the one hand, the soul is unencumbered with superfluities and no trouble connected with the body presses it down, its advance towards Him Who draws it to Himself is sweet and congenial. But suppose¹⁸⁴⁶, on the other hand, that it has been transfixed with the nails of propension¹⁸⁴⁷ so as to be held down to a habit connected with material things,—a case like that of those in the ruins caused by earthquakes, whose bodies are crushed by the mounds of rubbish; and let us imagine by way of illustration that these are not only pressed down by the weight of the ruins, but have been pierced as well with some spikes and splinters discovered with them in the rubbish. What then, would naturally be the plight of those bodies, when they were being dragged by relatives from the ruins to receive the holy rites of burial, mangled and torn entirely, disfigured in the most direful manner conceivable, with the nails beneath the heap harrowing them by the very violence necessary to pull them out?—Such I think is the plight of the soul as well when the Divine force, for God's very love of man, drags that which belongs to Him from the ruins of the irrational and material. Not in hatred or revenge for a wicked life, to my thinking, does God bring upon sinners those painful dispensations; He is only claiming and drawing to Himself whatever, to please Him, came into existence. But while He for a noble end is attracting the soul to Himself, the Fountain of all Blessedness, it is the occasion necessarily to the being so attracted of a state of torture. Just as those who refine gold from the dross which it contains not only get this base alloy to melt in the fire, but are obliged to melt the pure gold along with the alloy, and then while this last is being consumed the gold remains, so, while evil is being consumed in the purgatorial¹⁸⁴⁸ fire, the soul that is welded to this evil must inevitably be in the fire too, until

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¹⁸⁴⁶ *But suppose, &c.* Möller (*Gregorii doctrina de hom. natur.*, p. 99) shows that the following view of Purgatory is not that taught by the Roman Church.

¹⁸⁴⁷ *by the nails of propension.* This metaphor is frequently used by Gregory. Cf. *De Virginit.* c. 5: "How can the soul which is riveted (προσηλωθεῖσα) to the pleasures of the flesh, and busied with merely human longings, turn a disengaged eye upon its kindred intellectual light?" So *De Beatitud.* Or. viii. (I. p. 833), &c.

¹⁸⁴⁸ *purgatorial, καθαρσί&* 251'. Five of Krabinger's Codd. and the versions of Augustinus and Sifanus approve this reading. That of the Editions is ἀκοιμήτω. [This last epithet is applied to God's justice () by Isidore of Pelusium, *Ep.* 90: and to the "worm," and, on the other hand, the Devil, by Cyril Alexand. *Act. Ephes.*, p. 252. Cf. S. Math. iii. 12; S. Mark ix. 48.] It is the same with αἰωνί& 251' before πύρι just below. The Editions have it; the Codd. and Latin versions have not: Krabinger therefore has not hesitated to expunge it.

the spurious material alloy is consumed and annihilated by this fire. If a clay of the more tenacious kind is deeply plastered round a rope, and then the end of the rope is put through a narrow hole, and then some one on the further side violently pulls it by that end, the result must be that, while the rope itself obeys the force exerted, the clay that has been plastered upon it is scraped off it with this violent pulling and is left outside the hole, and, moreover, is the cause why the rope does not run easily through the passage, but has to undergo a violent tension at the hands of the puller. In such a manner, I think, we may figure to ourselves the agonized struggle of that soul which has wrapped itself up in earthy material passions, when God is drawing it, His own one, to Himself, and the foreign matter, which has somehow grown into its substance, has to be scraped from it by main force, and so occasions it that keen intolerable anguish.

Then it seems, I said, that it is not punishment chiefly and principally that the Deity, as Judge, afflicts sinners with; but He operates, as your argument has shown, only to get the good separated from the evil and to attract it into the communion of blessedness.

That, said the Teacher, is my meaning; and also that the agony will be measured by the amount of evil there is in each individual. For it would not be reasonable to think that the man who has remained so long as we have supposed in evil known to be forbidden, and the man who has fallen only into moderate sins, should be tortured to the same amount in the judgment upon their vicious habit; but according to the quantity of material will be the longer or shorter time that that agonizing flame will be burning; that is, as long as there is fuel to feed it. In the case of the man who has acquired a heavy weight of material, the consuming fire must necessarily be very searching; but where that which the fire has to feed upon¹⁸⁴⁹ has spread less far, there the penetrating fierceness of the punishment is mitigated, so far as the subject itself, in the amount of its evil, is diminished. In any and every case evil must be removed out of existence, so that, as we said above, the absolutely non-existent should cease to be at all. Since it is not in its nature that evil should exist outside the will, does it not follow that when it shall be that every will rests in God, evil will be reduced to complete annihilation, owing to no receptacle being left for it?

But, said I, what help can one find in this devout hope, when one considers the greatness of the evil in undergoing torture even for a single year; and if that intolerable anguish be prolonged for the interval of an age, what grain of comfort is left from any subsequent expectation to him whose purgation is thus commensurate with an entire age?¹⁸⁵⁰

Why¹⁸⁵¹, either we must plan to keep the soul absolutely untouched and free from any stain of evil; or, if our passionate nature makes that quite impossible, then we must plan that our failures in excellence consist only in mild and easily-curable derelictions. For the Gospel in its teaching

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¹⁸⁴⁹ ἡ τοῦ πύρρος δαπανή. These words can have no other meaning to suit the sense. Krabinger's reproduction of Sifanus' Latin, "ignis ille consumens," makes the sentence a tautology.

¹⁸⁵⁰ πρὸς ὄλον αἰ& 242'να. But cf. Plato, *Timæus*, 37, 39 D.

¹⁸⁵¹ Macrina's answer must begin here, though the Paris Editt. take no notice of a break. Krabinger on the authority of one of his Codd. has inserted φησὶν ἡ διδάσκαλος after προνοητέον

distinguishes between¹⁸⁵² a debtor of ten thousand talents and a debtor of five hundred pence, and of fifty pence and of a farthing¹⁸⁵³, which is “the uttermost” of coins; it proclaims that God’s just judgment reaches to all, and enhances the payment necessary as the weight of the debt increases, and on the other hand does not overlook the very smallest debts. But the Gospel tells us that this payment of debts was not effected by the refunding of money, but that the indebted man was delivered to the tormentors until he should pay the whole debt; and that means nothing else than paying in the coin of torment¹⁸⁵⁴ the inevitable recompense, the recompense, I mean, that consists in taking the share of pain incurred during his lifetime, when he inconsiderately chose mere pleasure, undiluted with its opposite; so that having put off from him all that foreign growth which sin is, and discarded the shame of any debts, he might stand in liberty and fearlessness. Now liberty is the coming up to a state which owns no master and is self-regulating¹⁸⁵⁵; it is that with which we were gifted by God at the beginning, but which has been obscured by the feeling of shame arising from indebtedness. Liberty too is in all cases one and the same essentially; it has a natural attraction to itself. It follows, then, that as everything that is free will be united with its like, and as virtue is a thing that has no master, that is, is free, everything that is free will be united with virtue. But, further, the Divine Being is the fountain of all virtue. Therefore, those who have parted with evil will be united with Him; and so, as the Apostle says, God will be “all in all¹⁸⁵⁶”; for this utterance

¹⁸⁵² *distinguishes between.* The word here is οἶδεν, which is used of “teaching,” “telling,” after the fashion of the later Greek writers, in making a quotation.

¹⁸⁵³ *of a farthing.* No mention is made of this in the Parable (S. Matt. xviii. 23; S. Luke vii. 41). The “uttermost farthing” of S. Matt. v. 26 does not apply here.

¹⁸⁵⁴ *διὰ τῆς βασάνου.* Of course διὰ cannot go with ὀφειλῆν, though Krabinger translates “per tormenta debita.” He has however, with Oehler, pointed the Greek right, so as to take ὄφλημα as in opposition to ὀφειλῆν

¹⁸⁵⁵ *a state which owns no master and is self-regulating, &c.* He repeats this, *De Hom. Opif.* c. 4: “For the soul immediately shows its royal and exalted character, far removed from the lowliness of private station, in that it owns no master, and is self-governed, swayed autocratically by its own will,—for to whom else does this belong than to a king?” and c. 16: “Thus, there is in us the principle of all excellence, all virtue, and every higher thing that we conceive: but pre-eminent among all is the fact that we are free from necessity, and not in bondage to any natural force, but have decision in our power as we please: for virtue is a voluntary thing, subject to no dominion:” and *Orat. Catech.* c. 5: “Was it not, then, most right that that which is in every detail made like the Divine should possess in its nature a self-ruling and independent principle, such as to enable the participation of the good to be the reward of its virtue?” It would be possible to quote similar language from the Neoplatonists (e.g. Plotinus vi. 83–6): but Gregory learnt the whole bearing and meaning of moral liberty from none but Origen, whose so-called “heresies” all flowed from his constant insistence on its reality.

¹⁸⁵⁶ This (1 Cor. xv. 28) is a text much handled by the earlier Greek Fathers. Origen especially has made it one of the Scripture foundations upon which he has built up theology. This passage in Gregory should be compared with the following in Origen, *c. Cels.* iv. 69, where he has been speaking of evil and its origin, and its disappearance: “God checks the wider spread of evil, and banishes it altogether in a way that is conducive to the good of the whole. Whether or not there is reason to believe that after the banishment of evil it will again appear is a separate question. By later corrections, then, God does put right some defects: for

seems to me plainly to confirm the opinion we have already arrived at, for it means that God will be instead of all other things, and in all. For while our present life is active amongst a variety of multiform conditions, and the things we have relations with are numerous, for instance, time, air, locality, food and drink, clothing, sunlight, lamplight, and other necessities of life, none of which, many though they be, are God,—that blessed state which we hope for is in need of none of these things, but the Divine Being will become all, and instead of all, to us, distributing Himself proportionately to every need of that existence. It is plain, too, from the Holy Scripture that God becomes, to those who deserve it, locality, and home, and clothing, and food, and drink, and light, and riches, and dominion, and everything thinkable and nameable that goes to make our life happy. But He that becomes “all” things will be “in all” things too; and herein it appears to me that Scripture teaches the complete annihilation of evil¹⁸⁵⁷. If, that is, God will be “in all” existing things, evil; plainly, will not then be amongst them; for if any one was to assume that it did exist then, how will the belief that God will be “in all” be kept intact? The excepting of that one thing, evil, mars the comprehensiveness of the term “all.” But He that will be “in all” will never be in that which does not exist.



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What then, I asked, are we to say to those whose hearts fail at these calamities¹⁸⁵⁸?

We will say to them, replied the Teacher, this. “It is foolish, good people, for you to fret and complain of the chain of this fixed sequence of life’s realities; you do not know the goal towards which each single dispensation of the universe is moving. You do not know that all things have to

although in the creation of the whole all the work was fair and strong, nevertheless a certain healing process is needed for those whom evil has infected, and for the world itself which it has as it were tainted; and God is never negligent in interfering on certain occasions in a way suitable to a changeful and alterable world,” &c. “He is like a husbandman performing different work at different times upon the land, for a final harvest.” Also viii. 72: “This subject requires much study and demonstration: still a few things must and shall be said at once tending to show that it is not only possible, but an actual truth, that every being that reasons ‘shall agree in one law’ (quoting Celsus’ words). Now while the Stoics hold that when the strongest of the elements has by its nature prevailed over the rest, there shall be the Conflagration, when all things will fall into the fire, we hold that the Word shall some day master the whole of ‘reasoning nature,’ and shall transfigure it to its own perfection, when each with pure spontaneity shall will what it wishes, and act what it wills. We hold that there is no analogy to be drawn from the case of bodily diseases, and wounds, where some things are beyond the power of any art of healing. We do not hold that there are any of the results of sin which the universal Word, and the universal God, cannot heal. The healing power of the Word is greater than any of the maladies of the soul, and, *according to the will*, He does draw it to Himself: and so the aim of things is that evil should be annihilated: whether with no possibility whatever of the soul ever turning to it again, is foreign to the present discussion. It is sufficient now to quote Zephaniah” (iii. 7–13, LXX.).

¹⁸⁵⁷ But, when A. Jahn, as quoted by Krabinger asserts that Gregory and Origen derived their denial of the eternity of punishment from a source “merely extraneous,” *i.e.* the Platonists, we must not forget that Plato himself in the *Phaedo*, 113 F (cf. also *Gorgias*, 525 C, and *Republic*, x. 615), expressly teaches the eternity of punishment hereafter, for he uses there not the word αἰώνιος or αἰώνιος, but οὐποτε. They were influenced rather by the late Platonists.

¹⁸⁵⁸ Reading συμφοραῖς, *i.e.* death especially.

be assimilated to the Divine Nature in accordance with the artistic plan of their author, in a certain regularity and order. Indeed, it was for this that intelligent beings came into existence; namely, that the riches of the Divine blessings should not lie idle. The All-creating Wisdom fashioned these souls, these receptacles with free wills, as vessels as it were, for this very purpose, that there should be some capacities able to receive His blessings and become continually larger with the inpouring of the stream. Such are the wonders¹⁸⁵⁹ that the participation in the Divine blessings works: it makes him into whom they come larger and more capacious; from his capacity to receive it gets for the receiver an actual increase in bulk as well, and he never stops enlarging. The fountain of blessings wells up unceasingly, and the partaker's nature, finding nothing superfluous and without a use in that which it receives, makes the whole influx an enlargement of its own proportions, and becomes at once more wishful to imbibe the nobler nourishment and more capable of containing it; each grows along with each, both the capacity which is nursed in such abundance of blessings and so grows greater, and the nurturing supply which comes on in a flood answering to the growth of those increasing powers. It is likely, therefore, that this bulk will mount to such a magnitude as¹⁸⁶⁰ there is no limit to check, so that we should not grow into it. With such a prospect before us, are you angry that our nature is advancing to its goal along the path appointed for us? Why, our career cannot be run thither-ward, except that which weighs us down, I mean this encumbering load of earthiness, be shaken off the soul; nor can we be domiciled in Purity with the corresponding part of our nature, unless we have cleansed ourselves by a better training from the habit of affection which we have contracted in life towards this earthiness. But if there be in you any clinging to this body¹⁸⁶¹, and the being unlocked from this darling thing give you pain, let not this, either, make you despair. You will behold this bodily envelopment, which is now dissolved in death, woven again out of the same atoms, not indeed into this organization with its gross and heavy texture, but with its threads worked up into something more subtle and ethereal, so that you will not only have

¹⁸⁵⁹ *Such are the wonders.* There is here, Denys (*De la Philosophie d'Origène*, p. 484) remarks, a great difference between Gregory and Origen. Both speak of an "eternal sabbath," which will end the circle of our destinies. But Origen, after all the progress and peregrinations of the soul, which he loves to describe, establishes "the reasoning nature" at last in an unchangeable quiet and repose; while Gregory sets before the soul an endless career of perfections and ever increasing happiness. This is owing to their different conceptions of the Deity. Origen cannot understand how He can know Himself or be accessible to our thought, if He is Infinite: Gregory on the contrary conceives Him as Infinite, as beyond all real or imaginable boundaries, *πασῆς περιγραφῆς ἔκτός* (*Orat. Cat.* viii. 65); this is the modern, rather than the Greek view. In the following description of the life eternal Gregory hardly merits the censure of Ritter that he "introduces absurdity" into it.

¹⁸⁶⁰ *such a magnitude as.* Reading, ἐφ' ὃ, with Schmidt. The "limit" is the present body, which must be laid aside in order to cease to be a hindrance to such a growth. Krabinger reads ἐφ' ὧν on the authority of six Codd., and translates "i in quibus nullus terminus interrumpit incrementum." But τοσοῦτον can answer to nothing before, and manifestly refers to the relative clause.

¹⁸⁶¹ Macrina may be here alluding to Gregory's brotherly affection for her.

near you that which you love, but it will be restored to you with a brighter and more entrancing beauty¹⁸⁶².”

But it somehow seems to me now, I said, that the doctrine of the Resurrection necessarily comes on for our discussion; a doctrine which I think is even at first sight true as well as credible¹⁸⁶³, as it is told us in Scripture; so that that will not come in question between us: but since the weakness of the human understanding is strengthened still farther by any arguments that are intelligible to us, it would be well not to leave this part of the subject, either, without philosophical examination. Let us consider, then, what ought to be said about it.

As for the thinkers, the Teacher went on, outside our own system of thought, they have, with all their diverse ways of looking at things, one in one point, another in another, approached and touched the doctrine of the Resurrection: while they none of them exactly coincide with us, they have in no case wholly abandoned such an expectation. Some indeed make human nature vile in their comprehensiveness, maintaining that a soul becomes alternately that of a man and of something irrational; that it transmigrates into various bodies, changing at pleasure from the man into fowl, fish, or beast, and then returning to human kind. While some extend this absurdity even to trees¹⁸⁶⁴

¹⁸⁶² But on high

A record lives of thine identity!
 Thou shalt not lose one charm of lip or eye;
 The hues and liquid lights shall wait for thee,
 And the fair tissues, whereso'er they be!
 Daughter of heaven! our grieving hearts repose
 On the dear thought that we once more shall see
 Thy beauty—like Himself our Master rose.

C. TENNYSON TURNER.—*Anastasis*.

¹⁸⁶³ ἰδεῖν... ἵνα μὴ ἀμφιβάλλῃ. This is the reading of the Paris Edit.: ἰδεῖν seems to go closely with ἀληθές: so that Krabinger's δεῖν is not absolutely necessary.

¹⁸⁶⁴ *some extend this absurdity even to trees*: Empedocles for instance. Cf. *Philosophumena* (of Hippolytus, falsely attributed to Origen), p. 50, where two lines of his are quoted. Chrysostom's words (I. iv. p. 196), "There are those amongst them who carry souls into plants, into shrubs, and into dogs," are taken by Matthæus to refer to Empedocles. Cf. Celsus also (quoted in Origen, c. *Cels.* viii. 53), "Seeing then men are born bound to a body—no matter whether the economy of the world required this, or that they are paying the penalty for some sin, or that the soul is weighted with certain emotions till it is purified from them at the end of its destined cycle, three myriad hours, according to Empedocles, being the necessary period of its wanderings far away from the Blessed Ones, during which it passes successively into every perishable shape—we must believe any way that there exist certain guardians of this prison-house." See *De Hom. Opif.* c. 28. Empedocles can be no other, then, than "the philosopher who asserts that the same thing may be born in anything:" below (p. 232 D). Anaxagoras, however, seems to have indulged in the same dictum (πᾶν ἐν παντί), but with a difference; as Nicetas explains in his commentary on Gregory Naz., *Orations*: "That everything is contained in everything Empedocles asserted, and Anaxagoras asserted also: but not with the same meaning. Empedocles said it of the four elements, namely, that they are not only divided and self-centred, but are also mingled



and shrubs, so that they consider their wooden life as corresponding and akin to humanity, others of them hold only thus much—that the soul exchanges one man for another man, so that the life of humanity is continued always by means of the same souls, which, being exactly the same in number, are being born perpetually first in one generation, then in another. As for ourselves, we take our stand upon the tenets of the Church, and assert that it will be well to accept only so much of these speculations as is sufficient to show that those who indulge in them are to a certain extent in accord with the doctrine of the Resurrection. Their statement, for instance, that the soul after its release from this body insinuates itself into certain other bodies is not absolutely out of harmony with the revival which we hope for. For our view, which maintains that the body, both now, and again in the future, is composed of the atoms of the universe, is held equally by these heathens. In fact, you cannot imagine any constitution of the body independent of a concourse¹⁸⁶⁵ of these atoms. But the divergence lies in this: we assert that the same body again as before, composed of the same atoms, is compacted around the soul; they suppose that the soul alights on other bodies, not only rational, but irrational and even insensate; and while all are agreed that these bodies which the soul resumes derive their substance from the atoms of the universe, they part company from us in thinking that they are not made out of identically the same atoms as those which in this mortal life grew around the soul. Let then, this external testimony stand for the fact that it is not contrary to probability that the soul should again inhabit a body; after that however, it is incumbent upon us to make a survey of the inconsistencies of their position, and it will be easy thus, by means of the consequences that arise as we follow out the consistent view, to bring the truth to light. What, then, is to be said about these theories? This that those who would have it that the soul migrates into natures divergent from each other seem to me to obliterate all natural distinctions; to blend and confuse together, in every possible respect, the rational, the irrational, the sentient, and the insensate; if, that is, all these are to pass into each other, with no distinct natural order¹⁸⁶⁶ secluding them from mutual transition. To say that one and the same soul, on account of a particular environment of body, is at one time a rational and intellectual soul, and that then it is cavered along with the reptiles, or herds with the birds, or is a beast of burden, or a carnivorous one, or swims in the deep; or even drops down to an insensate thing, so as to strike out roots or become a complete tree, producing buds on branches, and from those buds a flower, or a thorn, or a fruit edible or noxious—to say this, is nothing short of making all things the same and believing that one single nature runs through all beings; that there is a connexion between them which blends and confuses hopelessly all the marks by which one could be distinguished from another. The philosopher who asserts that the same thing may be

with each other. This is clear from the fact that every animal is engendered by all four. But Anaxagoras, finding an old proverb that nothing can be produced out of nothing, did away with creation, and introduced ‘differentiation’ instead, &c.” See also Greg. Naz., *Poems*, p. 170.

¹⁸⁶⁵ συνδρομῆς

¹⁸⁶⁶ εἶργμῶ, *i.e.* as links in a chain which cannot be altered. Sifanus’ “carcere et claustrō” is due to εἶργμῶ against all the mss.

Krabinger’s six have διατειχιζόμενα for διαστοιχιζόμενα of the Edit.

born in anything intends no less than that all things are to be one; when the observed differences in things are for him no obstacle to mixing together things which are utterly incongruous. He makes it necessary that, even when one sees one of the creatures that are venom-darting or carnivorous, one should regard it, in spite of appearances, as of the same tribe, nay even of the same family, as oneself. With such beliefs a man will look even upon hemlock as not alien to his own nature, detecting, as he does, humanity in the plant. The grape-bunch itself¹⁸⁶⁷, produced though it be by cultivation for the purpose of sustaining life, he will not regard without suspicion; for it too comes from a plant¹⁸⁶⁸: and we find even the fruit of the ears of corn upon which we live are plants; how, then, can one put in the sickle to cut them down; and how can one squeeze the bunch, or pull up the thistle from the field, or gather flowers, or hunt birds, or set fire to the logs of the funeral pyre: it being all the while uncertain whether we are not laying violent hands on kinsmen, or ancestors, or fellow-country-men, and whether it is not through the medium of some body of theirs that the fire is being kindled, and the cup mixed, and the food prepared? To think that in the case of any single one of these things a soul of a man has become a plant or animal¹⁸⁶⁹, while no marks are stamped upon them to indicate what sort of plant or animal it is that has been a man, and what sort has sprung from other beginnings,—such a conception as this will dispose him who has entertained it to feel an equal amount of interest in everything: he must perforce either harden himself against actual human beings who are in the land of the living, or, if his nature inclines him to love his kindred, he will feel alike towards every kind of life, whether he meet it in reptiles or in wild beasts. Why, if the holder of such an opinion go into a thicket of trees, even then he will regard the trees as a crowd of men. What sort of life will his be, when he has to be tender towards everything on the ground of kinship, or else hardened towards mankind on account of his seeing no difference between them and the other creatures? From what has been already said, then, we must reject this theory: and there are many other considerations as well which on the grounds of mere consistency lead us away from it. For I have heard persons who hold these opinions¹⁸⁷⁰ saying that whole nations

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¹⁸⁶⁷ οὐδε...τὸν βότρυον. The intensitive need not surprise us, though a grape-bunch does seem a more fitting body for a human soul than a stalk of hemlock: it is explained by the sentence in apposition, “produced...for the purpose of sustaining life,” *i.e.* it is eaten, and so a soul might be eaten; which increases the horror.

¹⁸⁶⁸ καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς τῶν φυομένων ἐστίν, *i.e.* the fruit, and not the tree only, belongs to the kingdom of plants: φυτὰ in the next sentence is exactly equivalent to τὰ φύομενα, *i.e.* plants. The probability that this is the meaning is strengthened by Krabinger’s reading οὔτος, from five of his Codd. But still if αὐτὸς be retained, it might have been taken to refer to the *man* who must needs look suspiciously at a bunch of grapes; “for what, according to this theory, is he himself, but a vegetable!” since all things are mixed, πάντα ὁμοῦ.

¹⁸⁶⁹ Two Codd. Mon. (D, E) omit φυτὸν ἢ ζῶον, which is repeated below.

¹⁸⁷⁰ *i.e.* Pythagoreans and later Platonists. Cf. Origen, *c. Cels.* iii. 80. For the losing of the wings, cf. *c. Cels.* iii. 40: “The coats of skins also, which God made for those sinners, the man and the woman cast forth from the garden, have a mystical meaning

of souls are hidden away somewhere in a realm of their own, living a life analogous to that of the embodied soul; but such is the fineness and buoyancy of their substance that they themselves' roll round along with the revolution of the universe; and that these souls, having individually lost their wings through some gravitation towards evil, become embodied; first this takes place in men; and after that, passing from a human life, owing to brutish affinities of their passions, they are reduced¹⁸⁷¹ to the level of brutes; and, leaving that, drop down to this insensate life of pure nature¹⁸⁷² which you have been hearing so much of; so that that inherently fine and buoyant thing that the soul is first becomes weighted and downward tending in consequence of some vice, and so migrates to a human body; then its reasoning powers are extinguished, and it goes on living in some brute; and then even this gift of sensation is withdrawn, and it changes into the insensate plant life; but after that mounts up again by the same gradations until it is restored to its place in heaven. Now this doctrine will at once be found, even after a very cursory survey, to have no coherency with itself. For, first, seeing that the soul is to be dragged down from its life in heaven, on account of evil there, to the condition of a tree, and is then from this point, on account of virtue exhibited there, to return to heaven, their theory will be unable to decide which is to have the preference, the life in heaven, or the life in the tree. A circle, in fact, of the same sequences will be perpetually traversed, where the soul, at whatever point it may be, has no resting-place. If it thus lapses from the disembodied state to the embodied, and thence to the insensate, and then springs back to the disembodied, an inextricable confusion of good and evil must result in the minds of those who thus teach. For the life in heaven will no more preserve its blessedness (since evil can touch heaven's denizens), than the life in trees will be devoid of virtue (since it is from this, they say, that the rebound of the soul towards the good begins, while from there it begins the evil life again). Secondly¹⁸⁷³, seeing that the soul as it moves round in heaven is there entangled with evil and is in consequence dragged down to live in mere matter, from whence, however, it is lifted again into its residence on high, it follows that those philosophers establish the very contrary¹⁸⁷⁴ of their own views; they establish, namely, that the life in matter is the purgation of evil, while that undeviating revolution along with

far deeper than Plato's fancy about the soul shedding its wings, and moving downward till it meets some spot upon the solid earth."

¹⁸⁷¹ ἀποκτηνοῦσθαι

¹⁸⁷² τῆς φυσικῆς ταύτης. This is the common reading: but φύσις and φυσικὸς have a rather higher meaning than our equivalent for them: cf. just below, "that inherently (τῆ φύσει) fine and buoyant thing": and Krabinger is probably right in reading φυσικῆς from four Codd.

¹⁸⁷³ With the γὰρ here (unlike the three preceding) begins the second "incoherency" of this view. The *first* is,—“It confuses the ideas of good and evil.” The *second*,—“it is inconsistent with a view already adopted by these teachers.” The *third* (beginning with καὶ οὐ μέχρι τούτων, κ.τ.λ.),—it contradicts the truth which it assumes, *i.e.* that there is no change in heaven.”

¹⁸⁷⁴ See just above: “For I have heard persons who hold these opinions saying that whole nations of souls are hidden away somewhere in a realm of their own,” &c., and see next note.

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the stars¹⁸⁷⁵ is the foundation and cause of evil in every soul: if it is here that the soul by means of virtue grows its wing and then soars upwards, and there that those wings by reason of evil fall off, so that it descends and clings to this lower world and is commingled with the grossness of material nature. But the untenableness of this view does not stop even in this, namely, that it contains assertions diametrically opposed to each other. Beyond this, their fundamental conception¹⁸⁷⁶ itself cannot stand secure on every side. They say, for instance, that a heavenly nature is unchangeable. How then, can there be room for any weakness in the unchangeable? If, again, a lower nature is subject to infirmity, how in the midst of this infirmity can freedom from it be achieved? They attempt to amalgamate two things that can never be joined together: they descry strength in weakness, passionlessness in passion. But even to this last view they are not faithful throughout; for they bring home the soul from its material life to that very place whence they had exiled it because of evil there, as though the life in that place was quite safe and uncontaminated; apparently quite forgetting the fact that the soul was weighted with evil *there*, before it plunged down into this lower world. The blame thrown on the life here below, and the praise of the things in heaven, are thus interchanged and reversed; for that which was once blamed conducts in their opinion to the brighter life, while that which was taken for the better state gives an impulse to the soul's propensity to evil. Expel, therefore, from amongst the doctrines of the Faith all erroneous and shifting suppositions about such matters! We must not follow, either, as though they had bit the truth those who suppose that souls pass from women's bodies to live in men¹⁸⁷⁷, or, reversely¹⁸⁷⁸, that souls that have parted with men's bodies exist in women: or even if they only say that they pass from men into men, or from women into women. As for the former theory¹⁸⁷⁹, not only has it been rejected for being shifting

¹⁸⁷⁵ *that undeviating revolution along with the stars*, τὴν ἀπλανῆ περιφορὰν. Cf. Origen, *De Princip.* ii. 3–6 (Rufinus' translation), "Sed et ipsum supereminens, quem dicunt ἀπλανῆ, globum proprie nihilominus mundum appellari volunt:" Cicero, *De Repub.* vi. 17: "Novem tibi orbibus ver potius globis connexa sunt omnia: quorum unus est celestis, extimus, qui reliquos omnes complectitur; in quo infixi sunt illi, qui volvuntur, stellarum cursus sempiterni," *i.e.* they roll, not on their axes, but only as turning round with the general revolution. They are literally *fixed* in that heaven (cf. Virg.: "tacito volvuntur sidera lapsu"): and the spiritual beings in it are as fixed and changeless: in fact, with Plato it is the abode only of Divine intelligences, not of the δαίμονες; but the theorists, whom Gregory is refuting, confuse this distinction which their own master drew.

¹⁸⁷⁶ ὑπόνοια.

¹⁸⁷⁷ Such theories are developed in the *Phaedo* of Plato; and constitute ὁ ἕτερος τῶν λόγων, criticized more fully below.

¹⁸⁷⁸ Reading δοκεῖ, ἢ τὸ ἔμπαλιν, instead of the corrupt δοκεῖ τὸ ἔμπαλιν.

¹⁸⁷⁹ ὁ πρότερος (λόγος). The second is mentioned below. "The same absurdity exists in the other of the two theories as well."

Obviously these two theories are those alluded to at the beginning of this last speech of Macrina, where, speaking of the heathen transmigration, she says, "While some of them extend this absurdity even to trees and shrubs, so that they consider their wooden life as corresponding and akin to humanity (*i.e.* ὁ πρότερος λόγος), others of them opine only thus much, that the soul exchanges one man for another man," &c. (*i.e.* ὁ ἕτερος). In either case the soul is supposed to return from the dead body to heaven, and then by a fresh fall into sin there, to sink down again. The absurdity and the godlessness is just as glaring, Macrina says, in the

and illusory, and for landing us in opinions diametrically opposed to each other; but it must be rejected also because it is a godless theory, maintaining as it does that nothing amongst the things in nature is brought into existence without deriving its peculiar constitution from evil as its source. If, that is, neither men nor plants nor cattle can be born unless some soul from above has fallen into them, and if this fall is owing to some tendency to evil, then they evidently think that evil controls the creation of all beings. In some mysterious way, too, both events are to occur at once; the birth of the man in consequence of a marriage, and the fall of the soul (synchronizing as it must with the proceedings at that marriage). A greater absurdity even than this is involved: if, as is the fact, the large majority of the brute creation copulate in the spring, are we, then, to say that the spring brings it about that evil is engendered in the revolving world above, so that, at one and the same moment, *there* certain souls are impregnated with evil and so fall, and *here* certain brutes conceive? And what are we to say about the husbandman who sets the vine-shoots in the soil? How does his hand manage to have covered in a human soul along with the plant, and how does the moulting of wings last simultaneously with his employment in planting? The same absurdity, it is to be observed, exists in the other of the two theories as well; in the direction, I mean, of thinking that the soul must be anxious about the intercourses of those living in wedlock, and must be on the look-out for the times of bringing forth, in order that it may insinuate itself into the bodies then produced. Supposing the man refuses the union, or the woman keeps herself clear of the necessity of becoming a mother, will evil then fail to weigh down that particular soul? Will it be marriage, in consequence, that sounds up above the first note of evil in the soul, or will this reversed state invade the soul quite independently of any marriage? But then, in this last case, the soul will have to wander about in the interval like a houseless vagabond, lapsed as it has from its heavenly surroundings, and yet, as it may happen in some cases, still without a body to receive it. But how, after that, can they imagine that the Deity exercises any superintendence over the world, referring as they do the beginnings of human lives to this casual and meaningless descent of a soul. For all that follows must necessarily accord with the beginning; and so, if a life begins in consequence of a chance accident, the whole course of it¹⁸⁸⁰ becomes at once a chapter of accidents, and the attempt to make the whole world depend on a Divine power is absurd, when it is made by these men, who deny to the individualities in it a birth from the fiat of the Divine Will and refer the several origins of beings to encounters that come of evil, as though there could never have existed such a thing as a human life, unless a vice had struck, as it were, its leading note. If the beginning is like that, a sequel will most certainly be set in motion in accordance with that beginning. None would dare to maintain that what is fair can come out of what is foul, any more than from good can come its opposite. We expect fruit in



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last case (the Platonic soul-rotation) as in the first (Transmigration pure and simple). But the one point in both in contact with the Christian Resurrection is this, that the soul of the departed *does assume another body*.

¹⁸⁸⁰ ἡ κατ' αὐτὸν (*i.e.* βίον) διέξοδος. The Editions have κατ' αὐτῶν. Krabinger well translates by "percursatio." Cf. *Phaedrus*, p. 247 A.

accordance with the nature of the seed. Therefore this blind movement of chance is to rule the whole of life, and no Providence is any more to pervade the world.

Nay, even the forecasting by our calculations will be quite useless; virtue will lose its value; and to turn from evil will not be worth the while. Everything will be entirely under the control of the driver, Chance; and our lives will differ not at all from vessels devoid of ballast, and will drift on waves of unaccountable circumstances, now to this, now to that incident of good or of evil. The treasures of virtue will never be found in those who owe their constitution to causes quite contrary to virtue. If God really superintends our life, then, confessedly, evil cannot begin it. But if we do owe our birth to evil, then we must go on living in complete uniformity with it. Thereby it will be shown that it is folly to talk about the “houses of correction” which await us after this life is ended, and the “just recompenses,” and all the other things there asserted, and believed in too, that tend to the suppression of vice: for how can a man, owing, as he does, his birth to evil, be outside its pale? How can he, whose very nature has its rise in a vice, as they assert, possess any deliberate impulse towards a life of virtue? Take any single one of the brute creation; it does not attempt to speak like a human being, but in using the natural kind of utterance sucked in, as it were, with its mother’s milk¹⁸⁸¹, it deems it no loss to be deprived of articulate speech. Just in the same way those who believe that a vice was the origin and the cause of their being alive will never bring themselves to have a longing after virtue, because it will be a thing quite foreign to their nature. But, as a fact¹⁸⁸², they who by reflecting have cleansed the vision of their soul do all of them desire and strive after a life of virtue. Therefore it is by that fact clearly proved that vice is not prior in time to the act of beginning to live, and that our nature did not thence derive its source, but that the all-disposing wisdom of God was the Cause of it: in short, that the soul issues on the stage of life in the manner which is pleasing to its Creator, and then (but not before), by virtue of its power of willing, is free to choose that which is to its mind, and so, whatever it may wish to be, becomes that very thing. We may understand this truth by the example of the eyes. To see is their natural state; but to fail to see results to them either from choice or from disease. This unnatural state may supervene instead of the natural, either by wilful shutting of the eyes or by deprivation of their sight through disease. With the like truth we may assert that the soul derives its constitution from God, and that, as we cannot conceive of any vice in Him, it is removed from any necessity of being vicious; that nevertheless, though this is the condition in which it came into being, it can be attracted of its own free will in a chosen direction, either wilfully shutting its eyes to the Good, or letting them be damaged¹⁸⁸³ by that insidious foe whom we have taken home to live with us, and so passing through life in the darkness of error; or, reversely, preserving undimmed its sight of the Truth and keeping far away from all weaknesses that could darken it.—But then some one will ask, “When and how did it come into being?” Now as for the question, how any single thing came into existence, we

¹⁸⁸¹ συντρόφω

¹⁸⁸² ἀλλὰ μὴν introduces a fact into the argument (cf. καὶ μὴν); Lat. “verum enimvero.”

¹⁸⁸³ τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν βλαπτομένην

must banish it altogether from our discussion. Even in the case of things which are quite within the grasp of our understanding and of which we have sensible perception, it would be impossible for the speculative reason¹⁸⁸⁴ to grasp the “how” of the production of the phenomenon; so much so, that even inspired and saintly men have deemed such questions insoluble. For instance, the Apostle says, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen are not made of things which do appear¹⁸⁸⁵.” He would not, I take it, have spoken like that, if he had thought that the question could be settled by any efforts of the reasoning powers. While the Apostle affirms that it is an object of his faith¹⁸⁸⁶ that it was by the will of God that the world itself and all which is therein was framed (whatever this “world” be that involves the idea of the whole visible and invisible creation), he has on the other hand left out of the investigation the “how” of this framing. Nor do I think that this point can ever be reached by any inquirers. The question presents, on the face of it, many insuperable difficulties. How, for instance, can a world of movement come from one that is at rest? how from the simple and undimensional that which shows dimension and compositeness? Did it come actually out of the Supreme Being? But the fact that this world presents a difference in kind to that Being militates against¹⁸⁸⁷ such a supposition. Did it then come from some other quarter? Yet Faith¹⁸⁸⁸ can contemplate nothing as quite outside the Divine Nature; for we should have to believe in two distinct and separate Principles, if outside the Creative Cause we are to suppose something else, which the Artificer, with all His skill, has to put under contribution for the formative processes of the Universe. Since, then, the Cause of all things is one, and one only, and yet the existences produced by that Cause are not of the same nature as its transcendent quality, an inconceivability of equal magnitude¹⁸⁸⁹ arises in both our suppositions, *i.e.* both that the creation comes straight out of the Divine Being, and that the universe owes its existence to some cause other than Him; for if created things are to be of the same nature as God, we must consider Him to be invested with the properties belonging to His creation; or else a world of matter, outside the circle of God’s substance, and equal, on the score of the absence in it of all beginning, to the eternity of the Self-existent One, will have to be ranged against Him: and this is in fact what the followers of Manes, and some of the Greek philosophers who held opinions of

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¹⁸⁸⁴ λόγῳ.

¹⁸⁸⁵ Heb. xi. 3.

¹⁸⁸⁶ *that it is an object of his faith, &c.* In the Greek the μὲν contrasts the Apostle’s declaration on this point with his silence as to the “how.”

¹⁸⁸⁷ *militates against, &c.* Ἄλλ’ οὐχ ὁμολογεῖται (reading then, ὅτι τὸ ἕτερογενὲς ἔχει πρὸς ἐκείνῃν τὰ ὄντα). Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 29 C, αὐτοὶ αὐτοῖς οὐχ ὁμολογούμενοι λόγοι, “theories that *contradict* each other.” This world cannot come out of the Supreme Being: its alien nature contradicts that. Krabinger’s translation is therefore wrong, “sed non constat:” and Oehler’s, “Aber das ist nicht angemacht.”

¹⁸⁸⁸ ὁ λόγος.

¹⁸⁸⁹ Reading ἴση δὴ.

equal boldness with his, did imagine; and they raised this imagination into a system. In order, then, to avoid falling into either of these absurdities, which the inquiry into the origin of things involves, let us, following the example of the Apostle, leave the question of the “how” in each created thing, without meddling with it at all, but merely observing incidentally that the movement of God’s Will becomes at any moment that He pleases a fact, and the intention becomes at once realized in Nature¹⁸⁹⁰; for Omnipotence does not leave the plans of its far-seeing skill in the state of unsubstantial wishes: and the actualizing of a wish is Substance. In short, the whole world of existing things falls into two divisions: *i.e.* that of the intelligible, and that of the corporeal: and the intelligible creation does not, to begin with, seem to be in any way at variance with a spiritual Being, but on the contrary to verge closely upon Him, exhibiting as it does that absence of tangible form and of dimension which we rightly attribute to His transcendent nature. The corporeal creation¹⁸⁹¹, on the other hand, must certainly be classed amongst specialities that have nothing in common with the Deity; and it does offer this supreme difficulty to the Reason; namely, that the Reason cannot see *how* the visible comes out of the invisible, *how* the hard solid comes out of the intangible, *how* the finite comes out of the infinite, *how* that which is circumscribed by certain proportions, where the idea of quantity comes in, can come from that which has no size, no proportions, and so on through each single circumstance of body. But even about this we can say so much: *i.e.* that not one of those things which we attribute to body is itself body; neither figure, nor colour, nor weight, nor extension, nor quantity, nor any other qualifying notion whatever; but every one of them is a category; it is the combination of them all into a single whole that constitutes body. Seeing, then, that these several qualifications which complete the particular body are grasped by thought alone, and not by sense, and that the Deity is a thinking being, what trouble can it be to such a thinking agent to produce the thinkables whose mutual combination generates *for us* the substance of that body? All this discussion, however, lies outside our present business. The previous question was,—If some souls exist anterior to their bodies, *when* and *how* do they come into existence? and of this question¹⁸⁹², again, the part about the *how*, has been left out of our examination and has not been meddled with, as presenting impenetrable difficulties. There remains the question of the *when* of the soul’s commencement of existence: it follows immediately on that which we have already discussed. For

¹⁸⁹⁰ ἡ φύσις.

¹⁸⁹¹ The long Greek sentence, which begins here with a genitive absolute (τῆς δὲ σωματικῆς κτίσεως, κ.τ.λ.), leading up to nothing but the anacoluthon περὶ ὧν τοσοῦτον κ.τ.λ., has been broken up in translating. Doubtless this anacoluthon can be explained by the sentences linked on to the last words (τῷ λόγῳ) of the genitive clause, which are so long as to throw that clause quite into the background. There is no need therefore to take the words where this anacoluthon begins, down to σῶμα γίνεται, as a parenthesis, with Krabinger and Oehler; especially as the words that follow γίνεται are a direct recapitulation of what immediately precedes.

¹⁸⁹² Reading, as Dr. H. Schmidt conjectures, καὶ τοῦτου πάλιν, cf. 205 C.



if we were to grant that the soul has lived previous to its body¹⁸⁹³ in some place of resort peculiar to itself, then we cannot avoid seeing some force in all that fantastic teaching lately discussed, which would explain the soul's habitation of the body as a consequence of some vice. Again, on the other hand, no one who can reflect will imagine an after-birth of the soul, *i.e.* that it is younger than the moulding of the body; for every one can see for himself that not one amongst all the things that are inanimate or soulless possesses any power of motion or of growth; whereas there is no question about that which is bred in the uterus both growing and moving from place to place. It remains therefore that we must think that the point of commencement of existence is one and the same for body and soul. Also we affirm that, just as the earth receives the sapling from the hands of the husbandman and makes a tree of it, without itself imparting the power of growth to its nursling, but only lending it, when placed within itself, the impulse to grow, in this very same way that which is secreted from a man for the planting of a man is itself to a certain extent a living being as much gifted with a soul and as capable of nourishing itself as that from which it comes¹⁸⁹⁴. If this offshoot, in its diminutiveness, cannot contain at first all the activities and the movements of the soul, we need not be surprised; for neither in the seed of corn is there visible all at once the ear. How indeed could anything so large be crowded into so small a space? But the earth keeps on feeding it with its congenial aliment, and so the grain becomes the ear, without changing its nature while in the clod, but only developing it and bringing it to perfection under the stimulus of that nourishment. As, then, in the case of those growing seeds the advance to perfection is a graduated one¹⁸⁹⁵, so in man's formation the forces of his soul show themselves in proportion to the size to which his body has attained. They dawn first in the foetus, in the shape of the power of nutrition and of development: after that, they introduce into the organism that has come into the light the gift of perception: then, when this is reached, they manifest a certain measure of the reasoning faculty, like the fruit of some matured plant, not growing all of it at once, but in a continuous progress along with the shooting up of that plant. Seeing, then, that that which is secreted from one living being to lay the foundations of another living being cannot itself be dead (for a state of deadness arises from the privation of life, and it cannot be that privation should precede the having),

¹⁸⁹³ Origen, Gregory's master in most of his theology, did teach this very thing, the pre-existence of the soul: nor did he attempt to deny that *some* degree of transmigration was a necessary accompaniment of such teaching; only he would adjust the moral meaning of it. Cf. *c. Celsum*, Lib. iii. 75. "And even if we should treat (*i.e.* medically) those who have caught the folly of the transmigration of souls from doctors who push down a reasoning nature into any of the unreasoning natures, or even into that which is insensate, how can any say that we shall not work improvement in their souls by teaching them that the bad do not have allotted to them by way of punishment that insensate or unreasoning state, but that what is inflicted by God upon the bad, be it pain or affliction, is only in the way of a very efficacious cure for them? This is the teaching of the wise Christian: he attempts to teach the simpler of his flock as fathers do the merest infants." Not the theory itself, but the exaggeration of it, is here combated.

¹⁸⁹⁴ ἐκ τρεφομένου τρεφόμενον

¹⁸⁹⁵ κατὰ λόγον.

we grasp from these considerations the fact that in the compound which results from the joining of both (soul and body) there is a simultaneous passage of both into existence; the one does not come first, any more than the other comes after. But as to the number of souls, our reason must necessarily contemplate a stopping some day of its increase; so that Nature's stream may not flow on for ever, pouring forward in her successive births and never staying that onward movement. The reason for our race having some day to come to a standstill is as follows, in our opinion: since every intellectual reality is fixed in a plenitude of its own, it is reasonable to expect that humanity¹⁸⁹⁶ also will arrive at a goal (for in this respect also humanity is not to be parted from the intellectual world¹⁸⁹⁷); so that we are to believe that it will not be visible for ever only in defect, as it is now: for this continual addition of after generations indicates that there is something deficient in our race.

Whenever, then, humanity shall have reached the plenitude that belongs to it, this on-streaming movement of production will altogether cease; it will have touched its destined bourn, and a new order of things quite distinct from the present precession of births and deaths will carry on the life of humanity. If there is no birth, it follows necessarily that there will be nothing to die. Composition must precede dissolution (and by composition I mean the coming into this world by being born); necessarily, therefore, if this synthesis does not precede, no dissolution will follow. Therefore, if we are to go upon probabilities, the life after this is shown to us beforehand as something that is fixed and imperishable, with no birth and no decay to change it.

The Teacher finished her exposition; and to the many persons sitting by her bedside the whole discussion seemed now to have arrived at a fitting conclusion. Nevertheless, fearing that if the Teacher's illness took a fatal turn (such as did actually happen), we should have no one amongst us to answer the objections of the unbelievers to the Resurrection¹⁸⁹⁸, I still insisted.

The argument has not yet touched the most vital of all the questions relating to our Faith. I mean, that the inspired Writings, both in the New and in the Old Testament, declare most emphatically not only that, when our race has completed the ordered chain of its existence as the ages lapse through their complete circle¹⁸⁹⁹, this current streaming onward as generation succeeds generation will cease altogether, but also that then, when the completed Universe no longer admits of further increase, all the souls in their entire number will come back out of their invisible and

¹⁸⁹⁶ This seems like a prelude to the Realism of the Middle Ages.

¹⁸⁹⁷ Each individual soul represents, to Gregory's view, a "thought" of God, which becomes visible by the soul being born. There will come a time when all these "thoughts," which complete, and do not destroy, each other, will have completed the *πλήρωμα* (Humanity) which the Deity contemplates. This immediate apparition of a soul, as a "thought" of God, is very unlike the teaching of his master Origen: and yet more sober, and more scriptural.

¹⁸⁹⁸ The situation here is, as Dr. H. Schmidt points out, just like that in the *Phædo* of Plato, where all are satisfied with Socrates' discourse, except Kebes and Simmias, who seize the precious moments still left, to bring forward an objection which none but their great Teacher could remove.

¹⁸⁹⁹ *περιοδικήν*: a better reading than *παροδικήν*, which most Codd. have.



scattered condition into tangibility and light, the identical atoms (belonging to each soul) reassembling together in the same order as before; and this reconstitution of human life is called, in these Writings which contain God's teaching, the Resurrection, the entire movement of the atoms receiving the same term as the raising up of that which is actually prostrate on the ground¹⁹⁰⁰.

But, said she, which of these points has been left unnoticed in what has been said?

Why, the actual doctrine of the Resurrection, I replied.

And yet, she answered, much in our long and detailed discussion pointed to that.

Then are you not aware, I insisted, of all the objections, a very swarm of them, which our antagonists bring against us in connection with that hope of yours?

And I at once tried to repeat all the devices hit upon by their captious champions to upset the doctrine of the Resurrection.

She, however, replied, First, I think, we must briefly run over the scattered proclamations of this doctrine in Holy Scripture; they shall give the finishing touch to our discourse. Observe, then, that I can hear David, in the midst of his praises in the Divine Songs, saying at the end of the hymnody of the hundred and third (104th) Psalm, where he has taken for his theme God's administration of the world, "Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall die, and return to their dust: Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth." He says that a power of the Spirit which works in all vivifies the beings into whom it enters, and deprives those whom He abandons of their life. Seeing, then, that the dying is declared to occur at the Spirit's departure, and the renewal of these dead ones at His appearance, and seeing moreover that in the order of the statement the death of those who are to be thus renewed comes first, we hold that in these words that mystery of the Resurrection is proclaimed to the Church, and that David in the spirit of prophecy expressed this very gift which you are asking about. You will find this same prophet in another place¹⁹⁰¹ also saying that "the God of the world,

¹⁹⁰⁰ *receiving the same term* (συνονομαζομένης) *as the raising up of that which is actually prostrate on the ground* (τοῦ γεώδους), *i.e.* the term ἀνάστασις is extended by analogy to embrace the entire movement of the atoms. Though there is here of course an allusion to the elevation of the nature from the "earthly" to the "heavenly," and perhaps to the raising of the body from the tomb, yet the primary meaning is that the term ἀνάστασις is derived from its special use of raising from the ground one who lies prostrate (as a suppliant). *Some* of the elements of the body are supposed to be γεώδη, *i.e.* mingled with their kindred earth. But though strictly the word ἀνάστασις should apply to them alone, it does not do so, but denotes more generally the movement of *all* the atoms to reform the body.

¹⁹⁰¹ Gregory quotes as usual the LXX. for this Psalm (cxviii. 27): Θεὸς κύριος, καὶ ἐπέφανεν ἡμῖν· συστήσασθε τὴν ἑορτὴν ἐν τοῖς πυκάλουσιν ἕως τῶν κεράτων τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου. [Krabinger has replaced συστήσασθε from one of his Codd. for the common συστήσασθαι; but if this is retained ὥστε must be understood. Cf. Matt., Gr. Gr. §532.] The LXX. is rendered by the Psalterium Romanum "constitue diem in *confrequentationibus*." So also Eusebius, Theodoret, and Chrysostom interpret. But the Psalterium Gallicanum reproduces the LXX. otherwise, *i.e.* in *condensis*, as Apollinaris and Jerome (in *frondosis*) also understand it. "Adorn the feast with green boughs, even to the horns of the altar": Luther. "It is true that during the time of the

the Lord of everything that is, hath showed Himself to us, that we may keep the Feast amongst the decorators;" by that mention of "decoration" with boughs, he means the Feast of Tabernacle-fixing, which, in accordance with Moses' injunction, has been observed from of old. That lawgiver, I take it, adopting a prophet's spirit, predicted therein things still to come; for though the decoration was always going on it was never finished. The truth indeed was foreshadowed under the type and riddle of those Feasts that were always occurring, but the true Tabernacle-fixing was not yet come; and on this account "the God and Lord of the whole world," according to the Prophet's declaration, "hath showed Himself to us, that the Tabernacle-fixing of this our tenement that has been dissolved may be kept for human kind"; a material decoration, that is, may be begun again by means of the concourse of our scattered atoms. For that word *πυκασμὸς* in its peculiar meaning signifies the Temple-circuit and the decoration which completes it. Now this passage from the Psalms runs as follows: "God and Lord hath showed Himself to us; keep the Feast amongst the decorators even unto the horns of the altar;" and this seems to me to proclaim in metaphors the fact that one single feast is to be kept by the whole rational creation, and that in that assembly of the saints the inferiors are to join the dance with their superiors. For in the case of the fabric of that Temple which was the Type it was not allowed to all who were on the outside of its circuit¹⁹⁰² to come within, but everything that was Gentile and alien was prohibited from entering; and of those, further, who had entered, all were not equally privileged to advance towards the centre; but only those who had consecrated themselves by a holier manner of life, and by certain sprinklings; and, again, not every one amongst these last might set foot within the interior of the Temple; the priests alone had the right of entering within the Curtain, and that only for the service of the sanctuary; while even to the priests the darkened shrine of the Temple, where stood the beautiful Altar with its jutting horns, was forbidden, except to one of them, who held the highest office of the priesthood, and who once a year, on a stated day, and unattended, passed within it, carrying an offering more than usually sacred and mystical. Such being the differences in connection with this Temple which you know of, it was clearly¹⁹⁰³ a representation and an imitation of the condition of the spirit-world, the lesson taught by these material observances being this, that it is not the whole of the rational creation that can approach the temple of God, or, in other words, the adoration of the Almighty; but that those who are led astray by false persuasions are outside the precinct of the Deity; and that from the number of those who by virtue of this adoration have been preferred to the rest and admitted within it, some by reason of sprinklings and purifications have still further privileges; and again amongst these last those who have been consecrated priests have privileges further still, even to being admitted to the mysteries of the interior. And, that one may bring into still clearer light the meaning

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second temple the altar of burnt offering was planted round about at the Feast of Tabernacles with large branches of osiers, which leaned over the edge of that altar": Delitzsch (who however says that this is, *linguistically*, untenable). Gregory's rendering differs from this only in making *πυκάζουσιν* masculine.

¹⁹⁰² Reading τοῖς ἔξωθεν περιβολῆς

¹⁹⁰³ Reading δηλόνοτι

of the allegory, we may understand the Word here as teaching this, that amongst all the Powers endued with reason some have been fixed like a Holy Altar in the inmost shrine of the Deity; and that again of these last some jut forward like horns, for their eminence, and that around them others are arranged first or second, according to a prescribed sequence of rank; that the race of man, on the contrary, on account of indwelling evil was excluded from the Divine precinct, but that purified with lustral water it re-enters it; and, since all the further barriers by which our sin has fenced us off from the things within the veil are in the end to be taken down, whenever the time comes that the tabernacle of our nature is as it were to be fixed up again in the Resurrection, and all the inveterate corruption of sin has vanished from the world, then a universal feast will be kept around the Deity by those who have decorated themselves in the Resurrection; and one and the same banquet will be spread for all, with no differences cutting off any rational creature from an equal participation in it; for those who are now excluded by reason of their sin will at last be admitted within the Holiest places of God's blessedness, and will bind themselves to the horns of the Altar there, that is, to the most excellent of the transcendental Powers. The Apostle says the same thing more plainly when he indicates the final accord of the whole Universe with the Good: "That" to Him "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father": instead of the "horns," speaking of that which is angelic and "in heaven," and by the other terms signifying ourselves, the creatures whom we think of next to that; one festival of united voices shall occupy us all; that festival shall be the confession and the recognition of the Being Who truly Is. One might (she proceeded) select many other passages of Holy Scripture to establish the doctrine of the Resurrection. For instance, Ezekiel leaps in the spirit of prophecy over all the intervening time, with its vast duration; he stands, by his powers of foresight, in the actual moment of the Resurrection, and, as if he had really gazed on what is still to come, brings it in his description before our eyes. He saw a mighty plain¹⁹⁰⁴, unfolded to an endless distance before him, and vast heaps of bones upon it flung at random, some this way, some that; and then under an impulse from God these bones began to move and group themselves with their fellows that they once owned, and adhere to the familiar sockets, and then clothe themselves with muscle, flesh, and skin (which was the process called "decorating" in the poetry of the Psalms); a Spirit in fact was giving life and movement to everything that lay there. But as regards our Apostle's description of the wonders of the Resurrection, why should one repeat it, seeing that it can easily be found and read? how, for instance, "with a shout" and the "sound of trumpets" (in the language of the Word) all dead and prostrate things shall be "changed"¹⁹⁰⁵ in the twinkling of an eye" into immortal beings. The expressions in the Gospels also I will pass over; for their meaning is quite clear to every one; and our Lord does not declare

¹⁹⁰⁴ Ezek. xxxvii. 1–10.

¹⁹⁰⁵ Gregory, as often, seems to quote from memory (ὕπαμειφθήσεσθαι, but 1 Cor. xv. 52 ἀλλαγῆσόμεθα; and St. Paul says ἡμεῖς δὲ, *i.e.* "we shall be changed," in distinction from the dead *generally*, who "shall be raised incorruptible"). But the doctrine of a *general* resurrection, with or without change, is quite in harmony with the end of this treatise. Cf. p. 468.

in word alone that the bodies of the dead shall be raised up again; but He shows in action the Resurrection itself, making a beginning of this work of wonder from things more within our reach and less capable of being doubted. First, that is, He displays His life-giving power in the case of the deadly forms of disease, and chases those maladies by one word of command; then He raises a little girl just dead; then He makes a young man, who is already being carried out, sit up on his bier, and delivers him to his mother; after that He calls forth from his tomb the four-days-dead and already decomposed Lazarus, vivifying the prostrate body with His commanding voice; then after three days He raises from the dead His own human body, pierced though it was with the nails and spear, and brings the print of those nails and the spear-wound to witness to the Resurrection. But I think that a detailed mention of these things is not necessary; for no doubt about them lingers in the minds of those who have accepted the written accounts of them.

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But that, said I, was not the point in question. Most of your hearers will assent to the fact that there will some day be a Resurrection, and that man will be brought before the incorruptible tribunal¹⁹⁰⁶; on account both of the Scripture proofs, and also of our previous examination of the question. But still the question remains¹⁹⁰⁷: Is the state which we are to expect to be like the present state of the body? Because if so, then, as I was saying¹⁹⁰⁸, men had better avoid hoping for any Resurrection at all. For if our bodies are to be restored to life again in the same sort of condition as they are in when they cease to breathe, then all that man can look forward to in the Resurrection is an unending calamity. For what spectacle is more piteous than when in extreme old age our bodies shrivel up¹⁹⁰⁹ and change into something repulsive and hideous, with the flesh all wasted in the length of years, the skin dried up about the bones till it is all in wrinkles, the muscles in a spasmodic state from being no longer enriched with their natural moisture, and the whole body

¹⁹⁰⁶ *the incorruptible tribunal*. The Judgment comes *after* the Resurrection (cf. 250 A, 254 A, 258 D), and *after* the purifying and chastising detailed above. The latter is represented by Gregory as a necessary process of *nature*: but not till the Judgment will the moral value of each life be revealed. There is no contradiction, such as Möller tries to find, between this Dialogue and Gregory's *Oratio Catechetica*. There too he is speaking of chastisement after the Resurrection and *before* the Judgment. "For not everything that is granted in the resurrection a return to existence will return to the same kind of life. There is a wide interval between those who have been purified (*i.e.* by baptism) and those who still need purification."... "But as for those whose weaknesses have become inveterate, and to whom no purgation of their defilement has been applied, no mystic water, no invocation of the Divine power, no amendment by repentance, it is absolutely necessary that they should be submitted to something proper to their case," *i.e.* to compensate for Baptism, which they have never received (c. 35).

¹⁹⁰⁷ φήσιν should probably be struck out (as the insertion of a copyist encouraged by εἶπον below): five of Krabinger's Codd. omit it.

¹⁹⁰⁸ εἶπον. Cf. 243 C: καὶ ἅμα λεγεῖν ἐπεχείρουν ὅσα πρὸς ἀνατροπὴν τῆς ἀναστάσεως παρὰ τῶν ἐριστικῶν ἐφευρίσκειται. So that this is not the first occasion on which objections to the Resurrection have been started by Gregory, and there is no occasion to adopt the conjecture of Augustinus and Sifanus, ἄν εἴποιμι, "dixerim", especially as εἶπον is found in all Codd. without exception.

¹⁹⁰⁹ Reading καταρῶν 191·ικνωθέντα

consequently shrunk, the hands on either side powerless to perform their natural work, shaken with an involuntary trembling? What a sight again are the bodies of persons in a long consumption! They differ from bare bones only in giving the appearance of being covered with a worn-out veil of skin. What a sight too are those of persons swollen with the disease of dropsy! What words could describe the unsightly disfigurement of sufferers from leprosy¹⁹¹⁰? Gradually over all their limbs and organs of sensation rottenness spreads and devours them. What words could describe that of persons who have been mutilated in earthquake, battle, or by any other visitation, and live on in such a plight for a long time before their natural deaths? Or of those who from an injury have grown up from infancy with their limbs awry! What can one say of them? What is one to think about the bodies of newborn infants who have been either exposed, or strangled, or died a natural death, if they are to be brought to life again just such as they were? Are they to continue in that infantine state? What condition could be more miserable than that? Or are they to come to the flower of their age? Well, but what sort of milk has Nature got to suckle them again with? It comes then to this: that, if our bodies are to live again in every respect the same as before, this thing that we are expecting is simply a calamity; whereas if they are not the same, the person raised up will be another than he who died. If, for instance, a little boy was buried, but a grown man rises again, or reversely, how can we say that the dead in his very self is raised up, when he has had some one substituted for him by virtue of this difference in age? Instead of the child, one sees a grown-up man. Instead of the old man, one sees a person in his prime. In fact, instead of the one person another entirely. The cripple is changed into the able-bodied man; the consumptive sufferer into a man whose flesh is firm; and so on of all possible cases, not to enumerate them for fear of being prolix. If, then, the body will not come to life again just such in its attributes as it was when it mingled with the earth, that dead body will not rise again; but on the contrary the earth will be formed into another man. How, then, will the Resurrection affect myself, when instead of me some one else will come to life? Some one else, I say; for how could I recognize myself when, instead of what was once myself, I see some one not myself? It cannot really be I, unless it is in every respect the same as myself. Suppose, for instance, in this life I had in my memory the traits of some one; say he was bald, had prominent lips, a somewhat flat nose, a fair complexion, grey eyes, white hair, wrinkled skin; and then went to look for such an one, and met a young man with a fine head of hair, an aquiline nose, a dark complexion, and in all other respects quite different in his type of countenance; am I likely in seeing the latter to think of the former? But why dwell longer on these the less forcible objections to the Resurrection, and neglect the strongest one of all? For who has not heard that human life is like a stream, moving from birth to death at a certain rate of progress, and then only ceasing from that progressive movement when it ceases also to exist? This movement indeed is not one of spacial change; our bulk never exceeds itself; but it makes this advance by means of internal alteration; and as long as this alteration is that which its name implies, it never remains at the same stage (from moment to moment); for how can that which is being altered be kept in any sameness? The fire on

¹⁹¹⁰ ἰεργᾶ νόσῳ. That these words can mean leprosy, as well as epilepsy, seems clear from Eusebius.

the wick, as far as appearance goes, certainly seems always the same, the continuity of its movement giving it the look of being an uninterrupted and self-centred whole; but in reality it is always passing itself along and never remains the same; the moisture which is extracted by the heat is burnt up and changed into smoke the moment it has burst into flame and this alterative force effects the movement of the flame, working by itself the change of the subject-matter into smoke; just, then, as it is impossible for one who has touched that flame twice on the same place, to touch twice the very same flame¹⁹¹¹ (for the speed of the alteration is too quick; it does not wait for that second touch, however rapidly it may be effected; the flame is always fresh and new; it is always being produced, always transmitting itself, never remaining at one and the same place), a thing of the same kind is found to be the case with the constitution of our body. There is influx and afflux going on in it in an alterative progress until the moment that it ceases to live; as long as it is living it has no stay; for it is either being replenished, or it is discharging in vapour, or it is being kept in motion by both of these processes combined. If, then, a particular man is not the same even as he was yesterday¹⁹¹², but is made different by this transmutation, when so be that the Resurrection shall restore our body to life again, that single man will become a crowd of human beings, so that with his rising again there will be found the babe, the child, the boy, the youth, the man, the father, the old man, and all the intermediate persons that he once was. But further¹⁹¹³; chastity and profligacy are both carried on in the flesh; those also who endure the most painful tortures for their religion, and those on the other hand who shrink from such, both one class and the other reveal their character in relation to fleshly sensations; how, then, can justice be done at the Judgment¹⁹¹⁴?

Or take the case of one and the same man first sinning and then cleansing himself by repentance, and then, it might so happen, relapsing into his sin; in such a case both the defiled and the undefiled body alike undergoes a change, as his nature changes, and neither of them continue to the end the

¹⁹¹¹ *to touch twice the very same flame.* Albert Jahn (quoted by Krabinger) here remarks that Gregory's comparison rivals that of Heraclitus: and that there is a deliberate intention of improving on the expression of the latter, "you cannot step twice into the same stream." Above (p. 459), Gregory has used directly Heraclitus' image, "so that Nature's stream may not flow on for ever, pouring forward in her successive births," &c. See also *De Hom. Opif.* c. 13 (beginning).

¹⁹¹² *not the same even as he was yesterday.* Cf. Gregory's *Oratio de Mortuis*, t. III. p. 633 A. "It is not exaggeration to say that death is woven into our life. Practically such an idea will be found by any one to be based on a reality: for experiment would confirm this belief that the man of yesterday is not the same as the man of today in material substance, but that something of him must be always becoming dead, or be growing, or being destroyed, or ejected:...Wherefore, according to the expression of the mighty Paul, 'we die daily': we are not always the same people remaining in the same homes of the body, but each moment we change from what we were by reception and ejection, altering continually into a fresh body."

¹⁹¹³ A fresh objection is here started. It is answered (254 A, B).

¹⁹¹⁴ Which succeeds (and is bound up with) the Resurrection. The argument is, "the *flesh* has behaved differently in *different persons* here; how then can it be treated alike in all by being allowed to rise again? Even before the judgment an injustice has been done by all rising in the same way to a new life."—In what follows, ἡ τοῦ αὐτοῦ νῦν μὲν, κ.τ.λ., the difficulty of different dispositions in the same person is considered.

same; which body, then, is the profligate to be tortured in? In that which is stiffened with old age and is near to death? But this is not the same as that which did the sin. In that, then, which defiled itself by giving way to passion? But where is the old man, in that case? This last, in fact, will not rise again, and the Resurrection will not do a complete work; or else he will rise, while the criminal will escape. Let me say something else also from amongst the objections made by unbelievers to this doctrine. No part, they urge, of the body is made by nature without a function. Some parts, for instance, are the efficient causes within us of our being alive; without them our life in the flesh could not possibly be carried on; such are the heart, liver, brain, lungs, stomach, and the other vitals; others are assigned to the activities of sensation; others to those of handling and walking¹⁹¹⁵; others are adapted for the transmission of a posterity. Now if the life to come is to be in exactly the same circumstances as this, the supposed change in us is reduced to nothing; but if the report is true, as indeed it is, which represents marriage as forming no part of the economy of that after-life, and eating and drinking as not then preserving its continuance, what use will there be for the members of our body, when we are no longer to expect in that existence any of the activities for which our members now exist? If, for the sake of marriage, there are now certain organs adapted for marriage, then, whenever the latter ceases to be, we shall not need those organs: the same may be said of the hands for working with, the feet for running with, the mouth for taking food with, the teeth for grinding it with, the organs of the stomach for digesting, the evacuating ducts for getting rid of that which has become superfluous. When therefore, all those operations will be no more how or wherefore will their instruments exist? So that necessarily, if the things that are not going to contribute in any way to that other life are not to surround the body, none of the parts which at present constitute the body would¹⁹¹⁶ exist either. That life¹⁹¹⁷, then, will be carried on by other instruments; and no one could call such a state of things a Resurrection, where the particular members are no longer present in the body, owing to their being useless to that life. But if on the other hand our Resurrection will be represented in every one of these; then the Author of the Resurrection will fashion things in us of no use and advantage to that life. And yet we must believe, not only that there is a Resurrection, but also that it will not be an absurdity. We must, therefore,

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¹⁹¹⁵ παρεκτικῆς καὶ μεταβατικῆς ἐνεργείας. To the latter expression, which simply means walking, belong the words below, καὶ πρὸς τὸν δρομον οἱ πόδες (p. 464). Schmidt well remarks that a simpler form than μεταβατικός does not exist, because in all walking the notion of putting one foot in the place of the other (μετά) is implied; and shows that Krabinger's translation "transeundi officium" makes too much of the word.

¹⁹¹⁶ Reading ὡς ἂν ἀνάγκην εἶναι, εἰ μὴ εἴη περὶ τὸ σῶμα τὰ πρὸς οὐδὲν, κ.τ.λ. The ἂν seems required by the protasis εἰ μὴ εἴη, and two Codd. supply it. The interrogative sentence ends with ἔσται.—Below (ὥστε παθεῖν ἂν), ἂν is found with the same force with the infinitive; "so that those...might possibly be affected."

¹⁹¹⁷ Reading ἐν ἄλλοις ἄρ' ἢ ζωῆ, as Schmidt suggests, and as the sense seems to require, although there is no MS. authority except for γάρ.

listen attentively to the explanation of this, so that, for every part of this truth we may have its probability saved to the last¹⁹¹⁸.

When I had finished, the Teacher thus replied, You have attacked the doctrines connected with the Resurrection with some spirit, in the way of rhetoric as it is called; you have coursed round and round the truth with plausibly subversive arguments; so much so, that those who have not very carefully considered this mysterious truth might possibly be affected in their view of it by the likelihood of those arguments, and might think that the difficulty started against what has been advanced was not altogether beside the point. But, she proceeded, the truth does not lie in these arguments, even though we may find it impossible to give a rhetorical answer to them, couched in equally strong language. The true explanation of all these questions is still stored up in the hidden treasure-rooms of Wisdom, and will not come to the light until that moment when we shall be taught the mystery of the Resurrection by the reality of it; and then there will be no more need of phrases to explain the things which we now hope for. Just as many questions might be started for debate amongst people sitting up at night as to the kind of thing that sunshine is, and then the simple appearing of it in all its beauty would render any verbal description superfluous, so every calculation that tries to arrive conjecturally at the future state will be reduced to nothingness by the object of our hopes, when it comes upon us. But since it is our duty not to leave the arguments brought against us in any way unexamined, we will expound the truth as to these points as follows. First let us get a clear notion as to the scope of this doctrine; in other words, what is the end that Holy Scripture has in view in promulgating it and creating the belief in it. Well, to sketch the outline of so vast a truth and to embrace it in a definition, we will say that the Resurrection is “*the reconstitution of our nature in its original form*”¹⁹¹⁹.” But in that form of life, of which God Himself was the Creator, it is reasonable to believe that there was neither age nor infancy nor any of the sufferings arising from our present various infirmities, nor any kind of bodily affliction whatever. It is reasonable, I say, to believe that God was the Creator of none of these things, but that man was a thing divine before his humanity got within reach of the assault of evil; that then, however, with the inroad of evil, all these afflictions also broke in upon him. Accordingly a life that is free from evil is under no necessity whatever of being passed amidst the things that result from evil. It follows that when a man travels through ice he must get his body chilled; or when he walks in a very hot sun that he must get his skin darkened; but if he has kept clear of the one or the other, he escapes these results

¹⁹¹⁸ *saved to the last*. The word here is διασώζειν; lit. to “preserve through danger,” but it is used by later writers mostly of dialectic battles, and Plato himself uses it so (e.g. *Timæus*, p. 56, 68, *Polit.* p. 395) always of “probability.” It is used by Gregory, literally, in his letter to Flavian, “we at last *arrived alive* in our own district,” and, with a slight difference, *On Pilgrimages*, “it is impossible for a woman to accomplish so long a journey without a *conductor*, on account of her natural weakness.” Hence the late word διασώστης, dux itineris.

¹⁹¹⁹ The actual language of this definition is Platonic (cf. *Sympos.* p. 193 D), but it is Gregory’s constant formula for the Christian Resurrection; see *De Hom. Opif.* c. 17; *In Ecclesiast.* I. p. 385 A; *Funeral Oration for Pulcheria*, III. p. 523 C; *Orat. de Mortuis*, III. p. 632 C; *De Virginitate*, c. xii. p. 358.

entirely, both the darkening and the chilling; no one, in fact, when a particular cause was removed, would be justified in looking for the effect of that particular cause. Just so our nature, becoming passional, had to encounter all the necessary results of a life of passion: but when it shall have started back to that state of passionless blessedness, it will no longer encounter the inevitable results of evil tendencies. Seeing, then, that all the infusions of the life of the brute into our nature were not in us before our humanity descended through the touch of evil into passions, most certainly, when we abandon those passions, we shall abandon all their visible results. No one, therefore, will be justified in seeking in that other life for the consequences in us of any passion. Just as if a man, who, clad in a ragged tunic, has divested himself of the garb, feels no more its disgrace upon him, so we too, when we have cast off that dead unsightly tunic made from the skins of brutes and put upon us (for I take the “coats of skins” to mean that conformation belonging to a brute nature with which we were clothed when we became familiar with passionate indulgence), shall, along with the casting off of that tunic, fling from us all the belongings that were round us of that skin of a brute; and such accretions are sexual intercourse, conception, parturition, impurities, suckling, feeding, evacuation, gradual growth to full size, prime of life, old age, disease, and death. If that skin is no longer round us, how can its resulting consequences be left behind within us? It is folly, then, when we are to expect a different state of things in the life to come, to object to the doctrine of the Resurrection on the ground of something that has nothing to do with it. I mean, what has thinness or corpulence, a state of consumption or of plethora, or any other condition supervening in a nature that is ever in a flux, to do with the other life, stranger as it is to any fleeting and transitory passing such as that? One thing, and one thing only, is required for the operation of the Resurrection; viz. that a man should have lived, by being born; or, to use rather the Gospel words, that “a man should be born¹⁹²⁰ into the world”; the length or briefness of the life, the manner, this or that, of the death, is an irrelevant subject of inquiry in connection with that operation. Whatever instance we take, howsoever we suppose this to have been, it is all the same; from these differences in life there arises no difficulty, any more than any facility, with regard to the Resurrection. He who has once begun to live must necessarily go on having once lived¹⁹²¹, after his intervening dissolution in death has been repaired in the Resurrection.

As to the *how* and the *when* of his dissolution, what do *they* matter to the Resurrection? Consideration of such points belongs to another line of inquiry altogether. For instance, a man may have lived in bodily comfort, or in affliction, virtuously or viciously, renowned or disgraced; he may have passed his days miserably, or happily. These and such-like results must be obtained from the length of his life and the manner of his living; and to be able to pass a judgment on the things done in his life, it will be necessary for the judge to scrutinize his indulgences, as the case may be,

¹⁹²⁰ ἐγεννηθη. S. John xvi. 21

¹⁹²¹ τὸν γὰρ τοῦ ζῆν ἀρξάμενον, ζῆσαι χρὴ πάντως. The present infinitive here expresses only a new state of existence, the aorist a continued act. The aorist may have this force, if (as a whole) it is viewed as a *single event* in past time. Cf. Appian. *Bell. Civ.* ii. 91, ἦλθον, εἶδον, ἐνίκησα.

or his losses, or his disease, or his old age, or his prime, or his youth, or his wealth, or his poverty: how well or ill a man, placed in either of these, concluded his destined career; whether he was the recipient of many blessings, or of many ills in a length of life; or tasted neither of them at all, but ceased to live before his mental powers were formed. But whenever the time come that God shall have brought our nature back to the primal state of man, it will be useless to talk of such things then, and to imagine that objections based upon such things can prove God's power to be impeded in arriving at His end. His end is one, and one only; it is this: when the complete whole of our race shall have been perfected from the first man to the last,—some having at once in this life been cleansed from evil, others having afterwards in the necessary periods been healed by the Fire, others having in their life here been unconscious equally of good and of evil,—to offer to every one of us participation in the blessings which are in Him, which, the Scripture tells us, “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,” nor thought ever reached. But this is nothing else, as I at least understand it, but to be in God Himself; for the Good which is above hearing and eye and heart must be that Good which transcends the universe. But the difference between the virtuous and the vicious life led at the present time¹⁹²² will be illustrated in this way; viz. in the quicker or more tardy participation of each in that promised blessedness. According to the amount of the ingrained wickedness of each will be computed the duration of his cure. This cure consists in the cleansing of his soul, and that cannot be achieved without an excruciating condition, as has been expounded in our previous discussion. But any one would more fully comprehend the futility and irrelevancy of all these objections by trying to fathom the depths of our Apostle's wisdom. When explaining this mystery to the Corinthians, who, perhaps, themselves were bringing forward the same objections to it as its impugners to-day bring forward to overthrow our faith, he proceeds on his own authority to chide the audacity of their ignorance, and speaks thus: “Thou wilt say, then, to me, How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain; But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him.” In that passage, as it seems to me, he gags the mouths of men who display their ignorance of the fitting proportions in Nature, and who measure the Divine power by their own strength, and think that only so much is possible to God as the human understanding can take in, but that what is beyond it surpasses also the Divine ability. For the man who had asked the Apostle, “how are the dead raised up?” evidently implies that it is impossible when once the body's atoms have been scattered that they should again come in concourse together; and this being impossible, and no other possible form of body, besides that arising from such a concourse, being left, he, after the fashion of clever controversialists, concludes the truth of what he wants to prove, by a species of syllogism, thus: If

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¹⁹²² Reading with Krabinger, ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ instead of ἐν τῷ μετὰ ταῦτα, which cannot possibly refer to what immediately precedes, *i.e.* the union with God, by means of the Resurrection. If μετὰ ταῦτα is retained, it must = μετὰ τοῦτον τὸν βίον.

Gregory here implies that the Resurrection is not a single contemporaneous act, but differs in time, as individuals differ; carrying out the Scriptural distinction of a first and second Resurrection.

a body is a concourse of atoms, and a second assemblage of these is impossible, what sort of body will those get who rise again? This conclusion, involved seemingly in this artful contrivance of premisses, the Apostle calls “folly,” as coming from men who failed to perceive in other parts of the creation the masterliness of the Divine power. For, omitting the sublimer miracles of God’s hand, by which it would have been easy to place his hearer in a dilemma (for instance he might have asked “how or whence comes a heavenly body, that of the sun for example, or that of the moon, or that which is seen in the constellations; whence the firmament, the air, water, the earth?”), he, on the contrary, convicts the objectors of inconsiderateness by means of objects which grow alongside of us and are very familiar to all. “Does not even husbandry teach thee,” he asks, “that the man who in calculating the transcendent powers of the Deity limits them by his own is a fool?” Whence do seeds get the bodies that spring up from them? What precedes this springing up? Is it not a death that precedes¹⁹²³? At least, if the dissolution of a compacted whole is a death; for indeed it cannot be supposed that the seed would spring up into a shoot unless it had been dissolved in the soil, and so become spongy and porous to such an extent as to mingle its own qualities with the adjacent moisture of the soil, and thus become transformed into a root and shoot; not stopping even there, but changing again into the stalk with its intervening knee-joints that gird it up like so many clasps, to enable it to carry with figure erect the ear with its load of corn. Where, then, were all these things belonging to the grain before its dissolution in the soil? And yet this result sprang from that grain; if that grain had not existed first, the ear would not have arisen. Just, then, as the “body” of the ear comes to light out of the seed, God’s artistic touch of power producing it all out of that single thing, and just as it is neither entirely the same thing as that seed nor something altogether

¹⁹²³ Dr. H. Schmidt has an admirable note here, pointing out the great and important difference between S. Paul’s use of this analogy of the grain of wheat, and that of our Saviour in S. John xii. 23, whence S. Paul took it. In the words, “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (A.V.), the fact and the similitude exactly correspond. To the corn with its life-engendering shoot, answers the man with his vivifying soul. The shoot, when the necessary conditions are fulfilled, breaks through the corn, and mounts up into an ear, exquisitely developed: so the soul, when the due time is come, bursts from the body into a nobler form. Again, through the death of the integument a number of new corns are produced: so through the death of the body that encases a perfect soul (*i.e.* that of Jesus), an abundance of blessings is produced for mankind. Everything here exactly corresponds; the principle of life, on the one hand in the corn, on the other hand in the human body, breaks, by dying, into a more beautiful existence. But this comparison in S. Paul becomes a *similitude* rather than an *analogy*. With him the lifeless body is set over against the life-containing corn; he does not compare the lifeless body with the lifeless corn: because out of the latter no stalk and ear would ever grow. The comparison, therefore, is not exact: it is not pretended that the rising to life of the dead human body is not a process transcendentally above the natural process of the rising of the ear of wheat. But the similitude serves to illustrate the *form* and the *quality* of the risen body, which has been in question since v. 35 (1 Cor. xv.), “with what body do they come?” and the salient point is that the risen body will be as little like the buried body, *as* the ear of wheat is like its corn. The possibility of the Resurrection has been *already* proved by S. Paul in this chapter by Christ’s own Resurrection, which he states from the very commencement as a fact: it is not proved by this similitude.

different, so (she insisted) by these miracles performed on seeds you may now interpret the mystery of the Resurrection. The Divine power, in the superabundance of Omnipotence, does not only restore you that body once dissolved, but makes great and splendid additions to it, whereby the human being is furnished in a manner still more magnificent.

“It is sown,” he says, “in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” The grain of wheat, after its dissolution in the soil, leaves behind the slightness of its bulk and the peculiar quality of its shape, and yet it has not left and lost itself, but, still self-centred, grows into the ear, though in many points it has made an advance upon itself, viz. in size, in splendour, in complexity, in form. In the same fashion the human being deposits in death all those peculiar surroundings which it has acquired from passionate propensities; dishonour, I mean, and corruption and weakness and characteristics of age; and yet the human being does not lose itself. It changes into an ear of corn as it were; into incorruption, that is, and glory and honour and power and absolute perfection; into a condition in which its life is no longer carried on in the ways peculiar to mere nature, but has passed into a spiritual and passionless existence. For it is the peculiarity of the natural body to be always moving on a stream, to be always altering from its state for the moment and changing into something else; but none of these processes, which we observe not in man only but also in plants and brutes will be found remaining in the life that shall be then. Further, it seems to me that the words of the Apostle in every respect harmonize with our own conception of what the Resurrection is. They indicate the very same thing that we have embodied in our own definition of it, wherein we said that the Resurrection is no other thing than “*the re-constitution of our nature in its original form.*” For, whereas we learn from Scripture in the account of the first Creation¹⁹²⁴, that first the earth brought forth “the green herb” (as the narrative says), and that then from this plant seed was yielded, from which, when it was shed on the ground, the same form of the original plant again sprang up, the Apostle, it is to be observed, declares that this very same thing happens in the Resurrection also; and so we learn from him the fact, not only¹⁹²⁵ that our humanity will be then changed into something nobler, but also that what we have therein to expect is nothing else than that which was at the beginning. In the beginning, we see, it was not an ear rising from a grain, but a grain coming from an ear, and, after that, the ear grows round the grain: and so the order indicated in this similitude¹⁹²⁶ clearly shows that all that blessed state, which arises for us by means of the Resurrection is only a return to our pristine state of grace. We too, in fact, were once in a fashion a full ear¹⁹²⁷; but the burning heat of sin withered us up, and then on



¹⁹²⁴ The Resurrection being the second. The ἐπειδὴ here does not give the reason for what precedes: that is given in the words, φησὶ δὴ τοῦτο ὁ ἀπόστολος, to which the leading γὰρ therefore belongs: the colon should be replaced (after ἀνέδραμεν) by a comma.

¹⁹²⁵ Reading οὐ μόνον δὲ τοῦτο, κ.τ.λ. The δὲ is not found in two Codd.

¹⁹²⁶ *i.e.* of grain, adopted by the Apostle.

¹⁹²⁷ στάχυς here might be the nom. plur. Any way it is a “nominativus pendens.”

our dissolution by death the earth received us: but in the spring of the Resurrection she will reproduce this naked grain¹⁹²⁸ of our body in the form of an ear, tall, well-proportioned, and erect, reaching to the heights of heaven, and, for blade and beard, resplendent in incorruption, and with all the other godlike marks. For “this corruptible must put on incorruption”; and this incorruption and glory and honour and power are those distinct and acknowledged marks of Deity which once belonged to him who was created in God’s image, and which we hope for hereafter. The first man Adam, that is, was the first ear; but with the arrival of evil human nature was diminished into a mere multitude¹⁹²⁹; and, as happens to the grain¹⁹³⁰ on the ear, each individual man was denuded of the beauty of that primal ear, and mouldered in the soil: but in the Resurrection we are born again in our original splendour; only instead of that single primitive ear we become the countless myriads of ears in the cornfields. The virtuous life as contrasted with that of vice is distinguished thus: those who while living have by virtuous conduct exercised husbandry on themselves are at once revealed in all the qualities of a perfect ear, while those whose bare grain (that is the forces of their natural soul) has become through evil habits degenerate, as it were, and hardened by the weather (as the

¹⁹²⁸ This “*naked grain*” is suggested by the words of S. Paul, not so much 1 Cor. xv. 37, as 2 Cor. v. 4: “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon.” Tertullian’s words (*de resurr. carnis* c. 52) deserve to be quoted, “Seritur granum sine folliculi veste, sine fundamento spicæ, sine munimento aristæ, sine superbiâ culmi. Exsurgit copiâ feneratum, compagine ædificatum, ordine structum, cultu munitum, et usquequaque vestitum.” In allusion to this passage (2 Cor. v. 4), Origen says, “Our theory of the Resurrection teaches that the relations of a seed attach to that which the Scriptures call the ‘tabernacle of the soul,’ in which the righteous ‘do groan being burdened,’ not wishing to put it off, but ‘to be clothed upon’ (with something else). We do not, as Celsus thinks, mean by the resurrection anything like the transmigration of souls. The soul, in its essence unbodied and invisible, when it comes into material space, requires a body fitted to the conditions of that particular space: which body it wears, having either put off a former body, or else having put it on over its former body...For instance, when it comes to the actual birth into this world it lays aside the environment (χωρίον) which was needed as long as it is in the womb of her that is with child: and it clothes itself with that which is necessary for one destined to pass through life. Then there is a ‘tabernacle,’ and ‘an earthly house,’ as well: and the Scriptures tell us that this ‘earthly house’ of the tabernacle is to be dissolved, but that the tabernacle itself is to surround itself with another house not made with hands. The men of God declare that the corruptible must put on incorruption (which is a different thing from the incorruptible), and the mortal must put on immortality (which is different from the immortal: just as the relative quality of wisdom is different from that which is absolutely wise). Observe, then, where this system leads us. It says that the souls put on incorruption and immortality like garments which keep their wearer from corruption, and their inmate (τὸν περικείμενον αὐτὰ) from death” (*c. Cels.* vii. 32). We see at once this is another explanation of the Resurrection, by the *σπερματικὸς λόγος* of the soul, and not Gregory’s; with him the soul recollects its scattered atoms, and he thus saves the true scriptural view.

¹⁹²⁹ This connection of “evil” and “multitude” is essentially Platonic. Cf. also Plotinus, vi. 6. 1: “Multitude, then, is a revolt from unity, and infinity a more complete revolt by being infinite multitude: and so infinity is bad, and we are bad, when we are a multitude” (cf. “Legion” in the parable).

¹⁹³⁰ *as happens to the grain*, i.e. to become bare, as compared with the beautiful envelopments of the entire ear.



so-called “hornstruck” seeds¹⁹³¹, according to the experts in such things, grow up), will, though they live again in the Resurrection, experience very great severity from their Judge, because they do not possess the strength to shoot up into the full proportions of an ear, and thereby become that which we were before our earthly fall¹⁹³². The remedy offered by the Overseer of the produce is to collect together the tares and the thorns, which have grown up with the good seed, and into whose bastard life all the secret forces that once nourished its root have passed, so that it not only has had to remain without its nutriment, but has been choked and so rendered unproductive by this unnatural growth. When from the nutritive part within them everything that is the reverse or the counterfeit of it has been picked out, and has been committed to the fire that consumes everything unnatural, and so has disappeared, then in this class also their humanity will thrive and will ripen into fruit-bearing, owing to such husbandry, and some day after long courses of ages will get back again that universal form which God stamped upon us at the beginning. Blessed are they, indeed, in whom the full beauty of those ears shall be developed directly they are born in the Resurrection. Yet we say this without implying that any merely bodily distinctions will be manifest between those who have lived virtuously and those who have lived viciously in this life, as if we ought to think that one will be imperfect as regards his material frame, while another will win perfection as regards it. The prisoner and the free, here in this present world, are just alike as regards the constitutions of their two bodies; though as regards enjoyment and suffering the gulf is wide between them. In this way, I take it, should we reckon the difference between the good and the bad in that intervening time¹⁹³³. For the perfection of bodies that rise from that sowing of death is, as the Apostle tells us, to consist in incorruption and glory and honour and power; but any diminution in such excellences does not denote a corresponding bodily mutilation of him who has risen again, but a withdrawal and estrangement from each one of those things which are conceived of as belonging to the good. Seeing, then, that one or the other of these two diametrically opposed ideas, I mean good and evil, must any way attach to us, it is clear that to say a man is not included in the good is a necessary demonstration that he is included in the evil. But then, in connection with evil, we find no honour,

¹⁹³¹ “hornstruck” seeds, i.e. those which have been struck by, or have struck, the horns of the oxen, in the process of sowing: according to the rustic superstition, which Gregory Nazianz. in some very excellent hexameters alludes to (*Opp.* t. II. pp. 66–163): “There is,” he says, “a dry unsoakable seed, which never sinks into the ground, or fattens with the rain; it is harder than horn; its horn has struck the horn of the ox, what time the ploughman’s hand is scattering the grain over his land.” Ruhnken (ad *Timæum*, p. 155) has collected the ancient authorities on this point. The word is used by Plato of a “hard,” “intractable” person. The “bare grain” of the wicked is here compared to these hard seeds, which even though they may sink into the earth and rise again, yet have a poor and stunted blade, which may never grow.

¹⁹³² Reading ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, instead of τὴν γῆν: for a fall “on to the earth,” instead of “on the earth,” agrees neither with what Gregory (speaking by Macrina) has urged against the heathen doctrine of Transmigration, nor with the words of Scripture which he follows. The “earthly fall” is compared with the heavenly rising: κατὰπτωσις, in the sense of a “moral fall,” is used in 3 Maccab. ii. 14 (quoted by Schmidt).

¹⁹³³ Between the Resurrection and the Αποκατάστασις

no glory, no incorruption, no power; and so we are forced to dismiss all doubt that a man who has nothing to do with these last-mentioned things must be connected with their opposites, viz. with weakness, with dishonour, with corruption, with everything of that nature, such as we spoke of in the previous parts of the discussion, when we said how many were the passions, sprung from evil, which are so hard for the soul to get rid of, when they have infused themselves into the very substance of its entire nature and become one with it. When such, then, have been purged from it and utterly removed by the healing processes worked out by the Fire, then every one of the things which make up our conception of the good will come to take their place; incorruption, that is, and life, and honour, and grace, and glory, and everything else that we conjecture is to be seen in God, and in His Image, man as he was made.