

**0330-0395 – Gregorius Nyssenus – Contra Eunomium**

**Gregory of Nyssa Against Eunomius**

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## Gregory of Nyssa Against Eunomius.

### Letter I.

GREGORY to his brother Peter, Bishop of Sebasteia.

Having with difficulty obtained a little leisure, I have been able to recover from bodily fatigue on my return from Armenia, and to collect the sheets of my reply to Eunomius which was suggested by your wise advice; so that my work is now arranged in a complete treatise, which can be read between covers. However, I have not written against both his pamphlets<sup>56</sup>; even the leisure for that was not granted; for the person who lent me the heretical volume most uncourteously sent for it again, and allowed me no time either to write it out or to study it. In the short space of seventeen days it was impossible to be prepared to answer both his attacks.

Owing to its somehow having become notorious that we had laboured to answer this blasphemous manifesto, many persons possessing some zeal for the Truth have importuned me about it: but I have thought it right to prefer you in your wisdom before them all, to advise me whether to consign this work to the public, or to take some other course. The reason why I hesitate is this. When our saintly Basil fell asleep, and I received the legacy of Eunomius' controversy, when my heart was hot within me with bereavement, and, besides this deep sorrow for the common loss of the church, Eunomius had not confined himself to the various topics which might pass as a defence of his views, but had spent the chief part of his energy in laboriously-written abuse of our father in God. I was exasperated with this, and there were passages where the flame of my heart-felt indignation burst out against this writer. The public have pardoned us for much else, because we have been apt in showing patience in meeting lawless attacks, and as far as possible have practised that restraint in feeling which the saint has taught us; but I had fears lest from what we have now written against this opponent the reader should get the idea that we were very raw controversialists, who lost our temper directly at insolent abuse. Perhaps, however, this suspicion about us will be disarmed by

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<sup>56</sup> *both his pamphlets.* The 'sheets' which Gregory says that he has collected are the 12 Books that follow. They are written in reply to Eunomius' pamphlet, 'Apologia Apologiæ,' itself a reply to Basil's Refutation. The other pamphlet of Eunomius seems to have come out during the composition of Gregory's 12 Books: and was afterwards answered by the latter in a second 12th Book, but not now, because of the shortness of the time in which he had a copy of the 'heretical volume' in his hands. The two last books of the five which go under the title of Basil's Refutation are considered on good grounds to have been Gregory's, and to have formed that short reply to Eunomius which he read, at the Council of Constantinople, to Gregory of Nazianzen and Jerome (*d. vir. illust.* c. 128). Then he worked upon this longer reply. Thus there were in all three works of Gregory corresponding to the three attacks of Eunomius upon the Trinity.

remembering that this display of anger is not on our own behalf, but because of insults levelled against our father in God; and that it is a case in which mildness would be more unpardonable than anger.

If, then, the first part of my treatise should seem somewhat outside the controversy, the following explanation of it will, I think, be accepted by a reader who can judge fairly. It was not right to leave undefended the reputation of our noble saint, mangled as it was by the opponent's blasphemies, any more than it was convenient to let this battle in his behalf be spread diffusely along the whole thread of the discussion; besides, if any one reflects, these pages do really form part of the controversy. Our adversary's treatise has two separate arms, viz. to abuse us and to controvert sound doctrine; and therefore ours too must show a double front. But for the sake of clearness, and in order that the thread of the discussion upon matters of the Faith should not be cut by parentheses, consisting of answers to their personal abuse, we have separated our work into two parts, and devoted ourselves in the first to refute these charges: and then we have grappled as best we might with that which they have advanced against the Faith. Our treatise also contains, in addition to a refutation of their heretical views, a dogmatic exposition of our own teaching; for it would be a most shameful want of spirit, when our foes make no concealment of their blasphemy, not to be bold in our statement of the Truth.



## Letter II.

To his most pious brother Gregory. Peter greeting in the Lord.

Having met with the writings of your holiness and having perceived in your tract against this heresy your zeal both for the truth and for our sainted father in God, I judge that this work was not due simply to your own ability, but was that of one who studied that the Truth should speak, even in the publication of his own views. To the Holy Spirit of truth I would refer this plea for the truth; just as to the father of lies, and not to Eunomius, should be referred this animosity against sound faith. Indeed, that murderer from the beginning who speaks in Eunomius has carefully whetted the sword against himself; for if he had not been so bold against the truth, no one would have roused you to undertake the cause of our religion. But to the end that the rottenness and flimsiness of their doctrines may be exposed, He who "taketh the wise in their own craftiness" hath allowed them both to be headstrong against the truth, and to have laboured vainly on this vain speech.

But since he that hath begun a good work will finish it, faint not in furthering the Spirit's power, nor leave half-won the victory over the assailants of Christ's glory; but imitate thy true father who, like the zealot Phineas, pierced with one stroke of his Answer both master and pupil. Plunge with thy intellectual arm the sword of the Spirit through both these heretical pamphlets, lest, though broken on the head, the serpent affright the simpler sort by still quivering in the tail. When the first

arguments have been answered, should the last remain unnoticed, the many will suspect that they still retain some strength against the truth.

The feeling shewn in your treatise will be grateful, as salt, to the palate of the soul. As bread cannot be eaten, according to Job, without salt, so the discourse which is not savoured with the inmost sentiments of God's word will never wake, and never move, desire.

Be strong, then, in the thought that thou art a beautiful example to succeeding times of the way in which good-hearted children should act towards their virtuous fathers.



## Book I.<sup>57</sup>

§1. *Preface.*—*It is useless to attempt to benefit those who will not accept help.*

It seems that the wish to benefit all, and to lavish indiscriminately upon the first comer one's own gifts, was not a thing altogether commendable, or even free from reproach in the eyes of the many; seeing that the gratuitous waste of many prepared drugs on the incurably-diseased produces no result worth caring about, either in the way of gain to the recipient, or reputation to the would-be benefactor. Rather such an attempt becomes in many cases the occasion of a change for the worse. The hopelessly-diseased and now dying patient receives only a speedier end from the more active medicines; the fierce unreasonable temper is only made worse by the kindness of the lavished pearls, as the Gospel tells us. I think it best, therefore, in accordance with the Divine command, for any one to separate the valuable from the worthless when either have to be given away, and to avoid the pain which a generous giver must receive from one who 'treads upon his pearl,' and insults him by his utter want of feeling for its beauty.

This thought suggests itself when I think of one who freely communicated to others the beauties of his own soul, I mean that man of God, that mouth of piety, Basil; one who from the abundance of his spiritual treasures poured his grace of wisdom into evil souls whom he had never tested, and into one among them, Eunomius, who was perfectly insensible to all the efforts made for his good. Pitiably indeed seemed the condition of this poor man, from the extreme weakness of his soul in

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<sup>57</sup> This first Book against Eunomius was not in the 1<sup>st</sup> Paris Edition of Gregory's works, 1615; but it was published three years later from the 'Bavarian Codex,' i.e. that of Munich, by J. Gretser, in an Appendix, along with the Summaries (i.e. the headings of the sections, which appear to be not Gregory's) and the two Introductory Letters. These Summaries and the Letters, and nearly three quarters of the 1<sup>st</sup> Book were found in J. Livineius' transcript from the Codex Vaticanus made 1579, at Rome. This Appendix was added to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Paris Edit. 1638. F. Oehler, whose text has been followed throughout, has used for the 1<sup>st</sup> Book the Munich Codex (on paper, xvi<sup>th</sup> Cent.); the Venetian (on cotton, xiii<sup>th</sup> Cent.); the Turin (on cotton, xiv<sup>th</sup> Cent.), and the oldest of all, the Florentine (on parchment, xi<sup>th</sup> Cent.).

the matter of the Faith, to all true members of the Church; for who is so wanting in feeling as not to pity, at least, a perishing soul? But Basil alone, from the abiding<sup>58</sup> ardour of his love, was moved to undertake his cure, and therein to attempt impossibilities; he alone took so much to heart the man's desperate condition, as to compose, as an antidote of deadly poisons, his refutation of this heresy<sup>59</sup>, which aimed at saving its author, and restoring him to the Church.

He, on the contrary, like one beside himself with fury, resists his doctor; he fights and struggles; he regards as a bitter foe one who only put forth his strength to drag him from the abyss of misbelief; and he does not indulge in this foolish anger only before chance hearers now and then; he has raised against himself a literary monument to record this blackness of his bile; and when in long years he got the requisite amount of leisure, he was travailling over his work during all that interval with mightier pangs than those of the largest and the bulkiest beasts; his threats of what was coming were dreadful, whilst he was still secretly moulding his conception: but when at last and with great difficulty he brought it to the light, it was a poor little abortion, quite prematurely born. However, those who share his ruin nurse it and coddle it; while we, seeking the blessing in the prophet ("Blessed shall he be who shall take thy children, and shall dash them against the stones<sup>60</sup>") are only eager, now that it has got into our hands, to take this puling manifesto and dash it on the rock, as if it was one of the children of Babylon; and the rock must be Christ; in other words, the enunciation of the truth. Only may that power come upon us which strengthens weakness, through the prayers of him who made his own strength perfect in bodily weakness<sup>61</sup>.



58 Reading,—

τὸ μόνιμον...ἐπιτολῶντα. This is the correction of Oehler for τὸν μόνον...ἐπιτολῶν which the text presents. The Venetian ms. has ἐπιτολῶντι

59 *his refutation of this heresy.* This is Basil's Ἀνατρεπτικός τοῦ ἀπολογητικοῦ τοῦ δυοσεβοῦς Εὐνομίου. 'Basil,' says Photius, 'with difficulty got hold of Eunomius' book,' perhaps because it was written originally for a small circle of readers, and was in a highly scientific form. What happened next may be told in the words of Claudius Morellius (Prolegomena to Paris Edition of 1615): 'When Basil's first essay against the foetus of Eunomius had been published, he raised his bruised head like a trodden worm, seized his pen, and began to rave more poisonously still as well against Basil as the orthodox faith.' This was Eunomius' Ἀπολογία Ἀπολογιαῖ: of it Photius says, 'His reply to Basil was composed for many Olympiads while shut up in his cell. This, like another Saturn, he concealed from the eyes of Basil till it had grown up, i.e. he concealed it, by devouring it, as long as Basil lived.' He then goes on to say that after Basil's death, Theodore (of Mopsuestia), Gregory of Nyssa, and Sophronius found it and dealt with it, though even then Eunomius had only ventured to show it to some of his friends. Philostorgius, the ardent admirer of Eunomius, makes the amazing statement that Basil died of despair after reading it.

60 Psalm cxxxvii. 9.

61 'He asks for the intercession of Saint Paul' (Paris Edit. in marg.).

§2. *We have been justly provoked to make this Answer, being stung by Eunomius' accusations of our brother.*

If indeed that godlike and saintly soul were still in the flesh looking out upon human affairs, if those lofty tones were still heard with all their peculiar<sup>62</sup> grace and all their resistless utterance, who could arrive at such a pitch of audacity, as to attempt to speak one word upon this subject? that divine trumpet-voice would drown any word that could be uttered. But all of him has now flown back to God; at first indeed in the slight shadowy phantom of his body, he still rested on the earth; but now he has quite shed even that unsubstantial form, and bequeathed it to this world. Meantime the drones are buzzing round the cells of the Word, and are plundering the honey; so let no one accuse me of mere audacity for rising up to speak instead of those silent lips. I have not accepted this laborious task from any consciousness in myself of powers of argument superior to the others who might be named; I, if any, have the means of knowing that there are thousands in the Church who are strong in the gift of philosophic skill. Nevertheless I affirm that, both by the written and the natural law, to me more especially belongs this heritage of the departed, and therefore I myself, in preference to others, appropriate the legacy of the controversy. I may be counted amongst the least of those who are enlisted in the Church of God, but still I am not too weak to stand out as her champion against one who has broken with that Church. The very smallest member of a vigorous body would, by virtue of the unity of its life with the whole, be found stronger than one that had been cut away and was dying, however large the latter and small the former.

§3. *We see nothing remarkable in logical force in the treatise of Eunomius, and so embark on our Answer with a just confidence.*

Let no one think, that in saying this I exaggerate and make an idle boast of doing something which is beyond my strength. I shall not be led by any boyish ambition to descend to his vulgar level in a contest of mere arguments and phrases. Where victory is a useless and profitless thing, we yield it readily to those who wish to win; besides, we have only to look at this man's long practice in controversy, to conclude that he is quite a word-practitioner, and, in addition, at the fact that he has spent no small portion of his life on the composition of this treatise, and at the supreme joy of his intimates over these labours, to conclude that he has taken particular trouble with this work. It was not improbable that one who had laboured at it for so many Olympiads would produce something better than the work of extempore scribblers. Even the vulgar profusion of the figures

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<sup>62</sup> ἀποκληρωθεῖσαν. This is probably the meaning, after the analogy of ἀποκλήρωσις, in the sense (most frequent in Origen), of 'favour,' 'partiality,' passing into that of 'caprice,' 'arbitrariness,' cf. below, cap. 9, τίς ἢ ἀποκλήρωσις, κ.τ.λ. 'How arbitrarily he praises himself.'

he uses in concocting his work is a further indication of this laborious care in writing<sup>63</sup>. He has got a great mass of newly assorted terms, for which he has put certain other books under contribution, and he piles this immense congeries of words on a very slender nucleus of thought; and so he has elaborated this highly-wrought production, which his pupils in error are lost in the admiration of;—no doubt, because their deadness on the vital points deprives them of the power of feeling the distinction between beauty and the reverse:—but which is ridiculous, and of no value at all in the judgment of those, whose hearts' insight is not dimmed with any soil of unbelief. How in the world can it contribute to the proof (as he hopes) of what he says and the establishment of the truth of his speculations, to adopt these absurd devices in his forms of speech, this new-fangled and peculiar arrangement, this fussy conceit, and this conceited fussiness, which works with no enthusiasm for any previous model? For it would be indeed difficult to discover who amongst all those who have been celebrated for their eloquence he has had his eye on, in bringing himself to this pitch; for he is like those who produce effects upon the stage, adapting his argument to the tune of his rhythmical phrases, as they their song to their castenets, by means of parallel sentences of equal length, of similar sound and similar ending. Such, amongst many other faults, are the nerveless quaverings and the meretricious tricks of his Introduction; and one might fancy him bringing them all out, not with an unimpassioned action, but with stamping of the feet and sharp snapping of the fingers declaiming to the time thus beaten, and then remarking that there was no need of other arguments and a second performance after that.

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§4. *Eunomius displays much folly and fine writing, but very little seriousness about vital points.*

In these and such like antics I allow him to have the advantage; and to his heart's content he may revel in his victory there. Most willingly I forego such a competition, which can attract those only who seek renown; if indeed any renown comes from indulging in such methods of

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<sup>63</sup> Photius reports very much the same as to his style, i.e. he shows a 'prodigious ostentation:' uses 'words difficult to pronounce, and abounding in many consonants, and that in a poetic, or rather a dithyrambic style:' he has 'periods inordinately long:' he is 'obscure,' and seeks 'to hide by this very obscurity whatever is weak in his perceptions and conceptions, which indeed is often.' He 'attacks others for their logic, and is very fond of using logic himself:' but 'as he had taken up this science late in life, and had not gone very deeply into it, he is often found making mistakes.'

The book of Eunomius which Photius had read is still extant: it is his 'Apologeticus' in 28 sections, and has been published by Canisius (*Lectiones Antiquæ*, I. 172 ff.). His ἔκθεσις τῆς τίστεως, presented to the emperor Theodosius in the year 383, is also extant. This last is found in the Codex Theodosius and in the mss. which Livineius of Ghent used for his Greek and Latin edition of Gregory, 1574: it follows the Books against Eunomius. His 'Apologia Apologiae,' which he wrote in answer to Basil's 5 (or 3) books against him, is *not* extant: nor the δευτερόν λόγος which Gregory answered in his second 12th Book.

Most of the quotations, then, from Eunomius, in these books of Gregory cannot be verified, in the case of a doubtful reading, &c.

argumentation, considering that Paul<sup>64</sup>, that genuine minister of the Word, whose only ornament was truth, both disdained himself to lower his style to such prettinesses, and instructs us also, in a noble and appropriate exhortation, to fix our attention on truth alone. What need indeed for one who is fair in the beauty of truth to drag in the paraphernalia of a decorator for the production of a false artificial beauty? Perhaps for those who do not possess truth it may be an advantage to varnish their falsehoods with an attractive style, and to rub into the grain of their argument a curious polish. When their error is taught in far-fetched language and decked out with all the affectations of style, they have a chance of being plausible and accepted by their hearers. But those whose only aim is simple truth, unadulterated by any misguiding foil, find the light of a natural beauty emitted from their words.

But now that I am about to begin the examination of all that he has advanced, I feel the same difficulty as a farmer does, when the air is calm; I know not how to separate his wheat from his chaff; the waste, in fact, and the chaff in this pile of words is so enormous, that it makes one think that the residue of facts and real thoughts in all that he has said is almost nil. It would be the worse for speed and very irksome, it would even be beside our object, to go into the whole of his remarks in detail; we have not the means for securing so much leisure so as wantonly to devote it to such frivolities; it is the duty, I think, of a prudent workman not to waste his strength on trifles, but on that which will clearly repay his toil.

As to all the things, then, in his Introduction, how he constitutes himself truth's champion, and fixes the charge of unbelief upon his opponents, and declares that an abiding and indelible hatred for them has sunk into his soul, how he struts in his 'new discoveries,' though he does not tell us what they are, but says only that an examination of the debateable points in them was set on foot, a certain 'legal' trial which placed on those who were daring to act illegally the necessity of keeping quiet, or to quote his own words in that Lydian style of singing which he has got, "the bold law-breakers—in open courts—were forced to be quiet;" (he calls this a "proscription" of the conspiracy against him, whatever may be meant by that term);—all this wearisome business I pass by as quite unimportant. On the other hand, all his special pleading for his heretical conceits may well demand our close attention. Our own interpreter of the principles of divinity followed this course in *his* Treatise; for though he had plenty of ability to broaden out his argument, he took the line of dealing only with vital points, which he selected from all the blasphemies of that heretical book<sup>65</sup>, and so narrowed the scope of the subject.

If, however, any one desires that our answer should exactly correspond to the array of his arguments, let him tell us the utility of such a process. What gain would it be to my readers if I were to solve the complicated riddle of his title, which he proposes to us at the very commencement,

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. 1 Corinth. ii. 1–8.

<sup>65</sup> *that heretical book*, i.e. the first 'Apology' of Eunomius in 28 parts: a translation of it is given in Whiston's *Eunomianismus Redivivus*.



in the manner of the sphinx of the tragic stage; namely this ‘New Apology for the Apology,’ and all the nonsense which he writes about that; and if I were to tell the long tale of what he dreamt? I think that the reader is sufficiently wearied with the petty vanity about this newness in his title already preserved in Eunomius’ own text, and with the want of taste displayed there in the account of his own exploits, all his labours and his trials, while he wandered over every land and every sea, and was ‘heralded’ through the whole world. If all that had to be written down over again,—and with additions, too, as the refutations of these falsehoods would naturally have to expand their statement,—who would be found of such an iron hardness as not to be sickened at this waste of labour? Suppose I was to write down, taking word by word, an explanation of that mad story of his; suppose I were to explain, for instance, who that Armenian was on the shores of the Euxine, who had annoyed him at first by having the same name as himself, what their lives were like, what their pursuits, how he had a quarrel with that Armenian because of the very likeness of their characters, then in what fashion those two were reconciled, so as to join in a common sympathy with that winning and most glorious Aetius, his master (for so pompous are his praises); and after that, what was the plot devised against himself, by which they brought him to trial on the charge of being surpassingly popular: suppose, I say, I was to explain all that, should I not appear, like those who catch ophthalmia themselves from frequent contact with those who are already suffering so, to have caught myself this malady of fussy circumstantiality? I should be following step by step each detail of his twaddling story; finding out who the “slaves released to liberty” were, what was “the conspiracy<sup>66</sup> of the initiated” and “the calling out<sup>67</sup> of hired slaves,” what ‘Montius and Gallus, and Domitian,’ and ‘false witnesses,’ and ‘an enraged Emperor,’ and ‘certain sent into exile’ have to do with the argument. What could be more useless than such tales for the purpose of one who was not wishing merely to write a narrative, but to refute the argument of him who had written against his heresy? What follows in the story is still more profitless; I do not think that the author himself could peruse it again without yawning, though a strong natural affection for his offspring *does* possess every father. He pretends to unfold there his exploits and his sufferings; the style rears itself into the sublime, and the legend swells into the tones of tragedy.

§5. *His peculiar caricature of the bishops, Eustathius of Armenia and Basil of Galatia, is not well drawn.*

But, not to linger longer on these absurdities in the very act of declining to mention them, and not to soil this book by forcing my subject through all his written reminiscences, like one who urges

<sup>66</sup> σχέσιν.

<sup>67</sup> τάξι. We have no context to explain these allusions, the treatise of Eunomius being lost, which Gregory *is now* answering, i.e. the *Apologia Apologiæ*.

his horse through a slough and so gets covered with its filth, I think it is best to leap over the mass of his rubbish with as high and as speedy a jump as my thoughts are capable of, seeing that a quick retreat from what is disgusting is a considerable advantage; and let us hasten on<sup>68</sup> to the finale of his story, lest the bitterness of his own words should trickle into my book. Let Eunomius have the monopoly of the bad taste in such words as these, spoken of God's priests<sup>69</sup>, "curmudgeon squires, and beadles, and satellites, rummaging about, and not suffering the fugitive to carry on his concealment," and all the other things which he is not ashamed to write of grey-haired priests. Just as in the schools for secular learning<sup>70</sup>, in order to exercise the boys to be ready in word and wit, they propose themes for declamation, in which the person who is the subject of them is nameless, so does Eunomius make an onset at once upon the facts suggested, and lets loose the tongue of invective, and without saying one word as to any actual villainies, he merely works up against them all the hackneyed phrases of contempt, and every imaginable term of abuse: in which, besides, incongruous ideas are brought together, such as a 'dilettante soldier,' 'an accursed saint,' 'pale with fast, and murderous with hate,' and many such like scurrilities; and just like a reveller in the secular processions shouts his ribaldry, when he would carry his insolence to the highest pitch, without his mask on, so does Eunomius, without an attempt to veil his malignity, shout with brazen throat the language of the waggon. Then he reveals the cause why he is so enraged; 'these priests took every precaution that many should not' be perverted to the error of these heretics; accordingly he is angry that they could not stay at their convenience in the places they liked, but that a residence was assigned them by order of the then governor of Phrygia, so that most might be secured from such wicked neighbours; his indignation at this bursts out in these words; 'the excessive severity of our trials,' 'our grievous sufferings,' 'our noble endurance of them,' 'the exile from our native country into Phrygia.' Quite so: this Oltiserian<sup>71</sup> might well be proud of what occurred, putting an end as it did to all his family pride, and casting such a slur upon his race that that far-renowned Priscus, his grandfather, from whom he gets those brilliant and most remarkable heirlooms, "the mill, and

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<sup>68</sup> Reading πρόσ τε τὸ πέρας.

<sup>69</sup> This must be the 'caricature' of the (Greek) Summary above. Eustathius of Sebasteia, the capital of Armenia, and the Galatian Basil, of Ancyra (Angora), are certainly mentioned, c. 6 (end). Twice did these two, once Semi-Arians, oppose Aetius and Eunomius, before Constantius, at Byzantium. On the second occasion, however (Sozomen, *H. E.* iv. 23, Ursacius and Valens arrived with the proscription of the Homoousion from Ariminum: it was then that "the world groaned to find itself Arian" (Jerome). The 'accursed saint' 'pale with fast,' i.e. Eustathius, in his Armenian monastery, gave Basil the Great a model for his own.

<sup>70</sup> τῶν ἔξωθεν λόγων.

<sup>71</sup> Oltiseris was probably the district, as Corniaspa was the village, in which Eunomius was born. It is a Celtic word: and probably suggests his half-Galatian extraction.



the leather, and the slaves' stores," and the rest of his inheritance in Chanaan<sup>72</sup>, would never have chosen this lot, which now makes him so angry. It was to be expected that he would revile those who were the agents of this exile. I quite understand his feeling. Truly the authors of these misfortunes, if such there be or ever have been, deserve the censures of these men, in that the renown of their former lives is thereby obscured, and they are deprived of the opportunity of mentioning and making much of their more impressive antecedents; the great distinctions with which each started in life; the professions they inherited from their fathers; the greater or the smaller marks of gentility of which each was conscious, even before they became so widely known and valued that even emperors numbered them amongst their acquaintance, as he now boasts in his book, and that all the higher governments were roused about them and the world was filled with their doings.

§6. *A notice of Aetius, Eunomius' master in heresy, and of Eunomius himself, describing the origin and avocations of each.*

Verily this did great damage to our declamation-writer, or rather to his patron and guide in life, Aetius; whose enthusiasm indeed appears to me to have aimed not so much at the propagation of error as to the securing a competence for life. I do not say this as a mere surmise of my own, but I have heard it from the lips of those who knew him well. I have listened to Athanasius, the former bishop of the Galatians, when he was speaking of the life of Aetius; Athanasius was a man who valued truth above all things; and he exhibited also the letter of George of Laodicæa, so that a number might attest the truth of his words. He told us that originally Aetius did not attempt to teach his monstrous doctrines, but only after some interval of time put forth these novelties as a trick to gain his livelihood; that having escaped from serfdom in the vineyard to which he belonged,—how, I do not wish to say, lest I should be thought to be entering on his history in a bad spirit,—he became at first a tinker, and had this grimy trade of a mechanic quite at his fingers' end, sitting under a goat's-hair tent, with a small hammer, and a diminutive anvil, and so earned a precarious and laborious livelihood. What income, indeed, of any account could be made by one who mends the shaky places in coppers, and solders holes up, and hammers sheets of tin to pieces, and clamps with lead the legs of pots? We were told that a certain incident which befell him in this trade necessitated the next change in his life. He had received from a woman belonging to a regiment a gold ornament, a necklace or a bracelet, which had been broken by a blow, and which he was to mend: but he cheated the poor creature, by appropriating her gold trinket, and giving her instead one of copper, of the same size, and also of the same appearance, owing to a gold-wash which he had imparted to its surface; she was deceived by this for a time, for he was clever enough in the tinker's, as in other,

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This can be no other than the district Chammanene, on the east bank of the Halys, where Galatia and Cappadocia join.

arts to mislead his customers with the tricks of trade; but at last she detected the rascality, for the wash got rubbed off the copper; and, as some of the soldiers of her family and nation were roused to indignation, she prosecuted the purloiner of her ornament. After this attempt he of course underwent a cheating thief's punishment; and then left the trade, swearing that it was not his deliberate intention, but that business tempted him to commit this theft. After this he became assistant to a certain doctor from amongst the quacks, so as not to be quite destitute of a livelihood; and in this capacity he made his attack upon the obscurer households and on the most abject of mankind. Wealth came gradually from his plots against a certain Armenius, who being a foreigner was easily cheated, and, having been induced to make him his physician, had advanced him frequent sums of money; and he began to think that serving under others was beneath him, and wanted to be styled a physician himself. Henceforth, therefore, he attended medical congresses, and consorting with the wrangling controversialists there became one of the ranters, and, just as the scales were turning, always adding his own weight to the argument, he got to be in no small request with those who would buy a brazen voice for their party contests.

But although his bread became thereby well buttered he thought he ought not to remain in such a profession; so he gradually gave up the medical, after the tinkering. Arius, the enemy of God, had already sown those wicked tares which bore the Anomæans as their fruit, and the schools of medicine resounded then with the disputes about that question. Accordingly Aetius studied the controversy, and, having laid a train of syllogisms from what he remembered of Aristotle, he became notorious for even going beyond Arius, the father of the heresy, in the novel character of his speculations; or rather he perceived the consequences of all that Arius had advanced, and so got this character of a shrewd discoverer of truths not obvious; revealing as he did that the Created, even from things non-existent, was *unlike* the Creator who drew Him out of nothing.

With such propositions he tickled ears that itched for these novelties; and the Ethiopian Theophilus<sup>73</sup> becomes acquainted with them. Aetius had already been connected with this man on some business of Gallus; and now by his help creeps into the palace. After Gallus<sup>74</sup> had perpetrated the tragedy with regard to Domitian the procurator and Montius, all the other participators in it naturally shared his ruin; yet this man escapes, being acquitted from being punished along with them. After this, when the great Athanasius had been driven by Imperial command from the Church of Alexandria, and George the Tarbasthenite was tearing his flock, another change takes place, and Aetius is an Alexandrian, receiving his full share amongst those who fattened at the Cappadocian's board; for he had not omitted to practice his flatteries on George. George was in fact from Chanaan himself, and therefore felt kindly towards a countryman: indeed he had been for long so possessed



<sup>73</sup> Probably the 'Indian' Theophilus, who afterwards helped to organize the Anomæan schism in the reign of Jovian.

<sup>74</sup> Gallus, Cæsar 350–354, brother of Julian, not a little influenced by Aetius, executed by Constantius at Flanon in Dalmatia. During his short reign at Antioch, Domitian, who was sent to bring him to Italy, and his quæstor Montius were dragged to death through the streets by the guards of the young Cæsar.

with his perverted opinions as actually to dote upon him, and was prone to become a godsend for Aetius, whenever he liked.

All this did not escape the notice of his sincere admirer, our Eunomius. This latter perceived that his natural father—an excellent man, except that he had such a son—led a very honest and respectable life certainly, but one of laborious penury and full of countless toils. (He was one of those farmers who are always bent over the plough, and spend a world of trouble over their little farm; and in the winter, when he was secured from agricultural work, he used to carve out neatly the letters of the alphabet for boys to form syllables with, winning his bread with the money these sold for.) Seeing all this in his father's life, he said goodbye to the plough and the mattock and all the paternal instruments, intending never to drudge himself like that; then he sets himself to learn Prunicus' skill<sup>75</sup> of short-hand writing, and having perfected himself in that he entered at first, I believe, the house of one of his own family, receiving his board for his services in writing; then, while tutoring the boys of his host, he rises to the ambition of becoming an orator. I pass over the next interval, both as to his life in his native country and as to the things and the company in which he was discovered at Constantinople.

Busied as he was after this 'about the cloke and the purse,' he saw it was all of little avail, and that nothing which he could amass by such work was adequate to the demands of his ambition. Accordingly he threw up all other practices, and devoted himself solely to the admiration of Aetius; not, perhaps, without some calculation that this absorbing pursuit which he selected might further his own devices for living. In fact, from the moment he asked for a share in a wisdom so profound, he toiled not thenceforward, neither did he spin; for he is certainly clever in what he takes in hand, and knows how to gain the more emotional portion of mankind. Seeing that human nature, as a rule, falls an easy prey to pleasure, and that its natural inclination in the direction of this weakness is very strong, descending from the sterner heights of conduct to the smooth level of comfort, he becomes with a view of making the largest number possible of proselytes to his pernicious opinions very pleasant indeed to those whom he is initiating; he gets rid of the toilsome steep of virtue altogether, because it is not a persuasive to accept his secrets. But should any one have the leisure to inquire what this secret teaching of theirs is, and what those who have been duped to accept this blighting curse utter without any reserve, and what in the mysterious ritual of initiation they are

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<sup>75</sup> The same phrase occurs again: Refutation of Eunomius' Second Essay, p. 844: οἱ τῆ προυνίκου σοφίᾳ 139' ἐγγυμασθέντες; ἐξ ἐκείνης γὰρ δοκεῖ μοι τῆς παρασκευῆς τὰ εἰρημένα προενηνοχέναι. In the last word there is evidently a pun on προυνίκου; προφερῆς, in the secondary sense of 'precocious,' is used by Iamblichus and Porphyry, and προυνίκος appears to have had the same meaning. We might venture, therefore, to translate 'that knowing trick' of short-hand: but why Prunicus is personified, if it is personified, as in the Gnostic Prunicos Sophia, does not appear. See Epiphanius *Hæres.* 253 for the feminine Proper name.

The other possible explanation is that given in the margin of the Paris Edition, and is based on Suidas, i.e. Prunici sunt cursores celeres; hic pro *celer scriba*. Hesychius also says of the word; οἱ μισθοῦ κομίζοντες τὰ ὄνια ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγορᾶς, οὓς τινες παιδαριωγὰς καλοῦσιν, δρομεῖς, τραχεῖς, ὄξεῖς, εὐκίνητοι, γοργοί, μισθωτοί. Here such 'porter's' skill, easy going and superficial, is opposed to the more laborious task of tilling the soil.

taught by the reverend hierophant, the manner of baptisms<sup>76</sup>, and the ‘helps of nature,’ and all that, let him question those who feel no compunction in letting indecencies pass their lips; we shall keep silent. For not even though we are the accusers should we be guiltless in mentioning such things, and we have been taught to reverence purity in word as well as deed, and not to soil our pages with equivocal stories, even though there be truth in what we say.

But we mention what we then heard (namely that, just as Aristotle’s evil skill supplied Aetius with his impiety, so the simplicity of his dupes secured a fat living for the well-trained pupil as well as for the master) for the purpose of asking some questions. What after all was the great damage done him by Basil on the Euxine, or by Eustathius in Armenia, to both of whom that long digression in his story harks back? How did they mar the aim of his life? Did they not rather feed up his and his companion’s freshly acquired fame? Whence came their wide notoriety, if not through the instrumentality of these men, supposing, that is, that their accuser is speaking the truth? For the fact that men, themselves illustrious, as our writer owns, deigned to fight with those who had as yet found no means of being known naturally gave the actual start to the ambitious thoughts of those who were to be pitted against these reputed heroes; and a veil was thereby thrown over their humble antecedents. They in fact owed their subsequent notoriety to this,—a thing detestable indeed to a reflecting mind which would never choose to rest fame upon an evil deed, but the acme of bliss to characters such as these. They tell of one in the province of Asia, amongst the obscurest and the basest, who longed to make a name in Ephesus; some great and brilliant achievement being quite beyond his powers never even entered his mind; and yet, by hitting upon that which would most deeply injure the Ephesians, he made his mark deeper than the heroes of the grandest actions; for there was amongst their public buildings one noticeable for its peculiar magnificence and costliness; and he burnt this vast structure to the ground, showing, when men came to inquire after the perpetration of this villany into its mental causes, that he dearly prized notoriety, and had devised that the greatness of the disaster should secure the name of its author being recorded with it. The secret motive<sup>77</sup> of these two men is the same thirst for publicity; the only difference is that the amount of mischief is greater in their case. They are marring, not lifeless architecture, but the living building of the Church, introducing, for fire, the slow canker of their teaching. But I will defer the doctrinal question till the proper time comes.

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<sup>76</sup> For the baptisms of Eunomius, compare Epiphanius *Har.* 765. Even Arians who were not Anomœans he rebaptized. The ‘helps of nature’ may possibly refer to the ‘miracles’ which Philostorgius ascribes both to Aetius and Eunomius.

Sozomen (vi. 26) says, “Eunomius introduced, *it is said*, a mode of discipline contrary to that of the Church, and endeavoured to disguise the innovation under the cloak of a grave and severe deportment.”...His followers “do not applaud a virtuous course of life...so much as skill in disputation and the power of triumphing in debates.”

<sup>77</sup> ὑπόθεσις.

§7. *Eunomius himself proves that the confession of faith which He made was not impeached.*

Let us see for a moment now what kind of truth is dealt with by this man, who in his Introduction complains that it is because of his telling the truth that he is hated by the unbelievers; we may well make the way he handles truth outside doctrine teach us a test to apply to his doctrine itself. “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Now, when he is beginning to write this “apology for the apology” (that is the new and startling title, as well as subject, of his book) he says that we must look for the cause of this very startling announcement nowhere else but in him who answered that first treatise of his. That book was entitled an Apology; but being given to understand by our master-theologian that an apology can only come from those who have been accused of something, and that if a man writes merely from his own inclination his production is something else than an apology, he does not deny—it would be too manifestly absurd—<sup>78</sup>that an apology requires a preceding accusation; but he declares that his ‘apology’ has cleared him from very serious accusations in the trial which has been instituted against him. How false this is, is manifest from his own words. He complained that “many heavy sufferings were inflicted on him by those who had condemned him”; we may read that in his book.

But how could he have suffered so, if his ‘apology’ cleared him of these charges? If he successfully adopted an apology to escape from these, that pathetic complaint of his is a hypocritical pretence; if on the other hand he really suffered as he says, then, plainly, he suffered because he did *not* clear himself by an apology; for every apology, to be such, has to secure this end, namely, to prevent the voting power from being misled by any false statements. Surely he will not now attempt to say that at the time of the trial he produced his apology, but not being able to win over the jury lost the case to the prosecution. For he said nothing at the time of the trial ‘about producing his apology;’ nor was it likely that he would, considering that he distinctly states in his book that he refused to have anything to do with those ill-affected and hostile dicasts. “We own,” he says, “that we were condemned by default: there was a packed<sup>79</sup> panel of evil-disposed persons where a jury ought to have sat.” He is very labored here, and has his attention diverted by his argument, I think, or he would have noticed that he has tacked on a fine solecism to his sentence. He affects to be imposingly Attic with his phrase ‘packed panel;’ but the correct in language use these words, as those familiar with the forensic vocabulary know, quite differently to our new Atticist.

A little further on he adds this; “If he thinks that, because I would have nothing to do with a jury who were really my prosecutors he can argue away my apology, he must be blind to his own simplicity.” When, then, and before whom did our caustic friend make his apology? He had demurred to the jury because they were ‘foes,’ and he did not utter one word about any trial, as he himself

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<sup>78</sup> The μή is redundant and owing to οὐκ.

<sup>79</sup> Εἰςφορησάντων. A word used in Aristophanes of ‘letting into court,’ probably a technical word: it is a manifest derivation from εἰσφορεῖν. What the solecism is, is not clear; Gretser thinks that Eunomius meant it for εἰσπηδᾶν

insists. See how this strenuous champion of the true, little by little, passes over to the side of the false, and, while honouring truth in phrase, combats it in deed. But it is amusing to see how weak he is even in seconding his own lie. How can one and the same man have ‘cleared himself by an apology in the trial which was instituted against him,’ and then have ‘prudently kept silence because the court was in the hands of the foe?’ Nay, the very language he uses in the preface to his Apology clearly shows that no court at all was opened against him. For he does not address his preface to any definite jury, but to certain unspecified persons who were living then, or who were afterwards to come into the world; and I grant that to such an audience there was need of a very vigorous apology, not indeed in the manner of the one he has actually written, which requires another still to bolster it up, but a broadly intelligible one<sup>80</sup>, able to prove this special point, viz., that he was not in the possession of his usual reason when he wrote this, wherein he rings<sup>81</sup> the assembly-bell for men who never came, perhaps never existed, and speaks an apology before an imaginary court, and begs an imperceptible jury not to let numbers decide between truth and falsehood, nor to assign the victory to mere quantity. Verily it is becoming that he should make an apology of that sort to jurymen who are yet in the loins of their fathers, and to explain to them how he came to think it right to adopt opinions which contradict universal belief, and to put more faith in his own mistaken fancies than in those who throughout the world glorify Christ’s name.

Let him write, please, another apology in addition to this second; for this one is not a correction of mistakes made about him, but rather a proof of the truth of those charges. Every one knows that a proper apology aims at disproving a charge; thus a man who is accused of theft or murder or any other crime either denies the fact altogether, or transfers the blame to another party, or else, if neither of these is possible, he appeals to the charity or to the compassion of those who are to vote upon his sentence. But in his book he neither denies the charge, nor shifts it on some one else, nor has recourse to an appeal for mercy, nor promises amendment for the future; but he establishes the charge against him by an unusually labored demonstration. This charge, as he himself confesses, really amounted to an indictment for profanity, nor did it leave the nature of this undefined, but proclaimed the particular kind; whereas his apology proves this species of profanity to be a positive duty, and instead of removing the charge strengthens it. Now, if the tenets of our Faith had been left in any obscurity, it might have been less hazardous to attempt novelties; but the teaching of our master-theologian is now firmly fixed in the souls of the faithful; and so it is a question whether the man who shouts out contradictions of that about which all equally have made up their minds is defending himself against the charges made, or is not rather drawing down upon him the anger of his hearers, and making his accusers still more bitter. I incline to think the latter. So that if there are, as our writer tells us, both hearers of his apology and accusers of his attempts upon the Faith,

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<sup>80</sup> γενικῆς.

<sup>81</sup> συνεκρότει. The word has this meaning in Origen. In Philo (*de Vitâ Mosis*, p. 476, l. 48, quoted by Viger.), it has another meaning, συνεκρότουν ἄλλος ἄλλον, μὴ ἀποκάμνειν, i.e. ‘cheered.’



let him tell us, how those accusers can possibly compromise<sup>82</sup> the matter now, or what sort of verdict that jury must return, now that his offence has been already proved by his own ‘apology.’

§8. *Facts show that the terms of abuse which he has employed against Basil are more suitable for himself.*

But these remarks are by the way, and come from our not keeping close to our argument. We had to inquire not how he ought to have made his apology, but whether he had ever made one at all. But now let us return to our former position, viz., that he is convicted by his own statements. This hater of falsehood first of all tells us that he was condemned because the jury which was assigned him defied the law, and that he was driven over sea and land and suffered much from the burning sun and the dust. Then in trying to conceal his falsehood he drives out one nail with another nail, as the proverb says, and puts one falsehood right by cancelling it with another. As every one knows as well as he does that he never uttered one word in court, he declares that he begged to be let off coming into a hostile court and was condemned by default. Could there be a plainer case than this of a man contradicting both the truth and himself? When he is pressed about the title of his book, he makes his trial the constraining cause of this ‘apology;’ but when he is pressed with the fact that he spoke not one word to the jury, he denies that there was any trial and says that he declined<sup>83</sup> such a jury. See how valiantly this doughty champion of the truth fights against falsehood! Then he dares to call our mighty Basil ‘a malicious rascal and a liar;’ and besides that, ‘a bold ignorant parvenu<sup>84</sup>,’ ‘no deep divine,’ and he adds to his list of abusive terms, ‘stark mad,’ scattering an infinity of such words over his pages, as if he imagined that his own bitter invectives could outweigh the common testimony of mankind, who revere that great name as though he were one of the saints of old. He thinks in fact that he, if no one else, can touch with calumny one whom calumny has never touched; but the sun is not so low in the heavens that any one can reach him with stones or any other missiles; they will but recoil upon him who shot them, while the intended target soars far beyond his reach. If any one, again, accuses the sun of want of light, he has not dimmed the brightness of the sunbeams with his scoffs; the sun will still remain the sun, and the fault-finder will only prove the feebleness of his own visual organs; and, if he should endeavour, after the fashion of this ‘apology,’ to persuade all whom he meets and will listen to him not to give in to the common opinions about the sun, nor to attach more weight to the experiences of all than



<sup>82</sup> καθυφήσουσιν. This is the reading of the Venetian ms. The word bears the same forensic sense as the Latin *prævaricari*.

The common reading is καθυβρίσουσιν

<sup>83</sup> ἀπαξιῶ.

<sup>84</sup> παρέγγραπτον: for the *vox nihili παράγραπτον*. Oehler again has adopted the reading of the Ven. ms.

to the surmises of one individual by ‘assigning victory to mere quantity,’ his nonsense will be wasted on those who can use their eyes.

Let some one then persuade Eunomius to bridle his tongue, and not give the rein to such wild talk, nor kick against the pricks in the insolent abuse of an honoured name; but to allow the mere remembrance of Basil to fill his soul with reverence and awe. What can he gain by this unmeasured ribaldry, when the object of it will retain all that character which his life, his words, and the general estimate of the civilized world proclaims him to have possessed? The man who takes in hand to revile reveals his own disposition as not being able, because it is evil, to speak good things, but only “to speak from the abundance of the heart,” and to bring forth from that evil treasure-house. Now, that his expressions are merely those of abuse quite divorced from actual facts, can be proved from his own writings.

§9. *In charging Basil with not defending his faith at the time of the ‘Trials,’ he lays himself open to the same charge.*

He hints at a certain locality where this trial for heresy took place; but he gives us no certain indication where it was, and the reader is obliged to guess in the dark. Thither, he tells us, a congress of picked representatives from all quarters was summoned; and he is at his best here, placing before our eyes with some vigorous strokes the preparation of the event which he pretends took place. Then, he says, a trial in which he would have had to run for his very life was put into the hands of certain arbitrators, to whom our Teacher and Master who was present gave his charge<sup>85</sup>; and as all the voting power was thus won over to the enemies’ side, he yielded the position<sup>86</sup>, fled from the place, and hunted everywhere for some hearth and home; and he is great, in this graphic sketch<sup>87</sup>, in arraignment the cowardice of our hero; as any one who likes may see by looking at what he has written. But I cannot stop to give specimens here of the bitter gall of his utterances; I must pass on to that, for the sake of which I mentioned all this.

Where, then, was that unnamed spot in which this examination of his teachings was to take place? What was this occasion when the best then were collected for a trial? Who were these men who hurried over land and sea to share in these labours? What was this ‘expectant world that hung upon the issue of the voting?’ Who was ‘the arranger of the trial?’ However, let us consider that

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<sup>85</sup> ὑποφωνεῖν

<sup>86</sup> Sozomen (vi. 26): “After his (Eunomius) elevation to the bishopric of Cyzicus he was accused by his own clergy of introducing innovations. Eudoxius obliged him to undergo a public trial and give an account of his doctrines to the people: finding, however, no fault in him, Eudoxius exhorted him to return to Cyzicus. He replied he could not remain with people who regarded him with suspicion, and it is said seized this opportunity to secede from communion.”

<sup>87</sup> ὑπογραφῆ; or else ‘on the subject of Basil’s charge.’

he invented all that to swell out the importance of his story, as boys at school are apt to do in *their* fictitious conversations of this kind; and let him only tell us who that ‘terrible combatant’ was whom our Master shrunk from encountering. If this also is a fiction, let him be the winner again, and have the advantage of his vain words. We will say nothing: in the useless fight with shadows the real victory is to decline conquering in *that*. But if he speaks of the events at Constantinople and means the assembly there, and is in this fever of literary indignation at tragedies enacted there, and means himself by that great and redoubtable athlete, then we would display the reasons why, though present on the occasion, we did not plunge into the fight.



Now let this man who upbraids that hero with his cowardice tell us whether *he* went down into the thick of the fray, whether *he* uttered one syllable in defence of his own orthodoxy, whether *he* made any vigorous peroration, whether *he* victoriously grappled with the foe? He cannot tell us that, or he manifestly contradicts himself, for he owns that by his default he received the adverse verdict. If it was a duty to speak at the actual time of the trial (for that is the law which he lays down for us in his book), then why was he then condemned by default? If on the other hand he did well in observing silence before such dicasts, how arbitrarily<sup>88</sup> he praises himself, but blames us, for silence at such a time! What can be more absurdly unjust than this! When two treatises have been put forth since the time of the trial, he declares that his apology, though written so very long after, was in time, but reviles that which answered his own as quite too late! Surely he ought to have abused Basil’s intended counter-statement before it was actually made; but this is not found amongst his other complaints. Knowing as he did what Basil was going to write when the time of the trial had passed away, why in the world did he not find fault with it there and then? In fact it is clear from his own confession that he never made that apology in the trial itself. I will repeat again his words:—‘We confess that we were condemned by default;’ and he adds why; ‘Evil-disposed persons had been passed as jurymen,’ or rather, to use his own phrase, ‘there was a packed panel of them where a jury ought to have sat.’ Whereas, on the other hand, it is clear from another passage in his book that he attests that his apology was made ‘at the proper time.’ It runs thus:—“That I was urged to make this apology at the proper time and in the proper manner from no pretended reasons, but compelled to do so on behalf of those who went security for me, is clear from facts and also from this man’s words.” He adroitly twists his words round to meet every possible objection; but what will he say to this? ‘It was not right to keep silent during the trial.’ Then why was Eunomius speechless during that same trial? And why is his apology, coming as it did after the trial, in good time? And if in good time, why is Basil’s controversy with him not in good time?

But the remark of that holy father is especially true, that Eunomius in pretending to make an apology really gave his teaching the support he wished to give it; and that genuine emulator of Phineas’ zeal, destroying as he does with the sword of the Word every spiritual fornicator, dealt in the ‘Answer to his blasphemy’ a sword-thrust that was calculated at once to heal a soul and to destroy a heresy. If he resists that stroke, and with a soul deadened by apostacy will not admit the

<sup>88</sup> τὴν ἢ ἀποκλήρωσις; this is a favourite word with Origen and Gregory.

cure, the blame rests with him who chooses the evil, as the Gentile proverb says. So far for Eunomius' treatment of truth, and of us: and now the law of former times, which allows an equal return on those who are the first to injure, might prompt us to discharge on him a counter-shower of abuse, and, as he is a very easy subject for this, to be very liberal of it, so as to outdo the pain which he has inflicted: for if he was so rich in insolent invective against one who gave no chance for calumny, how many of such epithets might we not expect to find for those who have satirized that saintly life? But we have been taught from the first by that scholar of the Truth to be scholars of the Gospel ourselves, and therefore we will not take an eye for an eye, nor a tooth for a tooth; we know well that all the evil that happens admits of being annihilated by its opposite, and that no bad word and no bad deed would ever develop into such desperate wickedness, if one good one could only be got in to break the continuity of the vicious stream. Therefore the routine of insolence and abusiveness is checked from repeating itself by long-suffering: whereas if insolence is met with insolence and abuse with abuse, you will but feed with itself this monster-vice, and increase it vastly.

§10. *All his insulting epithets are shewn by facts to be false.*

I therefore pass over everything else, as mere insolent mockery and scoffing abuse, and hasten to the question of his doctrine. Should any one say that I decline to be abusive only because I cannot pay him back in his own coin, let such an one consider in his own case what proneness there is to evil generally, what a mechanical sliding into sin, dispensing with the need of any practice. The power of becoming bad resides in the will; one act of wishing is often the sufficient occasion for a finished wickedness; and this ease of operation is more especially fatal in the sins of the tongue. Other classes of sins require time and occasion and co-operation to be committed; but the propensity to speak can sin when it likes. The treatise of Eunomius now in our hands is sufficient to prove this; one who attentively considers it will perceive the rapidity of the descent into sins in the matter of phrases: and it is the easiest thing in the world to imitate these, even though one is quite unpractised in habitual defamation. What need would there be to labour in coining our intended insults into names, when one might employ upon this slanderer his own phrases? He has strung together, in fact, in this part of his work, every sort of falsehood and evil-speaking, all moulded from the models which he finds in himself; every extravagance is to be found in writing these. He writes "cunning," "wrangling," "foe to truth," "high-flown"<sup>89</sup>, "charlatan," "combating general opinion and tradition," "braving facts which give him the lie," "careless of the terrors of the law, of the censure of men," "unable to distinguish the enthusiasm for truth from mere skill in reasoning;" he adds, "wanting in reverence," "quick to call names," and then "blatant," "full of conflicting suspicions," "combining irreconcilable arguments," "combating his own utterances," "affirming



<sup>89</sup> σοφίστης

contradictories;” then, though eager to speak all ill of him, not being able to find other novelties of invective in which to indulge his bitterness, often in default of all else he reiterates the same phrases, and comes round again a third and a fourth time and even more to what he has once said; and in this circus of words he drives up and then turns down, over and over again, the same racecourse of insolent abuse; so that at last even anger at this shameless display dies away from very weariness. These low unlovely street boys’ jeers do indeed provoke disgust rather than anger; they are not a whit better than the inarticulate grunting of some old woman who is quite drunk.

Must we then enter minutely into this, and laboriously refute all his invectives by showing that Basil was not this monster of his imagination? If we did this, contentedly proving the absence of anything vile and criminal in him, we should seem to join in insulting one who was a ‘bright particular star’ to his generation. But I remember how with that divine voice of his he quoted the prophet<sup>90</sup> with regard to him, comparing him to a shameless woman who casts her own reproaches on the chaste. For whom do these reasonings of his proclaim to be truth’s enemy and in arms against public opinion? Who is it who begs the readers of his book not ‘to look to the numbers of those who profess a belief, or to mere tradition, or to let their judgment be biassed so as to consider as trustworthy what is only suspected to be the stronger side?’ Can one and the same man write like this, and then make those charges, scheming that his readers should follow his own novelties at the very moment that he is abusing others for opposing themselves to the general belief? As for ‘brazening out facts which give him the lie, and men’s censure,’ I leave the reader to judge to whom this applies; whether to one who by a most careful self-restraint made sobriety and quietness and perfect purity the rule of his own life as well as that of his entourage, or to one who advised that nature should not be molested when it is her pleasure to advance through the appetites of the body, not to thwart indulgence, nor to be so particular as that in the training of our life; but that a self-chosen faith should be considered sufficient for a man to attain perfection. If he denies that this is his teaching, I and any right-minded person would rejoice if he were telling the truth in such a denial. But his genuine followers will not allow him to produce such a denial, or their leading principles would be gone, and the platform of those who for this reason embrace his tenets would fall to pieces. As for shameless indifference to human censure, you may look at his youth or his after life, and you would find him in both open to this reproach. The two men’s lives, whether in youth or manhood, tell a widely-different tale.

Let our speech-writer, while he reminds himself of his youthful doings in his native land, and afterwards at Constantinople, hear from those who can tell him what they know of the man whom he slanders. But if any would inquire into their subsequent occupations, let such a person tell us which of the two he considers to deserve so high a reputation; the man who ungrudgingly spent upon the poor his patrimony even before he was a priest, and most of all in the time of the famine,

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<sup>90</sup> Jeremiah iii. 3.

during which he was a ruler of the Church, though still a priest in the rank of presbyters<sup>91</sup>; and afterwards did not hoard even what remained to him, so that he too might have made the Apostles' boast, 'Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought<sup>92</sup>;' or, on the other hand, the man who has made the championship of a tenet a source of income, the man who creeps into houses, and does not conceal his loathsome affliction by staying at home, nor considers the natural aversion which those in good health must feel for such, though according to the law of old he is one of those who are banished from the inhabited camp because of the contagion of his unmistakeable<sup>93</sup> disease.

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Basil is called 'hasty' and 'insolent,' and in both characters 'a liar' by this man who 'would in patience and meekness educate those of a contrary opinion to himself;' for such are the airs he gives himself when he speaks of him, while he omits no hyperbole of bitter language, when he has a sufficient opening to produce it. On what grounds, then, does he charge him with this hastiness and insolence? Because 'he called me a Galatian, though I am a Cappadocian;' then it was because he called a man who lived on the boundary in an obscure corner like Corniaspine<sup>94</sup> a Galatian instead of an Oltiserian; supposing, that is, that it is proved that he said this. I have not found it in my copies; but grant it. For this he is to be called 'hasty,' 'insolent,' all that is bad. But the wise know well that the minute charges of a faultfinder furnish a strong argument for the righteousness of the accused; else, when eager to accuse, he would not have spared great faults and employed his malice on little ones. On these last he is certainly great, heightening the enormity of the offence, and making solemn reflections on falsehood, and seeing equal heinousness in it whether in great or very trivial matters. Like the fathers of his heresy, the scribes and Pharisees, he knows how to strain a gnat carefully and to swallow at one gulp the hump-backed camel laden with a weight of wickedness. But it would not be out of place to say to him, 'refrain from making such a rule in our system; cease to bid us think it of no account to measure the guilt of a falsehood by the slightness or the importance of the circumstances.' Paul telling a falsehood and purifying himself after the manner of the Jews to meet the needs of those whom he usefully deceived did not sin the same as Judas for the requirement of his treachery putting on a kind and affable look. By a falsehood Joseph in love to his brethren deceived them; and that too while swearing 'by the life of Pharaoh<sup>95</sup>;' but his brethren

<sup>91</sup> ἔτι ἐν τῷ κληρω τῶν πρεσβυτερῶν ιερατεύων

<sup>92</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 8.

<sup>93</sup> According to Ruffinus (*Hist. Eccl.* x. 25), his constitution was poisoned with jaundice within and without.

<sup>94</sup> ἐν ἀνωνόμῳ τινι Κορνιασπινῆς ἐσχατίᾳ 139°. Cf. μεγὰ χρῆμα ὕ& 232;ς (Herod.) for the use of this genitive. In the next sentence εἰ ἀντὶ, though it gives the sense translated in the text, is not so good as ἧ ἀντὶ (i.e. ἐσχατία), which Oehler suggests, but does not adopt.

With regard to Eunomius' birthplace, Sozomen and Philostorgius give Dacora (which the former describes as on the slopes of Mt. Argæus: but that it must have been on the borders of Galatia and Cappadocia is certain from what Gregory says here): 'Probably Dacora was his paternal estate: Oltiseris the village to which it belonged' (Dict. Christ. Biog.; unless indeed Corniaspa, marked on the maps as a town where Cappadocia, Galatia and Pontus join, was the spot, and Oltiseris the district. Eunomius died at Dacora.

<sup>95</sup> Gen. xlii. 15.

had really lied to him, in their envy plotting his death and then his enslavement. There are many such cases: Sarah lied, because she was ashamed of laughing: the serpent lied, tempting man to disobey and change to a divine existence. Falsehoods differ widely according to their motives. Accordingly we accept that general statement about man which the Holy Spirit uttered by the Prophet<sup>96</sup>, ‘Every man is a liar;’ and this man of God, too, has not kept clear of falsehood, having chanced to give a place the name of a neighbouring district, through oversight or ignorance of its real name. But Eunomius also has told a falsehood, and what is it? Nothing less than a misstatement of Truth itself. He asserts that One who always is once was not; he demonstrates that One who is truly a Son is falsely so called; he defines the Creator to be a creature and a work; the Lord of the world he calls a servant, and ranges the Being who essentially rules with subject beings. Is the difference between falsehoods so very trifling, that one can think it matters nothing whether the falsehood is palpable<sup>97</sup> in this way or in that?

§11. *The sophistry which he employs to prove our acknowledgment that he had been tried, and that the confession of his faith had not been unimpeached, is feeble.*

He objects to sophistries in others; see the sort of care he takes himself that his proofs shall be real ones. Our Master said, in the book which he addressed to him, that at the time when our cause was ruined, Eunomius won Cyzicus as the prize of his blasphemy. What then does this detector of sophistry do? He fastens at once on that word *prize*, and declares that we on our side confess that he made an apology, that he won thereby, that he gained the prize of victory by these efforts; and he frames his argument into a syllogism consisting as he thinks of unanswerable propositions. But we will quote word for word what he has written. ‘If a prize is the recognition and the crown of victory, and a trial implies a victory, and, as also inseparable from itself, an accusation, then that man who grants (in argument) the prize must necessarily allow that there was a defence.’ What then is our answer to that? We do not deny that he fought this wretched battle of impiety with a most vigorous energy, and that he went a very long distance beyond his fellows in these perspiring efforts against the truth; but we will not allow that he obtained the victory over his opponents; but only that as compared with those who were running the same as himself through heresy into error he was foremost in the number of his lies and so gained the prize of Cyzicus in return for high attainments in evil, beating all who for the same prize combated the Truth; and that for this victory of blasphemy his name was blazoned loud and clear when Cyzicus was selected for him by the umpires of his party as the reward of his extravagance. This is the statement of our opinion, and this we allowed; our contention now that Cyzicus was the prize of a heresy, not the successful result



<sup>96</sup> Psalm cxv. 11.

<sup>97</sup> ἐψεῦσθαι δοκεῖν.

of a defence, shews it. Is this anything like his own mess of childish sophistries, so that he can thereby hope to have grounds for proving the fact of his trial and his defence? His method is like that of a man in a drinking bout, who has made away with more strong liquor than the rest, and having then claimed the pool from his fellow-drunkards should attempt to make this victory a proof of having won some case in the law courts. That man might chop the same sort of logic. 'If a prize is the recognition and the crown of victory, and a law-trial implies a victory and, as also inseparable from itself, an accusation, then I have won my suit, since I have been crowned for my powers of drinking in this bout.'

One would certainly answer to such a boaster that a trial in court is a very different thing from a wine-contest, and that one who wins with the glass has thereby no advantage over his legal adversaries, though he get a beautiful chaplet of flowers. No more, therefore, has the man who has beaten his equals in the advocacy of profanity anything to show in having won the prize for that, that he has won a verdict too. The testimony on our side that he is first in profanity is no plea for his imaginary 'apology.' If he did speak it before the court, and, having so prevailed over his adversaries, was honoured with Cyzicus for that, then he might have some occasion for using our own words against ourselves; but as he is continually protesting in his book that he yielded to the animus of the voters, and accepted in silence the penalty which they inflicted, not even waiting for this hostile decision, why does he impose upon himself and make this word *prize* into the proof of a successful apology? Our excellent friend fails to understand the force of this word *prize*; Cyzicus was given up to him as the reward of merit for his extravagant impiety; and as it was his will to receive such a prize, and he views it in the light of a victor's guerdon, let him receive as well what that victory implies, viz. the lion's share in the guilt of profanity. If he insists on our own words against ourselves, he must accept both these consequences, or neither.

§12. *His charge of cowardice is baseless: for Basil displayed the highest courage before the Emperor and his Lord-Lieutenants.*

He treats our words so; and in the rest of his presumptuous statements can there be shown to be a particle of truth? In these he calls him 'cowardly,' 'spiritless,' 'a shirker of severer labours,' exhausting the list of such terms, and giving with laboured circumstantiality every symptom of this cowardice: 'the retired cabin, the door firmly closed, the anxious fear of intruders, the voice, the look, the tell-tale change of countenance,' everything of that sort, whereby the passion of fear is shown. If he were detected in no other lie but this, it alone would be sufficient to reveal his bent. For who does not know how, during the time when the Emperor Valens was roused against the churches of the Lord, that mighty champion of ours rose by his lofty spirit superior to those overwhelming circumstances and the terrors of the foe, and showed a mind which soared above every means devised to daunt him? Who of the dwellers in the East, and of the furthest regions of



our civilized world did not hear of his combat with the throne itself for the truth? Who, looking to his antagonist, was not in dismay? For his was no common antagonist, possessed only of the power of winning in sophistic juggles, where victory is no glory and defeat is harmless; but he had the power of bending the whole Roman government to his will; and, added to this pride of empire, he had prejudices against our faith, cunningly instilled into his mind by Eudoxius<sup>98</sup> of Germanicia<sup>99</sup>, who had won him to his side; and he found in all those who were then at the head of affairs allies in carrying out his designs, some being already inclined to them from mental sympathies, while others, and they were the majority, were ready from fear to indulge the imperial pleasure, and seeing the severity employed against those who held to the Faith were ostentatious in their zeal for him. It was a time of exile, confiscation, banishment, threats of fines, danger of life, arrests, imprisonment, scourging; nothing was too dreadful to put in force against those who would not yield to this sudden caprice of the Emperor; it was worse for the faithful to be caught in God's house than if they had been detected in the most heinous of crimes.

But a detailed history of that time would be too long; and would require a separate treatment; besides, as the sufferings at that sad season are known to all, nothing would be gained for our present purpose by carefully setting them forth in writing. A second drawback to such an attempt would be found to be that amidst the details of that melancholy history we should be forced to make mention of ourselves; and if we did anything in those struggles for our religion that redounds to our honour in the telling, Wisdom commands us to leave it to others to tell. "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth<sup>100</sup>;" and it is this very thing that our omniscient friend has not been conscious of in devoting the larger half of his book to self-glorification.

Omitting, then, all that kind of detail, I will be careful only in setting forth the achievement of our Master. The adversary whom he had to combat was no less a person than the Emperor himself; that adversary's second was the man who stood next him in the government; his assistants to work out his will were the court. Let us take into consideration also the point of time, in order to test and to illustrate the fortitude of our own noble champion. When was it? The Emperor was proceeding from Constantinople to the East elated by his recent successes against the barbarians, and not in a spirit to brook any obstruction to his will; and his lord-lieutenant directed his route, postponing all administration of the necessary affairs of state as long as a home remained to one adherent of the Faith, and until every one, no matter where, was ejected, and others, chosen by himself to outrage our godly hierarchy, were introduced instead. The Powers then of the Propontis were moving in such a fury, like some dark cloud, upon the churches; Bithynia was completely devastated; Galatia

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98 Afterwards of Antioch, and then 8th Bishop of Constantinople (360–370), one of the most influential of all the Arians.

He it was who procured for Eunomius the bishopric of Cyzicus (359). (The latter must indeed have concealed his views on that occasion, for Constantius hated the Anomœans).

99 A town of Commagene.

100 Proverbs xxvii. 2.

was very quickly carried away by their stream; all in the intervening districts had succeeded with them; and now our fold lay the next to be attacked. What did our mighty Basil show like then, ‘that spiritless coward,’ as Eunomius calls him, ‘shrinking from danger, and trusting to a retired cabin to save him?’ Did he quail at this evil onset? Did he allow the sufferings of previous victims to suggest to him that he should secure his own safety? Did he listen to any who advised a slight yielding to this rush of evils<sup>101</sup>, so as not to throw himself openly in the path of men who were now veterans in slaughter? Rather we find that all excess of language, all height of thought and word, falls short of the truth about him. None could describe his contempt of danger, so as to bring before the reader’s eyes this new combat, which one might justly say was waged not between man and man, but between a Christian’s firmness and courage on the one side, and a bloodstained power on the other.

The lord-lieutenant kept appealing to the commands of the Emperor, and rendering a power, which from its enormous strength was terrible enough, more terrible still by the unsparing cruelty of its vengeance. After the tragedies which he had enacted in Bithynia, and after Galatia with characteristic fickleness had yielded without a struggle, he thought that our country would fall a ready prey to his designs. Cruel deeds were precluded by words proposing, with mingled threats and promises, royal favours and ecclesiastical power to obedience, but to resistance all that a cruel spirit which has got the power to work its will can devise. Such was the enemy.

So far was our champion from being daunted by what he saw and heard, that he acted rather like a physician or prudent councillor called in to correct something that was wrong, bidding them repent of their rashness and cease to commit murders amongst the servants of the Lord; ‘their plans,’ he said, ‘could not succeed with men who cared only for the empire of Christ, and for the Powers that never die; with all their wish to maltreat him, they could discover nothing, whether word or act, that could pain the Christian; confiscation could not touch him whose only possession was his Faith; exile had no terrors for one who walked in every land with the same feelings, and looked on every city as strange because of the shortness of his sojourn in it, yet as home, because all human creatures are in equal bondage with himself; the endurance of blows, or tortures, or death, if it might be for the Truth, was an object of fear not even to women, but to every Christian it was the supremest bliss to suffer the worst for this their hope, and they were only grieved that nature allowed them but one death, and that they could devise no means of dying many times in this battle for the Truth<sup>102</sup>.’

When he thus confronted their threats, and looked beyond that imposing power, as if it were all nothing, then their exasperation, just like those rapid changes on the stage when one mask after another is put on, turned with all its threats into flattery; and the very man whose spirit up to then

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<sup>101</sup> ‘The metropolitan remained unshaken. The rough threats of Modestus succeeded no better than the fatherly counsel of Enippius.’ *Gwatkins Arians*.

<sup>102</sup> Other words of Basil, before Modestus at Cæsarea, are also recorded; “I cannot worship any created thing, being as I am God’s creation, and having been *bidden to be a God*.”



had been so determined and formidable adopted the most gentle and submissive of language; ‘Do not, I beg you, think it a small thing for our mighty emperor to have communion with your people, but be willing to be called his master too: nor thwart his wish; he wishes for this peace, if only one little word in the written Creed is erased, that of *Homoousios*.’ Our master answers that it is of the greatest importance that the emperor should be a member of the Church; that is, that he should save his soul, not as an emperor, but as a mere man; but a diminution of or addition to the Faith was so far from his (Basil’s) thoughts, that he would not change even the order of the written words. That was what this ‘spiritless coward, who trembles at the creaking of a door,’ said to this great ruler, and he confirmed his words by what he did; for he stemmed in his own person this imperial torrent of ruin that was rushing on the churches, and turned it aside; he in himself was a match for this attack, like a grand immovable rock in the sea, breaking the huge and surging billow of that terrible onset.

Nor did his wrestling stop there; the emperor himself succeeds to the attack, exasperated because he did not get effected in the first attempt all that he wished. Just, accordingly, as the Assyrian effected the destruction of the temple of the Israelites at Jerusalem by means of the cook Nabuzardan, so did this monarch of ours entrust his business to one Demosthenes, comptroller of his kitchen, and chief of his cooks<sup>103</sup>, as to one more pushing than the rest, thinking thereby to succeed entirely in his design. With this man stirring the pot, and with one of the blasphemers from Illyricum, letters in hand, assembling the authorities with this end in view, and with Modestus<sup>104</sup> kindling passion to a greater heat than in the previous excitement, every one joined the movement of the Emperor’s anger, making his fury their own, and yielding to the temper of authority; and on the other hand all felt their hopes sink at the prospect of what might happen. That same lord-lieutenant re-enters on the scene; intimidations worse than the former are begun; their threats are thrown out; their anger rises to a still higher pitch; there is the tragic pomp of trial over again, the criers, the apparitors, the lictors, the curtained bar, things which naturally daunt even a mind which is thoroughly prepared; and again we see God’s champion amidst this combat surpassing even his former glory. If you want proofs, look at the facts. What spot, where there are churches, did not that disaster reach? What nation remained unreached by these heretical commands? Who of the illustrious in any Church was not driven from the scene of his labours? What people escaped their spiteful treatment? It reached all Syria, and Mesopotamia up to the frontier, Phœnicia, Palestine, Arabia, Egypt, the Libyan tribes to the boundaries of the civilized world; and all nearer home, Pontus, Cilicia, Lycia, Lydia, Pisidia, Pamphylia, Caria, the Hellespont, the islands up to the Propontis itself; the coasts of Thrace, as far as Thrace extends, and the bordering nations as far as the Danube. Which of these

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<sup>103</sup> This cook is compared to Nabuzardan by Gregory Naz. also (Orat. xliiii. 47). Cf. also Theodoret, iv. 19, where most of these events are recorded. The former says that ‘Nabuzardan threatened Basil when summoned before him with the *μαχαίρα* of his trade, but was sent back to his kitchen fire.’

<sup>104</sup> Modestus, the Lord Lieutenant or Count of the East, had sacrificed to the images under Julian, and had been re-baptized as an Arian.

countries retained its former look, unless any were already possessed with the evil? The people of Cappadocia alone felt not these afflictions of the Church, because our mighty champion saved them in their trial.

Such was the achievement of this ‘coward’ master of ours; such was the success of one who ‘shirks all sterner toil.’ Surely it is not that of one who ‘wins renown amongst poor old women, and practises to deceive the sex which naturally falls into every snare,’ and ‘thinks it a great thing to be admired by the criminal and abandoned;’ it is that of one who has proved by deeds his soul’s fortitude, and the unflinching and noble manliness of his spirit. His success has resulted in the salvation of the whole country, the peace of our Church, the pattern given to the virtuous of every excellence, the overthrow of the foe, the upholding of the Faith, the confirmation of the weaker brethren, the encouragement of the zealous, everything that is believed to belong to the victorious side; and in the commemoration of no other events but these do hearing and seeing unite in accomplished facts; for here it is one and the same thing to relate in words his noble deeds and to show in facts the attestation of our words, and to confirm each by the other—the record from what is before our eyes, and the facts from what is being said.

§13. *Résumé of his dogmatic teaching. Objections to it in detail.*

But somehow our discourse has swerved considerably from the mark; it has had to turn round and face each of this slanderer’s insults. To Eunomius indeed it is no small advantage that the discussion should linger upon such points, and that the indictment of his offences against man should delay our approach to his graver sins. But it is profitless to abuse for hastiness of speech one who is on his trial for murder; (because the proof of the latter is sufficient to get the verdict of death passed, even though hastiness of speech is not proved along with it); just so it seems best to subject to proof his blasphemy only, and to leave his insults alone. When his heinousness on the most important points has been detected, his other delinquencies are proved potentially without going minutely into them. Well then; at the head of all his argumentations stands this blasphemy against the definitions of the Faith—both in his former work and in that which we are now criticizing—and his strenuous effort to destroy and cancel and completely upset all devout conceptions as to the Only-Begotten Son of God and the Holy Spirit. To show, then, how false and inconsistent are his arguments against these doctrines of the truth, I will first quote word for word his whole statement, and then I will begin again and examine each portion separately. “The whole account of our doctrines is summed up thus; there is the Supreme and Absolute Being, and another Being existing by reason of the First, but after It<sup>105</sup> though before all others; and a third Being not



<sup>105</sup> *there is the Supreme and Absolute Being, and another Being existing through the First, but after It.* The language of this exposition of Eunomius is Aristotelian: but the contents nevertheless are nothing more nor less than Gnosticism, as Rupp well points out (Gregors v. Nyssa Leben und Meinungen, p. 132 sq.). Arianism, he says, is nothing but the last attempt of Gnosticism

ranking with either of these, but inferior to the one, as to its cause, to the other, as to the energy which produced it: there must of course be included in this account the energies that follow each Being, and the names germane to these energies. Again, as each Being is absolutely single, and is in fact and thought one, and its energies are bounded by its works, and its works commensurate with its energies, necessarily, of course, the energies which follow these Beings are relatively greater and less, some being of a higher, some of a lower order; in a word, their difference amounts to that existing between their works: it would in fact not be lawful to say that the same energy produced the angels or stars, and the heavens or man: but a pious mind would conclude that in proportion as some works are superior to and more honourable than others, so does one energy transcend another, because sameness of energy produces sameness of work, and difference of work indicates difference of energy. These things being so, and maintaining an unbroken connexion in their relation to each other, it seems fitting for those who make their investigation according to the order germane to the subject, and who do not insist on mixing and confusing all together, in case of a discussion being raised about Being, to prove what is in course of demonstration, and to settle the points in debate, by the primary energies and those attached to the Beings, and again to explain by the Beings when the energies are in question, yet still to consider the passage from the first to the second the more suitable and in all respects the more efficacious of the two.”

Such is his blasphemy systematized! May the Very God, Son of the Very God, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, direct our discussion to the truth! We will repeat his statements one by one. He asserts that the “whole account of his doctrines is summed up in the Supreme and Absolute Being, and in another Being existing by reason of the First, but after It though before all others, and in a third Being not ranking with either of these but inferior to the one as to its cause, to the other as to the energy.” The first point, then, of the unfair dealings in this statement to be noticed is that in professing to expound the mystery of the Faith, he corrects as it were the expressions in the Gospel,

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to force the doctrine of emanations into Christian theology, clothing that doctrine on this occasion in a Greek dress. It was still an oriental heresy, not a Greek heresy like Pelagianism in the next century.

Rupp gives two reasons why Arianism may be identified with Gnosticism.

1. Arianism holds the Λόγος as the highest being after the Godhead, i.e. as the πρωτότοκος τῆς κτίσεως, and as merely the mediator between God and Man: just as it was the peculiar aim of Gnosticism to bridge over the gulf between the Creator and the Created by means of intermediate beings (the emanations).

2. Eunomius and his master adopted that very system of Greek philosophy which had always been the natural ally of Gnosticism: i.e. Aristotle is strong in divisions and differences, weak in ‘identifications:’ he had marked with a clearness never attained before the various stages upwards of existencies in the physical world: and this is just what Gnosticism, in its wish to exhibit all things according to their relative distances from the Ἀγέννητος, wanted.

Eunomius has in fact in this formula of his translated all the terms of Scripture straight into those of Aristotle: he has changed the ethical-physical of Christianity into the purely physical; πνεῦμα e.g. becomes οὐσία: and by thus banishing the spiritual and the moral he has made his Ἀγέννητος as completely ‘single’ and incommunicable as the τὸ πρῶτον κίνου ἀκίνητον (Arist. Metaph. XII. 7).

and will not make use of the words by which our Lord in perfecting our faith conveyed that mystery to us: he suppresses the names of ‘Father, Son and Holy Ghost,’ and speaks of a ‘Supreme and Absolute Being’ instead of the Father, of ‘another existing through it, but after it’ instead of the Son, and of ‘a third ranking with neither of these two’ instead of the Holy Ghost. And yet if those had been the more appropriate names, the Truth Himself would not have been at a loss to discover them, nor those men either, on whom successively devolved the preaching of the mystery, whether they were from the first eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, or, as successors to these, filled the whole world with the Evangelical doctrines, and again at various periods after this defined in a common assembly the ambiguities raised about the doctrine; whose traditions are constantly preserved in writing in the churches. If those had been the appropriate terms, they would not have mentioned, as they did, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, granting indeed it were pious or safe to remodel at all, with a view to this innovation, the terms of the faith; or else they were all ignorant men and uninstructed in the mysteries, and unacquainted with what he calls the appropriate names—those men who had really neither the knowledge nor the desire to give the preference to their own conceptions over what had been handed down to us by the voice of God.



§14. *He did wrong, when mentioning the Doctrines of Salvation, in adopting terms of his own choosing instead of the traditional terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

The reason for this invention of new words I take to be manifest to every one—namely: that every one, when the words father and son are spoken, at once recognizes the proper and natural relationship to one another which they imply. This relationship is conveyed at once by the appellations themselves. To prevent it being understood of the Father, and the Only-begotten Son, he robs us of this idea of relationship which enters the ear along with the words, and abandoning the inspired terms, expounds the Faith by means of others devised to injure the truth.

One thing, however, that he says is true: that his own teaching, not the Catholic teaching, is summed up so. Indeed any one who reflects can easily see the impiety of his statement. It will not be out of place now to discuss in detail what his intention is in ascribing to the being of the Father alone the highest degree of that which is supreme and proper, while not admitting that the being of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is supreme and proper. For my part I think that it is a prelude to his complete denial of the ‘being’ of the Only-begotten and of the Holy Ghost, and that this system of his is secretly intended to effect the setting aside of all real belief in their personality, while in appearance and in mere words confessing it. A moment’s reflection upon his statement will enable any one to perceive that this is so. It does not look like one who thinks that the Only-begotten and the Holy Ghost really exist in a distinct personality to be very particular about the names with which he thinks the greatness of Almighty God should be expressed. To grant the fact<sup>106</sup>, and then go into

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<sup>106</sup> i.e. of the equality of Persons.

minute distinctions about the appropriate phrases<sup>107</sup> would be indeed consummate folly: and so in ascribing a being that is in the highest degree supreme and proper only to the Father, he makes us surmise by this silence respecting the other two that (to him) they do not properly exist. How can that to which a proper being is denied be said to really exist? When we deny proper being to it, we must perforce affirm of it all the opposite terms. That which cannot be properly said is improperly said, so that the demonstration of its not being properly said is a proof of its not really subsisting: and it is at this that Eunomius seems to aim in introducing these new names into his teaching. For no one can say that he has strayed from ignorance into some silly fancy of separating, locally, the supreme from that which is below, and assigning to the Father as it were the peak of some hill, while he seats the Son lower down in the hollows. No one is so childish as to conceive of differences in space, when the intellectual and spiritual is under discussion. Local position is a property of the material: but the intellectual and immaterial is confessedly removed from the idea of locality. What, then, is the reason why he says that the Father alone has supreme being? For one can hardly think it is from ignorance that he wanders off into these conceptions, being one who, in the many displays he makes, claims to be wise, even “making himself otherwise,” as the Holy Scripture forbids us to do<sup>108</sup>.

§15. *He does wrong in making the being of the Father alone proper and supreme, implying by his omission of the Son and the Spirit that theirs is improperly spoken of, and is inferior.*

But at all events he will allow that this supremacy of being betokens no excess of power, or of goodness, or of anything of that kind. Every one knows that, not to mention those whose knowledge is supposed to be very profound; viz., that the personality of the Only-begotten and of the Holy Ghost has nothing lacking in the way of perfect goodness, perfect power, and of every quality like that. Good, as long as it is incapable of its opposite, has no bounds to its goodness: its opposite alone can circumscribe it, as we may see by particular examples. Strength is stopped only when weakness seizes it; life is limited by death alone; darkness is the ending of light: in a word, every good is checked by its opposite, and by that alone. If then he supposes that the nature of the Only-begotten and of the Spirit can change for the worse, then he plainly diminishes the conception of their goodness, making them capable of being associated with their opposites. But if the Divine and unalterable nature is incapable of degeneracy, as even our foes allow, we must regard it as absolutely unlimited in its goodness: and the unlimited is the same as the infinite. But to suppose excess and defect in the infinite and unlimited is to the last degree unreasonable: for how can the idea of infinitude remain, if we posit increase and loss in it? We get the idea of excess only by

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107 i.e. for the Persons.

108 Eccles. vii. 16.



a comparison of limits: where there is no limit, we cannot think of any excess. Perhaps, however, this was not what he was driving at, but he assigns this superiority only by the prerogative of priority in time, and, with this idea only, declares the Father's being to be alone the supreme one. Then he must tell us on what grounds he has measured out more length of life to the Father, while no distinctions of time whatever have been previously conceived of in the personality of the Son.

And yet supposing for a moment, for the sake of argument, that this was so, what superiority does the being which is prior in time have over that which follows, on the score of pure being, that he can say that the one is supreme and proper, and the other is not? For while the lifetime of the elder as compared with the younger is longer, yet his being has neither increase nor decrease on that account. This will be clear by an illustration. What disadvantage, on the score of being, as compared with Abraham, had David who lived fourteen generations after? Was any change, so far as humanity goes, effected in the latter? Was he less a human being, because he was later in time? Who would be so foolish as to assert this? The definition of their being is the same for both: the lapse of time does not change it. No one would assert that the one was more a man for being first in time, and the other less because he sojourned in life later; as if humanity had been exhausted on the first, or as if time had spent its chief power upon the deceased. For it is not in the power of time to define for each one the measures of nature, but nature abides self-contained, preserving herself through succeeding generations: and time has a course of its own, whether surrounding, or flowing by, this nature, which remains firm and motionless within her own limits. Therefore, not even supposing, as our argument did for a moment, that an advantage were allowed on the score of time, can they properly ascribe to the Father alone the highest supremacy of being: but as there is really no difference whatever in the prerogative of time, how could any one possibly entertain such an idea about these existencies which are pre-temporal? Every measure of distance that we could discover is beneath the divine nature: so no ground is left for those who attempt to divide this pre-temporal and incomprehensible being by distinctions of superior and inferior.

We have no hesitation either in asserting that what is dogmatically taught by them is an advocacy of the Jewish doctrine, setting forth, as they do, that the being of the Father alone has subsistence, and insisting that this only has proper existence, and reckoning that of the Son and the Spirit among non-existencies, seeing that what does not properly exist can be said nominally only, and by an abuse of terms, to exist at all. The name of man, for instance, is not given to a portrait representing one, but to so and so who is absolutely such, the original of the picture, and not the picture itself; whereas the picture is in word only a man, and does not possess absolutely the quality ascribed to it, because it is not in its nature that which it is called. In the case before us, too, if being is properly ascribed to the Father, but ceases when we come to the Son and the Spirit, it is nothing short of a plain denial of the message of salvation. Let them leave the church and fall back upon the synagogues of the Jews, proving, as they do, the Son's non-existence in denying to Him proper being. What does not properly exist is the same thing as the non-existent.

Again, he means in all this to be very clever, and has a poor opinion of those who essay to write without logical force. Then let him tell us, contemptible though we are, by what sort of skill he has



detected a greater and a less in pure being. What is his method for establishing that one being is more of a being than another being,—taking being in its plainest meaning, for he must not bring forward those various qualities and properties, which are comprehended in the conception of the being, and gather round it, but are not the subject itself? Shade, colour, weight, force or reputation, distinctive manner, disposition, any quality thought of in connection with body or mind, are not to be considered here: we have to inquire only whether the actual subject of all these, which is termed absolutely the being, differs in degree of being from another. We have yet to learn that of two known existencies, which still exist, the one is more, the other less, an existence. Both are equally such, as long as they are in the category of existence, and when all notions of more or less value, more or less force, have been excluded.

If, then, he denies that we can regard the Only-begotten as completely existing,—for to this depth his statement seems to lead,—in withholding from Him a proper existence, let him deny it even in a less degree. If, however, he does grant that the Son subsists in some substantial way—we will not quarrel now about the particular way—why does he take away again that which he has conceded Him to be, and prove Him to exist not properly, which is tantamount, as we have said, to not at all? For as humanity is not possible to that which does not possess the complete connotation of the term ‘man,’ and the whole conception of it is cancelled in the case of one who lacks any of the properties, so in every thing whose complete and proper existence is denied, the partial affirmation of its existence is no proof of its subsisting at all; the demonstration, in fact, of its incomplete being is a demonstration of its effacement in all points. So that if he is well-advised, he will come over to the orthodox belief, and remove from his teaching the idea of less and of incompleteness in the nature of the Son and the Spirit: but if he is determined to blaspheme, and wishes for some inscrutable reason thus to requite his Maker and God and Benefactor, let him at all events part with his conceit of possessing some amount of showy learning, unphilosophically piling, as he does, being over being, one above the other, one proper, one not such, for no discoverable reason. We have never heard that any of the infidel philosophers have committed this folly, any more than we have met with it in the inspired writings, or in the common apprehension of mankind.

I think that from what has been said it will be clear what is the aim of these newly-devised names. He drops them as the base of operations or foundation-stone of all this work of mischief to the Faith: once he can get the idea into currency that the one Being alone is supreme and proper in the highest degree, he can then assail the other two, as belonging to the inferior and not regarded as properly Being. He shows this especially in what follows, where he is discussing the belief in the Son and the Holy Spirit, and does not proceed with these names, so as to avoid bringing before us the proper characteristic of their nature by means of those appellations: they are passed over unnoticed by this man who is always telling us that minds of the hearers are to be directed by the use of appropriate names and phrases. Yet what name could be more appropriate than that which has been given by the Very Truth? He sets his views against the Gospel, and names not the Son, but ‘a Being existing through the First, but after It though before all others.’ That this is said to

destroy the right faith in the Only-begotten will be made plainer still by his subsequent arguments. Still there is only a moderate amount of mischief in these words: one intending no impiety at all towards Christ might sometimes use them: we will therefore omit at present all discussion about our Lord, and reserve our reply to the more open blasphemies against Him. But on the subject of the Holy Spirit the blasphemy is plain and unconcealed: he says that He is not to be ranked with the Father or the Son, but is subject to both. I will therefore examine as closely as possible this statement.

§16. *Examination of the meaning of ‘subjection:’ in that he says that the nature of the Holy Spirit is subject to that of the Father and the Son. It is shewn that the Holy Spirit is of an equal, not inferior, rank to the Father and the Son.*

Let us first, then, ascertain the meaning of this word ‘subjection’ in Scripture. To whom is it applied? The Creator, honouring man in his having been made in His own image, ‘hath placed’ the brute creation ‘in subjection under his feet;’ as great David relating this favour (of God) exclaimed in the Psalms<sup>109</sup>: “He put all things,” he says, “under his feet,” and he mentions by name the creatures so subjected. There is still another meaning of ‘subjection’ in Scripture. Ascribing to God Himself the cause of his success in war, the Psalmist says<sup>110</sup>, “He hath put peoples and nations in subjection under our feet,” and “He that putteth peoples in subjection under me.” This word is often found thus in Scripture, indicating a victory. As for the future subjection of all men to the Only-begotten, and through Him to the Father, in the passage where the Apostle with a profound wisdom speaks of the Mediator between God and man as subject to the Father, implying by that subjection of the Son who shares humanity the actual subjugation of mankind—we will not discuss it now, for it requires a full and thorough examination. But to take only the plain and unambiguous meaning of the word subjection, how can he declare the being of the Spirit to be subject to that of the Son and the Father? As the Son is subject to the Father, according to the thought of the Apostle? But in this view the Spirit is to be ranked with the Son, not below Him, seeing that both Persons are of this lower rank. This was not his meaning? How then? In the way the brute creation is subject to the rational, as in the Psalm? There is then as great a difference as is implied in the subjection of the brute creation, when compared to man. Perhaps he will reject this explanation as well. Then he will have to come to the only remaining one, that the Spirit, at first in the rebellious ranks, was afterwards forced by a superior Force to bend to a Conqueror.

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109 Psalm viii. 6–8.

110 Psalm xlvi. 3 (LXX.).



Let him choose which he likes of these alternatives: whichever it is I do not see how he can avoid the inevitable crime of blasphemy: whether he says the Spirit is subject in the manner of the brute creation, as fish and birds and sheep, to man, or were to fetch Him a captive to a superior power after the manner of a rebel. Or does he mean neither of these ways, but uses the word in a different signification altogether to the scripture meaning? What, then, is that signification? Does he lay down that we must rank Him as inferior and not as equal, because He was given by our Lord to His disciples third in order? By the same reasoning he should make the Father inferior to the Son, since the Scripture often places the name of our Lord first, and the Father Almighty second. “I and My Father,” our Lord says. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God<sup>111</sup>,” and other passages innumerable which the diligent student of Scripture testimonies might collect: for instance, “there are differences of gifts, but it is the same Spirit: and there are differences of administration, but it is the same Lord: and there are differences of operations, but it is the same God.” According to this, then, let the Almighty Father, who is mentioned third, be made ‘subject’ to the Son and the Spirit. However we have never yet heard of a philosophy such as this, which relegates to the category of the inferior and the dependent that which is mentioned second or third only for some particular reason of sequence: yet that is what our author wants to do, in arguing to show that the order observed in the transmission of the Persons amounts to differences of more and less in dignity and nature. In fact he rules that sequence in point of order is indicative of unlikeness of nature: whence he got this fancy, what necessity compelled him to it, is not clear. Mere numerical rank does not create a different nature: that which we would count in a number remains the same in nature whether we count it or not. Number is a mark only of the mere quantity of things: it does not place second those things only which have an inferior natural value, but it makes the sequence of the numerical objects indicated in accordance with the intention of those who are counting. ‘Paul and Silvanus and Timotheus’ are three persons mentioned according to a particular intention. Does the place of Silvanus, second and after Paul, indicate that he was other than a man? Or is Timothy, because he is third, considered by the writer who so ranks him a different kind of being? Not so. Each is human both before and after this arrangement. Speech, which cannot utter the names of all three at once, mentions each separately according to an order which commends itself, but unites them by the copula, in order that the juncture of the names may show the harmonious action of the three towards one end.

This, however, does not please our new dogmatist. He opposes the arrangement of Scripture. He separates off that equality with the Father and the Son of His proper and natural rank and connexion which our Lord Himself pronounces, and numbers Him with ‘subjects’: he declares Him to be a work of both Persons<sup>112</sup>, of the Father, as supplying the cause of His constitution, of the

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<sup>111</sup> John x. 30; 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>112</sup> *he declares Him to be a work of both Persons.* With regard to Gregory’s own belief as to the procession of the Holy Spirit, it may be said once for all that there is hardly anything (but see p. 99, note 5) clear about it to be found in his writings. The question, in fact, remained undecided until the 9th century, the time of the schism of the East and West. But here, as in other

Only-begotten, as of the artificer of His subsistence: and defines this as the ground of His ‘subjection,’ without as yet unfolding the meaning of ‘subjection.’

§17. *Discussion as to the exact nature of the ‘energies’ which, this man declares, ‘follow’ the being of the Father and of the Son.*

Then he says “there must of course be included in this account the energies that accompany each Being, and the names appropriate to these energies.” Shrouded in such a mist of vagueness, the meaning of this is far from clear: but one might conjecture it is as follows. By the energies of the Beings, he means those powers which have produced the Son and the Holy Spirit, and by which the First Being made the Second, and the Second the Third: and he means that the names of the results produced have been provided in a manner appropriate to those results. We have already exposed the mischief of these names, and will again, when we return to that part of the question, should additional discussion of it be required.

But it is worth a moment’s while now to consider how energies ‘follow’ beings: what these energies are essentially: whether different to the beings which they ‘follow,’ or part of them, and of their inmost nature: and then, if different, how and whence they arise: if the same, how they have got cut off from them, and instead of co-existing ‘follow’ them externally only. This is necessary, for we cannot learn all at once from his words whether some natural necessity compels the ‘energy,’ whatever that may be, to ‘follow’ the being, the way heat and vapour follow fire, and the various exhalations the bodies which produce them. Still I do not think that he would affirm that we should consider the being of God to be something heterogeneous and composite, having the energy inalienably contained in the idea of itself, like an ‘accident’ in some subject-matter: he must mean that the beings, deliberately and voluntarily moved, produce by themselves the desired result. But, if this be so, who would style this free result of intention as one of its external consequences? We have never heard of such an expression used in common parlance in such cases; the energy of the worker of anything is not said to ‘follow’ that worker. We cannot separate one from the other and leave one behind by itself: but, when one mentions the energy, one comprehends in the idea that which is moved with the energy, and when one mentions the worker one implies at once the unmentioned energy.

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points, Origen had approached the nearest to the teaching of the West: for he represents the procession as from Father and Son, just as often as from one Person or the other. Athanasius does certainly say that the Spirit ‘unites the creation to the Son, and through the Son to the Father,’ but with him this expression is not followed up: while in the Roman Church it led to doctrine. For why does the Holy Spirit unite the creation with God continuously and perfectly? Because, to use Bossuet’s words, “proceeding from the Father and the Son He is their love and eternal union.” Neither Basil, nor Gregory Nazianzen, nor Chrysostom, have anything definite about the procession of the Third Person.

An illustration will make our meaning clearer. We say a man works in iron, or in wood, or in anything else. This single expression conveys at once the idea of the working and of the artificer, so that if we withdraw the one, the other has no existence. If then they are thus thought of together, i.e. the energy and he who exercises it, how in this case can there be said to “follow” upon the first being the energy which produces the second being, like a sort of go-between to both, and neither coalescing with the nature of the first, nor combining with the second: separated from the first because it is not its very nature, but only the exercise of its nature, and from that which results afterwards because it does not therein reproduce a mere energy, but an active being.

§18. *He has no reason for distinguishing a plurality of beings in the Trinity. He offers no demonstration that it is so.*

Let us examine the following as well. He calls one Being the work of another, the second of the first, and the third of the second. On what previous demonstration does this statement rest: what proofs does he make use of, what method, to compel belief in the succeeding Being as a result of the preceding? For even if it were possible to draw an analogy for this from created things, such conjecturing about the transcendent from lower existences would not be altogether sound, though the error in arguing from natural phenomena to the incomprehensible might then be pardonable. But as it is, none would venture to affirm that, while the heavens are the work of God, the sun is that of the heavens, and the moon that of the sun, and the stars that of the moon, and other created things that of the stars: seeing that all are the work of One: for there is one God and Father of all, of Whom are all things. If anything is produced by mutual transmission, such as the race of animals, not even here does one produce another, for nature runs on through each generation. How then, when it is impossible to affirm it of the created world, can he declare of the transcendent existencies that the second is a work of the first, and so on? If, however, he is thinking of animal generation, and fancies that such a process is going on also amongst pure existences, so that the older produces the younger, even so he fails to be consistent: for such productions are of the same type as their progenitors: whereas he assigns to the members of his succession strange and uninherited qualities: and thus displays a superfluity of falsehood, while striving to strike truth with both hands at once, in a clever boxer’s fashion. In order to show the inferior rank and diminution in intrinsic value of the Son and Holy Spirit, he declares that “one is produced from *another*,” in order that those who understand about mutual generation might entertain no idea of family relationship here: he contradicts the law of nature by declaring that “one is produced from *another*,” and at the same time exhibiting the Son as a bastard when compared with His Father’s nature.

But one might find fault with him, I think, before coming to all this. If, that is, any one else, previously unaccustomed to discussion and unversed in logical expression, delivered his ideas in this chance fashion, some indulgence might be shown him for not using the recognized methods for establishing his views. But considering that Eunomius has such an abundance of this power,



that he can advance by his ‘irresistible’ method<sup>113</sup> of proof even into the supra-natural, how can he be ignorant of the starting-point from which this ‘irresistible’ perception of a hidden truth takes its rise in all these logical excursions. Every one knows that all such arguing must start from plain and well-known truths, to compel belief through itself in still doubtful truths: and that none of these last can be grasped without the guidance of what is obvious leading us towards the unknown. If on the other hand that which is adopted to start with for the illustration of this unknown is at variance with universal belief, it will be a long time before the unknown will receive any illustration from it.

The whole controversy, then, between the Church and the Anomœans turns on this: Are we to regard the Son and the Holy Spirit as belonging to created or uncreated existence? Our opponent declares that to be the case which all deny: he boldly lays it down, without looking about for any proof, that each being is the work of the preceding being. What method of education, what school of thought can warrant him in this, it is difficult to see. Some axiom that cannot be denied or assailed must be the beginning of every process of proof; so as for the unknown quantity to be demonstrated from what has been assumed, being legitimately deduced by intervening syllogisms. The reasoner, therefore, who makes what ought to be the object of inquiry itself a premiss of his demonstration is only proving the obscure by the obscure, and illusion by illusion. He is making ‘the blind lead the blind,’ for it is a truly blind and unsupported statement to say that the Creator and Maker of all things is a creature made: and to this they link on a conclusion that is also blind: namely, that the Son is alien in nature, *unlike* in being to the Father, and quite devoid of His essential character. But of this enough. Where his thought is nakedly blasphemous, there we too can defer its refutation. We must now return to consider his words which come next in order.

### §19. *His acknowledgment that the Divine Being is ‘single’ is only verbal.*

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<sup>113</sup> καταληπτικῆς ἐφόδου—ἡ κατάληψις. These words are taken from the Stoic logic, and refer to the Stoic view of the standard of truth. To the question, How are true perceptions distinguished from false ones, the Stoics answered, that a true perception is one which represents a real object as it really is. To the further question, How may it be known that a perception faithfully represents a reality, they replied by pointing to a relative not an absolute test—*the degree of strength with which certain perceptions force themselves* upon our notice. Some of our perceptions are of such a kind that they at once oblige us to bestow on them assent. Such perceptions produce in us that strength of conviction which the Stoics call a conception. Whenever a perception forces itself upon us in this irresistible form, we are no longer dealing with a fiction of the imagination but with something real. The test of irresistibility (κατάληψις) was, in the first place, understood to apply to sensations from without, such sensations, according to the Stoic view, alone supplying the material for knowledge. An equal degree of certainty was, however, attached to terms deduced from originally true data, either by the universal and natural exercise of thought, or by scientific processes of proof. It is καταλέψεις obtained in this last way that Gregory refers to, and Eunomius was endeavouring to create in the supra-natural world.

“Each Being has, in fact and in conception, a nature unmixed, single, and absolutely one as estimated by its dignity; and as the works are bounded by the energies of each operator, and the energies by the works, it is inevitable that the energies which follow each Being are greater in the one case than the other, some being of the first, others of the second rank.” The intention that runs through all this, however verbosely expressed, is one and the same; namely, to establish that there is no connexion between the Father and the Son, or between the Son and the Holy Ghost, but that these Beings are sundered from each other, and possess natures foreign and unfamiliar to each other, and differ not only in that, but also in magnitude and in subordination of their dignities, so that we must think of one as greater than the other, and presenting every other sort of difference.

It may seem to many useless to linger over what is so obvious, and to attempt a discussion of that which to them is on the face of it false and abominable and groundless: nevertheless, to avoid even the appearance of having to let these statements pass for want of counter-arguments, we will meet them with all our might. He says, “each being amongst them is unmixed, single, and absolutely one, as estimated by its dignity, both in fact and in conception.” Then premising this very doubtful statement as an axiom and valuing his own ‘ipse dixit’ as a sufficient substitute for any proof, he thinks he has made a point. “There are three Beings:” for he implies this when he says, ‘each being amongst them:’ he would not have used these words, if he meant only one. Now if he speaks thus of the mutual difference between the Beings in order to avoid complicity with the heresy of Sabellius, who applied three titles to one subject, we would acquiesce in his statement: nor would any of the Faithful contradict his view, except so far as he seems to be at fault in his names, and his mere form of expression in speaking of ‘beings’ instead of ‘persons:’ for things that are identical on the score of being will not all agree equally in definition on the score of personality. For instance, Peter, James, and John are the same viewed as beings, each was a man: but in the characteristics of their respective personalities, they were not alike. If, then, he were only proving that it is not right to confound the Persons, and to fit all the three names on to one Subject, his ‘saying’ would be, to use the Apostle’s words, ‘faithful, and worthy of all acceptance<sup>114</sup>.’ But this is not his object: he speaks so, not because he divides the Persons only from each other by their recognized characteristics, but because he makes the actual substantial being of each different from that of the others, or rather from itself: and so he speaks of a plurality of beings with distinctive differences which alienate them from each other. I therefore declare that his view is unfounded, and lacks a principle: it starts from data that are not granted, and then it constructs by mere logic a blasphemy upon them. It attempts no demonstration that could attract towards such a conception of the doctrine: it merely contains the statement of an unproved impiety, as if it were telling us a dream. While the Church teaches that we must not divide our faith amongst a plurality of beings, but must recognize no difference of being in three Subjects or Persons, whereas our opponents posit a variety and unlikeness amongst them as Beings, this writer confidently assumes as already proved what never



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1 Timothy i. 15.

has been, and never can be, proved by argument: maybe he has not even yet found hearers for his talk: or he might have been informed by one of them who was listening intelligently that every statement which is made at random, and without proof, is ‘an old woman’s tale,’ and powerless to prove the question, in itself, unaided by any plea whatever fetched from the Scriptures, or from human reasonings. So much for this.

But let us still scrutinize his words. He declares each of these Beings, whom he has shadowed forth in his exposition, to be single and absolutely one. We believe that the most boorish and simple-minded would not deny that the Divine Nature, blessed and transcendent as it is, was ‘single.’ That which is viewless, formless, and sizeless, cannot be conceived of as multiform and composite. But it will be clear, upon the very slightest reflection, that this view of the supreme Being as ‘simple,’ however finely they may talk of it, is quite inconsistent with the system which they have elaborated. For who does not know that, to be exact, simplicity in the case of the Holy Trinity admits of no degrees. In this case there is no mixture or conflux of qualities to think of; we comprehend a potency without parts and composition; how then, and on what grounds, could any one perceive there any differences of less and more. For he who marks differences there must perforce think of an incidence of certain qualities in the subject. He must in fact have perceived differences in largeness and smallness therein, to have introduced this conception of quantity into the question: or he must posit abundance or diminution in the matter of goodness, strength, wisdom, or of anything else that can with reverence be associated with God: and neither way will he escape the idea of composition. Nothing which possesses wisdom or power or any other good, not as an external gift, but rooted in its nature, can suffer diminution in it; so that if any one says that he detects Beings greater and smaller in the Divine Nature, he is unconsciously establishing a composite and heterogeneous Deity, and thinking of the Subject as one thing, and the quality, to share in which constitutes as good that which was not so before, as another. If he had been thinking of a Being really single and absolutely one, identical with goodness rather than possessing it, he would not be able to count a greater and a less in it at all. It was said, moreover, above that good can be diminished by the presence of evil alone, and that where the nature is incapable of deteriorating, there is no limit conceived of to the goodness: the unlimited, in fact, is not such owing to any relation whatever, but, considered in itself, escapes limitation. It is, indeed, difficult to see how a reflecting mind can conceive one infinite to be greater or less than another infinite. So that if he acknowledges the supreme Being to be ‘single’ and homogenous, let him grant that it is bound up with this universal attribute of simplicity and infinitude. If, on the other hand, he divides and estranges the ‘Beings’ from each other, conceiving that of the Only-begotten as another than the Father’s, and that of the Spirit as another than the Only-begotten, with a ‘more’ and ‘less’ in each case, let him be exposed now as granting simplicity in appearance only to the Deity, but in reality proving the composite in Him.

But let us resume the examination of his words in order. “Each Being has in fact and conception a nature unmixed, single, and absolutely one, as estimated by its dignity.” Why “as estimated by its dignity?” If he contemplates the Beings in their common dignity, this addition is unnecessary



and superfluous, and dwells upon that which is obvious: although a word so out of place might be pardoned, if it was any feeling of reverence which prompted him not to reject it. But here the mischief really is not owing to a mistake about a phrase (that might be easily set right): but it is connected with his evil designs. He says that each of the three beings is ‘single, as estimated by its dignity,’ in order that, on the strength of his previous definitions of the first, second, and third Being, the idea of their simplicity also may be marred. Having affirmed that the being of the Father alone is ‘Supreme’ and ‘Proper,’ and having refused both these titles to that of the Son and of the Spirit, in accordance with this, when he comes to speak of them all as ‘simple,’ he thinks it his duty to associate with them the idea of simplicity in proportion only to their essential worth, so that the Supreme alone is to be conceived of as at the height and perfection of simplicity, while the second, in proportion to its declension from supremacy, receives also a diminished measure of simplicity, and in the case of the third Being also, there is as much variation from the perfect simplicity, as the amount of worth is lessened in the extremes: whence it results that the Father’s being is conceived as of pure simplicity, that of the Son as not so flawless in simplicity, but with a mixture of the composite, that of the Holy Spirit as still increasing in the composite, while the amount of simplicity is gradually lessened. Just as imperfect goodness must be owned to share in some measure in the reverse disposition, so imperfect simplicity cannot escape being considered composite.



§20. *He does wrong in assuming, to account for the existence of the Only-Begotten, an ‘energy’ that produced Christ’s Person.*

That such is his intention in using these phrases will be clear from what follows, where he more plainly materializes and degrades our conception of the Son and of the Spirit. “As the energies are bounded by the works, and the works commensurate with the energies, it necessarily follows that these energies which accompany these Beings are relatively greater and less, some being of a higher, some of a lower order.” Though he has studiously wrapt the mist of his phraseology round the meaning of this, and made it hard for most to find out, yet as following that which we have already examined it will easily be made clear. “The energies,” he says, “are bounded by the works.” By ‘works’ he means the Son and the Spirit, by ‘energies’ the efficient powers by which they were produced, which powers, he said a little above, ‘follow’ the Beings. The phrase ‘bounded by’ expresses the balance which exists between the being produced and the producing power, or rather the ‘energy’ of that power, to use his own word implying that the thing produced is not the effect of the whole power of the operator, but only of a particular energy of it, only so much of the whole power being exerted as is calculated to be likely to be equal to effect that result. Then he inverts his statement: “and the works are commensurate with the energies of the operators.” The meaning of this will be made clearer by an illustration. Let us think of one of the tools of a shoemaker: i.e., a leather-cutter. When it is moved round upon that from which a certain shape has to be cut, the part so excised is limited by the size of the instrument, and a circle of such a radius will be cut as

the instrument possesses of length, and, to put the matter the other way, the span of the instrument will measure and cut out a corresponding circle. That is the idea which our theologian has of the divine person of the Only-begotten. He declares that a certain 'energy' which 'follows' upon the first Being produced, in the fashion of such a tool, a corresponding work, namely our Lord: this is his way of glorifying the Son of God, Who is even now glorified in the glory of the Father, and shall be revealed in the Day of Judgment. He is a 'work commensurate with the producing energy.' But what is this energy which 'follows' the Almighty and is to be conceived of prior to the Only-begotten, and which circumscribes His being? A certain essential Power, self-subsisting, which works its will by a spontaneous impulse. It is this, then, that is the real Father of our Lord. And why do we go on talking of the Almighty as the Father, if it was not He, but an energy belonging to the things which follow Him externally that produced the Son: and how can the Son be a son any longer, when something else has given Him existence according to Eunomius, and He creeps like a bastard (may our Lord pardon the expression!) into relationship with the Father, and is to be honoured in name only as a Son? How can Eunomius rank our Lord next after the Almighty at all, when he counts Him third only, with that mediating 'energy' placed in the second place? The Holy Spirit also according to this sequence will be found not in the third, but in the fifth place, that 'energy' which follows the Only-Begotten, and by which the Holy Spirit came into existence necessarily intervening between them.

Thereby, too, the creation of all things by the Son<sup>115</sup> will be found to have no foundation: another personality, prior to Him, has been invented by our neologian, to which the authorship of the world must be referred, because the Son Himself derives His being according to them from that 'energy.' If, however, to avoid such profanities, he makes this 'energy' which produced the Son into something unsubstantial, he will have to explain to us how non-being can 'follow' being, and how what is not a substance can produce a substance: for, if he did that, we shall find an unreality following God, the non-existent author of all existence, the radically unsubstantial circumscribing a substantial nature, the operative force of creation contained, in the last resort, in the unreal. Such is the result of the teaching of this theologian who affirms of the Lord Artificer of heaven and earth and of all the Creation, the Word of God Who was in the beginning, through Whom are all things, that He owes His existence to such a baseless entity or conception as that unnameable 'energy' which he has just invented, and that He is circumscribed by it, as by an enclosing prison of unreality. He who 'gazes into the unseen' cannot see the conclusion to which his teaching tends. It is this: if this 'energy' of God has no real existence, and if the work that this unreality produces is also circumscribed by it, it is quite clear that we can only think of such a nature in the work, as that which is possessed by this fancied producer of the work: in fact, that which is produced from and is contained by an unreality can itself be conceived of as nothing else but a non-entity. Opposites,

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115 There is of course reference here to John i. 3: and Eunomius is called just below the 'new theologian,' with an allusion of S. John, who was called by virtue of this passage essentially ὁ θεόλογος

in the nature of things, cannot be contained by opposites: such as water by fire, life by death, light by darkness, being by non-being. But with all his excessive cleverness he does not see this: or else he consciously shuts his eyes to the truth.

Some necessity compels him to see a diminution in the Son, and to establish a further advance in this direction in the case of the Holy Ghost. "It necessarily follows," he says, "that these energies which accompany these Beings are relatively greater and less." This compelling necessity in the Divine nature, which assigns a greater and a less, has not been explained to us by Eunomius, nor as yet can we ourselves understand it. Hitherto there has prevailed with those who accept the Gospel in its plain simplicity the belief that there is no necessity above the Godhead to bend the Only-begotten, like a slave, to inferiority. But he quite overlooks this belief, though it was worth some consideration; and he dogmatizes that we must conceive of this inferiority. But this necessity of his does not stop there: it lands him still further in blasphemy: as our examination in detail has already shewn. If, that is, the Son was born, not from the Father, but from some unsubstantial 'energy,' He must be thought of as not merely inferior to the Father, and this doctrine must end in pure Judaism. This necessity, when followed out, exhibits the product of a non-entity as not merely insignificant, but as something which it is a perilous blasphemy even for an accuser to name. For as that which has its birth from an existence necessarily exists, so that which is evolved from the non-existent necessarily does the very contrary. When anything is not self-existent, how can it generate another?

If, then, this energy which 'follows' the Deity, and produces the Son, has no existence of its own, no one can be so blind as not to see the conclusion, and that his aim is to deny our Saviour's deity: and if the personality of the Son is thus stolen by their doctrine from the Faith, with nothing left of it but the name, it will be a long time before the Holy Ghost, descended as He will be from a lineage of unrealities, will be believed in again. The energy which 'follows' the Deity has no existence of its own: then common sense requires the product of this to be unreal: then a second unsubstantial energy follows this product: then it is declared that the Holy Ghost is formed by this energy: so that their blasphemy is plain enough: it consists in nothing less than in denying that after the Ingenerate God there is any real existence: and their doctrine advances into shadowy and unsubstantial fictions, where there is no foundation of any actual subsistence. In such monstrous conclusions does their teaching strand the argument.

§21. *The blasphemy of these heretics is worse than the Jewish unbelief.*

But let us assume that this is not so: for they allow, forsooth, in theoretic kindness towards humanity, that the Only-begotten and the Holy Spirit have some personal existence: and if, in allowing this, they had granted too the consequent conceptions about them, they would not have been waging battle about the doctrine of the Church, nor cut themselves off from the hope of Christians. But if they have lent an existence to the Son and the Spirit, only to furnish a material

on which to erect their blasphemy, perhaps it might have been better for them, though it is a bold thing to say, to abjure the Faith and apostatize to the Jewish religion, rather than to insult the name of Christian by this mock assent. The Jews at all events, though they have persisted hitherto in rejecting the Word, carry their impiety only so far as to deny that Christ has come, but to hope that He will come: we do not hear from them any malignant or destructive conception of the glory of Him Whom they expect. But this school of the new circumcision<sup>116</sup>, or rather of “the concision,” while they own that He has come, resemble nevertheless those who insulted our Lord’s bodily presence by their wanton unbelief. They wanted to stone our Lord: these men stone Him with their blasphemous titles. They urged His humble and obscure origin, and rejected His divine birth before the ages: these men in the same way deny His grand, sublime, ineffable generation from the Father, and would prove that He owes His existence to a creation, just as the human race, and all that is born, owe theirs. In the eyes of the Jews it was a crime that our Lord should be regarded as Son of the Supreme: these men also are indignant against those who are sincere in making this confession of Him. The Jews thought to honour the Almighty by excluding the Son from equal reverence: these men, by annihilating the glory of the Son, think to bestow more honour on the Father. But it would be difficult to do justice to the number and the nature of the insults which they heap upon the Only-begotten: they invent an ‘energy’ prior to the personality of the Son and say that He is its work and product: a thing which the Jews hitherto have not dared to say. Then they circumscribe His nature, shutting Him off within certain limits of the power which made Him: the amount of this productive energy is a sort of measure within which they enclose Him: they have devised it as a sort of cloak to muffle Him up in. We cannot charge the Jews with doing this.



§22. *He has no right to assert a greater and less in the Divine being. A systematic statement of the teaching of the Church.*

Then they discover in His being a certain shortness in the way of deficiency, though they do not tell us by what method they measure that which is devoid of quantity and size: they are able to find out exactly by how much the size of the Only-begotten falls short of perfection, and therefore has to be classed with the inferior and imperfect: much else they lay down, partly by open assertion, partly by underhand inference: all the time making their confession of the Son and the Spirit a mere exercise-ground for their unbelieving spirit. How, then, can we fail to pity them more even than

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<sup>116</sup> *this school of the new circumcision.* This accusation is somewhat discounted by Gregory’s comparison of Eunomius elsewhere to Bardesanes and Marcion, to the Manichees, to Nicholaus, to Philo (see Book XI. 691, 704, VI. 607, and especially VII. 645), and by his putting him down a scholar of Plato. But a momentary advantage, calculated in accordance with the character and capacities of the great mass of Gregory’s audience, could not be lost. The lessons of Libanius, the rhetorician, had not been thrown away on Gregory.

the condemned Jews, when views never ventured upon by the latter are inferred by the former? He who makes the being of the Son and of the Spirit comparatively less, seems, so far as words go perhaps, to commit but a slight profanity: but if one were to test his view stringently it will be found the height of blasphemy. Let us look into this, then, and let indulgence be shown me, if, for the sake of doctrine, and to place in a clear light the lie which they have demonstrated, I advance into an exposition of our own conception of the truth.

Now the ultimate division of all being is into the Intelligible and the Sensible. The Sensible world is called by the Apostle broadly “that which is seen.” For as all body has colour, and the sight apprehends this, he calls this world by the rough and ready name of “that which is seen,” leaving out all the other qualities, which are essentially inherent in its framework. The common term, again, for all the intellectual world, is with the Apostle “that which is not seen<sup>117</sup>.” by withdrawing all idea of comprehension by the senses he leads the mind on to the immaterial and intellectual. Reason again divides this “which is not seen” into the uncreate and the created, inferentially comprehending it: the uncreate being that which effects the Creation, the created that which owes its origin and its force to the uncreate. In the Sensible world, then, is found everything that we comprehend by our organs of bodily sense, and in which the differences of qualities involve the idea of more and less, such differences consisting in quantity, quality, and the other properties.

But in the Intelligible world,—that part of it, I mean, which is created,—the idea of such differences as are perceived in the Sensible cannot find a place: another method, then, is devised for discovering the degrees of greater and less. The fountain, the origin, the supply of every good is regarded as being in the world that is uncreate, and the whole creation inclines to that, and touches and shares the Highest Existence only by virtue of its part in the First Good: therefore it follows from this participation in the highest blessings varying in degree according to the amount of freedom in the will that each possesses, that the greater and less in this creation is disclosed according to the proportion of this tendency in each<sup>118</sup>. Created intelligible nature stands on the borderline between good and the reverse, so as to be capable of either, and to incline at pleasure to the things of its choice, as we learn from Scripture; so that we can say of it that it is more or less in the heights of excellence only in proportion to its removal from the evil and its approach to the good. Whereas<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Colossians i. 16.

<sup>118</sup> i.e. according as each inclines more or less to the First Good.

<sup>119</sup> *uncreate intelligible nature is far removed from such distinctions.* This was the impregnable position that Athanasius had taken up. To admit that the Son is less than the Father, and the Spirit less than the Son, is to admit *the law of emanation* such as hitherto conceived, that is, the gradual and successive degradation of God’s substance; which had conducted oriental heretics as well as the Neoplatonists to a sort of pantheistic polytheism. Arius had indeed tried to resist this tendency so far as to bring back divinity to the Supreme Being; but it was at the expense of the divinity of the Son, Who was with him just as much a created Intermediate between God and man, as one of the Æons: and Aetius and Eunomius treated the Holy Ghost also as their master had treated the Son. But Arianism tended at once to Judaism and, in making creatures adorable, to Greek polytheism. There was



uncreate intelligible nature is far removed from such distinctions: it does not possess the good by acquisition, or participate only in the goodness of some good which lies above it: in its own essence it is good, and is conceived as such: it is a source of good, it is simple, uniform, incomposite, even by the confession of our adversaries. But it has distinction within itself in keeping with the majesty of its own nature, but not conceived of with regard to quantity, as Eunomius supposes: (indeed the man who introduces the notion of less of good into any of the things believed to be in the Holy Trinity must admit thereby some admixture of the opposite quality in that which fails of the good: and it is blasphemous to imagine this in the case either of the Only-begotten, or of the Holy Spirit): we regard it as consummately perfect and incomprehensibly excellent yet as containing clear distinctions within itself which reside in the peculiarities of each of the Persons: as possessing invariableness by virtue of its common attribute of uncreatedness, but differentiated by the unique character of each Person. This peculiarity contemplated in each sharply and clearly divides one from the other: the Father, for instance, is uncreate and ungenerate as well: He was never generated any more than He was created. While this uncreatedness is common to Him and the Son, and the Spirit, He is ungenerate as well as the Father. This is peculiar and uncommunicable, being not seen in the other Persons. The Son in His uncreatedness touches the Father and the Spirit, but as the Son and the Only-begotten He has a character which is not that of the Almighty or of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit by the uncreatedness of His nature has contact with the Son and Father, but is distinguished from them by His own tokens. His most peculiar characteristic is that He is neither of those things which we contemplate in the Father and the Son respectively. He *is* simply, neither as ungenerate<sup>120</sup>, nor as only-begotten: this it is that constitutes His chief peculiarity. Joined to the Father by His uncreatedness, He is disjoined from Him again by not being 'Father.' United to the Son by the bond of uncreatedness, and of deriving His existence from the Supreme, He is parted again from Him by the characteristic of not being the Only-begotten of the Father, and of having been manifested by means of the Son Himself. Again, as the creation was effected by the Only-begotten, in order to secure that the Spirit should not be considered to have something in common with this creation because of His having been manifested by means of the Son, He is distinguished from it by His unchangeableness, and independence of all external goodness. The creation does not possess in its nature this unchangeableness, as the Scripture says in the description of the fall of the morning star, the mysteries on which subject are revealed by our Lord to His

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only one way of cutting short the phantasmagoria of divine emanations, without having recourse to the contradictory hypothesis of Arius: and that was to reject the *law of emanation*, as hitherto accepted, altogether. Far from admitting that the Supreme Being is always weakening and degrading Himself in that which emanates from Him, Athanasius lays down the principle that He produces within Himself nothing but what is perfect, and first, and divine: and all that is not perfect is a work of the Divine Will, which draws it out of nothing (i.e. creates it), and not out of the Divine Substance. This was the crowning result of the teaching of Alexandria and Origen. See Denys (De la Philosophie d'Origene, p. 432, Paris, 1884).

<sup>120</sup> But He is not *begotten*. Athanasian Creed.

disciples: “I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven<sup>121</sup>.” But the very attributes which part Him from the creation constitute His relationship to the Father and the Son. All that is incapable of degenerating has one and the same definition of “unchangeable.”

Having stated thus much as a preface we are in a position to discuss the rest of our adversaries’ teaching. “It necessarily follows,” he says in his system of the Son and the Spirit, “that the Beings are relatively greater and less.” Let us then inquire what is the meaning of this necessity of difference. Does it arise from a comparison formed from measuring them one with another in some material way, or from viewing them on the spiritual ground of more or less of moral excellence, or on that of pure being? But in the case of this last it has been shown by competent thinkers that it is impossible to conceive of any difference whatever, if one abstracts being from attributes and properties, and looks at it according to its bare definition. Again, to conceive of this difference as consisting in the case of the Only-begotten and the Spirit in the intensity or abatement of moral excellence, and in consequence to hint that their nature admits of change in either direction, so as to be equally capable of opposites, and to be placed in a borderland between moral beauty and its opposite—that is gross profanity. A man who thinks this will be proving that their nature is one thing in itself, and becomes something else by virtue of its participation in this beauty or its opposite: as happens with iron for example: if it is approached some time to the fire, it assumes the quality of heat while remaining iron: if it is put in snow or ice, it changes its quality to the mastering influence, and lets the snow’s coldness pass into its pores.

Now just as we cannot name the material of the iron from the quality now to be observed upon it (for we do not give the name of fire or ice to that which is tempered with either of these), so the moment we grant the view of these heretics, that in the case<sup>122</sup> of the Life-giving Power good does not reside in It essentially, but is imparted to it only, it will become impossible to call it properly good: such a conception of it will compel us to regard it as something different, as not eternally exhibiting the good, as not in itself to be classed amongst genuine goods, but as such that the good is at times not in it, and is at times not likely to be in it. If these existences become good only by sharing in a something superior to themselves, it is plain that before this participation they were not good, and if, being other than good, they were then coloured by the influence of good they must certainly, if again isolated from this, be considered other than good: so that, if this heresy prevails, the Divine Nature cannot be apprehended as transmissive of good, but rather as itself needing goodness: for how can one impart to another that which he does not himself possess? If it is in a state of perfection, no abatement of that can be conceived, and it is absurd to talk of less of perfection. If on the other hand its participation of good is an imperfect one, and this is what they mean by ‘less,’ mark the consequence that anything in that state can never help an inferior, but will be busied in satisfying its own want: so that, according to them, Providence is a fiction, and so is the judgment and the Dispensation of the Only-begotten, and all the other works believed to be done, and still

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<sup>121</sup> Luke x. 18.

<sup>122</sup> τῆς ζωοποιου δυνάμεως.

doing by Him: for He will necessarily be employed in taking care of His own good, and must abandon the supervision of the Universe<sup>123</sup>.

If, then, this surmise is to have its way, namely, that our Lord is not perfected in every kind of good, it is very easy to see the conclusion of the blasphemy. This being so, our faith is vain, and our preaching vain; our hopes, which take their substance from our faith, are unsubstantial. Why are they baptized into Christ<sup>124</sup>, if He has no power of goodness of His own? God forgive me for saying it! Why do they believe in the Holy Ghost, if the same account is given of Him? How are they regenerate<sup>125</sup> by baptism from their mortal birth, if the regenerating Power does not possess in its own nature infallibility and independence? How can their 'vile body' be changed, while they think that He who is to change it Himself needs change, i.e. another to change Him? For as long as a nature is in defect as regards the good, the superior existence exerts upon this inferior one a ceaseless attraction towards itself: and this craving for more will never stop: it will be stretching out to something not yet grasped: the subject of this deficiency will be always demanding a supply, always altering into the grander nature, and yet will never touch perfection, because it cannot find a goal to grasp, and cease its impulse upward. The First Good is in its nature infinite, and so it follows of necessity that the participation in the enjoyment of it will be infinite also, for more will be always being grasped, and yet something beyond that which has been grasped will always be discovered, and this search will never overtake its Object, because its fund is as inexhaustible as the growth of that which participates in it is ceaseless<sup>126</sup>.

Such, then, are the blasphemies which emerge from their making differences between the Persons as to the good. If on the other hand the degrees of more or less are to be understood in this case in some material sense, the absurdity of this surmise will be obvious at once, without

<sup>123</sup> τοῦ παντός. It is worth while to mention, once for all, the distinction in the names used by the Stoics for the world, which had long since passed from them into the common parlance. Including the Empty, the world is called τὸ πᾶν, without it, ὅλον (τὸ ὅλον, τὰ ὅλα frequently occurs with the Stoics). The πᾶν, it was said, is neither material nor immaterial, since it consists of both.

<sup>124</sup> Τί γὰρ βαπτίζονται εἰς Χριστόν. This throws some light on the much discussed passage, 'Why are these baptized for the dead?' Gregory at all events *seems* here to take it to mean, 'Why are they baptized in the name of a dead Christ?' as he is adopting partially S. Paul's words, 1 Cor. xv. 29; as well as Heb. xi. 1 above.

<sup>125</sup> ἀναγεννῶνται

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Gregory's theory of *human* perfection; *De anima et Resurrectione*, p. 229, 230. '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 wonders that the participation in the Divine blessings works; it makes him into whom they come larger and more capacious....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....It is likely, therefore, that this bulk will mount to a magnitude wherein no limit checks the growth.'



examination in detail. Ideas of quality and distance, weight and figure, and all that goes to complete the notion of a body, will perforce be introduced along with such a surmise into the view of the Divine Nature: and where a compound is assumed, there the dissolution also of that compound must be admitted. A teaching so monstrous, which dares to discover a smaller and a larger in what is sizeless and not concrete lands us in these and suchlike conclusions, a few samples only of which are here indicated: nor indeed would it be easy to unveil all the mischief that lurks beneath it. Still the shocking absurdity that results from their blasphemous premiss will be clear from this brief notice. We now proceed to their next position, after a short defining and confirmation of our own doctrine. For an inspired testimony is a sure test of the truth of any doctrine: and so it seems to me that ours may be well guaranteed by a quotation from the divine words.

In the division of all existing things, then, we find these distinctions. There is, as appealing to our perceptions, the Sensible world: and there is, beyond this, the world which the mind, led on by objects of sense, can view: I mean the Intelligible: and in this we detect again a further distinction into the Created and the Uncreate: to the latter of which we have defined the Holy Trinity to belong, to the former all that can exist or can be thought of after that. But in order that this statement may not be left without a proof, but may be confirmed by Scripture, we will add that our Lord was not created, but came forth from the Father, as the Word with His own lips attests in the Gospel, in a manner of birth or of proceeding ineffable and mysterious: and what truer witness could be found than this constant declaration of our Lord all through the Gospel, that the Very Father was a father, not a creator, of Himself, and that He was not a work of God, but Son of God? Just as when He wished to name His connexion with humanity according to the flesh, He called that phase of his being Son of Man, indicating thereby His kinship according to the nature of the flesh with her from whom He was born, so also by the title of Son he expresses His true and real relationship to the Almighty, by that name of Son showing this natural connexion: no matter if there are some who, for the contradiction of the truth, do take literally and without any explanation, words used with a hidden meaning in the dark form of parable, and adduce the expression ‘created,’ put into the mouth of Wisdom by the author of the Proverbs<sup>127</sup>, to support their perverted views. They say, in fact, that “the Lord created me” is a proof that our Lord is a creature, as if the Only-begotten Himself in that word confessed it. But we need not heed such an argument. They do not give reasons why we must refer that text to our Lord at all: neither will they be able to show that the idea of the word in the Hebrew leads to this and no other meaning, seeing that the other translators have rendered it by “possessed” or “constituted:” nor, finally, even if this was the idea in the original text, would its real meaning be so plain and on the surface: for these proverbial discourses do not show their aim at once, but rather conceal it, revealing it only by an indirect import, and we may judge of the obscurity of this particular passage from its context where he says, “When He set His throne upon the winds<sup>128</sup>,” and all the similar expressions. What is God’s throne? Is it material or ideal? What

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<sup>127</sup> Proverbs viii. 22 (LXX). For another discussion of this passage, see Book II. ch. 10 (beginning) with note.

<sup>128</sup> Proverbs viii. 27 (LXX).

are the winds? Are they these winds so familiar to us, which the natural philosophers tell us are formed from vapours and exhalations: or are they to be understood in another way not familiar to man, when they are called the bases of His throne? What is this throne of the immaterial, incomprehensible, and formless Deity? Who could possibly understand all this in a literal sense?

§23. *These doctrines of our Faith witnessed to and confirmed by Scripture passages.*

It is therefore clear that these are metaphors, which contain a deeper meaning than the obvious one: so that there is no reason from them that any suspicion that our Lord was created should be entertained by reverent inquirers, who have been trained according to the grand words of the evangelist, that “all things that have been made were made by Him” and “consist in Him.” “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” The evangelist would not have so defined it if he had believed that our Lord was one among the things made. How could all things be made by Him and in Him consist, unless their Maker possessed a nature different from theirs, and so produced, not Himself, but them? If the creation was by Him, but He was not by Himself, plainly He is something outside the creation. And after the evangelist has by these words so plainly declared that the things that were made were made by the Son, and did not pass into existence by any other channel, Paul<sup>129</sup> follows and, to leave no ground at all for this profane talk which numbers even the Spirit amongst the things that were made, he mentions one after another all the existencies which the evangelist’s words imply: just as David in fact, after having said that “all things” were put in subjection to man, adds each species which that “all” comprehends, that is, the creatures on land, in water, and in air, so does Paul the Apostle, expounder of the divine doctrines, after saying that all things were made by Him, define by numbering them the meaning of “all.” He speaks of “the things that are seen<sup>130</sup>” and “the things that are not seen:” by the first he gives a general name to all things cognizable by the senses, as we have seen: by the latter he shadows forth the intelligible world.

Now about the first there is no necessity of going into minute detail. No one is so carnal, so brutelike, as to imagine that the Spirit resides in the sensible world. But after Paul has mentioned “the things that are not seen” he proceeds (in order that none may surmise that the Spirit, because He is of the intelligible and immaterial world, on account of this connexion subsists therein) to another most distinct division into the things that have been made in the way of creation, and the existence that is above creation. He mentions the several classes of these created intelligibles:



<sup>129</sup> in the Canon. (Oehler’s stopping is here at fault, i.e. he begins a new paragraph with Ἐκδέχεται τὸν λόγον τοῦτον ὁ Παῦλος). We need not speculate whether Gregory was aware that the Epistle to the Colossians (quoted below) is an earlier ‘Gospel’ than S. John’s.

<sup>130</sup> Coloss. i. 16.

“<sup>131</sup>thrones,” “dominions,” “principalities,” “powers,” conveying his doctrine about these unseen influences in broadly comprehensive terms: but by his very silence he separates from his list of things created that which is above them. It is just as if any one was required to name the sectional and inferior officers in some army, and after he had gone through them all, the commanders of tens, the commanders of hundreds, the captains and the colonels<sup>132</sup>, and all the other names given to the authorities over divisions, omitted after all to speak of the supreme command which extended over all the others: not from deliberate neglect, or from forgetfulness, but because when required or intending to name only the several ranks which served under it, it would have been an insult to include this supreme command in the list of the inferior. So do we find it with Paul, who once in Paradise was admitted to mysteries, when he had been caught up there, and had become a spectator of the wonders that are above the heavens, and saw and heard “things which it is not lawful for a man to utter<sup>133</sup>.” This Apostle proposes to tell us of all that has been created by our Lord, and he gives them under certain comprehensive terms: but, having traversed all the angelic and transcendental world, he stops his reckoning there, and refuses to drag down to the level of creation that which is above it. Hence there is a clear testimony in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is higher than the creation. Should any one attempt to refute this, by urging that neither are the Cherubim mentioned by Paul, that they equally with the Spirit are left out, and that therefore this omission must prove either that they also are above the creation, or that the Holy Spirit is not any more than they to be believed above it, let him measure the full intent of each name in the list: and he will find amongst them that which from not being actually mentioned seems, but only seems, omitted. Under “thrones” he includes the Cherubim, giving them this Greek name, as more intelligible than the Hebrew name for them. He knew that “God sits upon the Cherubim:” and so he calls these Powers the thrones of Him who sits thereon. In the same way there are included in the list Isaiah’s Seraphim<sup>134</sup>, by whom the mystery of the Trinity was luminously proclaimed, when they uttered that marvellous cry “Holy,” being awestruck with the beauty in each Person of the Trinity. They are named under the title of “powers” both by the mighty Paul, and by the prophet David. The latter says, “Bless ye the Lord all ye His powers, ye ministers of His that do His pleasure<sup>135</sup>:” and Isaiah instead of saying “Bless ye” has written the very words of their blessing, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory” and he has revealed by what one of the Seraphim did (to him) that these powers are ministers that do God’s pleasure, effecting the ‘purging of sin’ according to the will of Him Who sent them: for this is the ministry of these spiritual beings, viz., to be sent forth for the salvation of those who are being saved.

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131 Coloss. i. 16.

132 ταξιάρχας καὶ λοχαγούς, ἑκατοντάρχους τε καὶ χιλιάρχους. The difference between the two pairs seems to be the difference between ‘non-commissioned’ and ‘commissioned’ officers.

133 2 Corinth. xii. 4.

134 Isaiah vi. 6, 7.

135 Psalm ciii. 21.

That divine Apostle perceived this. He understood that the same matter is indicated under different names by the two prophets, and he took the best known of the two words, and called those Seraphim “powers:” so that no ground is left to our critics for saying that any single one of these beings is omitted equally with the Holy Ghost from the catalogue of creation. We learn from the existences detailed by Paul that while some existences have been mentioned, others have been passed over: and while he has taken count of the creation in masses as it were, he has (elsewhere) mentioned as units those things which are conceived of singly. For it is a peculiarity of the Holy Trinity that it is to be proclaimed as consisting of individuals: one Father, one Son, one Holy Ghost: whereas those existences aforesaid are counted in masses, “dominions,” “principalities,” “lordships,” “powers,” so as to exclude any suspicion that the Holy Ghost was one of them. Paul is wisely silent upon our mysteries; he understands how, after having heard those unspeakable words in paradise, to refrain from proclaiming those secrets when he is making mention of lower beings.

But these foes of the truth rush in upon the ineffable; they degrade the majesty of the Spirit to the level of the creation; they act as if they had never heard that the Word of God, when confiding to His disciples the secret of knowing God, Himself said that the life of <sup>136</sup>the regenerate was to be completed in them and imparted in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and, thereby ranking the Spirit with the Father and Himself, precluded Him from being confused with the creation. From both, therefore, we may get a reverential and proper conception with regard to Him: from Paul’s omitting the Spirit’s existence in the mention of the creation, and from our Lord’s joining the Spirit with His Father and Himself in mentioning the life-giving power. Thus does our reason, under the guidance of the Scripture, place not only the Only-begotten but the Holy Spirit as well above the creation, and prompt us in accordance with our Saviour’s command to contemplate Him by faith in the blessed world of life giving and uncreated existence: and so this unit, which we believe in, above creation, and sharing in the supreme and absolutely perfect nature, cannot be regarded as in any way a ‘less,’ although this teacher of heresy attempt to curtail its infinitude by introducing the idea of degrees, and thus contracting the divine perfection by defining a greater and a less as residing in the Persons.

§24. *His elaborate account of degrees and differences in ‘works’ and ‘energies’ within the Trinity is absurd.*

Now let us see what he adds, as the consequence of this. After saying that we must perforce regard the Being as greater and less and that while<sup>137</sup> the ones, by virtue of a pre-eminent magnitude

<sup>136</sup> τοῖς ἀναγεννωμένοις

<sup>137</sup> τὰς μὲν, i.e. Οὐσίος. Eunomius’ Arianism here degenerates into mere Emanationism: but even in this system the Substances were living: it is best on the whole to translate οὐσία ‘being,’ and this, as a rule, is adhered to throughout.

and value, occupy a leading place, the others must be detruded to a lower place, because their nature and their value is secondary, he adds this; “their difference amounts to that existing between their works: it would in fact be impious to say that the same energy produced the angels or the stars, and the heavens or man; but one would positively maintain about this, that in proportion as some works are older and more honourable than others, so does one energy transcend another, because sameness of energy produces sameness of work, and difference of work indicates difference of energy.”

I suspect that their author himself would find it difficult to tell us what he meant when he wrote those words. Their thought is obscured by the rhetorical mud, which is so thick that one can hardly see beyond any clue to interpret them. “Their difference amounts to that existing between their works” is a sentence which might be suspected of coming from some Loxias of pagan story, mystifying his hearers. But if we may make a guess at the drift of his observations here by following out those which we have already examined, this would be his meaning, viz., that if we know the amount of difference between one work and another, we shall know the amount of that between the corresponding energies. But what “works” he here speaks of, it is impossible to discover from his words. If he means the works to be observed in the creation, I do not see how this hangs on to what goes before. For the question was about Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: what occasion was there, then, for one thinking rationally to inquire one after another into the nature of earth, and water, and air, and fire, and the different animals, and to distinguish some works as older and more honourable than others, and to speak of one energy as transcending another? But if he calls the Only-begotten and the Holy Spirit “works,” what does he mean by the “differences” of the energies which produce these works: and what are <sup>138</sup>those wonderful energies of this writer which transcend the others? He has neither explained the particular way in which he means them to “transcend” each other; nor has he discussed the nature of these energies: but he has advanced in neither direction, neither proving so far their real subsistence, nor their being some unsubstantial exertion of a will. Throughout it all his meaning hangs suspended between these two conceptions, and oscillates from one to the other. He adds that “it would be impious to say that the same energy produced the angels or the stars, and the heavens or man.” Again we ask what necessity there is to draw this conclusion from his previous remarks? I do not see that it is proved any more <sup>139</sup>because the energies vary amongst themselves as much as the works do, and because the works are not all from the same source but are stated by him to come from different sources. As for the heavens and each angel, star, and man, or anything else understood by the word “creation,” we know from Scripture that they are all the work of One: whereas in their system of theology the Son and the Spirit are not the work of one and the same, the Son being the work of the energy which ‘follows’ the first Being, and the Spirit the further work of that work. What the connexion, then, is between that statement and the heavens, man, angel, star, which he drags in, must be revealed by himself, or some one

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<sup>138</sup> καὶ κείναι αἱ ἐνεργεῖαι αὐταί.

<sup>139</sup> τῷ παρηλλάχθαι, κ.τ.λ. This is Oehler’s emendation for the faulty reading τὸ of the editions.



whom he has initiated into his profound philosophy. The blasphemy intended by his words is plain enough, but the way the profanity is stated is inconsistent with itself. To suppose that within the Holy Trinity there is a difference as wide as that which we can observe between the heavens which envelope the whole creation, and one single man or the star which shines in them, is openly profane: but still the connexion of such thoughts and the pertinence of such a comparison is a mystery to me, and I suspect also to its author himself. If indeed his account of the creation were of this sort, viz., that while the heavens were the work of some transcendent energy each star in them was the result of an energy accompanying the heavens, and that then an angel was the result of that star, and a man of that angel, his argument would then have consisted in a comparison of similar processes, and might have somewhat confirmed his doctrine. But since he grants that it was all made by One (unless he wishes to contradict Scripture downright), while he describes the production of the Persons after a different fashion, what connexion is there between this newly imported view and what went before?

But let it be granted to him that this comparison does have some connexion with proving variation amongst the Beings (for this is what he desires to establish); still let us see how that which follows hangs on to what he has just said, 'In proportion as one work is prior to another and more precious than it, so would a pious mind affirm that one energy transcends another.' If in this he alludes to the sensible world, the statement is a long way from the matter in hand. There is no necessity whatever that requires one whose subject is theological to philosophize about the order in which the different results achieved in the world-making are to come, and to lay down that the energies of the Creator are higher and lower analogously to the magnitude of each thing then made. But if he speaks of the Persons themselves, and means by works that are 'older and more honourable' those 'works' which he has just fashioned in his own creed, that is, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it would be perhaps better to pass over in silence such an abominable view, than to create even the appearance of its being an argument by entangling ourselves with it. For can a 'more honourable' be discovered where there is not a less honourable? If he can go so far, and with so light a heart, in profanity as to hint that the expression and the idea 'less precious' can be predicated of anything whatever which we believe of the Trinity, then it were well to stop our ears, and get as quickly as possible out of hearing of such wickedness, and the contagion of reasoning which will be transfused into the heart, as from a vessel full of uncleanness.

Can any one dare to speak of the divine and supreme Being in such a way that a less degree of honour in comparison is proved by the argument. "That all," says the evangelist, "may honour the Son, as they honour the Father."<sup>140</sup> This utterance (and such an utterance is a law to us) makes a law of this equality in honour: yet this man annuls both the law and its Giver, and apports to the One more, to the Other less of honour, by some occult method for measuring its extra abundance which he has discovered. By the custom of mankind the differences of worth are the measure of the amount of honour which each in authority receives; so that inferiors do not approach the lower

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140 John v. 23.

magistracies in the same guise exactly as they do the sovereign, and the greater or less display of fear or reverence on their part indicates the greater or the less worshipfulness in the objects of it: in fact we may discover, in this disposition of inferiors, who *are* the specially honourable; when, for instance, we see some one feared beyond his neighbours, or the recipient of more reverence than the rest. But in the case of the divine nature, because every perfection in the way of goodness is connoted with the very name of God, we cannot discover, at all events as we look at it, any ground for degrees of honour. Where there is no greater and smaller in power, or glory, or wisdom, or love, or of any other imaginable good whatever, but the good which the Son has is the Father's also, and all that is the Father's is seen in the Son, what possible state of mind can induce us to show the more reverence in the case of the Father? If we think of royal power and worth the Son is King: if of a judge, 'all judgment is committed to the Son<sup>141</sup>:' if of the magnificent office of Creation, 'all things were made by Him<sup>142</sup>:' if of the Author of our life, we know the True Life came down as far as our nature: if of our being taken out of darkness, we know He is the True Light, who weans us from darkness: if wisdom is precious to any, Christ is God's power and Wisdom<sup>143</sup>.

Our very souls, then, being disposed so naturally and in proportion to their capacity, and yet so miraculously, to recognize so many and great wonders in Christ, what further excess of honour is left us to pay exclusively to the Father, as inappropriate to the Son? Human reverence of the Deity, looked at in its plainest meaning, is nothing else but an attitude of love towards Him, and a confession of the perfections in Him: and I think that the precept 'so ought the Son to be honoured as the Father<sup>144</sup>,' is enjoined by the Word in place of love. For the Law commands that we pay to God this fitting honour by *loving* Him with all our heart and strength and here is the equivalent of that love, in that the Word as Lawgiver thus says, that the Son ought to be *honoured* as the Father.

It was this kind of honour that the great David fully paid, when he confessed to the Lord in a prelude<sup>145</sup> of his psalmody that he loved the Lord, and told all the reasons for his love, calling Him his "rock" and "fortress," and "refuge," and "deliverer," and "God-helper," and "hope," and "buckler," and "horn of salvation," and "protector." If the Only-begotten Son is not all these to mankind, let the excess of honour be reduced to this extent as this heresy dictates: but if we have always believed Him to be, and to be entitled to, all this and even more, and to be equal in every operation and conception of the good to the majesty of the Father's goodness, how can it be pronounced consistent, either not to love such a character, or to slight it while we love it? No one can say that we ought to love Him with *all* our heart and strength, but to honour Him only with half. If, then, the Son is to be honoured with the whole heart in rendering to Him all our love, by what device can anything superior to His honour be discovered, when such a measure of honour

141 John v. 22; i. 3.

142 John v. 22; i. 3.

143 1 Cor. i. 24. "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

144 John v. 23. The Gospel enjoins honour and means love: the Law enjoins love and means honour.

145 *a prelude*. See Psalm vii. 1 and Psalm xviii. 1, "fortress," κραταίωμα; στερέωμα, LXX.

is paid Him in the coin of love as our whole heart is capable of? Vainly, therefore, in the case of Beings essentially honourable, will any one dogmatize about a superior honour, and by comparison suggest an inferior honour.

Again; only in the case of the creation is it true to speak of ‘priority.’ The sequence of works was there displayed in the order of the days; and the heavens may be said to have preceded by so much the making of man, and that interval may be measured by the interval of days. But in the divine nature, which transcends all idea of time and surpasses all reach of thought, to talk of a “prior” and a “later” in the honours of time is a privilege only of this new-fangled philosophy. In short he who declares the Father to be ‘prior’ to the subsistence of the Son declares nothing short of this, viz., that the Son is later than the things made by the Son<sup>146</sup> (if at least it is true to say that all the ages, and all duration of time was created after the Son, and by the Son).

*§25. He who asserts that the Father is ‘prior’ to the Son with any thought of an interval must perforce allow that even the Father is not without beginning.*

But more than this: what exposes still further the untenableness of this view is, that, besides positing a beginning in time of the Son’s existence, it does not, when followed out, spare the Father even, but proves that He also had his beginning in time. For any recognizing mark that is presupposed for the generation of the Son must certainly define as well the Father’s beginning.

To make this clear, it will be well to discuss it more carefully. When he pronounces that the life of the Father is prior to that of the Son, he places a certain interval between the two; now, he must mean, either that this interval is infinite, or that it is included within fixed limits. But the principle of an intervening mean will not allow him to call it infinite; he would annul thereby the very conception of Father and Son and the thought of anything connecting them, as long as this infinite were limited on neither side, with no idea of a Father cutting it short above, nor that of a Son checking it below. The very nature of the infinite is, to be extended in either direction, and to have no bounds of any kind.

Therefore if the conception of Father and Son is to remain firm and immoveable, he will find no ground for thinking this interval is infinite: his school must place a definite interval of time between the Only-begotten and the Father. What I say, then, is this: that this view of theirs will bring us to the conclusion that the Father is not from everlasting, but from a definite point in time. I will convey my meaning by familiar illustrations; the known shall make the unknown clear. When we say, on the authority of the text of Moses, that man was made the fifth day after the heavens, we tacitly imply that before those same days the heavens did not exist either; a subsequent event goes to define, by means of the interval which precedes it, the occurrence also of a previous event.

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<sup>146</sup> The meaning is that, if the Son is later (in time) than the Father, then time must have already existed for this comparison to be made; i.e. the Son is later than time as well as the Father. This involves a contradiction.





If this example does not make our contention plain, we can give others. We say that ‘the Law given by Moses was four hundred and thirty years later than the Promise to Abraham.’ If after traversing, step by step upwards<sup>147</sup>, the anterior time we reach this end of that number of years, we firmly grasp as well the fact that, before that date, God’s Promise was not either. Many such instances could be given, but I decline to be minute and wearisome.

Guided, then, by these examples, let us examine the question before us. Our adversaries conceive of the existences of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as involving elder and younger, respectively. Well then; if, at the bidding of this heresy, we journey up beyond the generation of the Son, and approach that intervening duration which the mere fancy of these dogmatists supposes between the Father and the Son, and then reach that other and supreme point of time by which they close that duration, there we find the life of the Father fixed as it were upon an apex; and thence we must necessarily conclude that before it the Father is not to be believed to have existed always.

If you still feel difficulties about this, let us again take an illustration. It shall be that of two rulers, one shorter than the other. If we fit the bases of the two together we know from the tops the extra length of the one; from the end of the lesser lying alongside of it we measure this excess, supplementing the deficiency of the shorter ruler by a calculation, and so bringing it up to the end of the longer; a cubit for instance, or whatever be the distance of the one end from the other. So, if there is, as our adversaries say, an excess of some kind in the Father’s life as compared with the Son’s, it must needs consist in some definite interval of duration: and they will allow that this interval of excess cannot be in the future, for that Both are imperishable, even the foes of the truth will grant. No; they conceive of this difference as in the past, and instead of equalizing the life of the Father and the Son there, they extend the conception of the Father by an interval of living. But every interval must be bounded by two ends: and so for this interval which they have devised we must grasp the two points by which the ends are denoted. The one portion takes its beginning, in their view, from the Son’s generation; and the other portion must end in some other point, from which the interval starts, and by which it limits itself. What this is, is for them to tell us; unless, indeed, they are ashamed of the consequences of their own assumptions.

It admits not of a doubt, then, that they will not be able to find at all the other portion, corresponding to the first portion of their fancied interval, except they were to suppose some beginning of their Ungenerate, whence the middle, that connects with the generation of the Son, may be conceived of as starting. We affirm, then, that when he makes the Son later than the Father by a certain intervening extension of life, he must grant a fixed beginning to the Father’s existence also, regulated by this same interval of his devising; and thus their much-vaunted “Ungeneracy” of the Father will be found to be undermined by its own champions’ arguments; and they will have

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<sup>147</sup> *step by step upwards*. δι’ ἀναλύσεως. This does not seem to be used in the Platonic (dialectic) sense, but in the N.T. sense of “return” or “retrogression,” cf. Luke xii. 36. Gregory elsewhere *De Hom. Opif.* xxv.), uses ἀναλύειν in this sense: speaking of the three examples of Christ’s power of raising from the dead, he says, ‘you see...all these equally at the command of one and the same voice returning (ναλύοντα) to life.’      thus also came to mean “death,” as a ‘return.’ Cf. Ecclesiastes xi. 7.

to confess that their Ungenerate God did once not exist, but began from a starting-point: indeed, that which has a beginning of being is not inoriginate. But if we must at all risks confess this absence of beginning in the Father, let not such exactitude be displayed in fixing for the life of the Son a point which, as the term of His existence, must cut Him off from the life on the other side of it; let it suffice on the ground of causation only to conceive of the Father as before the Son; and let not the Father's life be thought of as a separate and peculiar one before the generation of the Son, lest we should have to admit the idea inevitably associated with this of an interval before the appearance of the Son which measures the life of Him Who begot Him, and then the necessary consequence of this, that a beginning of the Father's life also must be supposed by virtue of which their fancied interval may be stayed in its upward advance so as to set a limit and a beginning to this previous life of the Father as well: let it suffice for us, when we confess the 'coming from Him,' to admit also, bold as it may seem, the 'living along with Him;' for we are led by the written oracles to such a belief. For we have been taught by Wisdom to contemplate the brightness<sup>148</sup> of the everlasting light in, and together with, the very everlastingness of that primal light, joining in one idea the brightness and its cause, and admitting no priority. Thus shall we save the theory of our Faith, the Son's life not failing in the upward view, and the Father's everlastingness being not trenced upon by supposing any definite beginning for the Son.

§26. *It will not do to apply this conception, as drawn out above, of the Father and Son to the Creation, as they insist on doing: but we must contemplate the Son apart with the Father, and believe that the Creation had its origin from a definite point.*

But perhaps some of the opponents of this will say, 'The Creation also has an acknowledged beginning; and yet the things in it are not connected in thought with the everlastingness of the Father, and it does not check, by having a beginning of its own, the infinitude of the divine life, which is the monstrous conclusion this discussion has pointed out in the case of the Father and the Son. One therefore of two things must follow. Either the Creation is everlasting; or, it must be boldly admitted, the Son is later in time (than the Father). The conception of an interval in time will lead to monstrous conclusions, even when measured from the Creation up to the Creator.'

One who demurs so, perhaps from not attending closely to the meaning of our belief, fights against it with alien comparisons which have nothing to do with the matter in hand. If he could point to anything above Creation which has its origin marked by any interval of time, and it were acknowledged possible by all to think of any time-interval as existing before Creation, he might have occasion for endeavouring to destroy by such attacks that everlastingness of the Son which we have proved above. But seeing that by all the suffrages of the faithful it is agreed that, of all things that are, part is by creation, and part before creation, and that the divine nature is to be



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<sup>148</sup> *brightness.* Heb. i. 3, ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης.

believed uncreate (although within it, as our faith teaches, there is a cause, and there is a subsistence produced, but without separation, from the cause), while the creation is to be viewed in an extension of distances,—all order and sequence of time in events can be perceived only in the ages (of this creation), but the nature pre-existent to those ages escapes all distinctions of before and after, because reason cannot see in that divine and blessed life the things which it observes, and that exclusively, in creation. The creation, as we have said, comes into existence according to a sequence of order, and is commensurate with the duration of the ages, so that if one ascends along the line of things created to their beginning, one will bound the search with the foundation of those ages. But the world above creation, being removed from all conception of distance, eludes all sequence of time: it has no commencement of that sort: it has no end in which to cease its advance, according to any discoverable method of order. Having traversed the ages and all that has been produced therein, our thought catches a glimpse of the divine nature, as of some immense ocean, but when the imagination stretches onward to grasp it, it gives no sign in its own case of any beginning; so that one who after inquiring with curiosity into the ‘priority’ of the ages tries to mount to the source of all things will never be able to make a single calculation on which he may stand; that which he seeks will always be moving on before, and no basis will be offered him for the curiosity of thought.

It is clear, even with a moderate insight into the nature of things, that there is nothing by which we can measure the divine and blessed Life. It is not in time, but time flows from it; whereas the creation, starting from a manifest beginning, journeys onward to its proper end through spaces of time; so that it is possible, as Solomon somewhere<sup>149</sup> says, to detect in it a beginning, an end, and a middle; and mark the sequence of its history by divisions of time. But the supreme and blessed life has no time-extension accompanying its course, and therefore no span nor measure. Created things are confined within the fitting measures, as within a boundary, with due regard to the good adjustment of the whole by the pleasure of a wise Creator; and so, though human reason in its weakness cannot reach the whole way to the contents of creation, yet still we do not doubt that the creative power has assigned to all of them their limits and that they do not stretch beyond creation. But this creative power itself, while circumscribing by itself the growth of things, has itself no circumscribing bounds; it buries in itself every effort of thought to mount up to the source of God’s life, and it eludes the busy and ambitious strivings to get to the end of the Infinite. Every discursive effort of thought to go back beyond the ages will ascend only so far as to see that that which it seeks can never be passed through: time and its contents seem the measure and the limit of the movement and the working of human thought, but that which lies beyond remains outside its reach; it is a world where it may not tread, unsullied by any object that can be comprehended by man. No form, no place, no size, no reckoning of time, or anything else knowable, is there: and so it is inevitable that our apprehensive faculty, seeking as it does always some object to grasp, must fall back from any side of this incomprehensible existence, and seek in the ages and in the creation which they hold its kindred and congenial sphere.

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<sup>149</sup> Compare Eccles. iii. 1–11; and viii. 5, “and a wise man’s heart discerneth both time and judgment.”



All, I say, with any insight, however moderate, into the nature of things, know that the world's Creator laid time and space as a background to receive what was to be; on this foundation He builds the universe. It is not possible that anything which has come or is now coming into being by way of creation can be independent of space or time. But the existence which is all-sufficient, everlasting, world-enveloping, is not in space, nor in time: it is before these, and above these in an ineffable way; self-contained, knowable by faith alone; immeasurable by ages; without the accompaniment of time; seated and resting in itself, with no associations of past or future, there being nothing beside and beyond itself, whose passing can make something past and something future. Such accidents are confined to the creation, whose life is divided with time's divisions into memory and hope. But within that transcendent and blessed Power all things are equally present as in an instant: past and future are within its all-encircling grasp and its comprehensive view.

This is the Being in which, to use the words of the Apostle, all things are formed; and we, with our individual share in existence, live and move, and have our being<sup>150</sup>. It is above beginning, and presents no marks of its inmost nature: it is to be known of only in the impossibility of perceiving it. That indeed is its most special characteristic, that its nature is too high for any distinctive attribute. A very different account to the Uncreate must be given of Creation: it is this very thing that takes it out of all comparison and connexion with its Maker; this difference, I mean, of essence, and this admitting a special account explanatory of its nature which has nothing in common with that of Him who made it. The Divine nature is a stranger to these special marks in the creation: It leaves beneath itself the sections of time, the 'before' and the 'after,' and the ideas of space: in fact 'higher' cannot properly be said of it at all. Every conception about that uncreate Power is a sublime principle, and involves the idea of what is proper in the highest degree<sup>151</sup>.

We have shewn, then, by what we have said that the Only-begotten and the Holy Spirit are not to be looked for in the creation but are to be believed above it; and that while the creation may perhaps by the persevering efforts of ambitious seekers be seized in its own beginning, whatever that may be, the supernatural will not the more for that come within the realm of knowledge, for no mark before the ages indicative of its nature can be found. Well, then, if in this uncreate existence those wondrous realities, with their wondrous names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are to be in our thoughts, how can we imagine, of that pre-temporal world, that which our busy, restless minds perceive in things here below by comparing one of them with another and giving it precedence by an interval of time? For there, with the Father, unoriginate, ungenerate, always Father, the idea of the Son as coming from Him yet side by side with Him is inseparably joined; and through the Son and yet with Him, before any vague and unsubstantial conception comes in between, the Holy Spirit is found at once in closest union; not subsequent in existence to the Son, as if the Son could be thought of as ever having been without the Spirit; but Himself also owning the same cause of His being, i.e. the God over all, as the Only-begotten Light, and having shone forth in that very Light,

<sup>150</sup> Acts xvii. 28; Col. i. 17.

<sup>151</sup> καὶ τὸν τοῦ κυριωτάτου λόγον ἐπέχει

being divisible neither by duration nor by an alien nature from the Father or from the Only-begotten. There are no intervals in that pre-temporal world: and difference on the score of being there is none. It is not even possible, comparing the uncreate with the uncreated, to see differences; and the Holy Ghost is uncreate, as we have before shewn.

This being the view held by all who accept in its simplicity the undiluted Gospel, what occasion was there for endeavouring to dissolve this fast union of the Son with the Father by means of the creation, as if it were necessary to suppose either that the Son was from everlasting along with the creation, or that He too, equally with it, was later? For the generation of the Son does not fall within time<sup>152</sup>, any more than the creation was before time: so that it can in no kind of way be right to partition the indivisible, and to insert, by declaring that there was a time when the Author of all existence was not, this false idea of time into the creative Source of the Universe.

Our previous contention, therefore, is true, that the everlastingness of the Son is included, along with the idea of His birth, in the Father's ungeneracy; and that, if any interval were to be imagined dividing the two, that same interval would fix a beginning for the life of the Almighty;—a monstrous supposition. But there is nothing to prevent the creation, being, as it is, in its own nature something other than its Creator and in no point trenching on that pure pre-temporal world, from having, in our belief, a beginning of its own, as we have said. To say that the heavens and the earth and other contents of creation were out of things which are not, or, as the Apostle says, out of "things not




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152 *The generation of the Son does not fall within time.* On this "eternal generation" Denys (*De la Philosophie d'Origène*, p. 452) has the following remarks, illustrating the probable way that Athanasians would have dealt with Eunomius: "If we do not see how God's indivisibility remains in the co-existence of the three Persons, we can throw the blame of this difficulty upon the feebleness of our reason: while it is a manifest contradiction to admit at one and the same time the simplicity of the Uncreated, and some change or inequality within His Being. I know that the defenders of the orthodox belief might be troubled with their adversaries' argument. (Eunom. Apol. 22.) 'If we admit that the Son, the energy creative of the world, is equal to the Father, it amounts to admitting that He is the actual energy of the Father in Creation, and that this energy is equal to His essence. But that is to return to the mistake of the Greeks who identified His essence and His energy, and consequently made the world coexist with God.' A serious difficulty, certainly, and one that has never yet been solved, nor will be; as all the questions likewise which refer to the Uncreated and Created, to eternity and time. It is true we cannot explain how God's eternally active energy does prolong itself eternally. But what is this difficulty compared with those which, with the hypothesis of Eunomius, must be swallowed? We must suppose, so, that the Ἀγέννητος, since His energy is *not eternal*, became in a given place and moment, and that He was at that point the Γεννητός. We must suppose that this activity communicated to a creature that privilege of the Uncreated which is most incommunicable, viz. the power of creating other creatures. We must suppose that these creatures, unconnected as they are with the Ἀγέννητος (since He has not made them), nevertheless conceive of and see beyond their own creator a Being, who cannot be anything to them. [This direct intuition on our part of the Deity was a special tenet of Eunomius.] Finally we must suppose that these creatures, seeing that Eunomius agrees with orthodox believers that the end of this world will be but a commencement, will enter into new relations with this Ἀγέννητος, when the Son shall have submitted all things to the Father."

seen,<sup>153</sup>” inflicts no dishonour upon the Maker of this universe; for we know from Scripture that all these things are not from everlasting nor will remain for ever. If on the other hand it could be believed that there is something in the Holy Trinity which does not coexist with the Father, if following out this heresy any thought could be entertained of stripping the Almighty of the glory of the Son and Holy Ghost, it would end in nothing else than in a God manifestly removed from every deed and thought that was good and godlike. But if the Father, existing before the ages, is always in glory, and the pre-temporal Son is His glory, and if in like manner the Spirit of Christ is the Son’s glory, always to be contemplated along with the Father and the Son, what training could have led this man of learning to declare that there is a ‘before’ in what is timeless, and a ‘more honourable’ in what is all essentially honourable, and preferring, by comparisons, the one to the other, to dishonour the latter by this partiality? The term in opposition<sup>154</sup> to the more honourable makes it clearer still whither he is tending.

§27. *He falsely imagines that the same energies produce the same works, and that variation in the works indicates variation in the energies.*

Of the same strain is that which he adds in the next paragraph; “the same energies producing sameness of works, and different works indicating difference in the energies as well.” Finely and irresistibly does this noble thinker plead for his doctrine. “The same energies produce sameness of works.” Let us test this by facts. The energy of fire is always one and the same; it consists in heating; but what sort of agreement do its results show? Bronze melts in it; mud hardens; wax vanishes; while all other animals are destroyed by it, the salamander is preserved alive<sup>155</sup>; tow burns, asbestos is washed by the flames as if by water; so much for his ‘sameness of works from one and the same energy.’ How too about the sun? Is not his power of warming always the same; and yet while he causes one plant to grow, he withers another, varying the results of his operation in accordance with the latent force of each. ‘That on the rock’ withers; ‘that in deep earth’ yields an hundredfold. Investigate Nature’s work, and you will learn, in the case of those bodies which she produces artistically, the amount of accuracy there is in his statement that ‘sameness of energy effects sameness of result.’ One single operation is the cause of conception, but the composition of that which is effected internally therein is so varied that it would be difficult for any one even to count all the various qualities of the body. Again, imbibing the milk is one single operation on the part of the infant, but the results of its being nourished so are too complex to be all detailed. While this food

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<sup>153</sup> Heb. xi. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 18.

<sup>154</sup> ἀντιδιαστολή

<sup>155</sup> *is preserved alive*; ξωογονεῖται. This is the LXX., not the classical use, of the word. Cf. Exod. i. 17; Judges viii. 19, &c. It is reproduced in the speech of S. Stephen, Acts vii. 19: cf. Luke xvii. 33, “shall preserve (his life).”

passes from the channel of the mouth into the secretory ducts<sup>156</sup>, the transforming power of Nature forwards it into the several parts proportionately to their wants; for by digestion she divides its sum total into the small change of multitudinous differences, and into supplies congenial to the subject matter with which she deals; so that the same milk goes to feed arteries, veins, brain and its membranes, marrow, bones, nerves<sup>157</sup>, sinews, tendons, flesh, surface, cartilages, fat, hair, nails, perspiration, vapours, phlegm, bile, and besides these, all useless superfluities deriving from the same source. You could not name either an organ, whether of motion or sensation, or anything else making up the body's bulk, which was not formed (in spite of startling differences) from this one and selfsame operation of feeding. If one were to compare the mechanic arts too it will be seen what is the scientific value of his statement; for there we see in them all the same operation, I mean the movement of the hands; but what have the results in common? What has building a shrine to do with a coat, though manual labour is employed on both? The house-breaker and the well-digger both move their hands: the mining of the earth, the murder of a man are results of the motion of the hands. The soldier slays the foe, and the husbandman wields the fork which breaks the clod, with his hands. How, then, can this doctrinaire lay it down that the 'same energies produce sameness of work?' But even if we were to grant that this view of his had any truth in it, the essential union of the Son with the Father, and of the Holy Spirit with the Son, is yet again more fully proved. For if there existed any variation in their energies, so that the Son worked His will in a different manner to the Father, then (on the above supposition) it would be fair to conjecture, from this variation, a variation also in the beings which were the result of these varying energies. But if it is true that the manner of the Father's working is likewise the manner always of the Son's, both from our Lord's own words and from what we should have expected *a priori*—(for the one is not unbodied while the other is embodied, the one is not from this material, the other from that, the one does not work his will in this time and place, the other in that time and place, nor is there difference of organs in them producing difference of result, but the sole movement of their wish and of their will is sufficient, seconded in the founding of the universe by the power that can create anything)—if, I say, it is true that in all respects the Father from Whom are all things, and the Son by Whom are all things in the actual form of their operation work alike, then how can this man hope to prove the essential difference between the Son and the Holy Ghost by any difference and separation between the working of the Son and the Father? The very opposite, as we have just seen, is proved to be the case<sup>158</sup>; seeing that there is no manner of difference contemplated between the working of the Father and that of the Son; and so that there is no gulf whatever between the being of the Son and the being of the Spirit, is shewn by the identity of the power which gives them their subsistence; and our pamphleteer himself confirms this; for these are his words *verbatim*: “the same energies



<sup>156</sup> ἀποκριτικούς, *actives*, so, the Medical writers. The Latin is ‘in meatus destinato descendit’ takes it *passive* (ἀποκριτικούς).

<sup>157</sup> νεῦρα. So since Galen's time: not ‘tendon.’

<sup>158</sup> Punctuating παρασκευάζεται, ἐπεὶ δὴ, κ.τ.λ. instead of a full stop, as Oehler.

producing sameness of works.” If sameness of works is really produced by likeness of energies, and if (as they say) the Son is the work of the Father and the Spirit the work of the Son, the likeness in manner<sup>159</sup> of the Father’s and the Son’s energies will demonstrate the sameness of these beings who each result from them.

But he adds, “variation in the works indicates variation in the energies.” How, again, is this dictum of his corroborated by facts? Look, if you please, at plain instances. Is not the ‘energy’ of command, in Him who embodied the world and all things therein by His sole will, a single energy? “He spake and they were made. He commanded and they were created.” Was not the thing commanded in every case alike given existence: did not His single will suffice to give subsistence to the nonexistent? How, then, when such vast differences are seen coming from that one energy of command, can this man shut his eyes to realities, and declare that the difference of works indicates difference of energies? If our dogmatist insists on this, that difference of works implies difference of energies, then we should have expected the very contrary to that which is the case; viz., that everything in the world should be of one type. Can it be that he does see here a universal likeness, and detects unlikeness only between the Father and the Son?

Let him, then, observe, if he never did before, the dissimilarity amongst the elements of the world, and how each thing that goes to make up the framework of the whole hangs on to its natural opposite. Some objects are light and buoyant, others heavy and gravitating; some are always still, others always moving; and amongst these last some move unchangingly on one plan<sup>160</sup>, as the heaven, for instance, and the planets, whose courses all revolve the opposite way to the universe, others are transfused in all directions and rush at random, as air and sea for instance, and every substance which is naturally penetrating<sup>161</sup>. What need to mention the contrasts seen between heat and cold, moist and dry, high and low position? As for the numerous dissimilarities amongst animals and plants, on the score of figure and size, and all the variations of their products and their qualities, the human mind would fail to follow them.

§28. *He falsely imagines that we can have an unalterable series of harmonious natures existing side by side.*

But this man of science still declares that varied works have energies as varied to produce them. Either he knows not yet the nature of the Divine energy, as taught by Scripture, — ‘All things were made by the word of His command,’ — or else he is blind to the differences of existing things. He

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<sup>159</sup> Gregory replaces ‘sameness’ (in the case of the energies in Eunomius argument) by ‘likeness’ since the Father and the Son could not be said to be the *same*, and their energies, therefore, are not identical but similar.

<sup>160</sup> ἐπὶ τὸ ἓν.

<sup>161</sup> ὑγρᾶς.





utters for our benefit these inconsiderate statements, and lays down the law about divine doctrines, as if he had never yet heard that anything that is merely asserted,—where no entirely undeniable and plain statement is made about the matter in hand, and where the asserter says on his own responsibility that which a cautious listener cannot assent to,—is no better than a telling of dreams or of stories over wine. Little then as this dictum of his fits facts, nevertheless,—like one who is deluded by a dream into thinking that he sees one of the objects of his waking efforts, and who grasps eagerly at this phantom and with eyes deceived by this visionary desire thinks that he holds it,—he with this dreamlike outline of doctrines before him imagines that his words possess force, and insists upon their truth, and essays by them to prove all the rest. It is worth while to give the passage. “These being so, and maintaining an unbroken connexion in their relation to each other, it seems fitting for those who make their investigation according to the order germane to the subject, and who do not insist on mixing and confusing all together, in case of a discussion being raised about Being, to prove what is in course of demonstration, and to settle the points in debate, by the primary energies and those attached to the Beings, and again to explain by the Being when the energies are in question.” I think the actual phrases of his impiety are enough to prove how absurd is this teaching. If any one had to give a description of the way some disease mars a human countenance, he would explain it better by actually unbandaging the patient, and there would be then no need of words when the eye had seen how he looked. So some mental eye might discern the hideous mutilation wrought by this heresy: its mere perusal might remove the veil. But since it is necessary, in order to make the latent mischief of this teaching clear to the many, to put the finger of demonstration upon it, I will again repeat each word. “This being so.” What does this dreamer mean? What is ‘this?’ How has it been stated? “The Father’s being is alone proper and in the highest degree supreme; consequently the next being is dependent, and the third more dependent still.” In such words he lays down the law. But why? Is it because an energy accompanies the first being, of which the effect and work, the Only-begotten, is circumscribed by the sphere of this producing cause? Or because these Beings are to be thought of as of greater or less extent, the smaller included within and surrounded by the larger, like casks put one inside the other, inasmuch as he detects degrees of size within Beings that are illimitable? Or because differences of products imply differences of producers, as if it were impossible that different effects should be produced by similar energies? Well, there is no one whose mental faculties are so steeped in sleep as to acquiesce directly after hearing such statements in the following assertion, “these being so, and maintaining an unbroken connexion in their relation to one another.” It is equal madness to say such things, and to hear them without any questioning. They are placed in a ‘series’ and ‘an unalterable relation to each other,’ and yet they are parted from each other by an essential unlikeness! Either, as our own doctrine insists, they are united in being, and then they really preserve an unalterable relation to each other; or else they stand apart in essential unlikeness, as he fancies. But what series, what relationship that is unalterable can exist with alien entities? And how can they present that ‘order germane to the matter’ which according to him is to rule the investigation? Now if he had an eye only on the doctrine of the truth, and if the order in which he counts the differences

was only that of the attributes which Faith sees in the Holy Trinity,—an order so ‘natural’ and ‘germane’ that the Persons cannot be confounded, being divided as Persons, though united in their being—then he would not have been classed at all amongst our enemies, for he would mean the very same doctrine that we teach. But, as it is, he is looking in the very contrary direction, and he makes the order which he fancies *there* quite inconceivable. There is all the difference in the world between the accomplishment of an act of the will, and that of a mechanical law of nature. Heat is inherent in fire, splendour in the sunbeam, fluidity in water, downward tendency in a stone, and so on. But if a man builds a house, or seeks an office, or puts to sea with a cargo, or attempts anything else which requires forethought and preparation to succeed, we cannot say in such a case that there is properly a rank or order inherent in his operations: their order in each case will result as an after consequence of the motive which guided his choice, or the utility of that which he achieves. Well, then; since this heresy parts the Son from any essential relationship with the Father, and adopts the same view of the Spirit as estranged from any union with the Father or the Son, and since also it affirms throughout that the Son is the work of the Father, and the Spirit the work of the Son, and that these works are the results of a purpose, not of nature, what grounds has he for declaring that this work of a will is an ‘order inherent in the matter,’ and what is the drift of this teaching, which makes the Almighty the manufacturer of such a nature as this in the Son and the Holy Spirit, where transcendent beings are made such as to be inferior the one to the other? If such is really his meaning, why did he not clearly state the grounds he has for presuming in the case of the Deity, that smallness of result will be evidence of all the greater power? But who really could ever allow that a cause that is great and powerful is to be looked for in this smallness of results? As if God was unable to establish His own perfection in anything that comes from Him<sup>162</sup>! And how can he attribute to the Deity the highest prerogative of supremacy while he exhibits His power as thus falling short of His will? Eunomius certainly seems to mean that perfection was not even proposed as the aim of God’s work, for fear the honour and glory of One to Whom homage is due for His superiority might be thereby lessened. And yet is there any one so narrow-minded as to reckon the Blessed Deity Himself as not free from the passion of envy? What plausible reason, then, is left why the Supreme Deity should have constituted such an ‘order’ in the case of the Son and the Spirit? “But I did not mean that ‘order’ to come from Him,” he rejoins. But whence else, if the beings to which this ‘order’ is connatural are not essentially related to each other? But perhaps he calls the inferiority itself of the being of the Son and of the Spirit this ‘connatural order.’ But I would beg of him to tell me the reason of this very thing, viz., why the Son is inferior on the score of being, when both this being and energy are to be discovered in the same characteristics and attributes. If on the other hand there is not to be the same<sup>163</sup> definition of being and energy, and each is to signify something different, why does he introduce a demonstration of the thing in question by means of that which is quite



<sup>162</sup> ἐν παντὶ τῷ ἔξ αὐτοῦ.

<sup>163</sup> Reading αὐτὸς; instead of Oehler’s αὐτὸς.

different from it? It would be, in that case, just as if, when it was debated with regard to man's own being whether he were a risible animal, or one capable of being taught to read, some one was to adduce the building of a house or ship on the part of a mason or a shipwright as a settling of the question, insisting on the skilful syllogism that we know beings by operations, and a house and a ship are operations of man. Do we then learn, most simple sir, by such premisses, that man is risible as well as broad-nailed? Some one might well retort; 'whether man possesses motion and energy was not the question: it was, what is the energizing principle itself; and that I fail to learn from your way of deciding the question.' Indeed, if we wanted to know something about the nature of the wind, you would not give a satisfactory answer by pointing to a heap of sand or chaff raised by the wind, or to dust which it scattered: for the account to be given of the wind is quite different: and these illustrations of yours would be foreign to the subject. What ground, then, has he for attempting to explain beings by their energies, and making the definition of an entity out of the resultants of that entity.

Let us observe, too, what sort of work of the Father it is by which the Father's being, according to him, is to be comprehended. The Son most certainly, he will say, if he says as usual. But this Son of yours, most learned sir, is commensurate in your scheme only with the energy which produced Him, and indicates that alone, while the Object of our search still keeps in the dark, if, as you yourself confess, this energy is only one amongst the things which 'follow'<sup>164</sup> the first being. This energy, as you say, extends itself into the work which it produces, but it does not reveal therein even its own nature, but only so much of it as we can get a glimpse of in that work. All the resources of a smith are not set in motion to make a gimlet; the skill of that artisan only operates so far as is adequate to form that tool, though it could fashion a large variety of other tools. Thus the limit of the energy is to be found in the work which it produces. But the question now is not about the amount of the energy, but about the being of that which has put forth the energy. In the same way, if he asserts that he can perceive the nature of the Only-begotten in the Spirit (Whom he styles the work of an energy which 'follows' the Son), his assertion has no foundation; for here again the energy, while it extends itself into its work, does not reveal therein the nature either of itself or of the agent who exerts it.

But let us yield in this; grant him that beings are known in their energies. The First being is known through His work; and this Second being is revealed in the work proceeding from *Him*. But what, my learned friend, is to show this Third being? No such work of this Third is to be found. If you insist that these beings are perceived by their energies, you must confess that the Spirit's nature is imperceptible; you cannot infer His nature from any energy put forth by Him to carry on the continuity. Show some substantiated work of the Spirit, through which you think you have detected

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<sup>164</sup> *only one thing amongst the things which follow, &c.* The Latin translation is manifestly wrong here, "si recte a te assertum est, *iis etiam quæ ad primam substantiam sequuntur aliquam operationem inesse.*" The Greek is εἴπερ ἡ ἐνέργεια τῶν παρεπομένων τις εἶναι τῇ πρώτῃ οὐσίᾳ μεμαρτύρηται



the being of the Spirit, or all your cobweb will collapse at the touch of Reason. If the being is known by the subsequent energy, and substantiated energy of the Spirit there is none, such as ye say the Father shows in the Son, and the Son in the Spirit, then the nature of the Spirit must be confessed unknowable and not be apprehended through these; there is no energy conceived of in connexion with a substance to show even a side glimpse of it. But if the Spirit eludes apprehension, how by means of that which is itself imperceptible can the more exalted being be perceived? If the Son's work, that is, the Spirit according to them, is unknowable, the Son Himself can never be known; He will be involved in the obscurity of that which gives evidence of Him: and if the being of the Son in this way is hidden, how can the being who is most properly such and most supreme be brought to light by means of the being which is itself hidden; this obscurity of the Spirit is transmitted by retrogression<sup>165</sup> through the Son to the Father; so that in this view, even by our adversaries' confession, the unknowableness of the Fathers being is clearly demonstrated. How, then, can this man, be his eye ever so 'keen to see unsubstantial entities,' discern the nature of the unseen and incomprehensible by means of itself; and how can he command us to grasp the beings by means of their works, and their works again from them?

§29. *He vainly thinks that the doubt about the energies is to be solved by the beings, and reversely.*

Now let us see what comes next. 'The doubt about the energies is to be solved by the beings.' What way is there of bringing this man out of his vain fancies down to common sense? If he thinks that it is possible thus to solve doubts about the energies by comprehending the beings themselves, how, if these last are not comprehended, can he change this doubt to any certainty? If the being has been comprehended, what need to make the energy of this importance, as if *it* was going to lead us to the comprehension of the being. But if this is the very thing that makes an examination of the energy necessary, viz., that we may be thereby guided to the understanding of the being that exerts it, how can this as yet unknown nature solve the doubt about the energy? The proof of anything that is doubted must be made by means of well-known truths; but when there is an equal uncertainty about both the objects of our search, how can Eunomius say that they are comprehended by means of each other, both being in themselves beyond our knowledge? When the Father's being is under discussion, he tells us that the question may be settled by means of the energy which follows Him and of the work which this energy accomplishes; but when the inquiry is about the being of the Only-begotten, whether Eunomius calls Him an energy or a product of the energy (for he does both), then he tells us that the question may be easily solved by looking at the being of His producer!

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<sup>165</sup> κατὰ ἀνάλοισιν. So Plutarch, ii. 76 E. and see above (cap. 25, note 6.).

§30. *There is no Word of God that commands such investigations: the uselessness of the philosophy which makes them is thereby proved.*

I should like also to ask him this. Does he mean that energies are explained by the beings which produced them only in the case of the Divine Nature, or does he recognize the nature of the produced by means of the being of the producer with regard to anything whatever that possesses an effective force? If in the case of the Divine Nature only he holds this view, let him show us how he settles questions about the works of God by means of the nature of the Worker. Take an undoubted work of God,—the sky, the earth, the sea, the whole universe. Let it be the being of one of these that, according to our supposition, is being enquired into, and let ‘sky’ be the subject fixed for our speculative reasoning. It is a question what the substance of the sky is; opinions have been broached about it varying widely according to the lights of each natural philosopher. How will the contemplation of the Maker of the sky procure a solution of the question, immaterial, invisible, formless, ungenerate, everlasting, incapable of decay and change and alteration, and all such things, as He is. How will anyone who entertains this conception of the Worker be led on to the knowledge of the nature of the sky? How will he get an idea of a thing which is visible from the Invisible, of the perishable from the imperishable, of that which has a date for its existence from that which never had any generation, of that which has duration but for a time from the everlasting; in fact, of the object of his search from everything which is the very opposite to it. Let this man who has accurately probed the secret of things tell us how it is possible that two unlike things should be known from each other.

§31. *The observations made by watching Providence are sufficient to give us the knowledge of sameness of Being.*

And yet, if he could see the consequences of his own statements, he would be led on by them to acquiesce in the doctrine of the Church. For if the maker’s nature is an indication of the thing made, as he affirms, and if, according to his school, the Son is something made by the Father, anyone who has observed the Father’s nature would have certainly known thereby that of the Son; if, I say, it is true that the worker’s nature is a sign of that which he works. But the Only-begotten, as they say, of the Father’s *unlikeness*, will be excluded from operating through Providence. Eunomius need not trouble any more about His being generated, nor force out of that another proof of the son’s unlikeness. The difference of purpose will itself be sufficient to bring to light His alien nature. For the First Being is, even by our opponents’ confession, one and single, and necessarily His will must be thought of as following the bent of His nature; but Providence shows that purpose is good, and so the nature from which that purpose comes is shown to be good also. So the Father alone works good; and the Son does not purpose the same things as He, if we adopt the assumptions of our adversary; the difference then, of their nature will be clearly attested by this variation of

their purposes. But if, while the Father is provident for the Universe, the Son is equally provident for it (for ‘what He sees the Father doing that also the Son does’), this sameness of their purposes exhibits a communion of nature in those who thus purpose the same things. Why, then, is all mention of Providence omitted by him, as if it would not help us at all to that which we are searching for. Yet many familiar examples make for our view of it. Anyone who has gazed on the brightness of fire and experienced its power of warming, when he approaches another such brightness and another such warmth, will assuredly be led on to think of fire; for his senses through the medium of these similar phænomena will conduct him to the fact of a kindred element producing both; anything that was not fire could not work on all occasions like fire. Just so, when we perceive a similar and equal amount of providential power in the Father and in the Son, we make a guess by means of what thus comes within the range of our knowledge about things which transcend our comprehension; we feel that causes of an alien nature cannot be detected in these equal and similar effects. As the observed phenomena are to each other, so will the subjects of those phenomena be: if the first are opposed to each other, we must reckon the revealed entities to be so too; if the first are alike, so too must those others be. Our Lord said allegorically that their fruit is the sign of the characters of trees, meaning that it does not belie that character, that the bad is not attached to the good tree, nor the good to the bad tree;—“by their fruits ye shall know them;”—so when the fruit, Providence, presents no difference, we detect a single nature from which that fruit has sprung, even though the trees be different from which the fruit is put forth. Through that, then, which is cognizable by our apprehension, viz., the scheme or Providence visible in the Son in the same way as in the Father, the common likeness of the Only-begotten and the Father is placed beyond a doubt; and it is the identity of the fruits of Providence by which we know it.

§32. *His dictum that ‘the manner of the likeness must follow the manner of the generation’ is unintelligible.*

But to prevent such a thought being entertained, and pretending to be forced somehow away from it, he says that he withdraws from all these results of Providence, and goes back to the manner of the Son’s generation, because “the manner of His likeness must follow the manner of His generation.” What an irresistible proof! How forcibly does this verbiage compel assent! What skill and precision there is in the wording of this assertion! Then, if we know the manner of the generation, we shall know by that the manner of the likeness. Well, then; seeing that all, or at all events most, animals born by parturition have the same manner of generation, and, according to their logic, the manner of likeness follows this manner of generation, these animals, following as they do the same model in their production, will resemble entirely those similarly generated; for things that are like the same thing are like one another. If, then, according to the view of this heresy, the manner of the generation makes every thing generated just like itself, and it is a fact that this manner does not

vary at all in diversified kinds of animals but remains the same in the greatest part of them, we shall find that this sweeping and unqualified assertion of his establishes, by virtue of this similarity of birth, a mutual resemblance between men, dogs, camels, mice, elephants, leopards, and every other animal which Nature produces in the same manner. Or does he mean, not, that things brought into the world in a similar way are all like each other, but that each one of them is like that being only which is the source of its life. But if so, he ought to have declared that the child is like the parent, not that the “manner of the likeness” resembles the “manner of the generation.” But this, which is so probable in itself, and is observed as a fact in Nature, that the begotten resembles the begetter, he will not admit as a truth; it would reduce his whole argumentation to a proof of the contrary of what he intended. If he allowed the offspring to be like the parent, his laboured store of arguments to prove the *unlikeness* of the Beings would be refuted as evanescent and groundless.

So he says “the manner of the likeness follows the manner of the generation.” This, when tested by the exact critic of the meaning of any idea<sup>166</sup>, will be found completely unintelligible. It is plainly impossible to say what a “manner of generation” can mean. Does it mean the figure of the parent, or his impulse, or his disposition; or the time, or the place, or the completing of the embryo by conception; or the generative receptacles; or nothing of that kind, but something else of the things observed in ‘generation.’ It is impossible to find out what he means. The impropriety and vagueness of the word “manner” causes perplexity as to its signification here; every possible one is equally open to our surmises, and presents as well an equal want of connexion with the subject before us. So also with this phrase of his “manner of likeness;” it is devoid of any vestige of meaning, if we fix our attention on the examples familiarly known to us. For the thing generated is not to be likened there to the kind or the manner of its birth. Birth consists, in the case of animal birth, in a separation of body from body, in which the animal perfectly moulded in the womb is brought forth; but the thing born is a man, or horse, or cow, or whatever it may chance to be in its existence through birth. How, therefore, the “manner of the likeness of the offspring follows the manner of its generation” must be left to him, or to some pupil of his in midwifery, to explain. Birth is one thing: the thing born is another: they are different ideas altogether. No one with any sense would deny that what he says is perfectly untrue in the case of animal births. But if he calls the actual making and the actual fashioning a “manner of the generation,” which the “manner of the likeness” of the thing produced is to “follow,” even so his statement is removed from all likelihood, as we shall see from some illustrations. Iron is hammered out by the blows of the artificer into some useful instrument. How, then, the outline of its edge, if such there happen to be, can be said to be similar to the hand of the worker, or to the manner of its fashioning, to the hammers, for instance, and the coals and the bellows and the anvil by means of which he has moulded it, no one could explain. And what can be said in one case fits all, where there is any operation producing a result; the thing produced cannot be said to be like the “manner of its generation.” What has the shape of a garment got to do

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<sup>166</sup> ἐννοίας λόγον.

with the spool, or the rods, or the comb, or with the form of the weaver's instruments at all? What has an actual seat got to do with the working of the blocks; or any finished production with the build of him who achieved it?—But I think even our opponents would allow that this rule of his is not in force in sensible and material instances.

It remains to see whether it contributes anything further to the proof of his blasphemy. What, then, was he aiming at? The necessity of believing in accordance with their being in the likeness or unlikeness of the Son to the Father; and, as we cannot know about this being from considerations of Providence, the necessity of having recourse to the “manner of the generation,” whereby we may know, not indeed whether the Begotten is like the Begetter (absolutely), but only a certain “manner of likeness” between them; and as this manner is a secret to the many, the necessity of going at some length into the being of the Begetter. Then has he forgotten his own definitions about the beings having to be known from their works? But this begotten being, which he calls the work of the supreme being, has as yet no light thrown upon it (according to him); so how can its nature be dealt with? And how can he “mount above this lower and therefore more directly comprehensible thing,” and so cling to the absolute and supreme being? Again, he always throughout his discourse lays claim to an accurate knowledge of the divine utterances; yet here he pays them scant reverence, ignoring the fact that it is not possible to approach to a knowledge of the Father except through the Son. “No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal Him<sup>167</sup>.” Yet Eunomius, while on every occasion, where he can insult our devout and God-adoring conceptions of the Son, he asserts in plain words the Son's inferiority, establishes His superiority unconsciously in this device of his for knowing the Deity; for he assumes that the Father's being lends itself the more readily to our comprehension, and then attempts to trace and argue out the Son's nature from that.

§33. *He declares falsely that ‘the manner of the generation is to be known from the intrinsic worth of the generator’.*

He goes back, for instance, to the begetting being, and from thence takes a survey of the begotten; “for,” says he, “the manner of the generation is to be known from the intrinsic worth of the generator.” Again, we find this bold unqualified generalization of his causing the thought of the inquirer to be dissipated in every possible direction; it is the nature of such general statements, to extend in their meanings to every instance, and allow nothing to escape their sweeping assertion. If then ‘the manner of the generation is to be known from the intrinsic worth of the generator,’ and

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<sup>167</sup> Matt. xi. 27.





there are many differences in the worth of generators according to their many classifications<sup>168</sup> to be found (for one may be born Jew, Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond, free), what will be the result? Why, that we must expect to find as many “manners of generation” as there are differences in intrinsic worth amongst the generators; and that their birth will not be fulfilled with all in the same way, but that their nature will vary with the worth of the parent, and that some peculiar manner of birth will be struck out for each, according to these varying estimations. For a certain inalienable worth is to be observed in the individual parent; the distinction, that is, of being better or worse off according as there has fallen to each race, estimation, religion, nationality, power, servitude, wealth, poverty, independence, dependence, or whatever else constitutes the life-long differences of worth. If then “the manner of the generation” is shown by the intrinsic worth of the parent, and there are many differences in worth, we shall inevitably find, if we follow this opinion-monger, that the manners of generation are various too; in fact, this difference of worth will dictate to Nature the manner of the birth.

But if he should not<sup>169</sup> admit that such worth is natural, because they can be put in thought outside the nature of their subject, we will not oppose him. But at all events he will agree to this; that man’s existence is separated by an intrinsic character from that of brutes. Yet the manner of birth in these two cases presents no variation in intrinsic character; nature brings man and the brute into the world in just the same way, i.e. by generation. But if he apprehends this native dignity only in the case of the most proper and supreme existence, let us see what he means then. In our view, the ‘native dignity’ of God consists in godhead itself, wisdom, power, goodness, judgment, justice, strength, mercy, truth, creativeness, domination, invisibility, everlastingness, and every other quality named in the inspired writings to magnify his glory; and we affirm that everyone of them is properly and inalienably found in the Son, recognizing difference only in respect of unoriginateness; and even that we do not exclude the Son from, according to *all* its meanings. But let no carping critic attack this statement as if we were attempting to exhibit the Very Son as ungenerate; for we hold that one who maintains that is no less impious than an Anomœan. But since the meanings of ‘origin’ are various, and suggest many ideas, there are some of them in which the title ‘unoriginate’ is not inapplicable to the Son<sup>170</sup>. When, for instance, this word has the meaning of ‘deriving existence from no cause whatever,’ then we confess that it is peculiar to the Father; but when the question is

<sup>168</sup> Ἐπίνοια is the opposite of ἔννοια, ‘the intuitive idea.’ It means an “afterthought,” and, with the notion of unnecessary addition, a ‘conceit.’ Here it is applied to conventional, or not purely natural difference. See Introduction to Book XIII. for the fuller meaning of Ἐπίνοια.

<sup>169</sup> μὴ δέχοιτο. This use of the optative, where the subjunctive with εἰν might have been expected, is one of the few instances in Gregory’s Greek of declension from Classic usage; in the latter, when εἰ with the optative does denote subjective possibility, it is only when the condition is conceived of as of frequent repetition, e.g. 1 Peter iii. 14. The optative often in this Greek of the fourth century invades the province of the subjunctive.

<sup>170</sup> μὴ ἀπεμφαίνειν

about 'origin' in its other meanings (since any creature or time or order has an origin), then we attribute the being superior to origin to the Son as well, and we believe that that whereby all things were made is beyond the origin of creation, and the idea of time, and the sequence of order. So He, Who on the ground of His subsistence is not without an origin, possessed in every other view an undoubted *unoriginateness*; and while the Father is unoriginate and Ungenerate, the Son is unoriginate in the way we have said, though not ungenerate.

What, then, is that native dignity of the Father which he is going to look at in order to infer thereby the 'manner of the generation.' "His not being generated, most certainly," he will reply. If, then, all those names with which we have learnt to magnify God's glory are useless and meaningless to you, Eunomius, the mere going through the list of such expressions is a gratuitous and superfluous task; none of these other words, you say, expresses the intrinsic worth of the God over all. But if there is a peculiar force fitting our conceptions of the Deity in each of these words, the intrinsic dignities of God must plainly be viewed in connexion with this list, and the likeness of the two beings will be thereby proved; if, that is, the characters inalienable from the beings are an index of the subjects of those characters. The characters of each being are found to be the same; and so the identity on the score of being of the two subjects of these identical dignities is shown most clearly. For if the variation in a single name is to be held to be the index of an alien being, how much more should the identity of these countless names avail to prove community of nature!

What, then, is the reason why the other names should all be neglected, and generation be indicated by the means of one alone? Why do they pronounce this 'Ungeneracy' to be the only intrinsic character in the Father, and thrust all the rest aside? It is in order that they may establish their mischievous mode<sup>171</sup> of unlikeness of Father and Son, by this contrast as regards the begotten. But we shall find that this attempt of theirs, when we come to test it in its proper place, is equally feeble, unfounded, and nugatory as the preceding attempts.

Still, that all his reasonings point this way, is shown by the sequel, in which he praises himself for having fittingly adopted this method for the proof of his blasphemy, and yet for not having all at once divulged his intention, nor shocked the unprepared hearer with his impiety, before the concatenation of his delusive argument was complete, nor displayed this Ungeneracy as God's being in the early part of his discourse, nor to weary us with talk about the difference of being. The following are his exact words: "Or was it right, as Basil commands, to begin with the thing to be proved, and to assert incoherently that the Ungeneracy is the being, and to talk about the difference or the sameness of nature?" Upon this he has a long intervening tirade, made up of scoffs and insulting abuse (such being the weapons which this thinker uses to defend his own doctrines), and then he resumes the argument, and turning upon his adversary, fixes upon him, forsooth, the blame of what he is saying, in these words; "For your party, before any others, are guilty of this offence; having partitioned out this same being between Begetter and Begotten; and so the scolding you have given is only a halter not to be eluded which you have woven for your own necks; justice, as



<sup>171</sup> See Note on Ἀγέννητος, p. 100.

might have been expected, records in your own words a verdict against yourselves. Either you first conceive of the beings as sundered, and independent of each other<sup>172</sup>; and then bring down one of them, by generation, to the rank of Son, and contend that One who exists independently nevertheless was made by means of the Other existence; and so lay yourselves open to your own reproaches: for to Him whom you imagine as without generation you ascribe a generation by another:—or else you first allow one single causeless being, and then marking this out by an act of causation into Father and Son, you declare that this non-generated being came into existence by means of itself.”

§34. *The Passage where he attacks the ‘μ’, and the contention in answer to it.*

I will omit to speak of the words which occur before this passage which has been quoted. They contain merely shameless abuse of our Master and Father in God, and nothing bearing on the matter in hand. But on the passage itself, as he advances by the device of this terrible dilemma a double-edged refutation, we cannot be silent; we must accept the intellectual challenge, and fight for the Faith with all the power we have, and show that the formidable two-edged sword which he has sharpened is feebler than a make-believe in a scene-painting.

He attacks the community of substance with two suppositions; he says that we either name as Father and as Son two independent principles drawn out parallel to each other, and then say that one of these existencies is produced by the other existence: or else we say that one and the same essence is conceived of, participating in both names in turn, both being<sup>173</sup> Father, and becoming Son, and itself produced in generation from itself. I put this in my own words, thereby not misinterpreting his thought, but only correcting the tumid exaggeration of its expression, in such a way as to reveal his meaning by clearer words and afford a comprehensive view of it. Having blamed us for want of polish and for having brought to the controversy an insufficient amount of learning, he decks out his own work in such a glitter of style, and passes the nail<sup>174</sup>, to use his own phrase, so often over his own sentences, and makes his periods so smart with this elaborate prettiness, that he captivates the reader at once with the attractions of language; such amongst many others is the passage we have just recited by way of preface. We will, by leave, again recite it. “And so the scolding you have given is only a halter, not to be eluded, which you have woven for your own necks; justice, as might have been expected, records in your own words a verdict against yourselves.”

Observe these flowers of the old Attic; what polished brilliance of diction plays over his composition; what a delicate and subtle charm of style is in bloom there! However, let this be as people think. Our course requires us again to turn to the thought in those words; let us plunge once

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<sup>172</sup> ἀνάρχως.

<sup>173</sup> Reading οὖσαν for οὐσίαν of Oehler and Migne.

<sup>174</sup> ἐξουσιάζει



more into the phrases of this pamphleteer. “Either you conceive of the beings as separated and independent of each other, and then bring down one of them, by generation, to the rank of Son, and contend that One who exists independently nevertheless was made by means of the Other existence.” That is enough for the present. He says, then, that we preach<sup>175</sup> two causeless Beings. How can this man, who is always accusing us of levelling and confusing, assert this from our believing, as we do, in a single substance of Both. If two natures, alien to each other on the score of their being, were preached by our Faith, just as it is preached by the Anomœan school, then there would be good reason for thinking that this distinction of natures led to the supposition of two causeless beings. But if, as is the case, we acknowledge one nature with the differences of Person, if, while the Father is believed in, the Son also is glorified, how can such a Faith be misrepresented by our opponents as preaching Two First Causes? Then he says, ‘of these two causes, one is lowered’ by us ‘to the rank of Son.’ Let him point out one champion of such a doctrine; whether he can convict any single person of talking like this, or only knows of such a doctrine as taught anywhere at all in the Church, we will hold our peace. For who is so wild in his reasonings, and so bereft of reflection as, after speaking of Father and Son, to imagine in spite of that two ungenerate beings: and then again to suppose that the One of them has come into being by means of the Other? Besides, what logical necessity does he show for pushing our teaching towards such suppositions? By what arguments does he show that such an absurdity must result from it? If indeed he adduced one single article of our Faith, and then, whether as a quibble or with a real force of demonstration, made this criticism upon it, there might have been some reason for his doing so with a view to invalidate that article. But when there is not, and never can be such a doctrine in the Church, when neither a teacher of it nor a hearer of it is to be found, and the absurdity cannot be shown, either, to be the strict logical consequence of anything, I cannot understand the meaning of his fighting thus with shadows. It is just as if some phenzy-struck person supposed himself to be grappling with an imaginary combatant, and then, having with great efforts thrown himself down, thought that it was his foe who was lying there; our clever pamphleteer is in the same state; he feigns suppositions which we know nothing about, and he fights with the shadows which are sketched by the workings of his own brain.

For I challenge him to say why a believer in the Son as having come into being from the Father must advance to the opinion that there are two First Causes; and let him tell us who is most guilty of this establishment of two First Causes; one who asserts that the Son is falsely so named, or one who insists that, when we call Him that, the name represents a reality? The first, rejecting a real generation of the Son, and affirming simply that He exists, would be more open to the suspicion of making Him a First Cause, if he exists indeed, but not by generation: whereas the second, making the representative sign of the Person of the Only-begotten to consist in subsisting generatively from the Father, cannot by any possibility be drawn into the error of supposing the Son to be Ungenerate. And yet as long as, according to you thinkers, the non-generation of the Son by the Father is to be

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<sup>175</sup> πρεσβεύειν. So Lucian. Diog. Laert., and Origen passim.

held, the Son Himself will be properly called Ungenerate in one of the many meanings of the Ungenerate; seeing that, as some things come into existence by being born and others by being fashioned, nothing prevents our calling one of the latter, which does not subsist by *generation*, an Ungenerate, looking only to the idea of generation; and this your account, defining, as it does, our Lord to be a creature, does establish about Him. So, my very learned sirs, it is in your view, not ours, when it is thus followed out, that the Only-begotten can be named Ungenerate: and you will find that “justice,”—whatever you mean by that,—records in *your own words*<sup>176</sup> a verdict against us.

It is easy also to find mud in his words after that to cast upon this execrable teaching. For the other horn of his dilemma partakes in the same mental delusion; he says, “or else you first allow one single causeless being, and then marking this out by an act of generation into Father and Son, you declare that this non-generated being came into existence by means of itself.” What is this new and marvellous story? How is one begotten by oneself, having oneself for father, and becoming one’s own son? What dizziness and delusion is here? It is like supposing the roof to be turning down below one’s feet, and the floor above one’s head; it is like the mental state of one with his senses stupified with drink, who shouts out persistently that the ground does not stand still beneath, and that the walls are disappearing, and that everything he sees is whirling round and will not keep still. Perhaps our pamphleteer had such a tumult in his soul when he wrote; if so, we must pity him rather than abhor him. For who is so out of hearing of our divine doctrine, who is so far from the mysteries of the Church, as to accept such a view as this to the detriment of the Faith. Rather, it is hardly enough to say, that no one ever dreamed of such an absurdity to its detriment. Why, in the case of human nature, or any other entity falling within the grasp of the senses who, when he hears of a community of substance, dreams either that all things that are compared together on the ground of substance are without a cause or beginning, or that something comes into existence out of itself, at once producing and being produced by itself?



The first man, and the man born from him, received their being in a different way; the latter by copulation, the former from the moulding of Christ Himself; and yet, though they are thus believed to be two, they are inseparable in the definition of their being, and are not considered as two beings, without beginning or cause, running parallel to each other; nor can the existing one be said to be generated by the existing one, or the two be ever thought of as one in the monstrous sense that each is his own father, and his own son; but it is because the one and the other was a man that the two have the same definition of being; each was mortal, reasoning, capable of intuition and of science. If, then, the idea of humanity in Adam and Abel does not vary with the difference of their origin, neither the order nor the manner of their coming into existence making any difference in their

<sup>176</sup> *your own words*, i.e. not ours, as you say. The Codex of Turin has τοῖς ἡμετέροις, and ἡμῖν above: but Oehler has wisely followed that of Venice. Eunomius had said of Basil’s party (§34) ‘justice records in your own words a verdict against yourselves.’ ‘No,’ Gregory answers; ‘*your words* (interpreting our doctrine) alone lend themselves to that.’ But to change καθ’ ἡμῶν of the Codd. also to καθ’ ὑμῶν would supply a still better sense.

nature, which is the same in both, according to the testimony of every one in his senses, and no one, not greatly needing treatment for insanity, would deny it; what necessity is there that against the divine nature we should admit this strange thought? Having heard of Father and Son from the Truth, we are taught in those two subjects the oneness of their nature; their natural relation to each other expressed by those names indicates that nature; and so do Our Lord's own words. For when He said, "I and My Father are one<sup>177</sup>," He conveys by that confession of a Father exactly the truth that He Himself is not a first cause, at the same time that He asserts by His union with the Father their common nature; so that these words of His secure our faith from the taint of heretical error on either side: for Sabellius has no ground for his confusion of the individuality of each Person, when the Only-begotten has so distinctly marked Himself off from the Father in those words, "I and My Father;" and Arius finds no confirmation of his doctrine of the strangeness of either nature to the other, since this oneness of both cannot admit distinction in nature. For that which is signified in these words by the oneness of Father and Son is nothing else but what belongs to them on the score of their actual being; all the other moral excellences which are to be observed in them as over and above<sup>178</sup> their nature may without error be set down as shared in by all created beings. For instance, Our Lord is called merciful and pitiful by the prophet<sup>179</sup>, and He wills us to be and to be called the same; "Be ye therefore merciful<sup>180</sup>," and "Blessed are the merciful<sup>181</sup>," and many such passages. If, then, any one by diligence and attention has modelled himself according to the divine will, and become kind and pitiful and compassionate, or meek and lowly of heart, such as many of the saints are testified to have become in the pursuit of such excellences, does it follow that they are therefore one with God, or united to Him by virtue of any one of them? Not so. That which is not in every respect the same, cannot be 'one' with him whose nature thus varies from it. Accordingly, a man becomes 'one' with another, when in will, as our Lord says, they are 'perfected into one<sup>182</sup>,' this union of wills being added to the connexion of nature. So also the Father and Son are one, the community of nature and the community of will running, in them, into one. But if the Son had been joined in wish only to the Father, and divided from Him in His nature, how is it that we find Him testifying to His oneness with the Father, when all the time He was sundered from Him in the point most proper to Him of all?

§35. *Proof that the Anomæan teaching tends to Manichæism.*

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177 John x. 30.

178 ὅσα ἐπιθεωρεῖται τῆ φύσει.

179 Psalm ciii. 8.

180 Luke vi. 36.

181 Matthew v. 7.

182 John xvii. 23. "I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one." (R.V.)

We hear our Lord saying. "I and My Father are one," and we are taught in that utterance the dependence of our Lord on a cause, and yet the absolute identity of the Son's and the Father's nature; we do not let our idea about them be melted down into One Person, but we keep distinct the properties of the Persons, while, on the other hand, not dividing in the Persons the oneness of their substance; and so the supposition of two diverse principles in the category of Cause is avoided, and there is no loophole for the Manichæan heresy to enter. For the created and the uncreate are as diametrically opposed to each other as their names are; and so if the two are to be ranked as First Causes, the mischief of Manichæism will thus under cover be brought into the Church. I say this, because my zeal against our antagonists makes me scrutinize their doctrine very closely. Now I think that none would deny that we were bringing this scrutiny very near the truth, when we said, that if the created be possessed of equal power with the uncreate, there will be some sort of antagonism between these things of diverse nature, and as long as neither of them fails in power, the two will be brought into a certain state of mutual discord for we must perforce allow that will corresponds with, and is intimately joined to nature; and that if two things are unlike in nature, they will be so also in will. But when power is adequate in both, neither will flag in the gratification of its wish; and if the power of each is thus equal to its wish, the primacy will become a doubtful point with the two: and it will end in a drawn battle from the inexhaustibleness of their powers. Thus will the Manichæan heresy creep in, two opposite principles appearing with counter claims in the category of Cause, parted and opposed by reason of difference both in nature and in will. They will find, therefore, that assertion of diminution (in the Divine being) is the beginning of Manichæism; for their teaching organizes a discord within that being, which comes to two leading principles, as our account of it has shewn; namely the created and the uncreated.

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But perhaps most will blame this as too strong a *reductio ad absurdum*, and will wish that we had not put it down at all along with our other objections. Be it so; we will not contradict them. It was not our impulse, but our adversaries themselves, that forced us to carry our argument into such minuteness of results. But if it is not right to argue thus, it was more fitting still that our opponents' teaching, which gave occasion to such a refutation, should never have been heard. There is only one way of suppressing the answer to bad teaching, and that is, to take away the subject-matter to which a reply has to be made. But what would give me most pleasure would be to advise those, who are thus disposed, to divest themselves a little of the spirit of rivalry, and not be such exceedingly zealous combatants on behalf of the private opinions with which they have become possessed, and convinced that the race is for their (spiritual) life, to attend to its interests only, and to yield the victory to Truth. If, then, one were to cease from this ambitious strife, and look straight into the actual question before us, he would very soon discover the flagrant absurdity of this teaching.

For let us assume as granted what the system of our opponents demands, that the having no generation is Being, and in like manner again that generation is admitted into Being. If, then, one were to follow out carefully these statements in all their meaning, even this way the Manichæan heresy will be reconstructed seeing that the Manichees are wont to take as an axiom the oppositions of good and bad, light and darkness, and all such naturally antagonistic things. I think that any who

will not be satisfied with a superficial view of the matter will be convinced that I say true. Let us look at it thus. Every subject has certain inherent characteristics, by means of which the specialty of that underlying nature is known. This is so, whether we are investigating the animal kingdom, or any other. The tree and the animal are not known by the same marks; nor do the characteristics of man extend in the animal kingdom to the brutes; nor, again, do the same symptoms indicate life and death; in every case, without exception, as we have said, the distinction of subjects resists any effort to confuse them and run one into another; the marks upon each thing which we observe cannot be communicated so as to destroy that distinction. Let us follow this out in examining our opponents' position. They say that the state of having no generation is Being; and they likewise make the having generation Being. But just as a man and a stone have not the same marks (in defining the essence of the animate and that of the inanimate you would not give the same account of each), so they must certainly grant that one who is non-generated is to be known by different signs to the generated. Let us then survey those peculiar qualities of the non-generated Deity, which the Holy Scriptures teach us can be mentioned and thought of, without doing Him an irreverence.

What are they? I think no Christian is ignorant that He is good, kind, holy, just and hallowed, unseen and immortal, incapable of decay and change and alteration, powerful, wise, beneficent, Master, Judge, and everything like that. Why lengthen our discussion by lingering on acknowledged facts? If, then, we find these qualities in the ungenerate nature, and the state of having been generated is contrary<sup>183</sup> in its very conception to the state of having not been generated, those who define these two states to be each of them Being, must perforce concede, that the characteristic marks of the generated being, following this opposition existing between the generated and non-generated, must be contrary to the marks observable in the non-generated being; for if they were to declare the marks to be the same, this sameness would destroy the difference between the two beings who are the subject of these observations. Differing things must be regarded as possessing differing marks; like things are to be known by like signs. If, then, these men testify to the same marks in the Only-begotten, they can conceive of no difference whatever in the subject of the marks. But if they persist in their blasphemous position, and maintain in asserting the difference of the generated and the non-generated the variation of the natures, it is readily seen what must result: viz., that, as in following out the opposition of the names, the nature of the things which those names indicate must be considered to be in a state of contrariety to itself, there is every necessity that the qualities observed in each should be drawn out opposite each other; so that those qualities should be applied to the Son which are the reverse of those predicated of the Father, viz., of divinity, holiness, goodness, imperishability, eternity, and of every other quality that represents God to the devout mind; in fact, every negation<sup>184</sup> of these, every conception that ranks opposite to the good, must be considered as belonging to the generated nature.

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<sup>183</sup> ὑπεναντίως, i.e. as logical "contraries" differ from each other. This is not an Aristotelian, but a Neo-Platonic use of the word (i.e. Ammonius, A.D. 390, &c.). It occurs so again in this Book frequently.

<sup>184</sup> ἀπεμφαίνοντα



To ensure clearness, we must dwell upon this point. As the peculiar phenomena of heat and cold—which are themselves by nature opposed to each other (let us take fire and ice as examples of each), each being that which the other is not—are at variance with each other, cooling being the peculiarity of ice, heating of fire; so if in accordance with the antithesis expressed by the names, the nature revealed by those names is parted asunder, it is not to be admitted that the faculties attending these natural “subcontraries<sup>185</sup>” are like each other, any more than cooling can belong to fire, or burning to ice. If, then, goodness is inseparable from the idea of the non-generated nature, and that nature is parted on the ground of being, as they declare, from the generated nature, the properties of the former will be parted as well from those of the latter: so that if the good is found in the first, the quality set against the good is to be perceived in the last. Thus, thanks to our clever systematizers, Manes lives again with his parallel line of evil in array over against the good, and his theory of opposite powers residing in opposite natures.

Indeed, if we are to speak the truth boldly, without any reserve, Manes, who for having been the first, they say, to venture to entertain the Manichæan view, gave his name to that heresy, may fairly be considered the less offensive of the two. I say this, just as if one had to choose between a viper and an asp for the most affection towards man; still, if we consider, there is *some* difference between brutes<sup>186</sup>. Does not a comparison of doctrines show that those older heretics are less intolerable than these? Manes thought he was pleading on the side of the Origin of Good, when he represented that Evil could derive thence none of its causes; so he linked the chain of things which are on the list of the bad to a separate Principle, in his character of the Almighty’s champion, and in his pious aversion to put the blame of any unjustifiable aberrations upon that Source of Good; not perceiving, with his narrow understanding, that it is impossible even to conceive of God as the fashioner of evil, or on the other hand, of any other First Principle besides Him. There might be a long discussion on this point, but it is beside our present purpose. We mentioned Manes’ statements only in order to show, that he at all events thought it his duty to separate evil from anything to do with God. But the blasphemous error with regard to the Son, which these men systematize, is much more terrible. Like the others, they explain the existence of evil by a contrariety in respect of Being; but when they declare, besides this, that the God of the universe is actually the Maker of this alien production, and say that this “generation” formed by Him into a substance possesses a nature foreign to that of its Maker, they exhibit therein more of impiety than the aforesaid sect; for they not only give a personal existence to that which in its nature is opposed to good, but they say that a Good Deity is the Cause of another Deity who in nature diverges from His; and they all but openly exclaim in their teaching, that there is in existence something opposite to the nature of the good, deriving its personality from the good itself. For when we know the Father’s substance to be good, and therefore find that the Son’s substance, owing to its being unlike the Father’s in its nature (which is the tenet of this heresy), is amongst the contrary predicables, what is thereby proved? Why, not

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<sup>185</sup> ὑπεναντίων

<sup>186</sup> πλήν ἄλλ’ ἐπειδὴ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν θηριοῖς κρίσις.

only that the opposite to the good subsists, but that this contrary comes from the good itself. I declare this to be more horrible even than the irrationality of the Manichees.

But if they repudiate this blasphemy from their system, though it *is* the logical carrying out of their teaching, and if they say that the Only-begotten has inherited the excellences of the Father, not as being really His Son, but—so does it please these misbelievers—as receiving His personality by an act of creation, let us look into this too, and see whether such an idea can be reasonably entertained. If, then, it were granted that it is as they think, viz., that the Lord of all things has not inherited as being a true Son, but that He rules a kindred of created things, being Himself made and created, how will the rest of creation accept this rule and not rise in revolt, being thus thrust down from kinship to subjection and condemned, though not a whit behind Him in natural prerogative (both being created), to serve and bend beneath a kinsman after all. That were like a usurpation, viz. not to assign the command to a superiority of Being, but to divide a creation that retains by right of nature equal privileges into slaves and a ruling power, one part in command, the other in subjection; as if, as the result of an arbitrary distribution<sup>187</sup>, these same privileges had been piled at random on one who after that distribution got preferred to his equals. Even man did not share his honour with the brutes, before he received his dominion over them; his prerogative of reason gave him the title to command; he was set over them, because of a variance of his nature in the direction of superiority. And human governments experience such quickly-repeated revolutions for this very reason, that it is impracticable that those to whom nature has given equal rights should be excluded from power, but her impulse is instinct in all to make themselves equal with the dominant party, when all are of the same blood.

How, too, will it be true that “all things were made by Him,” if it is true that the Son Himself is one of the things made? Either He must have made Himself, for that text to be true, and so this unreasonableness which they have devised to harm our Faith will recoil with all its force upon themselves; or else, if this is absurdly unnatural, that affirmation that the *whole* creation was made by Him will be proved to have no ground to stand on. The withdrawal of one makes “all” a false statement. So that, from this definition of the Son as a created being, one of two vicious and absurd alternatives is inevitable; either that He is not the Author of all created things, seeing that He, who, they insist, is one of those works, must be withdrawn from the “all;” or else, that He is exhibited as the maker of Himself, seeing that the preaching that ‘without Him was not anything (made) that was made’ is not a lie. So much for their teaching.

### §36. *A passing repetition of the teaching of the Church.*

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<sup>187</sup> *arbitrary distribution*, ἀποκληρώσεως: κατ’ ἀποκλήρωσιν “at random,” is also used by Sextus Empiric. (A.D. 200), Clem. Alex., and Greg Naz.

But if a man keeps steadfast to the sound doctrine, and believes that the Son is of the nature which is divine without admixture, he will find everything in harmony with the other truths of his religion, viz., that Our Lord is the maker of all things, that He is King of the universe, set above it not by an arbitrary act of capricious power, but ruling by virtue of a superior nature; and besides this, he will find that the one First Cause<sup>188</sup>, as taught by us, is not divided by any unlikeness of substance into separate first causes, but one Godhead, one Cause, one Power over all things is believed in, that Godhead being discoverable by the harmony existing between these like beings, and leading on the mind through one like to another like, so that the Cause of all things, which is Our Lord, shines in our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit; (for it is impossible, as the Apostle says, that the Lord Jesus can be truly known, “except by the Holy Spirit<sup>189</sup>”); and then all the Cause beyond, which is God over all, is found through Our Lord, Who is the Cause of all things; nor, indeed, is it possible to gain an exact knowledge of the Archetypal Good, except as it appears in the (visible) image of that invisible. But then, after passing that summit of theology, I mean the God over all, we turn as it were back again in the racecourse of the mind, and speed through conjoint and kindred ideas from the Father, through the Son, to the Holy Ghost. For once having taken our stand on the comprehension of the Ungenerate Light, we perceive<sup>190</sup> that moment from that vantage ground the Light that streams from Him, like the ray co-existent with the sun, whose cause indeed is in the sun, but whose existence is synchronous with the sun, not being a later addition, but appearing at the first sight of the sun itself: or rather (for there is no necessity to be slaves to this similitude, and so give a handle to the critics to use against our teaching by reason of the inadequacy of our image), it will not be a ray of the sun that we shall perceive, but another sun blazing forth, as an offspring, out of the Ungenerate sun, and simultaneously with our conception of the First, and in every way like him, in beauty, in power, in lustre, in size, in brilliance, in all things at once that we observe in the sun. Then again, we see yet another such Light after the same fashion sundered by no interval of time from that offspring Light, and while shining forth by means of It yet tracing the source of its being to the Primal Light; itself, nevertheless, a Light shining in like manner as the one first conceived of, and itself a source of light and doing all that light does. There is, indeed, no difference between one light and another light, *qua light*, when the one shows no lack or diminution of illuminating grace, but by its complete perfection forms part of the highest light of all, and is beheld along with the Father and the Son, though counted after them, and by its own

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<sup>188</sup> *One First Cause*, μοναρχία. In a notable passage on the Greeks who came up to the Feast (John xii. 20), Cyril (*Catena*, p. 307), uses the same word. “Such, seeing that some of the Jews’ customs did not greatly differ from their own, as far as related to the manner of sacrifice, and the belief in a *One first Cause*...came up with them to worship,” &c. Philo had already used the word so (*De Charit.*). Athanasius opposes it to πολυθεία (*Quaest. ad Antioch.* I.).

<sup>189</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 3.

<sup>190</sup> ἐνοήσαμεν: aorist of instantaneous action.

power gives access to the light that is perceived in the Father and Son to all who are able to partake of it. So far upon this.

§37. *Defence of S. Basil's statement, attacked by Eunomius, that the terms 'Father' and 'The Ungenerate' can have the same meaning.*

The stream of his abuse is very strong; insolence is at the bottom of every principle he lays down; and vilification is put by him in the place of any demonstration of doubtful points so let us briefly discuss the many misrepresentations about the word Ungenerate with which he insults our Teacher himself and his treatise. He has quoted the following words of our Teacher: "For my part I should be inclined to say that this title of the Ungenerate, however fitting it may seem to express our ideas, yet, as nowhere found in Scripture and as forming the alphabet of Eunomius' blasphemy, may very well be suppressed, when we have the word Father meaning the same thing; for One who essentially and alone is Father comes from none else; and that which comes from none else is equivalent to the Ungenerate." Now let us hear what proof he brings of the 'folly' of these words: "Overhastiness and shameless dishonesty prompt him to put this dose of words<sup>191</sup> anomalously used into his attempts; he turns completely round, because his judgment is wavering and his powers of reasoning are feeble." Notice how well-directed that blow is; how skilfully, with all his mastery of logic, he takes Basil's words to pieces and puts a conception more consistent with piety in their place! "Anomalous in phrase," "hasty and dishonest in judgment," "wavering and turning round from feebleness of reasoning." Why this? what has exasperated this man, whose own judgment is so firm and reasoning so sound? What is it that he most condemns in Basil's words? Is it, that he accepts the *idea* of the Ungenerate, but says that the actual word, as misused by those who pervert it, should be suppressed? Well; is the Faith in jeopardy only as regards words and outward expressions, and need we take no account of the correctness of the thought beneath? Or does not the Word of Truth rather exhort us first to have a heart pure from evil thoughts, and then, for the manifestation of the soul's emotions, to use any words that can express these secrets of the mind, without any minute care about this or that particular sound? For the speaking in this way or in that is not the cause of the thought within us; but the hidden conception of the heart supplies the motive for such and such words; "for from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." We make the words interpret the thought; we do not by a reverse process gather<sup>192</sup> the thought from the words. Should both be at hand, a man may certainly be ready in both, in clever thinking and clever expression; but if the one should be wanting, the loss to the illiterate is slight, if the knowledge in his soul is perfect in the direction of moral goodness. "This people honoureth me with their lips,

<sup>191</sup> i.e. πατήρ, ἀγέννητος

<sup>192</sup> Putting a full stop at συναγείρομεν. Oehler otherwise.

but their heart is far from me<sup>193</sup>.” What is the meaning of that? That the right attitude of the soul towards the truth is more precious than the propriety of phrases in the sight of God, who hears the “groanings that cannot be uttered.” Phrases can be used in opposite senses; the tongue readily serving, at his will, the intention of the speaker; but the disposition of the soul, as it is, so is it seen by Him Who sees all secrets. Why, then, does he deserve to be called “anomalous,” and “hasty,” and “dishonest,” for bidding us suppress all in the term Ungenerate which can aid in their blasphemy those who transgress the Faith, while minding and welcoming all the meaning in the word which can be reverently held. If indeed he had said that we ought not to think of the Deity as Ungenerate, there might have been some occasion for these and even worse terms of abuse to be used against him. But if he falls in with the general belief of the faithful and admits this, and then pronounces an opinion well worthy of the Master’s mind<sup>194</sup>, viz., “Refrain from the use of the word, for into it, and from it, the subverting heresy is fetched,” and bids us cherish the idea of an ungenerate Deity by means of other names,—therein he does not deserve their abuse. Are we not taught by the Truth Himself to act so, and not to cling even to things exceeding precious, if any of them tend to mischief? When He thus bids us to cut away the right eye or foot or hand, if so be that one of them offends, what else does He imply by this figure, than that He would have anything, however fair-seeming, if it leads a man by an inconsiderate use to evil, remain inoperative and out of use, assuring us that it is better for us to be saved by amputation of the parts which led to sin, than to perish by retaining them?



What, too, does Paul, the follower of Christ, say? He, too, in his deep wisdom teaches the same. He, who declares that “everything is good, and nothing to be rejected, if it be received with thanks<sup>195</sup>,” on some occasions, because of the ‘conscience of the weak brother,’ puts some things back from the number which he has accepted, and commands us to decline them. “If,” he says, “meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth<sup>196</sup>.” Now this is just what our follower of Paul did. He saw that the deceiving power of those who try to teach the inequality of the Persons was increased by this word Ungenerate, taken in their mischievous, heretical sense, and so he advised that, while we cherish in our souls a devout consciousness of this ungenerate Deity, we should not show any particular love for the actual word, which was the occasion of sin to the reprobate; for that the title of Father, if we follow out all that it implies, will suggest to us this meaning of not having been generated. For when we hear the word Father, we think at once of the Author of all beings; for if He had some further cause transcending Himself, He would not have been called thus of proper right Father; for that title would have had to be transferred higher,

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193      Isaiah xxix. 13; Matthew xv. 8.

194      *the Master’s mind*. “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Matth. xviii. 6; Mark ix. 42.

195      1 Tim. iv. 4 (R.V.)

196      1 Cor. viii. 13.

to this pre-supposed Cause. But if He Himself is that Cause from which all comes, as the Apostle says, it is plain that nothing can be thought of beyond His existence. But this is to believe in that existence not having been generated. But this man, who claims that even the Truth shall not be considered more persuasive than himself, will not acquiesce in this; he loudly dogmatizes against it; he jeers at the argument.

§38. *Several ways of controverting his quibbling syllogisms.*

Let us, if you please, examine his irrefragable syllogisms, and his subtle transpositions<sup>197</sup> of the terms in his own false premisses, by which he hopes to shake that argument; though, indeed, I fear lest the miserable quibbling in what he says may in a measure raise a prejudice also against the remarks that would correct it. When striplings challenge to a fight, men get more blame for pugnaciousness in closing with such foes, than honour for their show of victory. Nevertheless, what we want to say is this. We think, indeed, that the things said by him, with that well-known elocution now familiar to us, only for the sake of being insolent, are better buried in silence and oblivion; they may suit him; but to us they afford only an exercise for much-enduring patience. Nor would it be proper, I think, to insert his ridiculous expressions in the midst of our own serious controversy, and so to make this zeal for the truth evaporate in coarse, vulgar laughter; for indeed to be within hearing, and to remain unmoved, is an impossibility, when he says with such sublime and magnificent verbosity, “Where additional words amount to additional blasphemy, it is by half as much more tranquillizing to be silent than to speak.” Let those laugh at these expressions who know which of them are fit to be believed, and which only to be laughed at; while we scrutinize the keenness of those syllogisms with which he tries to tear our system to pieces.

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<sup>197</sup> *Transpositions of the terms in his own false premisses*; τῶν σοφισμάτων ἀντιστροφάς. The same as “the professional twisting of premisses,” and “the hooking backward and forward and twisting of premisses” below. The terms Father and Ἀγέννητος are transposed or twisted into each other’s place in this ‘irrefragable syllogism.’ It is ‘a reductio ad absurdum’ thus:—

Father means Ἀγέννητος (Basil’s premiss),

Ἀγέννητος means Father.

The fallacy of Eunomius consists in making ‘Father’ universal in his own premiss, when it was only particular in Basil’s. “Ἀγέννητος means the *whole* contents of the word Father,” which therefore cannot mean having generated a son. It is a False Conversion.

This Conversion or ἀντιστροφή is illustrated in Aristotle’s *Analytics, Prior*. I. iii. 3. It is legitimate thus:—

*Some B is A*

*Some A is (some) B.*

He says, “If ‘Father’ is the same in meaning as ‘Ungenerate,’ and words which have the same meaning naturally have in every respect the same force, and Ungenerate signifies by their confession that God comes from nothing, it follows necessarily that Father signifies the fact of God being of none, and not the having generated the Son.” Now what is this logical necessity which prevents the having generated a Son being signified by the title “Father,” if so be that that same title does in itself express to us as well the absence of beginning in the Father? If, indeed, the one idea was totally destructive of the other, it would certainly follow, from the very nature of contradictories<sup>198</sup>, that the affirming of the one would involve the denial of the other. But if there is nothing in the world to prevent the same Existence from being Father and also Ungenerate, when we try to think, under this title of Father, of the quality of not having been generated as one of the ideas implied in it, what necessity prevents the relation to a Son being any longer marked by the word Father? Other names which express mutual relationship are not always confined to those ideas of relationship; for instance, we call the emperor<sup>199</sup> autocrat and masterless, and we call the same the ruler of his subjects; and, while it is quite true that the word emperor signifies also the being masterless, it is not therefore necessary that this word, because signifying autocratic and unruléd, must cease to imply the having power over inferiors; the word emperor, in fact, is midway between these two conceptions, and at one time indicates masterlessness, at another the ruling over lower orders. In the case before us, then, if there is some other Father conceivable besides the Father of Our Lord, let these men who boast of their profound wisdom show him to us, and then we will agree with him that the idea of the Ungenerate cannot be represented by the title “Father.” But if the First Father has no cause transcending His own state, and the subsistence of the Son is invariably implied in the title of Father, why do they try to scare us, as if we were children, with these professional twistings of premisses, endeavouring to persuade or rather to decoy us into the belief that, if the property of not having been generated is acknowledged in the title of Father, we must sever from the Father any relation with the Son.

Despising, then, this silly superficial attempt of theirs, let us manfully own our belief in that which they adduce as a monstrous absurdity, viz., that not only does the ‘Father’ mean the same as Ungenerate and that this last property establishes the Father as being of none, but also that the word ‘Father’ introduces with itself the notion of the Only-begotten, as a relative bound to it. Now the following passage, which is to be found in the treatise of our Teacher, has been removed from the context by this clever and invincible controversialist; for, by suppressing that part which was added by Basil by way of safeguard, he thought he would make his own reply a much easier task. The passage runs thus verbatim. “For my part I should be inclined to say that this title of the Ungenerate, however readily it may seem to fall in with our own ideas, yet, as nowhere found in Scripture, and as forming the alphabet of Eunomius’ blasphemy, may very well be suppressed,

<sup>198</sup> κατὰ τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων φύσιν. If Ἁγέννητος means *not* having a son, then to affirm ‘God is always Ἁγέννητος’ is even to deny (its logical contradictory) ‘God once had a Son.’

<sup>199</sup> τὸν βασιλέα.

when we have the word Father meaning the same thing, in addition to<sup>200</sup> its introducing with itself, as a relative bound to it, the notion of the Son.” This generous champion of the truth, with innate good feeling<sup>201</sup>, has suppressed this sentence which was added by way of safeguard, I mean, “in addition to introducing with itself, as a relative bound to it, the notion of the Son;” after this garbling, he comes to close quarters with what remains, and having severed the connection of the living whole<sup>202</sup>, and thus made it, as he thinks, a more yielding and assailable victim of his logic, he misleads his own party with the frigid and feeble paralogism, that “that which has a common meaning, in one single point, with something else retains that community of meaning in every possible point;” and with this he takes their shallow intelligences by storm. For while we have only affirmed that the word Father in a *certain* signification yields the same meaning as Ungenerate, this man makes the coincidence of meanings complete in every point, quite at variance therein with the common acceptance of either word; and so he reduces the matter to an absurdity, pretending that this word Father can no longer denote any relation to the Son, if the idea of not having been generated is conveyed by it. It is just as if some one, after having acquired two ideas about a loaf,—one, that it is made of flour, the other, that it is food to the consumer—were to contend with the person who told him this, using against him the same kind of fallacy as Eunomius does, viz., that ‘the being made of flour is one thing, but the being food is another; if, then, it is granted that the loaf is made of flour, this quality in it can no longer strictly be called food.’ Such is the thought in Eunomius’ syllogism; “if the not having been generated is implied by the word Father, this word can no longer convey the idea of having generated the Son.” But I think it is time that we, in our turn, applied to this argument of his that magnificently rounded period of his own (already quoted). In reply to such words, it would be suitable to say that he would have more claim to be considered in his sober senses, if he had put the limit to such argumentative safeguards at absolute silence. For “where additional words amount to additional blasphemy,” or, rather, indicate that he has utterly lost his reason, it is not only “by half as much more,” but by the whole as much more “tranquillizing to be silent than to speak.”

But perhaps a man would be more easily led into the true view by personal illustrations; so let us leave this looking backwards and forwards and this twisting of false premisses<sup>203</sup>, and discuss



<sup>200</sup> πρὸς τῷ. Cod. Ven., surely better than the common πρὸς τὸ, which Oehler has in his text.

<sup>201</sup> ἐλευθερία; late Greek, for ἐλευθεριότης

<sup>202</sup> “*the living whole.*” σώματος; this is the radical meaning of σῶμα, and also the classical. Viger. (Idiom. p. 143 note) distinguishes four meanings under this. 1. Safety. 2. Individuality. 3. Living presence. 4. Life: and adduces instances of each from the Attic orators.

<sup>203</sup> τὸ κατηγκλωμένον τῆς τῶν συφισμάτων πλοκῆς. See c. 38, note 7. The false premisses in the syllogisms have been—

1. Father (partly) means Ἀγέννητος

Things which mean the same in part, mean the same in all (false premiss).

Father means Ἀγέννητος (false).



the matter in a less learned and more popular way. Your father, Eunomius, was certainly a human being; but the same person was also the author of your being. Did you, then, ever use in his case too this clever quibble which you have employed; so that your own ‘father,’ when once he receives the true definition of his being, can no longer mean, because of being a ‘man,’ any relationship to yourself; ‘for he must be one of two things, either a man, or Eunomius’ father?’ — Well, then, you must not use the names of intimate relationship otherwise than in accordance with that intimate meaning. Yet, though you would indict for libel any one who contemptuously scoffed against yourself, by means of such an alteration of meanings, are you not afraid to scoff against God; and are you safe when you laugh at these mysteries of our faith? As ‘your father’ indicates relationship to yourself, and at the same time humanity is not excluded by that term, and as no one in his sober senses instead of styling him who begat you ‘your father’ would render his description by the word ‘man,’ or, reversely, if asked for his genus and answering ‘man,’ would assert that that answer prevented him from being your father; so in the contemplation of the Almighty a reverent mind would not deny that by the title of Father is meant that He is without generation, as well as that in another meaning it represents His relationship to the Son. Nevertheless Eunomius, in open contempt of truth, does assert that the title cannot mean the ‘having begotten a son’ any longer, when once the word has conveyed to us the idea of ‘never having been generated.’

Let us add the following illustration of the absurdity of his assertions. It is one that all must be familiar with, even mere children who are being introduced under a grammar-tutor to the study of words. Who, I say, does not know that some nouns are absolute and out of all relation, others express some relationship. Of these last, again, there are some which incline, according to the speaker’s wish, either way; they have a simple intention in themselves, but can be turned so as to become nouns of relation. I will not linger amongst examples foreign to our subject. I will explain from the words of our Faith itself.

God is called Father and King and other names innumerable in Scripture. Of these names one part can be pronounced absolutely, i.e. simply as they are, and no more: viz.. “imperishable,” “everlasting,” “immortal,” and so on. Each of these, without our bringing in another thought, contains in itself a complete thought about the Deity. Others express only relative usefulness; thus, Helper, Champion, Rescuer, and other words of that meaning; if you remove thence the idea of one in need of the help, all the force expressed by the word is gone. Some, on the other hand, as we have said, are both absolute, and are also amongst the words of relation; ‘God,’ for instance, and ‘good,’ and many other such. In these the thought does not continue always within the absolute. The Universal God often becomes the property of him who calls upon Him; as the Saints teach us, when they make that independent Being their own. ‘The Lord God is Holy;’ so far there is no relation; but when one adds the Lord *Our* God, and so appropriates the meaning in a relation towards

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2. Father means ἄγέννητος (false).

ἄγέννητος does not mean ‘having a Son.’

Father does not mean ‘having a Son’ (false).

oneself, then one causes the word to be no longer thought of absolutely. Again; “Abba, Father” is the cry of the Spirit; it is an utterance free from any partial reference. But we are bidden to call the Father in heaven, ‘Our Father;’ this is the relative use of the word. A man who makes the Universal Deity his own, does not dim His supreme dignity; and in the same way there is nothing to prevent us, when we point out the Father and Him who comes from Him, the Firstborn before all creation, from signifying by that title of Father at one and the same time the having begotten that Son, and also the not being from any more transcendent Cause. For he who speaks of the First Father means Him who is presupposed before all existence, Whose is the beyond<sup>204</sup>. This is He, Who has nothing previous to Himself to behold, no end in which He shall cease. Whichever way we look, He is equally existing there for ever; He transcends the limit of any end, the idea of any beginning, by the infinitude of His life; whatever be His title, eternity must be implied with it.

But Eunomius, versed as he is in the contemplation of that which eludes thought, rejects this view of unscientific minds; he will not admit a double meaning in the word ‘Father,’ the one, that from Him are all things and in the front of all things the Only-begotten Son, the other, that He Himself has no superior Cause. He may scorn the statement; but we will brave his mocking laugh, and repeat what we have said already, that the ‘Father’ is the same as that Ungenerate One, and both signifies the having begotten the Son, and represents the being from nothing.

But Eunomius, contending with this statement of ours, says (the very contrary now of what he said before), “If God is Father because He has begotten the Son, and ‘Father’ has the same meaning as Ungenerate, God is Ungenerate because He has begotten the Son, but before He begat Him He was not Ungenerate.” Observe his method of turning round; how he pulls his first quibble to pieces, and turns it into the very opposite, thinking even so to entrap us in a conclusion from which there is no escape. His first syllogism presented the following absurdity, “If ‘Father’ means the coming from nothing, then necessarily it will no longer indicate the having begotten the Son.” But this last syllogism, by turning (a premiss) into its contrary, threatens our faith with another absurdity. How, then, does he pull to pieces his former conclusion<sup>205</sup>? “If He is ‘Father’ because He has begotten a



204 ἐνεδείξατο, οὗ τὸ ἐπέκεινα. This is the reading of the Turin Cod., and preferable to that of the Paris edition.

205 The first syllogism was—

‘Father’ means the ‘coming from nothing;’

(‘Coming from nothing’ does not mean ‘begetting a Son’)

Father does not mean begetting a Son.

He “pulls to pieces” this conclusion by taking its logical ‘contrary’ as the first premiss of his second syllogism; thus—

Father means begetting a Son;

(Father means ἁγένητος)

ἁγένητος means begetting a Son.

From which it follows that before that begetting the Almighty was not ἁγένητος

Son.” His first syllogism gave us nothing like that; on the contrary, its logical inference purported to show that if the Father’s not having been generated was meant by the word Father, that word could *not* mean as well the having begotten a Son<sup>206</sup>. Thus his first syllogism contained no intimation whatever that God was Father because He had begotten a Son. I fail to understand what this argumentative and shrewdly professional reversal means.

But let us look to the thought in it below the words. ‘If God is Ungenerate because He has begotten a Son, He was not Ungenerate before He begat Him.’ The answer to that is plain; it consists in the simple statement of the Truth that ‘the word Father means both the having begotten a Son, and also that the Begetter is not to be thought of as Himself coming from any cause.’ If you look at the effect, the Person of the Son is revealed in the word Father; if you look for a previous Cause, the absence of any beginning in the Begetter is shown by that word. In saying that ‘Before He begat a Son, the Almighty was not Ungenerate,’ this pamphleteer lays himself open to a double charge; i.e. of misrepresentation of us, and of insult to the Faith. He attacks, as if there was no mistake about it, something which our Teacher never said, neither do we now assert, viz., that the Almighty became in process of time a Father, having been something else before. Moreover in ridiculing the absurdity of this fancied doctrine of ours, he proclaims his own wildness as to doctrine. Assuming that the Almighty was once something else, and then by an advance became entitled to be called Father, he would have it that before this He was not Ungenerate either, since Ungeneracy is implied in the idea of Father. The folly of this hardly needs to be pointed out; it will be abundantly clear to anyone who reflects. If the Almighty was something else before He became Father, what will the champions of this theory say, if they were asked in what state they propose to contemplate Him? What name are they going to give Him in that stage of existence; child, infant, babe, or youth? Will they blush at such flagrant absurdity, and say nothing like that, and concede that He was perfect from the first? Then how can He be perfect, while as yet unable to become Father? Or will they not deprive Him of this power, but say only that it was *not fitting* that there should be Fatherhood simultaneously with His existence. But if it was not good nor fitting that He should be from the very beginning Father of such a Son, how did He go on to acquire that which was not good?

But, as it is, it is good and fitting to God’s majesty that He should become Father of such a Son. So they will make out that at the beginning He had no share in this good thing, and as long as He did not have this Son they must assert (may God forgive me for saying it!) that He had no Wisdom, nor Power, nor Truth, nor any of the other glories which from various points of view the Only-begotten Son is and is called.

But let all this fall on the heads of those who started it. We will return whence we digressed. He says, “if God is Father because of having begotten a Son, and if Father means the being

The conclusion of the last syllogism also involves the contrary of the 2nd premiss of the first.

It is to be noticed that both syllogisms are aimed at Basil’s doctrine, ‘Father’ means ‘coming from nothing.’ Eunomius strives to show that, in both, such a premiss leads to an absurdity. But Gregory ridicules both for contradicting each other.

<sup>206</sup> τὸ μὲν μὴ δύνασθαι. The negative, absent in Oehler, is recovered from the Turin Cod.



Ungenerate, then God was not this last, before He begat.” Now if he could speak here as it is customary to speak about human life, where it is inconceivable that any should acquire possession of many accomplishments all at once, instead of winning each of the objects sought after in a certain order and sequence of time—if I say we could reason like that in the case of the Almighty, so that we could say He possessed His Ungeneracy at one time, and after that acquired His power, and then His imperishability, and then His Wisdom, and advancing so became Father, and after that Just and then Everlasting, and so came into all that enters into the philosophical conception of Him, in a certain sequence—then it would not be so manifestly absurd to think that one of His names has precedence of another name, and to talk of His being first Ungenerate, and after that having become Father.

As it is, however, no one is so earth-bound in imagination, so uninitiated in the sublimities of our Faith, as to fail, when once he has apprehended the Cause of the universe, to embrace in one collective and compact whole all the attributes which piety can give to God; and to conceive instead of a primal and a later attribute, and of another in between, supervening in a certain sequence. It is not possible, in fact, to traverse in thought one amongst those attributes and then reach another, be it a reality or a conception, which is to transcend the first in antiquity. Every name of God, every sublime conception of Him, every utterance or idea that harmonizes with our general ideas with regard to Him, is linked in closest union with its fellow; all such conceptions are massed together in our understanding into one collective and compact whole namely, His Fatherhood, and Ungeneracy, and Power, and Imperishability, and Goodness, and Authority, and everything else. You cannot take one of these and separate it in thought from the rest by any interval of time, as if it preceded or followed something else; no sublime or adorable attribute in Him can be discovered, which is not simultaneously expressed in His everlastingness. Just, then, as we cannot say that God was ever not good, or powerful, or imperishable, or immortal, in the same way it is a blasphemy not to attribute to Him Fatherhood always, and to say that that came later. He Who is truly Father is always Father; if eternity was not included in this confession, and if a foolishly preconceived idea curtailed and checked retrospectively our conception of the Father, true Fatherhood could no longer be properly predicated of Him, because that preconceived idea about the Son would cancel the continuity and eternity of His Fatherhood. How could that which He is now called be thought of something which came into existence subsequent to these other attributes? If being first Ungenerate He then became Father, and received that name, He was not always altogether what He is now called. But that which the God now existing is He always is; He does not become worse or better by any addition, He does not become altered by taking something from another source. He is always identical with Himself. If, then, He was not Father at first, He was not Father afterwards. But if He is confessed to be Father (now), I will recur to the same argument, that, if He is so now, He always was so; and that if He always was, He always will be. The Father therefore is always Father; and seeing that the Son must always be thought of along with the Father (for the title of father cannot be justified unless there is a son to make it true), all that we contemplate in the Father is to be observed also in the Son. “All that the Father hath is the Son’s; and all that is the Son’s the Father

hath.” The words are, ‘The Father *hath* that which is the Son’s<sup>207</sup>,’ and so a carping critic will have no authority for finding in the contents of the word “all” the ungeneracy of the Son, when it is said that the Son has all that the Father has, nor on the other hand the generation of the Father, when all that is the Son’s is to be observed in the Father. For the Son *has* all the things of the Father; but He *is* not Father: and again, all the things of the Son are to be observed in the Father, but He *is* not a Son.

If, then, all that is the Father’s is in the Only-begotten, and He is in the Father, and the Fatherhood is not dissociated from the ‘not having been generated,’ I for my part cannot see what there is to think of in connexion with the Father, by Himself, that is parted by any interval so as to precede our apprehension of the Son. Therefore we may boldly encounter the difficulties started in that quibbling syllogism; we may despise it as a mere scare to frighten children, and still assert that God is Holy, and Immortal, and Father, and Ungenerate, and Everlasting, and everything all at once; and that, if it could be supposed possible that you could withhold one of these attributes which devotion assigns to Him, all would be destroyed along with that one. Nothing, therefore, in Him is older or younger; else He would be found to be older or younger than Himself. If God is not all His attributes always, but something in Him is, and something else only becoming, following some order of sequence (we must remember God is not a compound; whatever He is is the whole of Him), and if according to this heresy He is first Ungenerate and afterwards becomes Father, then, seeing that we cannot think of Him in connexion with a heaping together of qualities, there is no alternative but that the whole of Him must be both older and younger than the whole of Him, the former by virtue of His Ungeneracy, the latter by virtue of His Fatherhood. But if, as the prophet says of God<sup>208</sup>, He “is the same,” it is idle to say that before He begat He was not Himself Ungenerate; we cannot find either of these names, the Father and the Ungenerate One, parted from the other; the two ideas rise together, suggested by each other, in the thoughts of the devout reasoner. God is Father from everlasting, and everlasting Father, and every other term that devotion assigns to Him is given in a like sense, the mensuration and the flow of time having no place, as we have said, in the Eternal.

Let us now see the remaining results of his expertness in dealing with words; results, which he himself truly says, are at once ridiculous and lamentable. Truly one must laugh outright at what he says, if a deep lament for the error that steeps his soul were not more fitting. Whereas Father, as we teach, includes, according to one of its meanings, the idea of the Ungenerate, he transfers the full signification of the word Father to that of the Ungenerate, and declares “If Father is the same as Ungenerate, it is allowable for us to drop it, and use Ungenerate instead; thus, the Ungenerate of the Son is Ungenerate; for as the Ungenerate is Father of the Son, so reversely the Father is Ungenerate of the Son.” After this a feeling of admiration for our friend’s adroitness steals over

<sup>207</sup> John xvi. 15. Oehler conjectures these words (Ἐχει ὁ πατήρ) are to be repeated; and thus obtains a good sense, which the common reading, ὁ πατήρ εἶπον, does not give.

<sup>208</sup> Psalm cii. 27.

me, with the conviction that the many-sided subtlety of his theological training is quite beyond the capacity of most. What our Teacher said was embraced in one short sentence, to the effect that it was possible that by the title 'Father' the Ungeneracy could be signified; but Eunomius' words depend for their number not on the variety of the thoughts, but on the way that anything within the circuit of similar names can be turned about<sup>209</sup>. As the cattle that run blindfold round to turn the mill remain with all their travel in the same spot, so does he go round and round the same topic, and never leaves it. Once he said, ridiculing us, that 'Father' does not signify the having begotten, but the being from nothing. Again he wove a similar dilemma, "If Father signifies Ungeneracy, before He begat He was not ungenerate." Then a third time he resorts to the same trick. "It is allowable for us to drop Father, and to use Ungenerate instead;" and then directly he repeats the logic so often vomited. "For as the Ungenerate is Father of the Son, so reversely the Father is Ungenerate of the Son." How often he returns to his vomit; how often he blurts it out again! Shall we not, then, annoy most people, if we drag about our argument in company with this foolish display of words? It would be perhaps more decent to be silent in a case like this; still, lest any one should think that we decline discussion because we are weak in pleas, we will answer thus to what he has said. 'You have no authority, Eunomius, for calling the Father the Ungenerate of the Son, even though the title Father *does* signify that the Begetter was from no cause Himself. For as, to take the example already cited, when we hear the word 'Emperor' we understand two things, both that the one who is pre-eminent in authority is subject to none, and also that he controls his inferiors, so the title Father supplies us with two ideas about the Deity, one relating to His Son, the other to His being dependent on no preconceivable cause. As, then, in the case of 'Emperor' we cannot say that because the two things are signified by that term, viz., the ruling over subjects and the not having any to take precedence of him, there is any justification for speaking of the 'Unruled of subjects,' instead of the 'Ruler of the nation,' or allowing so much, that we may use such a juxtaposition of words, in imitation of king of a nation, as kingless of a nation, in the same way when 'Father' indicates a Son, and also represents the idea of the Ungenerate, we may not unduly transfer this latter meaning, so as to attach this idea of the Ungenerate fast to a paternal relationship, and absurdly say 'the Ungenerate is Ungenerate of the Son.'

He treads on the ground of truth, he thinks, after such utterances; he has exposed the absurdity of his adversaries' position; how boastfully he cries, "And what sane thinker, pray, ever yet wanted the natural thought to be suppressed, and welcomed the paradoxical?" No sane thinker, most accomplished sir; and therefore our argument neither, which teaches that while the term Ungenerate does suit our thoughts, and we ought to guard it in our hearts intact, yet the term Father is an adequate substitute for the one which you have perverted, and leads the mind in that direction. Remember the words which you yourself quoted; Basil did not 'want the natural thought to be suppressed, and welcome the paradoxical,' as you phrase it; but he advised us to avoid all danger by suppressing the mere word Ungenerate, that is, the expression in so many syllables, as one which had been

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<sup>209</sup> ἐν τῇ περιόδῳ καὶ ἀναστροφῇ τῶν ὁμοίων ῥημάτων.

evilly interpreted, and besides was not to be found in Scripture; as for its meaning he declares that it does most completely suit our thoughts.



Thus far for our statement. But this reviler of all quibblers, who completely arms his own argument with the truth, and arraigns our sins in logic, does not blush in any of his arguing on doctrines to indulge in very pretty quibbles; on a par with those exquisite jokes which are cracked to make people laugh at dessert. Reflect on the weight of reasoning displayed in that complicated syllogism; which I will now again repeat. “If ‘Father’ is the same as Ungenerate, it is allowable for us to drop it, and use Ungenerate instead; thus, the Ungenerate is Ungenerate of the Son; for as the Ungenerate is Father of the Son, so, reversely, the Father is Ungenerate of the Son.” Well, this is very like another case such as the following. Suppose some one were to state the right and sound view about Adam; namely, that it mattered not whether we called him “father of mankind” or “the first man formed by God” (for both mean the same thing), and then some one else, belonging to Eunomius’ school of reasoners, were to pounce upon this statement, and make the same complication out of it, viz.: If “first man formed by God” and “father of mankind” are the same things, it is allowable for us to drop the word “father” and use “first formed” instead; and say that Adam was the “first formed,” instead of the “father,” of Abel; for as the first formed was the father of a son, so, reversely, that father is the first formed of that son. If this had been said in a tavern, what laughter and applause would have broken from the tippling circle over so fine and exquisite a joke! These are the arguments on which our learned theologian leans; when he assails our doctrine, he really needs himself a tutor and a stick to teach him that all the things which are predicated of some one do not necessarily, in their meaning, have respect to one single object; as is plain from the aforesaid instance of Abel and Adam. That one and the same Adam is Abel’s father and also God’s handiwork is a truth; nevertheless it does not follow that, because he is both, he is both with respect to Abel. So the designation of the Almighty as Father has both the special meaning of that word, i.e., the having begotten a son, and also that of there being no preconceivable cause of the Very Father; nevertheless it does not follow that when we mention the Son we must speak of the Ungenerate, instead of the Father, of that Son; nor, on the other hand, if the absence of beginning remains unexpressed in reference to the Son, that we must banish from our thoughts about God that attribute of Ungeneracy. But he discards the usual acceptations, and like an actor in comedy, makes a joke of the whole subject, and by dint of the oddity of his quibbles makes the questions of our faith ridiculous. Again I must repeat his words: “If Father is the same as Ungenerate, it is allowable for us to drop it, and use Ungenerate instead; thus, the Ungenerate is Ungenerate of the Son; for as the Ungenerate is Father of the Son, so, reversely, the Father is Ungenerate of the Son.” But let us turn the laugh against him, by reversing his quibble; thus: If Father is not the same as Ungenerate, the Son of the Father will not be Son of the Ungenerate; for having relation to the Father only, he will be altogether alien in nature to that which is other than Father, and does not suit that idea; so that, if the Father is something other than the Ungenerate, and the title Father does not comprehend that meaning, the Son, being One, cannot be distributed between these two relationships, and be at the same time Son both of the Father and of the Ungenerate; and, as before it was an acknowledged

absurdity to speak of the Deity as Ungenerate of the Son, so in this converse proposition it will be found an absurdity just as great to call the Only-begotten Son of the Ungenerate. So that he must choose one of two things; either the Father is the same as the Ungenerate (which is necessary in order that the Son of the Father may be Son of the Ungenerate as well); and then our doctrine has been ridiculed by him without reason; or, the Father is something different to the Ungenerate, and the Son of the Father is alienated from all relationship to the Ungenerate. But then, if it is thus to hold that the Only-begotten is not the Son of the Ungenerate, logic inevitably points to a “generated Father;” for that which exists, but does not exist without generation, must have a generated substance. If, then, the Father, being according to these men other than Ungenerate, is therefore generated, where is their much talked of Ungeneracy? Where is that basis and foundation of their heretical castle-building? The Ungenerate, which they thought just now that they grasped, has eluded them, and vanished quite beneath the action of a few barren syllogisms; their would-be demonstration of the *Unlikeness*, like a mere dream about something, slips away at the touch of criticism, and takes its flight along with this Ungenerate.

Thus it is that whenever a falsehood is welcomed in preference to the truth, it may indeed flourish for a little through the illusion which it creates, but it will soon collapse; its own methods of proof will dissolve it. But we bring this forward only to raise a smile at the very pretty revenge we might take on their *Unlikeness*. We must now resume the main thread of our discourse.



§39. Answer to the question he is always asking, “Can He who is be begotten?”

Eunomius does not like the meaning of the Ungenerate to be conveyed by the term Father, because he wants to establish that there was a time when the Son was not. It is in fact a constant question amongst his pupils, “How can He who (always) is be begotten?” This comes, I take it, of not weaning oneself from the human application of words, when we have to think about God. But let us without bitterness at once expose the actual falseness of this ‘arrière pensée’ of his<sup>210</sup>, stating first our conclusions upon the matter.

These names have a different meaning with us, Eunomius; when we come to the transcendent energies they yield another sense. Wide, indeed, is the interval in all else that divides the human from the divine; experience cannot point here below to anything at all resembling in amount what we may guess at and imagine there. So likewise, as regards the meaning of our terms, though there may be, so far as words go, some likeness between man and the Eternal, yet the gulf between these two worlds is the real measure of the separation of meanings. For instance, our Lord calls God a ‘man’ that was a ‘householder’ in the parable<sup>211</sup>; but though this title is ever so familiar to us, will

<sup>210</sup> αὐτὸ τὸ πεπλασμενὸν τῆς ὑπονοίας.

<sup>211</sup> the parable, i.e. of the Tares. Matthew xiii. 27: cf. v. 52.



the person we think of and the person there meant be of the same description; and will our 'house' be the same as that large house, in which, as the Apostle says, there are the vessels of gold, and those of silver<sup>212</sup>, and those of the other materials which are recounted? Or will not *those* rather be beyond our immediate apprehension and to be contemplated in a blessed immortality, while ours are earthen, and to dissolve to earth? So in almost all the other terms there is a similarity of names between things human and things divine, revealing nevertheless underneath this sameness a wide difference of meanings. We find alike in both worlds the mention of bodily limbs and senses; as with us, so with the life of God, which all allow to be above sense, there are set down in order fingers and arm and hand, eye and eyelids, hearing, heart, feet and sandals, horses, cavalry, and chariots; and other metaphors innumerable are taken from human life to illustrate symbolically divine things. As, then, each one of these names has a human sound, but not a human meaning, so also that of Father, while applying equally to life divine and human, hides a distinction between the uttered meanings exactly proportionate to the difference existing between the subjects of this title. We think of man's generation one way; we surmise of the divine generation in another. A man is born in a stated time; and a particular place must be the receptacle of his life; without it it is not in nature that he should have any concrete substance: whence also it is inevitable that sections of time are found enveloping his life; there is a Before, and With, and After him. It is true to say of any one whatever of those born into this world that there was a time when he was not, that he is now, and again there will be time when he will cease to exist; but into the Eternal world these ideas of time do not enter; to a sober thinker they have nothing akin to that world. He who considers what the divine life really is will get beyond the 'sometime,' the 'before,' and the 'after,' and every mark whatever of this extension in time; he will have lofty views upon a subject so lofty; nor will he deem that the Absolute is bound by those laws which he observes to be in force in human generation.

Passion precedes the concrete existence of man; certain material foundations are laid for the formation of the living creature; beneath it all is Nature, by God's will, with her wonder-working, putting everything under contribution for the proper proportion of nutrition for that which is to be born, taking from each terrestrial element the amount necessary for the particular case, receiving the co-operation of a measured time, and as much of the food of the parents as is necessary for the formation of the child: in a word Nature, advancing through all these processes by which a human life is built up, brings the non-existent to the birth; and accordingly we say that, non-existent once, it now is born; because, at one time not being, at another it begins to be. But when it comes to the Divine generation the mind rejects this ministration of Nature, and this fulness of time in contributing to the development, and everything else which our argument contemplated as taking place in human generation; and he who enters on divine topics with no carnal conceptions will not fall down again to the level of any of those debasing thoughts, but seeks for one in keeping with the majesty of the thing to be expressed; he will not think of passion in connexion with that which is passionless, or

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212 2 Tim. ii. 20.



count the Creator of all Nature as in need of Nature's help, or admit extension in time into the Eternal life; he will see that the Divine generation is to be cleared of all such ideas, and will allow to the title 'Father' only the meaning that the Only-begotten is not Himself without a source, but derives from That the cause of His being; though, as for the actual beginning of His subsistence, he will not calculate that, because he will not be able to see any sign of the thing in question. 'Older' and 'younger' and all such notions are found to involve intervals of time; and so, when you mentally abstract time in general, all such indications are got rid of along with it.

Since, then, He who *is* with the Father, in some inconceivable category, before the ages admits not of a 'sometime,' He exists by generation indeed, but nevertheless He never begins to exist. His life is neither in time, nor in place. But when we take away these and all suchlike ideas in contemplating the subsistence of the Son, there is only one thing that we can even think of as before Him—i.e. the Father. But the Only-begotten, as He Himself has told us, is in the Father, and so, from His nature, is not open to the supposition that He ever existed not. If indeed the Father ever was not, the eternity of the Son must be cancelled retrospectively in consequence of this nothingness of the Father: but if the Father is always, how can the Son ever be non-existent, when He cannot be thought of at all by Himself apart from the Father, but is always implied silently in the name Father. This name in fact conveys the two Persons equally; the idea of the Son is inevitably suggested by that word. When was it, then, that the Son was not? In what category shall we detect His non-existence? In place? There is none. In time? Our Lord was before all times; and if so, when was He not? And if He was in the Father, in what place was He not? Tell us that, ye who are so practised in seeing things out of sight. What kind of interval have your cogitations given a shape to? What vacancy in the Son, be it of substance or of conception, have you been able to think of, which shows the Father's life, when drawn out in parallel, as surpassing that of the Only-begotten? Why, even of men we cannot say absolutely that any one was not, and then was born. Levi, many generations before his own birth in the flesh, was tithed by Melchisedech; so the Apostle says, "Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes (in Abraham),"<sup>213</sup> adding the proof, "for he was yet in the loins of his father, when" Abraham met the priest of the Most High. If, then, a man in a certain sense is not, and is then born, having existed beforehand by virtue of kinship of substance in his progenitor, according to an Apostle's testimony, how as to the Divine life do they dare to utter the thought that He was not, and then was begotten? For He 'is in the Father,' as our Lord has told us; "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me"<sup>214</sup>," each of course being in the other in two different senses; the Son being in the Father as the beauty of the image is to be found in the form from which it has been outlined; and the Father in the Son, as that original beauty is to be found in the image of itself. Now in all hand-made images the interval of time is a point of separation between the model and that to which it lends its form; but there the one cannot be separated from the other,

213 Heb. vii. 9, 10; Genesis xiv. 18.

214 John x. 38.

neither the “express image” from the “Person,” to use the Apostle’s words<sup>215</sup>, nor the “brightness” from the “glory” of God, nor the representation from the goodness; but when once thought has grasped one of these, it has admitted the associated Verity as well. “*Being*,” he says (not becoming), “the brightness of His glory<sup>216</sup>,” so that clearly we may rid ourselves for ever of the blasphemy which lurks in either of those two conceptions; viz., that the Only-begotten can be thought of as Ungenerate (for he says “the brightness of His glory,” the brightness coming from the glory, and not, reversely, the glory from the brightness); or that He ever began to be. For the word “being” is a witness that interprets to us the Son’s continuity and eternity and superiority to all marks of time.

What occasion, then, had our foes for proposing for the damage of our Faith that trifling question, which they think unanswerable and, so, a proving of their own doctrine, and which they are continually asking, namely, ‘whether One who is can be generated.’ We may boldly answer them at once, that He who is in the Ungenerate *was* generated from Him, and *does* derive His source from Him. ‘I live by the Father<sup>217</sup>.’ but it is impossible to name the ‘when’ of His beginning. When there is no intermediate matter, or idea, or interval of time, to separate the being of the Son from the Father, no symbol can be thought of, either, by which the Only-begotten can be unlinked from the Father’s life, and shewn to proceed from some special source of His own. If, then, there is no other principle that guides the Son’s life, if there is nothing that a devout mind can contemplate before (but not divided from) the subsistence of the Son, but the Father only; and if the Father is without beginning or generation, as even our adversaries admit, how can He who can be contemplated only within the Father, who is without beginning, admit Himself of a beginning?

What harm, too, does our Faith suffer from our admitting those expressions of our opponents which they bring forward against us as absurd, when they ask ‘whether He which is can be begotten?’ We do not assert that this can be so in the sense in which Nicodemus put his offensive question<sup>218</sup>, wherein *he* thought it impossible that one who was in existence could come to a second birth: but we assert that, having His existence attached to an Existence which is always and is without beginning, and accompanying every investigator into the antiquities of time, and forestalling the curiosity of thought as it advances into the world beyond, and intimately blended as He is with all our conceptions of the Father, He has no beginning of His existence any more than He is Ungenerate: but He was both begotten and was, evincing on the score of causation generation from the Father, but by virtue of His everlasting life repelling any moment of non-existence.

But this thinker in his exceeding subtlety contravenes this statement; he sunders the being of the Only-begotten from the Father’s nature, on the ground of one being Generated, the other Ungenerate; and although there are such a number of names which with reverence may be applied to the Deity, and all of them suitable to both Persons equally, he pays no attention to anyone of

215 Heb. i.

216 Heb. i. 3. (ὄν, not γενόμενος).

217 John iv. 57.

218 John iii. 4.

them, because these others indicate that in which Both participate; he fastens on the name Ungenerate, and that alone; and even of this he will not adopt the usual and approved meaning; he revolutionizes the conception of it, and cancels its common associations. Whatever can be the reason of this? For without some very strong one he would not wrest language away from its accepted meaning, and innovate<sup>219</sup> by changing the signification of words. He knows perfectly well that if their meaning was confined to the customary one he would have no power to subvert the sound doctrine; but that if such terms are perverted from their common and current acceptation, he will be able to spoil the doctrine along with the word. For instance (to come to the actual words which he misuses), if, according to the common thinking of our Faith he had allowed that God was to be called Ungenerate only because He was never generated, the whole fabric of his heresy would have collapsed, with the withdrawal of his quibbling about this Ungenerate. If, that is, he was to be persuaded, by following out the analogy of almost all the names of God in use for the Church, to think of the God over all as Ungenerate, just as He is invisible, and passionless, and immaterial; and if he was agreed that in every one of these terms there was signified only that which in no way belongs to God—body, for instance, and passion and colour, and derivation from a cause—then, if his view of the case had been like that, his party's tenet of the *Unlikeness* would lose its meaning; for in all else (except the Ungeneracy) that is conceived concerning the God of all even these adversaries allow the likeness existing between the Only-begotten and the Father. But to prevent this, he puts the term Ungenerate in front of all these names indicating God's transcendent nature; and he makes this one a vantage-ground from which he may sweep down upon our Faith; he transfers the contrariety between the actual expressions 'Generated' and 'Ungenerate' to the Persons themselves to whom these words apply; and thereby, by this difference between the words he argues by a quibble for a difference between the Beings; not agreeing with us that Generated is to be used only because the Son was generated, and Ungenerate because the Father exists without having been generated; but affirming that he thinks the former has acquired existence by having been generated; though what sort of philosophy leads him to such a view I cannot understand. If one were to attend to the mere meanings of those words by themselves, abstracting in thought those Persons for whom the names are taken to stand, one would discover the groundlessness of these statements of theirs. Consider, then, not that, in consequence of the Father being a conception prior to the Son (as the Faith truly teaches), the order of the names themselves must be arranged so as to correspond with the value and order of that which underlies them; but regard them alone by themselves, to see which of them (the word, I repeat, not the Reality which it represents) is to be placed before the other as a conception of our mind; which of the two conveys the assertion of an idea, which the negation of the same; for instance (to be clear, I think similar pairs of words will give my meaning), Knowledge, Ignorance—Passion, Passionlessness—and suchlike contrasts, which of them possess priority of conception before the others? Those which posit the negation, or those which posit the assertion of the said quality? I take it the latter do so. Knowledge, anger, passion, are conceived of

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<sup>219</sup> ξενίζει, intrans. N.T. Polyb. Lucian.



first; and then comes the negation of these ideas. And let no one, in his excess of devotion<sup>220</sup>, blame this argument, as if it would put the Son before the Father. We are not making out that the Son is to be placed in conception before the Father, seeing that the argument is discriminating only the meanings of ‘Generated,’ and ‘Ungenerate.’ So Generation signifies the assertion of some reality or some idea; while Ungeneracy signifies its negation; so that there is every reason that Generation must be thought of first. Why, then, do they insist herein on fixing on the Father the second, in order of conception, of these two names; why do they keep on thinking that a negation can define and can embrace the whole substance of the term in question, and are roused to exasperation against those who point out the groundlessness of their arguments?

§40. *His unsuccessful attempt to be consistent with his own statements after Basil has confuted him.*

For notice how bitter he is against one who did detect the rottenness and weakness of his work of mischief; how he revenges himself all he can, and that is only by abuse and vilification: in these, however, he possesses abundant ability. Those who would give elegance of style to a discourse have a way of filling out the places that want rhythm with certain conjunctive particles<sup>221</sup>, whereby they introduce more euphony and connexion into the assembly of their phrases; so does Eunomius garnish his work with abusive epithets in most of his passages, as though he wished to make a display of this overflowing power of invective. Again we are ‘fools,’ again we ‘fail in correct reasoning,’ and ‘meddle in the controversy without the preparation which its importance requires,’ and ‘miss the speaker’s meaning.’ Such, and still more than these, are the phrases used of our Master by this decorous orator. But perhaps after all there is good reason in his anger; and this pamphleteer is justly indignant. For why should Basil have stung him by thus exposing the weakness of this teaching of his? Why should he have uncovered to the sight of the simpler brethren the blasphemy veiled beneath his plausible sophistries? Why should he not have let silence cover the unsoundness

220 ἐθελοθρησκείας, “will worship.”

221 *conjunctive particles*, σύνδεσμοι. In Aristotle’s *Poetics* (xx. 6), these are reckoned as one of the 8 ‘parts of speech.’ The term σύνδεσμος is illustrated by the examples μὲν, ἤτοι, δὴ, which leaves no doubt that it includes at all events conjunctions and particles. Its general character is defined in his *Rhetoric* iii. 12, 4: “It makes many (sentences) one.” Harris (*Hermes* ii. c. 2), thus defines a conjunction, “A part of speech devoid of signification itself, but so formed as to help signification by making two or more significant sentences to be one significant sentence,” a definition which manifestly comes from Aristotle.

The comparison here seems to be between these constantly recurring particles, themselves ‘devoid of signification,’ in an ‘elegant’ discourse, and the perpetually used epithets, “fools,” &c., which, though utterly meaningless, serve to connect his dislocated paragraphs. The ‘assembly’ (σύναξις, always of the synagogue or the Communion. See Suicer) of his words is brought, it is ironically implied, into some sort of harmony by these means.

of this view? Why gibbet the wretched man, when he ought to have pitied him, and kept the veil over the indecency of his argument? He actually finds out and makes a spectacle of one who has somehow got to be admired amongst his private pupils for cleverness and shrewdness! Eunomius had said somewhere in his works that the attribute of being ungenerate “follows” the deity. Our Master remarked upon this phrase of his that a thing which “follows” must be amongst the externals, whereas the actual Being is not one of these, but indicates the very existence of anything, so far as it does exist. Then this gentle yet unconquerable opponent is furious, and pours along a copious stream of invective, because our Master, on hearing that phrase, apprehended the sense of it as well. But what did he do wrong, if he firmly insisted only upon the meaning of your own writings. If indeed he had seized illogically on what was said, all that you say would be true, and we should have to ignore what he did; but seeing that you are blushing at his reproof, why do you not erase the word from your pamphlet, instead of abusing the reprover? ‘Yes, but he did not understand the drift of the argument. Well, how do we do wrong, if being human, we guessed at the meaning from your actual words, having no comprehension of that which was buried in your heart? It is for God to see the inscrutable, and to inspect the characters of that which we have no means of comprehending, and to be cognizant of *unlikeness*<sup>222</sup> in the invisible world. We can only judge by what we hear.

§41. *The thing that follows is not the same as the thing that it follows.*

He first says, “the attribute of being ungenerate follows the Deity.” By that we understood him to mean that this Ungeneracy is one of the things external to God. Then he says, “Or rather this Ungeneracy is His actual being.” We fail to understand the ‘sequitur’ of this; we notice in fact something very queer and incongruous about it. If Ungeneracy follows God, and yet also constitutes His being, two beings will be attributed to one and the same subject in this view; so that God will be in the same way as He was before and has always been believed to be<sup>223</sup>, but besides that will have another being accompanying, which they style Ungeneracy, quite distinct from Him Whose ‘following’ it is, as our Master puts it. Well, if he commands us to think so, he must pardon our poverty of ideas, in not being able to follow out such subtle speculations.

But if he disowns this view, and does not admit a double being in the Deity, one represented by the godhead, the other by the ungeneracy, let our friend, who is himself neither ‘rash’ nor ‘malignant,’ prevail upon himself not to be over partial to invective while these combats for the truth are being fought, but to explain to us, who are so wanting in culture, how that which follows

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<sup>222</sup> A hit at the Anomœans. ‘Your subtle distinctions, in the invisible world of your own mind, between the meanings of “following” are like the *unlikenesses* which you see between the Three Persons.’

<sup>223</sup> ὡς εἶναι μὲν τὸν Θεὸν κατὰ ταῦτόν ὡς εἶναι ποτε (infinitive by attraction to preceding) καὶ εἶναι πεπίστευται

is not one thing and that which leads another, but how both coalesce into one; for, in spite of what he says in defence of his statement, the absurdity of it remains; and the addition of that handful of words<sup>224</sup> does not correct, as he asserts, the contradiction in it. I have not yet been able to see that any explanation at all is discoverable in them. But we will give what he has written verbatim. “We say, ‘or rather the Ungeneracy is His actual being,’ without meaning to *contract* into the being<sup>225</sup> that which we have proved to follow it, but applying ‘follow’ to the title, but *is* to the being.” Accordingly when these things are taken together, the whole resulting argument would be, that the title Ungenerate follows, because to be Ungenerate is His actual being. But what expounder of this expounding shall we get? He says “without meaning to contract into the being that which we have proved to follow it.” Perhaps some of the guessers of riddles might tell us that by ‘contract into’ he means ‘fastening together.’ But who can see anything intelligible or coherent in the rest? The results of ‘following’ belong, he tells us, not to the being, but to the title. But, most learned sir, what is the title? Is it in discord with the being, or does it not rather coincide with it in the thinking? If the title is inappropriate to the being, then how can the being be represented by the title; but if, as he himself phrases it, the being is fittingly defined by the title of Ungenerate, how can there be any parting of them after that? You make the name of the being follow one thing and the being itself another. And what then is the ‘construction of the entire view?’ “The title Ungenerate follows God, seeing that He Himself is Ungenerate.” He says that there ‘follows’ God, Who is something other than that which is Ungenerate, this very title. Then how can he place the definition of Godhead within the Ungeneracy? Again, he says that this title ‘follows’ God as existing without a previous generation. Who will solve us the mystery of such riddles? ‘Ungenerate’ preceding and then following; first a fittingly attached title of the being, and then following like a stranger! What, too, is the cause or this excessive flutter about this name; he gives to it the whole contents of godhead<sup>226</sup>; as if there will be nothing wanting in our adoration, if God be so named; and as if the whole system of our faith will be endangered, if He is not? Now, if a brief statement about this should not be deemed superfluous and irrelevant, we will thus explain the matter.

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<sup>224</sup> ἐναριθμητῶν ῥημάτων. But it is possible that the true reading may be εὐρύθμων, alluding to the ‘rhythm’ in the form of abuse with which Eunomius connected his arguments (preceding section).

<sup>225</sup> οὐκ εἰς τὸ εἶναι συναιροῦντες

<sup>226</sup> *He gives to it the whole contents of godhead.* It was the central point in Eunomius’ system that by the Ἀγεννησία we can comprehend the Divine Nature; he trusts entirely to the Aristotelian divisions (logical) and sub-divisions. A mere word (γέννητος) was thus allowed to destroy the equality of the Son. It was almost inevitable, therefore, that his opponent, as a defender of the Homoousion, should occasionally fall back so far upon Plato, as to maintain that opposites are joined and are identical with each other, i.e. that γέννησις and ἀγεννησία are not truly opposed to each other. Another method of combating this excessive insistence on the physical and logical was, to bring forward the ethical realities; and this Gregory does constantly throughout this treatise. We are to know God by Wisdom, and Truth, and Righteousness. Only occasionally (as in the next section) does he speak of the ‘eternity’ of God: and here only because Eunomius has obliged him, and in order to show that the idea is made up of two negations, and nothing more.

§42. *Explanation of 'Ungenerate,' and a 'study' of Eternity.*

The eternity of God's life, to sketch it in mere outline, is on this wise. He is always to be apprehended as in existence; He admits not a time when He was not, and when He will not be. Those who draw a circular figure in plane geometry from a centre to the distance of the line of circumference tell us there is no definite beginning to their figure; and that the line is interrupted by no ascertained end any more than by any visible commencement: they say that, as it forms a single whole in itself with equal radii on all sides, it avoids giving any indication of beginning or ending. When, then, we compare the Infinite being to such a figure, circumscribed though it be, let none find fault with this account; for it is not on the circumference, but on the similarity which the figure bears to the Life which in every direction eludes the grasp, that we fix our attention when we affirm that such is our intuition of the Eternal. From the present instant, as from a centre and a "point," we extend thought in all directions, to the immensity of that Life. We find that we are drawn round uninterruptedly and evenly, and that we are always following a circumference where there is nothing to grasp; we find the divine life returning upon itself in an unbroken continuity, where no end and no parts can be recognized. Of God's eternity we say that which we have heard from prophecy<sup>227</sup>; viz.. that God is a king "of old," and rules for ages, and for ever, and beyond. Therefore we define Him to be earlier than any beginning, and exceeding any end. Entertaining, then, this idea of the Almighty, as one that is adequate, we express it by two titles; i.e., 'Ungenerate' and 'Endless' represent this infinitude and continuity and ever-lastingness of the Deity. If we adopted only one of them for our idea, and if the remaining one was dropped, our meaning would be marred by this omission; for it is impossible with either one of them singly<sup>228</sup> to express the notion residing in each of the two; but when one speaks of the 'endless,' only the absence as regards an end has been indicated, and it does not follow that any hint has been given about a beginning; while, when one speaks of the 'Unoriginate<sup>229</sup>,' the fact of being beyond a beginning has been expressed, but the case as regards an end has been left quite doubtful.

Seeing, then, that these two titles equally help to express the eternity of the divine life, it is high time to inquire why our friends cut in two the complete meaning of this eternity, and declare that the one meaning, which is the negation of beginning, constitutes God's being (instead of merely forming part of the definition of eternity<sup>230</sup>), while they consider the other, which is the negation of end, as amongst the externals of that being. It is difficult to see the reason for thus assigning the negation of beginning to the realm of being, while they banish the negation of end outside that

<sup>227</sup> *from prophecy.* Psalm x. 16. βασιλεύσει Κύριος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος· Psalm xxix.

10. καθιεῖται Κύριος βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα· Psalm lxxiv. 12. Ὁ δὲ θεὸς βασιλεὺς ἡμῶν πρὸ αἰῶνος.

<sup>228</sup> ἑνός τινος τούτων.

<sup>229</sup> ἄναρχον.

<sup>230</sup> οὐ περὶ τὸ αἶδιον θεωρεῖσθαι



realm. The two are our conceptions of the same thing; and, therefore, either both should be admitted to the definition of being, or, if the one is to be judged inadmissible, the other should be rejected also. If, however, they are determined thus to divide the thought of eternity, and to make the one fall within the realm of that being, and to reckon the other with the non-realities of Deity (for the thoughts which they adopt on this subject are grovelling, and, like birds who have shed their feathers, they are unable to soar into the sublimities of theology), I would advise them to reverse their teaching, and to count the unending as being, overlooking the unoriginate rather, and assigning the palm to that which is future and excites hope, rather than to that which is past and stale. Seeing, I say (and I speak thus owing to their narrowness of spirit, and lower the discussion to the level of a child's conception), the past period of his life is nothing to him who has lived it, and all his interest is centred on the future and on that which can be looked forward to, that which has no end will have more value than that which has no beginning. So let our thoughts upon the divine nature be worthy and exalted ones; or else, if they are going to judge of it according to human tests, let the future be more valued by them than the past, and let them confine the being of the Deity to that, since time's lapse sweeps away with it all existence in the past, whereas expected existence gains substance from our hope<sup>231</sup>.

Now I broach these ridiculously childish suggestions as to children sitting in the market-place and playing<sup>232</sup>; for when one looks into the grovelling earthliness of their heretical teaching it is impossible to help falling into a sort of sportive childishness. It would be right, however, to add this to what we have said, viz., that, as the idea of eternity is completed only by means of both (as we have already argued), by the negation of a beginning and also by that of an end, if they confine God's being to the one, their definition of this being will be manifestly imperfect and curtailed by half; it is thought of only by the absence of beginning, and does not contain the absence of end within itself as an essential element. But if they do combine both negations, and so complete their definition of the being of God, observe, again, the absurdity that is at once apparent in this view; it will be found, after all their efforts, to be at variance not only with the Only-begotten, but with itself. The case is clear and does not require much dwelling upon. The idea of a beginning and the idea of an end are opposed each to each; the meanings of each differ as widely as the other diametric oppositions<sup>233</sup>, where there is no half-way proposition below<sup>234</sup>. If any one is asked to define

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<sup>231</sup> Cf. Heb. xi. 1, of faith, ἐπιζομένων υπόστασις πραγμάτων

<sup>232</sup> Luke vii. 32.

<sup>233</sup> κατὰ διάμετρον ἀλλήλοις ἀντικειμένων, i.e. Contradictories in Logic.

<sup>234</sup> As in A or E, both of which have the Particular below them (I or O) as a *half-way* to the contrary Universal. Thus—

A I E

All men are mortal. Some men are mortal. No men are mortal.

E O A

No men are mortal. Some men are not mortal. All men are mortal.

But between A and O, E and I, there is no half-way.



‘beginning,’ he will not give a definition the same as that of end; but will carry his definition of it to the opposite extremity. Therefore also the two *contraries*<sup>235</sup> of these will be separated from each other by the same distance of opposition; and that which is without beginning, being contrary to that which is to be seen by a beginning, will be a very different thing from that which is endless, or the negation of end. If, then, they import both these attributes into the being of God, I mean the negations of end and of beginning, they will exhibit this Deity of theirs as a combination of two contradictory and discordant things, because the *contrary* ideas to beginning and end reproduce on their side also the *contradiction* existing between beginning and end. Contraries of contradictories are themselves contradictory of each other. In fact, it is always a true axiom, that two things which are naturally opposed to two things mutually opposite are themselves opposed to each other; as we may see by example. Water is opposed to fire; therefore also the forces destructive of these are opposed to each other; if moistness is apt to extinguish fire, and dryness is apt to destroy water, the opposition of fire to water is continued in those qualities themselves which are contrary to them; so that dryness is plainly opposed to moistness. Thus, when beginning and end have to be placed (diametrically) opposite each other<sup>236</sup>, the terms contrary to these also contradict each other in their meaning, I mean, the negations of end and of beginning. Well, then, if they determine that one only of these negations is indicative of the being (to repeat my former assertion), they will bear evidence to half only of God’s existence, confining it to the absence of beginning, and refusing to extend it to the absence of end; whereas, if they import both into their definition of it, they will actually exhibit it so as a combination of contradictions in the way that has been said; for these two negations of beginning and of end, by virtue of the contradiction existing between beginning and end, will part it asunder. So their Deity will be found to be a sort of patchwork compound, a conglomerate of contradictions.

But there is not, neither shall there be, in the Church of God a teaching such as that, which can make One who is single and incomposite not only multiform and patchwork, but also the combination of opposites. The simplicity of the True Faith assumes God to be that which He is, viz., incapable of being grasped by any term, or any idea, or any other device of our apprehension, remaining beyond the reach not only of the human but of the angelic and of all supramundane intelligence, unthinkable, unutterable, above all expression in words, having but one name that can represent His proper nature, the single name of being ‘Above every name<sup>237</sup>’; which is granted to the Only-begotten also, because “all that the Father hath is the Son’s.” The orthodox theory allows these words, I mean “Ungenerate,” “Endless,” to be indicative of God’s eternity, but not of His being; so that “Ungenerate” means that no source or cause lies beyond Him, and “Endless” means

<sup>235</sup> Beginning (Contraries) Beginningless.

Endless (Contraries) Ending.

<sup>236</sup> ὑπεναντίως διακειμένων. The same term has been used to express the opposition between Ungenerate and Generated: so that it means both Oppositions, i.e. Contraries and Contradictories.

<sup>237</sup> Philip. ii. 9. ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὄνομα.

that His kingdom will be brought to a standstill in no end. “Thou art the same,” the prophet says, “and Thy years shall not fail<sup>238</sup>,” showing by “art” that He subsists out of no cause, and by the words following, that the blessedness of His life is ceaseless and unending.

But, perhaps, some one amongst even very religious people will pause over these investigations of ours upon God’s eternity, and say that it will be difficult from what we have said for the Faith in the Only-begotten to escape unhurt. Of two unacceptable doctrines, he will say, our account<sup>239</sup> must inevitably be brought into contact with one. Either we shall make out that the Son is Ungenerate, which is absurd; or else we shall deny Him Eternity altogether, a denial which that *fraternity* of blasphemers make their specialty. For if Eternity is characterized by having no beginning and end, it is inevitable either that we must be impious and deny the Son Eternity, or that we must be led in our secret thoughts about Him into the idea of Ungeneracy. What, then, shall we answer? That if, in conceiving of the Father before the Son on the single score of causation, we inserted any mark of time before the subsistence of the Only-begotten, the belief which we have in the Son’s eternity might with reason be said to be endangered. But, as it is, the Eternal nature, equally in the case of the Father’s and the Son’s life, and, as well, in what we believe about the Holy Ghost, admits not of the thought that it will ever cease to be; for where time is not, the “when” is annihilated with it. And if the Son, always appearing with the thought of the Father, is always found in the category of existence, what danger is there in owning the Eternity of the Only-begotten, Who “hath neither beginning of days, nor end of life<sup>240</sup>.” For as He is Light from Light, Life from Life, Good from Good, and Wise, Just, Strong, and all else in the same way, so most certainly is He Eternal from Eternal.

But a lover of controversial wrangling catches up the argument, on the ground that such a sequence would make Him Ungenerate from Ungenerate. Let him, however, cool his combative heart, and insist upon the proper expressions, for in confessing His ‘coming from the Father’ he has banished all ideas of Ungeneracy as regards the Only-begotten; and there will be then no danger in pronouncing Him Eternal and yet not Ungenerate. On the one hand, because the existence of the Son is not marked by any intervals of time, and the infinitude of His life flows back before the ages and onward beyond them in an all-pervading tide, He is properly addressed with the title of Eternal; again, on the other hand, because the thought of Him as Son in fact and title gives us the thought of the Father as inalienably joined to it, He thereby stands clear of an ungenerate existence being imputed to Him, while He is always with a Father Who always is, as those inspired words of our Master expressed it, “bound by way of generation to His Father’s Ungeneracy.” Our account of

<sup>238</sup> Psalm cii. 27.

<sup>239</sup> Adopting ὁ λόγος from the Venice Cod. (ἐνὶ πάντως ὁ λόγος συνενεχθήσεται). The verb cannot be impersonal: and τις above, the only available nominative, does not suit the sense very well.

Gregory constructs this scheme of Opposition *after the analogy* of Logical Opposition. Beginning is not so opposed to Beginning-less, as it is to Ending, because with the latter there is no half-way, i.e. no word of definition in common.

<sup>240</sup> Heb. vii. 3.

the Holy Ghost will be the same also; the difference is only in the place assigned in order. For as the Son is bound to the Father, and, while deriving existence from Him, is not substantially after Him, so again the Holy Spirit is in touch with the Only-begotten, Who is conceived of as before the Spirit's subsistence only in the theoretical light of a cause<sup>241</sup>. Extensions in time find no admittance in the Eternal Life; so that, when we have removed the thought of cause, the Holy Trinity in no single way exhibits discord with itself; and to It is glory due.



## Book II.

§1. *The second book declares the Incarnation of God the Word, and the faith delivered by the Lord to His disciples, and asserts that the heretics who endeavour to overthrow this faith and devise other additional names are of their father the devil.*

The Christian Faith, which in accordance with the command of our Lord has been preached to all nations by His disciples, is neither of men, nor by men, but by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who being the Word, the Life, the Light, the Truth, and God, and Wisdom, and all else that He is by nature, for this cause above all was made in the likeness of man, and shared our nature, becoming like us in all things, yet without sin. He was like us in all things, in that He took upon Him manhood in its entirety with soul and body, so that our salvation was accomplished by means of both:—He, I say, appeared on earth and “conversed with men<sup>242</sup>,” that men might no longer have opinions according to their own notions about the Self-existent, formulating into a doctrine the hints that come to them from vague conjectures, but that we might be convinced that God has truly been manifested in the flesh, and believe that to be the only true “mystery of godliness<sup>243</sup>,” which was delivered to us by the very Word and God, Who by Himself spake to His Apostles, and that we might receive the teaching concerning the transcendent nature of the Deity which is given to us, as it were, “through a glass darkly<sup>244</sup>” from the older Scriptures,—from the Law, and the Prophets, and the Sapiential Books, as an evidence of the truth fully revealed to us, reverently accepting the meaning of the things which have been spoken, so as to accord in the faith set forth by the Lord of

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<sup>241</sup> τὸν τῆς αἰτίας λόγον. This is much more probably the meaning, because of *before* above, than “on the score of the different kind of causation” (Non omne quod procedat nascitur, quamvis omne procedat quod nascitur. S. August.). It is a direct testimony to the ‘Filioque’ belief. “The Spirit comes forth with the Word, not begotten with Him, but being with and accompanying and proceeding from Him.” Theodoret. Serm. II.

<sup>242</sup> Bar. iii. 37.

<sup>243</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>244</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

the whole Scriptures<sup>245</sup>, which faith we guard as we received it, word for word, in purity, without falsification, judging even a slight divergence from the words delivered to us an extreme blasphemy and impiety. We believe, then, even as the Lord set forth the Faith to His Disciples, when He said, “Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost<sup>246</sup>.” This is the word of the mystery whereby through the new birth from above our nature is transformed from the corruptible to the incorruptible, being renewed from “the old man,” “according to the image of Him who created<sup>247</sup>” at the beginning the likeness to the Godhead. In the Faith then which was delivered by God to the Apostles we admit neither subtraction, nor alteration, nor addition, knowing assuredly that he who presumes to pervert the Divine utterance by dishonest quibbling, the same “is of his father the devil,” who leaves the words of truth and “speaks of his own,” becoming the father of a lie<sup>248</sup>. For whatsoever is said otherwise than in exact accord with the truth is assuredly false and not true.

§2. *Gregory then makes an explanation at length touching the eternal Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*

Since then this doctrine is put forth by the Truth itself, it follows that anything which the inventors of pestilent heresies devise besides to subvert this Divine utterance,—as, for example, calling the Father “Maker” and “Creator” of the Son instead of “Father,” and the Son a “result,” a “creature,” a “product,” instead of “Son,” and the Holy Spirit the “creature of a creature,” and the “product of a product,” instead of His proper title the “Spirit,” and whatever those who fight against God are pleased to say of Him,—all such fancies we term a denial and violation of the Godhead revealed to us in this doctrine. For once for all we have learned from the Lord, through Whom comes the transformation of our nature from mortality to immortality,—from Him, I say, we have learned to what we ought to look with the eyes of our understanding,—that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We say that it is a terrible and soul-destroying thing to misinterpret these Divine utterances and to devise in their stead assertions to subvert them,—assertions pretending to correct God the Word, Who appointed that we should maintain these statements as part of our faith. For each of these titles understood in its natural sense becomes for Christians a rule of truth and a law of piety. For while there are many other names by which Deity is indicated in the Historical Books, in the Prophets and in the Law, our Master Christ passes by all these and commits to us these titles

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<sup>245</sup> This is perhaps the force of τῶν ὄλων: “the Lord of the Old Covenant as well as of the New.” But τῶν ὄλων may mean simply “the Universe.”

<sup>246</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>247</sup> Cf. Col. iii. 10

<sup>248</sup> Cf. S. John viii. 44.

as better able to bring us to the faith about the Self-Existent, declaring that it suffices us to cling to the title, “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” in order to attain to the apprehension of Him Who is absolutely Existent, Who is one and yet not one. In regard to essence He is one, wherefore the Lord ordained that we should look to one Name: but in regard to the attributes indicative of the Persons, our belief in Him is distinguished into belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost<sup>249</sup>; He is divided without separation, and united without confusion. For when we hear the title “Father” we apprehend the meaning to be this, that the name is not understood with reference to itself alone, but also by its special signification indicates the relation to the Son. For the term “Father” would have no meaning apart by itself, if “Son” were not connoted by the utterance of the word “Father.” When, then, we learnt the name “Father” we were taught at the same time, by the selfsame title, faith also in the Son. Now since Deity by its very nature is permanently and immutably the same in all that pertains to its essence, nor did it at any time fail to be anything that it now is, nor will it at any future time be anything that it now is not, and since He Who is the very Father was named Father by the Word, and since in the Father the Son is implied,—since these things are so, we of necessity believe that He Who admits no change or alteration in His nature was always entirely what He is now, or, if there is anything which He was not, *that* He assuredly is not now. Since then He is named Father by the very Word, He assuredly always was Father, and is and will be even as He was. For surely it is not lawful in speaking of the Divine and unimpaired Essence to deny that what is excellent always belonged to It. For if He was not always what He now is, He certainly changed either from the better to the worse or from the worse to the better, and of these assertions the impiety is equal either way, whichever statement is made concerning the Divine nature. But in fact the Deity is incapable of change and alteration. So, then, everything that is excellent and good is always contemplated in the fountain of excellency. But “the Only-begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father<sup>250</sup>” is excellent, and beyond all excellency:—mark you, He says, “Who *is* in the bosom of the Father,” not “Who came to be” there.

Well then, it has been demonstrated by these proofs that the Son is from all eternity to be contemplated in the Father, in Whom He is, being Life and Light and Truth, and every noble name and conception—to say that the Father ever existed by Himself apart from these attributes is a piece of the utmost impiety and infatuation. For if the Son, as the Scripture saith, is the Power of God, and Wisdom, and Truth, and Light, and Sanctification, and Peace, and Life, and the like, then before the Son existed, according to the view of the heretics, these things also had no existence at all. And if these things had no existence they must certainly conceive the bosom of the Father to have been devoid of such excellences. To the end, then, that the Father might not be conceived as destitute of the excellences which are His own, and that the doctrine might not run wild into this extravagance,

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<sup>249</sup> Or, somewhat more literally, “He admits of distinction into belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, being divided,” &c.

<sup>250</sup> S. John i. 18

the right faith concerning the Son is necessarily included in our Lord's utterance with the contemplation of the eternity of the Father. And for this reason He passes over all those names which are employed to indicate the surpassing excellence of the Divine nature<sup>251</sup>, and delivers to us as part of our profession of faith the title of "Father" as better suited to indicate the truth, being a title which, as has been said, by its relative sense connotes with itself the Son, while the Son, Who is in the Father, always is what He essentially is, as has been said already, because the Deity by Its very nature does not admit of augmentation. For It does not perceive any other good outside of Itself, by participation in which It could acquire any accession, but is always immutable, neither casting away what It has, nor acquiring what It has not: for none of Its properties are such as to be cast away. And if there is anything whatsoever blessed, unsullied, true and good, associated with Him and in Him, we see of necessity that the good and holy Spirit must belong to Him<sup>252</sup>, not by way of accretion. That Spirit is indisputably a princely Spirit<sup>253</sup>, a quickening Spirit, the controlling and sanctifying force of all creation, the Spirit that "worketh all in all" as He wills<sup>254</sup>. Thus we conceive no gap between the anointed Christ and His anointing, between the King and His sovereignty, between Wisdom and the Spirit of Wisdom, between Truth and the Spirit of Truth, between Power and the Spirit of Power, but as there is contemplated from all eternity in the Father the Son, Who is Wisdom and Truth, and Counsel, and Might, and Knowledge, and Understanding, so there is also contemplated in Him the Holy Spirit, Who is the Spirit of Wisdom, and of Truth, and of Counsel, and of Understanding, and all else that the Son is and is called. For which reason we say that to the holy disciples the mystery of godliness was committed in a form expressing at once union and distinction,—that we should believe on the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For the differentiation of the subsistences<sup>255</sup> makes the distinction of Persons<sup>256</sup> clear and free from confusion, while the one Name standing in the forefront of the declaration of the Faith clearly expounds to us the unity of essence of the Persons<sup>257</sup> Whom the Faith declares,—I mean, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. For by these appellations we are taught not a difference of nature, but only the special attributes that mark the subsistences<sup>258</sup>, so that we know that neither is the Father the Son, nor the Son the Father, nor the Holy Spirit either the Father

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251 That nature which transcends our conceptions (ὑπερκειμένη).

252 Or "be conjoined with such attribute:" αὐτῷ probably refers, like περὶ αὐτὸν καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ just above, to Θεός or τὸ Θεῖον, but it may conceivably refer to εἶ τι μακάριον, κ.τ.λ.

253 ἡγεμονικόν. Cf. Ps. li. 12 in LXX. (*Spiritus principalis* in Vulg., "free spirit" in the "Authorised" Version, and in the Prayer-book Version).

254 Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

255 ὑποστασέων

256 προσώπων

257 προσώπων

258 ὑποστασέων

or the Son, and recognize each by the distinctive mark of His Personal Subsistence<sup>259</sup>, in illimitable perfection, at once contemplated by Himself and not divided from that with Which He is connected.

§3. *Gregory proceeds to discuss the relative force of the unnameable name of the Holy Trinity and the mutual relation of the Persons, and moreover the unknowable character of the essence, and the condescension on His part towards us, His generation of the Virgin, and His second coming, the resurrection from the dead and future retribution.*

What then means that unnameable name concerning which the Lord said, “Baptizing them into the name,” and did not add the actual significant term which “the name” indicates? We have concerning it this notion, that all things that exist in the creation are defined by means of their several names. Thus whenever a man speaks of “heaven” he directs the notion of the hearer to the created object indicated by this name, and he who mentions “man” or some animal, at once by the mention of the name impresses upon the hearer the form of the creature, and in the same way all other things, by means of the names imposed upon them, are depicted in the heart of him who by hearing receives the appellation imposed upon the thing. The uncreated Nature alone, which we acknowledge in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, surpasses all significance of names. For this cause the Word, when He spoke of “the name” in delivering the Faith, did not add what it is,—for how could a name be found for that which is above every name?—but gave authority that whatever name our intelligence by pious effort be enabled to discover to indicate the transcendent Nature, that name should be applied alike to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whether it be “the Good” or “the Incorruptible,” whatever name each may think proper to be employed to indicate the undefiled Nature of Godhead. And by this deliverance the Word seems to me to lay down for us this law, that we are to be persuaded that the Divine Essence is ineffable and incomprehensible: for it is plain that the title of Father does not present to us the Essence, but only indicates the relation to the Son. It follows, then, that if it were possible for human nature to be taught the essence of God, He “Who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth<sup>260</sup>” would not have suppressed the knowledge upon this matter. But as it is, by saying nothing concerning the Divine Essence, He showed that the knowledge thereof is beyond our power, while when we have learnt that of which we are capable, we stand in no need of the knowledge beyond our capacity, as we have in the profession of faith in the doctrine delivered to us what suffices for our salvation. For to learn that He is the absolutely existent, together with Whom, by the relative force of the term, there is also declared the majesty of the Son, is the fullest teaching of godliness; the Son, as

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259 ὑποστάσεων

260 1 Tim. ii. 4.



has been said, implying in close union with Himself the Spirit of Life and Truth, inasmuch as He is Himself Life and Truth.

These distinctions being thus established, while we anathematize all heretical fancies in the sphere of divine doctrines, we believe, even as we were taught by the voice of the Lord, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, acknowledging together with this faith also the dispensation that has been set on foot on behalf of men by the Lord of the creation. For He “being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant<sup>261</sup>,” and being incarnate in the Holy Virgin redeemed us from death “in which we were held,” “sold under sin<sup>262</sup>,” giving as the ransom for the deliverance of our souls His precious blood which He poured out by His Cross, and having through Himself made clear for us the path of the resurrection<sup>263</sup> from the dead, shall come in His own time in the glory of the Father to judge every soul in righteousness, when “all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation<sup>264</sup>.” But that the pernicious heresy that is now being sown broadcast by Eunomius may not, by falling upon the mind of some of the simpler sort and being left without investigation, do harm to guileless faith, we are constrained to set forth the profession which they circulate and to strive to expose the mischief of their teaching.

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§4. *He next skilfully confutes the partial, empty and blasphemous statement of Eunomius on the subject of the absolutely existent.*

Now the wording of their doctrine is as follows: “We believe in the one and only true God, according to the teaching of the Lord Himself, not honouring Him with a lying title (for He cannot lie), but really existent, one God in nature and in glory, who is without beginning, eternally, without end, alone.” Let not him who professes to believe in accordance with the teaching of the Lord pervert the exposition of the faith that was made concerning the Lord of all to suit his own fancy, but himself follow the utterance of the truth. Since then, the expression of the Faith comprehends the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, what agreement has this construction of theirs to show with the utterances of the Lord, so as to refer such a doctrine to the teaching of

261 Phil. ii. 6.

262 Or, “in which we were held by sin, being sold.” The reference is to Rom. vii. 7 and 14, but with the variation of ὑπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, for ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, and a change in the order of the words.

263 A similar phrase is to be found in Book V. With both may be compared the language of the Eucharistic Prayer in the Liturgy of S. Basil (where the context corresponds to some extent with that of either passage in S. Gregory):—καὶ ἀναστὰς τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, καὶ ὀδοποιήσας πάσῃ σαρκὶ τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν, κ.τ.λ.

264 S. John v. 29

those utterances? They cannot manage to show where in the Gospels the Lord said that we should believe on “the one and only true God:” unless they have some new Gospel. For the Gospels which are read in the churches continuously from ancient times to the present day, do not contain this saying which tells us that we should believe in or baptize into “the one and only true God,” as these people say, but “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” But as we were taught by the voice of the Lord, this we say, that the word “one” does not indicate the Father alone, but comprehends in its significance the Son with the Father, inasmuch as the Lord said, “I and My Father are one<sup>265</sup>.” In like manner also the name “God” belongs equally to the Beginning in which the Word was, and to the Word Who was in the Beginning. For the Evangelist tells us that “the Word was with God, and the Word was God<sup>266</sup>.” So that when Deity is expressed the Son is included no less than the Father. Moreover, the true cannot be conceived as something alien from and unconnected with the truth. But that the Lord is the Truth no one at all will dispute, unless he be one estranged from the truth. If, then, the Word is in the One, and is God and Truth, as is proclaimed in the Gospels, on what teaching of the Lord does he base his doctrine who makes use of these distinctive terms? For the antithesis is between “only” and “not only,” between “God” and “no God,” between “true” and “untrue.” If it is with respect to idols that they make their distinction of phrases, we too agree. For the name of “deity” is given, in an equivocal sense, to the idols of the heathen, seeing that “all the gods of the heathen are demons,” and in another sense marks the contrast of the one with the many, of the true with the false, of those who are not Gods with Him who is God<sup>267</sup>. But if the contrast is one with the Only-begotten God<sup>268</sup>, let our sages learn that truth has its opposite only in falsehood, and God in one who is not God. But inasmuch as the Lord Who is the Truth is God, and is in the Father and is one relatively to the Father<sup>269</sup>, there is no room in the true doctrine for these distinctions of phrases. For he who truly believes in the One sees in the One Him Who is completely united with Him in truth, and deity, and essence, and life, and wisdom, and in all attributes whatsoever: or, if he does not see in the One Him Who is all these it is in nothing that he believes. For without the Son the Father has neither existence nor name, any more than the Powerful without Power, or the Wise without Wisdom. For Christ is “the Power of God and the Wisdom of God<sup>270</sup>,” so that he who imagines he sees the One God apart from power, truth, wisdom,

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265 S. John x. 30

266 S. John i. 1

267 Or, possibly, “and the contrast he makes between the one and the many, &c. is irrelevant” (ἄλλως ἀντιδιαίρει): the quotation is from Ps. xcvi. 6 (LXX.).

268 Cf. S. John i. 18, reading (as S. Gregory seems to have done) θεός for υἱὸς 231ζ.

269 καὶ ἐν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ὄντος. It may be questioned whether the text is sound: the phrase seems unusual; perhaps ἐν has been inserted in error from the preceding clause καὶ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ὄντος, and we should read “is in the Father and is with the Father” (cf. the 2nd verse of the 1st Epistle, and verses 1 and 2 of the Gospel of S. John).

270 1 Cor. i. 24.

life, or the true light, either sees nothing at all or else assuredly that which is evil. For the withdrawal of the good attributes becomes a positing and origination of evil.

“Not honouring Him,” he says, “with a lying title, for He cannot lie.” By that phrase I pray that Eunomius may abide, and so bear witness to the truth that it cannot lie. For if he would be of this mind, that everything that is uttered by the Lord is far removed from falsehood, he will of course be persuaded that He speaks the truth Who says, “I am in the Father, and the Father in Me<sup>271</sup>,” —plainly, the One in His entirety, in the Other in His entirety, the Father not superabounding in the Son, the Son not being deficient in the Father,—and Who says also that the Son should be honoured as the Father is honoured<sup>272</sup>, and “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father<sup>273</sup>,” and “no man knoweth the Father save the Son<sup>274</sup>,” in all which passages there is no hint given to those who receive these declarations as genuine, of any variation<sup>275</sup> of glory, or of essence, or anything else, between the Father and the Son.

“Really existent,” he says, “one God in nature and in glory.” Real existence is opposed to unreal existence. Now each of existing things is really existent in so far as it is; but that which, so far as appearance and suggestion go, seems to be, but is not, this is not really existent, as for example an appearance in a dream or a man in a picture. For these and such like things, though they exist so far as appearance is concerned, have not real existence. If then they maintain, in accordance with the Jewish opinion, that the Only-begotten God does not exist at all, they are right in predicating real existence of the Father alone. But if they do not deny the existence of the Maker of all things, let them be content not to deprive of real existence Him Who is, Who in the Divine appearance to Moses gave Himself the name of Existent, when He said, “I am that I am<sup>276</sup>.” even as Eunomius in his later argument agrees with this, saying that it was He Who appeared to Moses. Then he says that God is “one in nature and in glory.” Whether God exists without being by nature God, he who uses these words may perhaps know: but if it be true that he who is not by nature God is not God at all, let them learn from the great Paul that they who serve those who are not Gods do not serve God<sup>277</sup>.” But we “serve the living and true God,” as the Apostle says<sup>278</sup>: and He Whom we serve is Jesus the Christ<sup>279</sup>. For Him the Apostle Paul even exults in serving, saying, “Paul, a servant of

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271 S. John xiv. 10

272 Cf. S. John v. 23

273 S. John xiv. 9

274 S. Matt. xi. 27

275 παραλλαγή (Cf. S. James i. 17).

276 Or “I am He that is,” Ex. iii. 14.

277 The reference seems to be to Gal. iv. 8.

278 1 Thess. i. 10.

279 There is perhaps a reference here to Col. iii. 24.

Jesus Christ<sup>280</sup>.” We then, who no longer serve them which by nature are no Gods<sup>281</sup>, have come to the knowledge of Him Who by nature is God, to Whom every knee boweth “of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth<sup>282</sup>.” But we should not have been His servants had we not believed that this is the living and true God, to Whom “every tongue maketh confession that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father<sup>283</sup>.”

“God,” he says, “Who is without beginning, eternally, without end, alone.” Once more “understand, ye simple ones,” as Solomon says, “his subtlety<sup>284</sup>,” lest haply ye be deceived and fall headlong into the denial of the Godhead of the Only-begotten Son. That is without end which admits not of death and decay: that, likewise, is called everlasting which is not only for a time. That, therefore, which is neither everlasting nor without end is surely seen in the nature which is perishable and mortal. Accordingly he who predicates “unendingness” of the one and only God, and does not include the Son in the assertion of “unendingness” and “eternity,” maintains by such a proposition, that He Whom he thus contrasts with the eternal and unending is perishable and temporary. But we, even when we are told that God “only hath immortality<sup>285</sup>,” understand by “immortality” the Son. For life is immortality, and the Lord is that life, Who said, “I am the Life<sup>286</sup>.” And if He be said to dwell “in the light that no man can approach unto<sup>287</sup>,” again we make no difficulty in understanding that the true Light, unapproachable by falsehood, is the Only-begotten, in Whom we learn from the Truth itself that the Father is<sup>288</sup>. Of these opinions let the reader choose the more devout, whether we are to think of the Only-begotten in a manner worthy of the Godhead, or to call Him, as heresy prescribes, perishable and temporary.

§5. *He next marvellously overthrows the unintelligible statements of Eunomius which assert that the essence of the Father is not separated or divided, and does not become anything else.*

“We believe in God,” he tells us, “not separated as regards the essence wherein He is one, into more than one, or becoming sometimes one and sometimes another, or changing from being what He is, or passing from one essence to assume the guise of a threefold personality: for He is always

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280 Rom. i. 1.

281 Cf. Gal. iv. 8

282 Cf. Phil. ii. 10, 11.

283 Cf. Phil. ii. 10, 11.

284 Prov. viii. 5 (Septuagint).

285 1 Tim. vi. 16.

286 S. John xiv. 6

287 1 Tim. vi. 16.

288 S. John xiv. 11

and absolutely one, remaining uniformly and unchangeably the only God.” From these citations the discreet reader may well separate first of all the idle words inserted in the statement without any meaning from those which appear to have some sense, and afterwards examine the meaning that is discoverable in what remains of his statement, to ascertain whether it is compatible with due reverence towards Christ.

The first, then, of the statements cited is completely divorced from any intelligible meaning, good or bad. For what sense there is in the words, “not separated, as regards the essence wherein He is one, into more than one, or becoming sometimes one and sometimes another, or changing from being what He is,” Eunomius himself could not tell us, and I do not think that any of his allies could find in the words any shadow of meaning. When he speaks of Him as “not separated in regard to the essence wherein He is one,” he says either that He is not separated from His own essence, or that His own essence is not divided from Him. This unmeaning statement is nothing but a random combination of noise and empty sound. And why should one spend time in the investigation of these meaningless expressions? For how does any one remain in existence when separated from his own essence? or how is the essence of anything divided and displayed apart? Or how is it possible for one to depart from that wherein he is, and become another, getting outside himself? But he adds, “not passing from one essence to assume the guise of three persons: for He is always and absolutely one, remaining uniformly and unchangeably the only God.” I think the absence of meaning in his statement is plain to every one without a word from me: against this let any one argue who thinks there is any sense or meaning in what he says: he who has an eye to discern the force of words will decline to involve himself in a struggle with unsubstantial shadows. For what force has it against our doctrine to say “not separated or divided into more than one as regards the essence wherein He is one, or becoming sometimes one and sometimes another, or passing from one essence to assume the guise of three persons?”—things that are neither said nor believed by Christians nor understood by inference from the truths we confess. For who ever said or heard any one else say in the Church of God, that the Father is either separated or divided as regards His essence, or becomes sometimes one, sometimes another, coming to be outside Himself, or assumes the guise of three persons? These things Eunomius says to himself, not arguing with us but stringing together his own trash, mixing with the impiety of his utterances a great deal of absurdity. For we say that it is equally impious and ungodly to call the Lord of the creation a created being and to think that the Father, in that He is, is separated or split up, or departs from Himself, or assumes the guise of three persons, like clay or wax moulded in various shapes.

But let us examine the words that follow: “He is always and absolutely one, remaining uniformly and unchangeably the only God.” If he is speaking about the Father, we agree with him, for the Father is most truly one, alone and always absolutely uniform and unchangeable, never at any time present or future ceasing to be what He is. If then such an assertion as this has regard to the Father, let him not contend with the doctrine of godliness, inasmuch as on this point he is in harmony with the Church. For he who confesses that the Father is always and unchangeably the same, being one and only God, holds fast the word of godliness, if in the Father he sees the Son, without Whom the

Father neither is nor is named. But if he is inventing some other God besides the Father, let him dispute with the Jews or with those who are called Hypsistiani, between whom and the Christians there is this difference, that they acknowledge that there is a God Whom they term the Highest<sup>289</sup> or Almighty, but do not admit that he is Father; while a Christian, if he believe not in the Father, no Christian at all.

§6. *He then shows the unity of the Son with the Father and Eunomius' lack of understanding and knowledge in the Scriptures.*

What he adds next after this is as follows:—“Having no sharer,” he says, “in His Godhead, no divider of His glory, none who has lot in His power, or part in His royal throne: for He is the one and only God, the Almighty, God of Gods, King of Kings, Lord of Lords.” I know not to whom Eunomius refers when he protests that the Father admits none to share His Godhead with Himself. For if he uses such expressions with reference to vain idols and to the erroneous conceptions of those who worship them (even as Paul assures us that there is no agreement between Christ and Belial, and no fellowship between the temple of God and idols<sup>290</sup>) we agree with him. But if by these assertions he means to sever the Only-begotten God from the Godhead of the Father, let him be informed that he is providing us with a dilemma that may be turned against himself to refute his own impiety. For either he denies the Only-begotten God to be God at all, that he may preserve for the Father those prerogatives of deity which (according to him) are incapable of being shared with the Son, and thus is convicted as a transgressor by denying the God Whom Christians worship, or if he were to grant that the Son also is God, yet not agreeing in nature with the true God, he would be necessarily obliged to acknowledge that he maintains Gods sundered from one another by the difference of their natures. Let him choose which of these he will,—either to deny the Godhead of the Son, or to introduce into his creed a plurality of Gods. For whichever of these he chooses, it is all one as regards impiety: for we who are initiated into the mystery of godliness by the Divinely inspired words of the Scripture do not see between the Father and the Son a partnership of Godhead, but unity, inasmuch as the Lord hath taught us this by His own words, when He saith, “I and the Father are one<sup>291</sup>,” and “he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father<sup>292</sup>.” For if He were not of the same nature as the Father, how could He either have had in Himself that which was different<sup>293</sup>? or how could He have shown in Himself that which was unlike, if the foreign and alien nature did

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<sup>289</sup> ὑψιστον, whence the name of the sect.

<sup>290</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. vi. 15, 16.

<sup>291</sup> S. John x. 30

<sup>292</sup> S. John xiv. 9

<sup>293</sup> S. John xvii. 10.

not receive the stamp of that which was of a different kind from itself? But he says, “nor has He a divider of His glory.” Herein he speaks in accordance with the fact, even though he does not know what he is saying: for the Son does not divide the glory with the Father, but has the glory of the Father in its entirety, even as the Father has all the glory of the Son. For thus He spake to the Father “All Mine are Thine and Thine are Mine<sup>294</sup>.” Wherefore also He says that He will appear on the Judgment Day “in the glory of the Father<sup>295</sup>,” when He will render to every man according to his works. And by this phrase He shows the unity of nature that subsists between them. For as “there is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon<sup>296</sup>,” because of the difference between the natures of those luminaries (since if both had the same glory there would not be deemed to be any difference in their nature), so He Who foretold of Himself that He would appear in the glory of the Father indicated by the identity of glory their community of nature.

But to say that the Son has no part in His Father’s royal throne argues an extraordinary amount of research into the oracles of God on the part of Eunomius, who, after his extreme devotion to the inspired Scriptures, has not yet heard, “Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God<sup>297</sup>,” and many similar passages, of which it would not be easy to reckon up the number, but which Eunomius has never learnt, and so denies that the Son is enthroned together with the Father. Again the phrase, “not having lot in his power,” we should rather pass by as unmeaning than confute as ungodly. For what sense is attached to the term “having lot” is not easy to discover from the common use of the word. Those cast lots, as the Scripture tells us, for the Lord’s vesture, who were unwilling to rend His garment, but disposed to make it over to that one of their number in whose favour the lot should decide<sup>298</sup>. They then who thus cast lots among themselves for the “coat” may be said, perhaps, to “have had lot” in it. But here in the case of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as Their power resides in Their nature (for the Holy Spirit breathes “where He listeth<sup>299</sup>,” and “worketh all in all as He will<sup>300</sup>,” and the Son, by Whom all things were made, visible and invisible, in heaven and in earth, “did all things whatsoever He pleased<sup>301</sup>,” and “quickeneth whom He will<sup>302</sup>,” and the Father put “the times in His own power<sup>303</sup>,” while from the mention of “times” we conclude that all things done in time are subject to the power

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294 S. John xvii. 10.

295 S. Mark viii. 38.

296 1 Cor. xv. 41.

297 Col. iii. 1.

298 Cf. S. John xix. 23, 24.

299 S. John iii. 8

300 Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 6 and 11.

301 Ps. cxxxv. 6.

302 S. John v. 21

303 Acts i. 7.

of the Father), if, I say, it has been demonstrated that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit alike are in a position of power to do what They will, it is impossible to see what sense there can be in the phrase “having lot in His power.” For the heir of all things, the maker of the ages<sup>304</sup>, He Who shines with the Father’s glory and expresses in Himself the Father’s person, has all things that the Father Himself has, and is possessor of all His power, not that the right is transferred from the Father to the Son, but that it at once remains in the Father and resides in the Son. For He Who is in the Father is manifestly in the Father with all His own might, and He Who has the Father in Himself includes all the power and might of the Father. For He has in Himself all the Father, and not merely a part of Him: and He Who has Him entirely assuredly has His power as well. With what meaning, then, Eunomius asserts that the Father has “none who has lot in His power,” those perhaps can tell who are disciples of his folly: one who knows how to appreciate language confesses that he cannot understand phrases divorced from meaning. The Father, he says, “has none Who has lot in His power.” Why, who is there that says that the Father and Son contend together for power and cast lots to decide the matter? But the holy Eunomius comes as mediator between them and by a friendly agreement without lot assigns to the Father the superiority in power.

Mark, I pray you, the absurdity and childishness of this grovelling exposition of his articles of faith. What! He Who “upholds all things by the word of His power<sup>305</sup>,” Who says what He wills to be done, and does what He wills by the very power of that command, He Whose power lags not behind His will and Whose will is the measure of His power (for “He spake the word and they were made, He commanded and they were created<sup>306</sup>”), He Who made all things by Himself, and made them consist in Himself<sup>307</sup>, without Whom no existing thing either came into being or remains in being,—He it is Who waits to obtain His power by some process of allotment! Judge you who hear whether the man who talks like this is in his senses. “For He is the one and only God, the Almighty,” he says. If by the title of “Almighty” he intends the Father, the language he uses is ours, and no strange language: but if he means some other God than the Father, let our patron of Jewish doctrines preach circumcision too, if he pleases. For the Faith of Christians is directed to the Father. And the Father is all these—Highest, Almighty, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and in a word all terms of highest significance are proper to the Father. But all that is the Father’s is the Son’s also; so that, on this understanding<sup>308</sup>, we admit this phrase too. But if, leaving the Father, he speaks of another Almighty, he is speaking the language of the Jews or following the speculations of Plato,—for they say that that philosopher also affirms that there exists on high a maker and creator of certain subordinate gods. As then in the case of the Jewish and Platonic opinions he who does not believe in God the Father is not a Christian, even though in his creed he asserts an Almighty God, so

304 Cf. Heb. i. 2

305 Heb. i. 3.

306 Ps. cxlviii. 5, or xxxiii. 9 in LXX.

307 Cf. Col. i. 16 and 17.

308 “If this is so:” i.e. if Eunomius means his words in a Christian sense.



Eunomius also falsely pretends to the name of Christian, being in inclination a Jew, or asserting the doctrines of the Greeks while putting on the guise of the title borne by Christians. And with regard to the next points he asserts the same account will apply. He says He is “God of Gods.” We make the declaration our own by adding the name of the Father, knowing that the Father is God of Gods. But all that belongs to the Father certainly belongs also to the Son. “And Lord of Lords.” The same account will apply to this. “And Most High over all the earth.” Yes, for whichever of the Three Persons you are thinking of, He is Most High over all the earth, inasmuch as the oversight of earthly things from on high is exercised alike by the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. So, too, with what follows the words above, “Most High in the heavens, Most High in the highest, Heavenly, true in being what He is, and so continuing, true in words, true in works.” Why, all these things the Christian eye discerns alike in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. If Eunomius does assign them to one only of the Persons acknowledged in the creed, let him dare to call Him “not true in words” Who has said, “I am the Truth<sup>309</sup>,” or to call the Spirit of truth “not true in words,” or let him refuse to give the title of “true in works” to Him Who doeth righteousness and judgment, or to the Spirit Who worketh all in all as He will. For if he does not acknowledge that these attributes belong to the Persons delivered to us in the creed, he is absolutely cancelling the creed of Christians. For how shall any one think Him a worthy object of faith Who is false in words and untrue in works.

But let us proceed to what follows. “Above all rule, subjection and authority,” he says. This language is ours, and belongs properly to the Catholic Church,—to believe that the Divine nature is above all rule, and that it has in subordination to itself everything that can be conceived among existing things. But the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost constitute the Divine nature. If he assigns this property to the Father alone, and if he affirms Him alone to be free from variableness and change, and if he says that He alone is undefiled, the inference that we are meant to draw is plain, namely, that He who has not these characteristics is variable, corruptible, subject to change and decay. This, then, is what Eunomius asserts of the Son and the Holy Spirit: for if he did not hold this opinion concerning the Son and the Spirit, he would not have employed this opposition, contrasting the Father with them. For the rest, brethren, judge whether, with these sentiments, he is not a persecutor of the Christian faith. For who will allow it to be right to deem that a fitting object of reverence which varies, changes, and is subject to decay? So then the whole aim of one who flames such notions as these,—notions by which he makes out that neither the Truth nor the Spirit of Truth is undefiled, unvarying, or unchangeable,—is to expel from the Church the belief in the Son and in the Holy Spirit.


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§7. *Gregory further shows that the Only-Begotten being begotten not only of the Father, but also impassibly of the Virgin by the Holy Ghost, does not divide the substance; seeing that neither*

*is the nature of men divided or severed from the parents by being begotten, as is ingeniously demonstrated from the instances of Adam and Abraham.*

And now let us see what he adds to his previous statements. “Not dividing,” he says, “His own essence by begetting, and being at once begetter and begotten, at the same time Father and Son; for He is incorruptible.” Of such a kind as this, perhaps, is that of which the prophet says, touching the ungodly, “They weave a spider’s web<sup>310</sup>.” For as in the cobweb there is the appearance of something woven, but no substantiality in the appearance,—for he who touches it touches nothing substantial, as the spider’s threads break with the touch of a finger,—just such is the unsubstantial texture of idle phrases. “Not dividing His own essence by begetting and being at once begetter and begotten.” Ought we to give his words the name of argument, or to call them rather a swelling of humours secreted by some dropsical inflation? For what is the sense of “dividing His own essence by begetting, and being at once begetter and begotten?” Who is so distracted, who is so demented, as to make the statement against which Eunomius thinks he is doing battle? For the Church believes that the true Father is truly Father of His own Son, as the Apostle says, not of a Son alien from Him. For thus he declares in one of his Epistles, “Who spared not His own Son<sup>311</sup>,” distinguishing Him, by the addition of “own,” from those who are counted worthy of the adoption of sons by grace and not by nature. But what says He who disparages this belief of ours? “Not dividing His own essence by begetting, or being at once begetter and begotten, at the same time Father and Son; for He is incorruptible.” Does one who hears in the Gospel that the Word was in the beginning, and was God, and that the Word came forth from the Father, so befoul the undefiled doctrine with these base and fetid ideas, saying “He does not divide His essence by begetting?” Shame on the abomination of these base and filthy notions! How is it that he who speaks thus fails to understand that God when manifested in flesh did not admit for the formation of His own body the conditions of human nature, but was born for us a Child by the Holy Ghost and the power of the Highest; nor was the Virgin subject to those conditions, nor was the Spirit diminished, nor the power of the Highest divided? For the Spirit is entire, the power of the Highest remained undiminished: the Child was born in the fulness of our nature<sup>312</sup>, and did not sully the incorruption of His mother. Then was flesh born of flesh without carnal passion: yet Eunomius will not admit that the brightness of the glory is from the glory itself, since the glory is neither diminished nor divided by begetting the light. Again, the word of man is generated from his mind without division, but God the Word cannot be generated from the Father without the essence of the Father being divided! Is any one so witless as not to perceive the irrational character of his position? “Not dividing,” quoth he, “His own essence by begetting.” Why, whose own essence is divided by begetting? For in the case of men essence means human nature: in the case of brutes, it means, generically, brute nature, but in the

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<sup>310</sup> Is. lix. 5.

<sup>311</sup> Rom. viii. 32.

<sup>312</sup> This, or something like this, appears to be the force of ὄλον.

case of cattle, sheep, and all brute animals, specifically, it is regarded according to the distinctions of their kinds. Which, then, of these divides its own essence by the process of generation? Does not the nature always remain undiminished in the case of every animal by the succession of its posterity? Further a man in begetting a man from himself does not divide his nature, but it remains in its fulness alike in him who begets and in him who is begotten, not split off and transferred from the one to the other, nor mutilated in the one when it is fully formed in the other, but at once existing in its entirety in the former and discoverable in its entirety in the latter. For both before begetting his child the man was a rational animal, mortal, capable of intelligence and knowledge, and also after begetting a man endowed with such qualities: so that in him are shown all the special properties of his nature; as he does not lose his existence as a man by begetting the man derived from him, but remains after that event what he was before without causing any diminution of the nature derived from him by the fact that the man derived from him comes into being.

Well, man is begotten of man, and the nature of the begetter is not divided. Yet Eunomius does not admit that the Only-begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, is truly of the Father, for fear forsooth, lest he should mutilate the inviolable nature of the Father by the subsistence of the Only-begotten: but after saying “Not dividing His essence by begetting,” he adds, “Or being Himself begetter and begotten, or Himself becoming Father and Son<sup>313</sup>,” and thinks by such loose disjointed phrases to undermine the true confession of godliness or to furnish some support to his own ungodliness, not being aware that by the very means he uses to construct a *reductio ad absurdum* he is discovered to be an advocate of the truth. For we too say that He who has all that belongs to His own Father is all that He is, save being Father, and that He who has all that belongs to the Son exhibits in Himself the Son in His completeness, save being Son: so that the *reductio ad absurdum*, which Eunomius here invents, turns out to be a support of the truth, when the notion is expanded by us so as to display it more clearly, under the guidance of the Gospel. For if “he that hath seen the Son seeth the Father<sup>314</sup>” then the Father begat another self, not passing out of Himself, and at the same time appearing in His fulness in Him: so that from these considerations that which seemed to have been uttered against godliness is demonstrated to be a support of sound doctrine.

But he says, “Not dividing His own essence by begetting, and being at once begetter and begotten, at the same time Father and Son; for He is incorruptible.” Most cogent conclusion! What do you mean, most sapient sir? Because He is incorruptible, therefore He does not divide His own essence by begetting the Son: nor does He beget Himself or be begotten of Himself, nor become at the same time His own Father and His own Son because He is incorruptible. It follows then, that if any one is of corruptible nature he divides his essence by begetting, and is begotten by himself, and begets himself, and is his own father and his own son, because he is not incorruptible. If this is so, then Abraham, because he was corruptible, did not beget Ishmael and Isaac, but begat himself

313 The quotation does not verbally correspond with Eunomius' words as cited above.

314 Cf. S. John xiv. 9

by the bondwoman and by his lawful wife or, to take the other mountebank tricks of the argument, he divided his essence among the sons who were begotten of him, and first, when Hagar bore him a son, he was divided into two sections, and in one of the halves became Ishmael, while in the other he remained half Abraham; and subsequently the residue of the essence of Abraham being again divided took subsistence in Isaac. Accordingly the fourth part of the essence of Abraham was divided into the twin sons of Isaac, so that there was an eighth in each of his grandchildren! How could one subdivide the eighth part, cutting it small in fractions among the twelve Patriarchs, or among the threescore and fifteen souls with whom Jacob went down into Egypt? And why do I talk thus when I really ought to confute the folly of such notions by beginning with the first man? For if it is a property of the incorruptible only not to divide its essence in begetting, and if Adam was corruptible, to whom the word was spoken, “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return<sup>315</sup>,” then, according to Eunomius’ reasoning, he certainly divided his essence, being cut up among those who were begotten of him, and by reason of the vast number of his posterity (the slice of his essence which is to be found in each being necessarily subdivided according to the number of his progeny), the essence of Adam is used up before Abraham began to subsist, being dispersed in these minute and infinitesimal particles among the countless myriads of his descendants, and the minute fragment of Adam that has reached Abraham and his descendants by a process of division, is no longer discoverable in them as a remnant of his essence, inasmuch as his nature has been already used up among the countless myriads of those who were before them by its division into infinitesimal fractions. Mark the folly of him who “understands neither what he says nor whereof he affirms<sup>316</sup>.” For by saying “Since He is incorruptible” He neither divides His essence nor begets Himself nor becomes His own father, he implicitly lays it down that we must suppose all those things from which he affirms that the incorruptible alone are free to be incidental to generation in the case of every one who is subject to corruption. Though there are many other considerations capable of proving the inanity of his argument, I think that what has been said above is sufficient to demonstrate its absurdity. But this has surely been already acknowledged by all who have an eye for logical consistency, that, when he asserted incorruptibility of the Father alone, he places all things which are considered after the Father in the category of corruptible, by virtue of opposition to the incorruptible, so as to make out even the Son not to be free from corruption. If then he places the Son in opposition to the incorruptible, he not only defines Him to be corruptible, but also asserts of Him all those incidents from which he affirms only the incorruptible to be exempt. For it necessarily follows that, if the Father alone neither begets Himself nor is begotten of Himself, everything which is not incorruptible both begets itself and is begotten of itself, and becomes its own father and son, shifting from its own proper essence to each of these relations. For if to be incorruptible belongs to the Father alone, and if not to be the things specified is a special property of the incorruptible, then, of course, according to this heretical argument, the Son is not incorruptible,

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315 Gen. iii. 19.

316 Cf. 1 Tim. i. 7

and all these circumstances of course, find place about Him,—to have His essence divided, to beget Himself and to be begotten by Himself, to become Himself His own father and His own son.

Perhaps, however, it is waste of time to linger long over such follies. Let us pass to the next point of his statement. He adds to what he had already said, “Not standing in need, in the act of creation, of matter or parts or natural instruments: for He stands in need of nothing.” This proposition, though Eunomius states it with a certain looseness of phrase, we yet do not reject as inconsistent with godly doctrine. For learning as we do that “He spake the word and they were made: He commanded and they were created<sup>317</sup>,” we know that the Word is the Creator of matter, by that very act also producing with the matter the qualities of matter, so that for Him the impulse of His almighty will was everything and instead of everything, matter, instrument, place, time, essence, quality, everything that is conceived in creation. For at one and the same time did He will that that which ought to be should be, and His power, that produced all things that are, kept pace with His will, turning His will into act. For thus the mighty Moses in the record of creation instructs us about the Divine power, ascribing the production of each of the objects that were manifested in the creation to the words that bade them be. For “God said,” he tells us, “Let there be light, and there was light<sup>318</sup>,” and so about the rest, without any mention either of matter or of any instrumental agency. Accordingly the language of Eunomius on this point is not to be rejected. For God, when creating all things that have their origin by creation, neither stood in need of any matter on which to operate, nor of instruments to aid Him in His construction: for the power and wisdom of God has no need of any external assistance. But Christ is “the Power of God and the Wisdom of God<sup>319</sup>,” by Whom all things were made and without Whom is no existent thing, as John testifies<sup>320</sup>. If, then, all things were made by Him, both visible and invisible, and if His will alone suffices to effect the subsistence of existing things (for His will is power), Eunomius utters our doctrine though with a loose mode of expression<sup>321</sup>. For what instrument and what matter could He Who upholds all things by the word of His power<sup>322</sup> need in upholding the constitution of existing things by His almighty word? But if he maintains that what we have believed to be true of the Only-begotten in the case of the creation, is true also in the case of the Son—in the sense that the Father created Him in like manner as the creation was made by the Son,—then we retract our former statement, because such a supposition is a denial of the Godhead of the Only-begotten. For we have learnt from the mighty utterance of Paul that it is the distinguishing feature of idolatry to worship and serve the creature more than the

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317 Ps. cxlviii. 5, or xxxiii. 9 in LXX.

318 Gen. i. 3.

319 I Cor. i. 24.

320 Cf. S. John i. 3

321 Reading ἐν ἀτονούσῃ τῇ λέξει for ἐνατονούσῃ τῇ λέξει (the reading of the Paris edition, which Oehler follows).

322 Cf. Heb. i. 3. The quotation is not verbally exact.

Creator<sup>323</sup>, as well as from David, when He says “There shall no new God be in thee: neither shalt thou worship any alien God<sup>324</sup>.” We use this line and rule to arrive at the discernment of the object of worship, so as to be convinced that that alone is God which is neither “new” nor “alien.” Since then we have been taught to believe that the Only-begotten God is God, we acknowledge, by our belief that He is God, that He is neither “new” or “alien.” If, then, He is God, He is not “new,” and if He is not new, He is assuredly eternal. Accordingly, neither is the Eternal “new,” nor is He Who is of the Father and in the bosom of the Father and Who has the Father in Himself “alien” from true Deity. Thus he who severs the Son from the nature of the Father either absolutely disallows the worship of the Son, that he may not worship an alien God, or bows down before an idol, making a creature and not God the object of his worship, and giving to his idol the name of Christ.

Now that this is the meaning to which he tends in his conception concerning the Only-begotten will become more plain by considering the language he employs touching the Only-begotten Himself, which is as follows. “We believe also in the Son of God, the Only-begotten God, the first-born of all creation, very Son, not ungenerate, verily begotten before the worlds, named Son not without being begotten before He existed, coming into being before all creation, not uncreate.” I think that the mere reading of his exposition of his faith is quite sufficient to render its impiety plain without any investigation on our part. For though he calls Him “first-born,” yet that he may not raise any doubt in his readers’ minds as to His not being created, he immediately adds the words, “not uncreate,” lest if the natural significance of the term “Son” were apprehended by his readers, any pious conception concerning Him might find place in their minds. It is for this reason that after at first confessing Him to be SON of God and Only-begotten God, he proceeds at once, by what he adds, to pervert the minds of his readers from their devout belief to his heretical notions. For he who hears the titles “Son of God” and “Only-begotten God” is of necessity lifted up to the loftier kind of assertions respecting the Son, led onward by the significance of these terms, inasmuch as no difference of nature is introduced by the use of the title “God” and by the significance of the term “Son.” For how could He Who is truly the Son of God and Himself God be conceived as something else differing from the nature of the Father? But that godly conceptions may not by these names be impressed beforehand on the hearts of his readers, he forthwith calls Him “the first-born of all creation, named Son, not without being begotten before He existed, coming into being before all creation, not uncreate.” Let us linger a little while, then, over his argument, that the miscreant may be shown to be holding out his first statements to people merely as a bait to induce them to receive the poison that he sugars over with phrases of a pious tendency, as it were with honey. Who does not know how great is the difference in signification between the term “only-begotten” and “first-born?” For “first-born” implies brethren, and “only-begotten” implies that there are no other

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<sup>323</sup> Cf. Rom. i. 26

<sup>324</sup> Ps. lxxxi. 10, LXX. The words πρόσφατος (“new”) and ἀλλότριος (“alien”) are both represented in the A.V. by “strange,” and so in R.V. The Prayer-book version expresses them by “strange” and “any other.” Both words are subsequently employed by Gregory in his argument.

brethren. Thus the “first-born” is not “only-begotten,” for certainly “first-born” is the first-born among brethren, while he who is “only-begotten” has no brother: for if he were numbered among brethren he would not be only-begotten. And moreover, whatever the essence of the brothers of the first-born is, the same is the essence of the first-born himself. Nor is this all that is signified by the title, but also that the first-born and those born after him draw their being from the same source, without the first-born contributing at all to the birth of those that come after him: so that hereby<sup>325</sup> is maintained the falsehood of that statement of John, which affirms that “all things were made by Him<sup>326</sup>.” For if He is first-born, He differs from those born after Him only by priority in time, while there must be some one else by Whom the power to be at all is imparted alike to Him and to the rest. But that we may not by our objections give any unfair opponent ground for an insinuation that we do not receive the inspired utterances of Scripture, we will first set before our readers our own view about these titles, and then leave it to their judgment which is the better.

§8. *He further very appositely expounds the meaning of the term “Only-Begotten,” and of the term “First born,” four times used by the Apostle.*

The mighty Paul, knowing that the Only-begotten God, Who has the pre-eminence in all things<sup>327</sup>, is the author and cause of all good, bears witness to Him that not only was the creation of all existent things wrought by Him, but that when the original creation of man had decayed and vanished away<sup>328</sup>, to use his own language, and another new creation was wrought in Christ, in this too no other than He took the lead, but He is Himself the first-born of all that new creation of men which is effected by the Gospel. And that our view about this may be made clearer let us thus divide our argument. The inspired apostle on four occasions employs this term, once as here, calling Him, “first-born of all creation<sup>329</sup>,” another time, “the first-born among many brethren<sup>330</sup>,” again, “first-born from the dead<sup>331</sup>,” and on another occasion he employs the term absolutely, without combining it with other words, saying, “But when again He bringeth the first-born into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him<sup>332</sup>.” Accordingly whatever view we entertain concerning this title in the other combinations, the same we shall in consistency apply to the phrase “first-born of

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<sup>325</sup> Hereby, i.e. by the use of the term πρωτότοκος as applicable to the Divinity of the Son.

<sup>326</sup> S. John i. 3

<sup>327</sup> Cf. Col. i. 18

<sup>328</sup> Cf. Heb. viii. 13, whence the phrase is apparently adapted.

<sup>329</sup> Col. i. 15.

<sup>330</sup> Rom. viii. 29.

<sup>331</sup> Col. i. 18 (cf. Rev. i. 5).

<sup>332</sup> Heb. i. 6.

all creation.” For since the title is one and the same it must needs be that the meaning conveyed is also one. In what sense then does He become “the first-born among many brethren?” in what sense does He become “the first-born from the dead?” Assuredly this is plain, that because we are by birth flesh and blood, as the Scripture saith, “He Who for our sakes was born among us and was partaker of flesh and blood<sup>333</sup>,” purposing to change us from corruption to incorruption by the birth from above, the birth by water and the Spirit, Himself led the way in this birth, drawing down upon the water, by His own baptism, the Holy Spirit; so that in all things He became the first-born of those who are spiritually born again, and gave the name of brethren to those who partook in a birth like to His own by water and the Spirit. But since it was also meet that He should implant in our nature the power of rising again from the dead, He becomes the “first-fruits of them that slept<sup>334</sup>” and the “first-born from the dead<sup>335</sup>,” in that He first by His own act loosed the pains of death<sup>336</sup>, so that His new birth from the dead was made a way for us also, since the pains of death, wherein we were held, were loosed by the resurrection of the Lord. Thus, just as by having shared in the washing of regeneration<sup>337</sup> He became “the first-born among many brethren,” and again by having made Himself the first-fruits of the resurrection, He obtains the name of the “first-born from the dead,” so having in all things the pre-eminence, after that “all old things,” as the apostle says, “have passed away<sup>338</sup>,” He becomes the first-born of the new creation of men in Christ by the two-fold regeneration, alike that by Holy Baptism and that which is the consequence of the resurrection from the dead, becoming for us in both alike the Prince of Life<sup>339</sup>, the first-fruits, the first-born. This first-born, then, hath also brethren, concerning whom He speaks to Mary, saying, “Go and tell My brethren, I go to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God<sup>340</sup>.” In these words He sums up the whole aim of His dispensation as Man. For men revolted from God, and “served them which by nature were no gods<sup>341</sup>,” and though being the children of God became attached to an evil father falsely so called. For this cause the mediator between God and man<sup>342</sup> having assumed the


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333 Cf. Heb. i. 14

334 1 Cor. xv. 20.

335 Col. i. 18.

336 Cf. Acts ii. 24. See note 2, p. 104, *supra*.

337 The phrase is not verbally the same as in Tit. iii. 5.

338 Cf. 2 Cor. v. 17

339 Cf. Acts iii. 15

340 Cf. S. John xx. 17: the quotation is not verbal.

341 Cf. Gal. iv. 8

342 Cf. 1 Tim. ii. 5



first-fruits of all human nature<sup>343</sup>, sends to His brethren the announcement of Himself not in His divine character, but in that which He shares with us, saying, “I am departing in order to make by My own self that true Father, from whom you were separated, to be your Father, and by My own self to make that true God from whom you had revolted to be your God, for by that first-fruits which I have assumed, I am in Myself presenting all humanity to its God and Father.”

Since, then, the first-fruits made the true God to be its God, and the good Father to be its Father, the blessing is secured for human nature as a whole, and by means of the first-fruits the true God and Father becomes Father and God of all men. Now “if the first-fruits be holy, the lump also is holy<sup>344</sup>.” But where the first-fruits, Christ, is (and the first-fruits is none other than Christ), there also are they that are Christ’s, as the apostle says. In those passages therefore where he makes mention of the “first-born” in connexion with other words, he suggests that we should understand the phrase in the way which I have indicated: but where, without any such addition, he says, “When again He bringeth the first-born into the world<sup>345</sup>,” the addition of “again” asserts that manifestation of the Lord of all which shall take place at the last day. For as “at the name of Jesus every knee doth bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth<sup>346</sup>,” although the human name does not belong to the Son in that He is above every name, even so He says that the First-born, Who was so named for our sakes, is worshipped by all the supramundane creation, on His coming again into the world, when He “shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with equity<sup>347</sup>.” Thus the several meanings of the titles “First-born” and “Only begotten” are kept distinct by the word of godliness, its respective significance being secured for each name. But how can he who refers the name of “first-born” to the pre-temporal existence of the Son preserve the proper sense of the term “Only-begotten”? Let the discerning reader consider whether these things agree with one another, when the term “first-born” necessarily implies brethren, and the term “Only-begotten” as necessarily excludes the notion of brethren. For when the Scripture says, “In the beginning was the Word<sup>348</sup>,” we understand the Only-begotten to be meant, and when it adds “the Word was made flesh<sup>349</sup>” we thereby receive in our minds the idea of the first-born, and so the word of godliness remains without confusion, preserving to each name its natural significance, so

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<sup>343</sup> The Humanity of Christ being regarded as this “first-fruits:” unless this phrase is to be understood of the Resurrection, rather than of the Incarnation, in which case the first-fruits will be His Body, and ἀναλαβὼν should be rendered by “having resumed.”

<sup>344</sup> Rom. ix. 16. The reference next following may be to S. John xii. 26, or xiv. 3; or to Col. iii. 3.

<sup>345</sup> Heb. i. 6.

<sup>346</sup> Phil. ii. 10, 11.

<sup>347</sup> Cf. Ps. xcvi. 10.

<sup>348</sup> S. John i. 1

<sup>349</sup> S. John i. 14

that in “Only-begotten” we regard the pre-temporal, and by “the first-born of creation” the manifestation of the pre-temporal in the flesh.

§9. *Gregory again discusses the generation of the Only-Begotten, and other different modes of generation, material and immaterial, and nobly demonstrates that the Son is the brightness of the Divine glory, and not a creature.*

And now let us return once more to the precise statement of Eunomius. “We believe also in the Son of God, the only begotten God, the first-born of all creation, very Son, not Ungenerate, verily begotten before the worlds.” That he transfers, then, the sense of *generation* to indicate *creation* is plain from his expressly calling Him created, when he speaks of Him as “coming into being” and “not uncreate”. But that the inconsiderate rashness and want of training which shows itself in the doctrines may be made manifest, let us omit all expressions of indignation at his evident blasphemy, and employ in the discussion of this matter a scientific division. For it would be well, I think, to consider in a somewhat careful investigation the exact meaning of the term “generation.” That this expression conveys the meaning of existing as the result of some cause is plain to all, and I suppose there is no need to contend about this point: but since there are different modes of existing as the result of a cause, this difference is what I think ought to receive thorough explanation in our discussion by means of scientific division. Of things which have come into being as the results of some cause we recognize the following differences. Some are the result of material and art, as the fabrics of houses and all other works produced by means of their respective material, where some art gives direction and conducts its purpose to its proper aim. Others are the result of material and nature; for nature orders<sup>350</sup> the generation of animals one from another, effecting her own work by means of the material subsistence in the bodies of the parents; others again are by material efflux. In these the original remains as it was before, and that which flows from it is contemplated by itself, as in the case of the sun and its beam, or the lamp and its radiance, or of scents and ointments, and the quality given off from them. For these, while remaining undiminished in themselves, have each accompanying them the special and peculiar effect which they naturally produce, as the sun his ray, the lamp its brightness, and perfumes the fragrance which they engender in the air. There is also another kind of generation besides these, where the cause is immaterial and incorporeal, but the generation is sensible and takes place through the instrumentality of the body; I mean the generation of the word by the mind. For the mind being in itself incorporeal begets the word by means of sensible instruments. So many are the differences of the term generation, which we discover in a philosophic view of them, that is itself, so to speak, the result of generation.

And now that we have thus distinguished the various modes of generation, it will be time to remark how the benevolent dispensation of the Holy Spirit, in delivering to us the Divine mysteries,



<sup>350</sup> Reading οἰκονομεῖ or οἰκοδομεῖ

imparts that instruction which transcends reason by such methods as we can receive. For the inspired teaching adopts, in order to set forth the unspeakable power of God, all the forms of generation that human intelligence recognizes, yet without including the corporeal senses attaching to the words. For when it speaks of the creative power, it gives to such an energy the name of generation, because its expression must stoop to our low capacity; it does not, however, convey thereby all that we include in creative generation, as time, place, the furnishing of matter, the fitness of instruments, the design in the things that come into being, but it leaves these, and asserts of God in lofty and magnificent language the creation of all existent things, when it says, “He spake the word and they were made<sup>351</sup>, He commanded and they were created.” Again when it interprets to us the unspeakable and transcendent existence of the Only-begotten from the Father, as the poverty of human intellect is incapable of receiving doctrines which surpass all power of speech and thought, there too it borrows our language and terms Him “Son,”—a name which our usage assigns to those who are born of matter and nature. But just as Scripture, when speaking of generation by creation, does not in the case of God imply that such generation took place by means of any material, affirming that the power of God’s will served for material substance, place, time and all such circumstances, even so here too, when using the term Son, it rejects both all else that human nature remarks in generation here below,—I mean affections and dispositions and the co-operation of time, and the necessity of place,—and, above all, matter, without all which natural generation here below does not take place. But when all such material, temporal and local<sup>352</sup> existence is excluded from the sense of the term “Son,” community of nature alone is left, and for this reason by the title “Son” is declared, concerning the Only-begotten, the close affinity and genuineness of relationship which mark His manifestation from the Father. And since such a kind of generation was not sufficient to implant in us an adequate notion of the ineffable mode of subsistence of the Only-begotten, Scripture avails itself also of the third kind of generation to indicate the doctrine of the Son’s Divinity,—that kind, namely, which is the result of material efflux, and speaks of Him as the “brightness of glory<sup>353</sup>,” the “savour of ointment<sup>354</sup>,” the “breath of God<sup>355</sup>,” illustrations which in the scientific phraseology we have adopted we ordinarily designate as material efflux.

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But as in the cases alleged neither the birth of the creation nor the force of the term “Son” admits time, matter, place, or affection, so here too the Scripture employing only the illustration of effulgence and the others that I have mentioned, apart from all material conception, with regard to the Divine fitness of such a mode of generation, shows that we must understand by the significance of this expression, an existence at once derived from and subsisting with the Father. For neither is the figure of breath intended to convey to us the notion of dispersion into the air from the material

351 Or “were generated.” The reference is to Ps. cxlviii. 5.

352 διαστηματικῆς seems to include the idea of extension in time as well as in space.

353 Heb. i. 3.

354 The reference may be to the Song of Solomon i. 3.

355 Wisd. vii. 25.

from which it is formed, nor is the figure of fragrance designed to express the passing off of the quality of the ointment into the air, nor the figure of effulgence the efflux which takes place by means of the rays from the body of the sun: but as has been said in all cases, by such a mode of generation is indicated this alone, that the Son is of the Father and is conceived of along with Him, no interval intervening between the Father and Him Who is of the Father. For since of His exceeding loving-kindness the grace of the Holy Spirit so ordered that the divine conceptions concerning the Only-begotten should reach us from many quarters, and so be implanted in us, He added also the remaining kind of generation,—that, namely, of the word from the mind. And here the sublime John uses remarkable foresight. That the reader might not through inattention and unworthy conceptions sink to the common notion of “word,” so as to deem the Son to be merely a voice of the Father, he therefore affirms of the Word that He essentially subsisted in the first and blessed nature Itself, thus proclaiming aloud, “In the Beginning was the Word, and with God, and God, and Light, and Life<sup>356</sup>,” and all that the Beginning is, the Word was also.

Since, then, these kinds of generation, those, I mean, which arise as the result of some cause, and are recognized in our every-day experience, are also employed by Holy Scripture to convey its teaching concerning transcendent mysteries in such wise as each of them may reasonably be transferred to the expression of divine conceptions, we may now proceed to examine Eunomius’ statement also, to find in what sense he accepts the meaning of “generation.” “Very Son,” he says, “not ungenerate, verily begotten before the worlds.” One may, I think, pass quickly over the violence done to logical sequence in his distinction, as being easily recognizable by all. For who does not know that while the proper opposition is between Father and Son, between generate and ungenerate, he thus passes over the term “Father” and sets “ungenerate” in opposition to “Son,” whereas he ought, if he had any concern for truth, to have avoided diverting his phrase from the due sequence of relationship, and to have said, “Very Son, not Father”? And in this way due regard would have been paid at once to piety and to logical consistency, as the nature would not have been rent asunder in making the distinction between the persons. But he has exchanged in his statement of his faith the true and scriptural use of the term “Father,” committed to us by the Word Himself, and speaks of the “Ungenerate” instead of the “Father,” in order that by separating Him from that close relationship towards the Son which is naturally conceived of in the title of Father, he may place Him on a common level with all created objects, which equally stand in opposition to the “ungenerate<sup>357</sup>.” “Verily begotten,” he says, “before the worlds.” Let him say of Whom He is begotten. He will answer, of course, “Of the Father,” unless he is prepared unblushingly to contradict the truth. But since it is impossible to detach the eternity of the Son from the eternal Father, seeing that the term “Father” by its very signification implies the Son, for this reason it is that he rejects

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<sup>356</sup> Cf. S. John i. 1 sqq.

<sup>357</sup> That is, by using as the terms of his antithesis, not “Son” and “Father,” but “Son” and “Ungenerate,” he avoids suggesting relationship between the two Persons, and does suggest that the Second Person stands in the same opposition to the First Person in which all created objects stand as contrasted with Him.

the title Father and shifts his phrase to “ungenerate,” since the meaning of this latter name has no sort of relation or connection with the Son, and by thus misleading his readers through the substitution of one term for the other, into not contemplating the Son along with the Father, he opens up a path for his sophistry, paving the way of impiety by slipping in the term “ungenerate.” For they who according to the ordinance of the Lord believe in the Father, when they hear the name of the Father, receive the Son along with Him in their thought, as the mind passes from the Son to the Father, without treading on an unsubstantial vacuum interposed between them. But those who are diverted to the title “ungenerate” instead of Father, get a bare notion of this name, learning only the fact that He did not at any time come into being, not that He is Father. Still, even with this mode of conception, the faith of those who read with discernment remains free from confusion. For the expression “not to come into being” is used in an identical sense of all uncreated nature: and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are equally uncreated. For it has ever been believed by those who follow the Divine word that all the creation, sensible and supramundane, derives its existence from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He who has heard that “by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth<sup>358</sup>,” neither understands by “word” mere utterance, nor by “breath” mere exhalation, but by what is there said frames the conception of God the Word and of the Spirit of God. Now to create and to be created are not equivalent, but all existent things being divided into that which makes and that which is made, each is different in nature from the other, so that neither is that uncreated which is made, nor is that created which effects the production of the things that are made. By those then who, according to the exposition of the faith given us by our Lord Himself, have believed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, it is acknowledged that each of these Persons is alike unoriginate<sup>359</sup>, and the meaning conveyed by “ungenerate” does no harm to their sound belief: but to those who are dense and indefinite this term serves as a starting-point for deflection from sound doctrine. For not understanding the true force of the term, that “ungenerate” signifies nothing more than “not having come into being,” and that “not coming into being” is a common property of all that transcends created nature, they drop their faith in the Father, and substitute for “Father” the phrase “ungenerate:” and since, as has been said, the Personal existence of the Only-begotten is not connoted in this name, they determine the existence of the Son to have commenced from some definite beginning in time, affirming (what Eunomius here adds to his previous statements) that He is called Son not without generation preceding His existence.

What is this vain juggling with words? Is he aware that it is God of Whom he speaks, Who was in the beginning and is in the Father, nor was there any time when He was not? He knows not what

<sup>358</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 6.

<sup>359</sup> τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι τι τούτων ἐπίσης ὁμολογεῖται. This may possibly mean “it is acknowledged that each of those alternatives” (viz. that that which comes into being is uncreate, and that that which creates should itself be created) “is equally untrue.” But this view would not be confined to those who held the Catholic doctrine: the impossibility of the former alternative, indeed, was insisted upon by the Arians as an argument in their own favour.

he says nor whereof he affirms<sup>360</sup>, but he endeavours, as though he were constructing the pedigree of a mere man, to apply to the Lord of all creation the language which properly belongs to our nature here below. For, to take an example, Ishmael was not before the generation that brought him into being, and before his birth there was of course an interval of time. But with Him Who is “the brightness of glory<sup>361</sup>,” “before” and “after” have no place: for before the brightness, of course neither was there any glory, for concurrently with the existence of the glory there assuredly beams forth its brightness; and it is impossible in the nature of things that one should be severed from the other, nor is it possible to see the glory by itself before its brightness. For he who says thus will make out the glory in itself to be darkling and dim, if the brightness from it does not shine out at the same time. But this is the unfair method of the heresy, to endeavour, by the notions and terms employed concerning the Only-begotten God, to displace Him from His oneness with the Father. It is to this end they say, “Before the generation that brought Him into being He was not Son:” but the “sons of rams<sup>362</sup>,” of whom the prophet speaks,—are not they too called sons after coming into being? That quality, then, which reason notices in the “sons of rams,” that they are not “sons of rams” before the generation which brings them into being,—this our reverend divine now ascribes to the Maker of the worlds and of all creation, Who has the Eternal Father in Himself, and is contemplated in the eternity of the Father, as He Himself says, “I am in the Father, and the Father in Me<sup>363</sup>.” Those, however, who are not able to detect the sophistry that lurks in his statement, and are not trained to any sort of logical perception, follow these inconsequent statements and receive what comes next as a logical consequence of what preceded. For he says, “coming into being before all creation,” and as though this were not enough to prove his impiety, he has a piece of profanity in reserve in the phrase that follows, when he terms the Son “not uncreate.” In what sense then does he call Him Who is not uncreate “very Son”? For if it is meet to call Him Who is not uncreate “very Son,” then of course the heaven is “very Son;” for it too is “not uncreate.” So the sun too is “very Son,” and all that the creation contains, both small and great, are of course entitled to the appellation of “very Son.” And in what sense does He call Him Who has come into being “Only-begotten”? For all things that come into being are unquestionably in brotherhood with each other, so far, I mean, as their coming into being is concerned. And from whom did He come into being? For assuredly all things that have ever come into being did so from the Son. For thus did John testify, saying, “All things were made by Him<sup>364</sup>.” If then the Son also came into being,

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360 Cf. 1 Tim. i. 7

361 Cf. Heb. i. 3

362 Ps. cxiv. 4, in Septuagint.

363 S. John xiv. 10

364 S. John i. 3



according to Eunomius' creed, He is certainly ranked in the class of things which have come into being. If then all things that came into being were made by Him, and the Word is one of the things that came into being, who is so dull as not to draw from these premises the absurd conclusion that our new creed-monger makes out the Lord of creation to have been His own work, in saying in so many words that the Lord and Maker of all creation is "not uncreate"? Let him tell us whence he has this boldness of assertion. From what inspired utterance? What evangelist, what apostle ever uttered such words as these? What prophet, what lawgiver, what patriarch, what other person of all who were divinely moved by the Holy Ghost, whose voices are preserved in writing, ever originated such a statement as this? In the tradition of the faith delivered by the Truth we are taught to believe in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. If it were right to believe that the Son was created, how was it that the Truth in delivering to us this mystery bade us believe in the Son, and not in the creature? and how is it that the inspired Apostle, himself adoring Christ, lays it down that they who worship the creature besides the Creator are guilty of idolatry<sup>365</sup>? For, were the Son created, either he would not have worshipped Him, or he would have refrained from classing those who worship the creature along with idolaters, lest he himself should appear to be an idolater, in offering adoration to the created. But he knew that He Whom he adored was God over all<sup>366</sup>, for so he terms the Son in his Epistle to the Romans. Why then do those who divorce the Son from the essence of the Father, and call Him creature, bestow on Him in mockery the fictitious title of Deity, idly conferring on one alien from true Divinity the name of "God," as they might confer it on Bel or Dagon or the Dragon? Let those, therefore, who affirm that He is created, acknowledge that He is not God at all, that they may be seen to be nothing but Jews in disguise, or, if they confess one who is created to be God, let them not deny that they are idolaters.

§10. *He explains the phrase "The Lord created Me," and the argument about the origination of the Son, the deceptive character of Eunomius' reasoning, and the passage which says, "My glory will I not give to another," examining them from different points of view.*

But of course they bring forward the passage in the book of Proverbs which says, "The Lord created Me as the beginning of His ways, for His works<sup>367</sup>." Now it would require a lengthy

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<sup>365</sup> Rom. i. 25, where *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα* may be better translated "besides the Creator," or "rather than the Creator," than as in the A.V.

<sup>366</sup> Rom. ix. 5.

<sup>367</sup> Prov. viii. 22 (LXX.). The versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus (to one or more of which perhaps §9 refers), all render the Hebrew by *ἐκτήσατο* ("possessed"), not by *ἔκτισε* ("created"). But Gregory may be referring to mss. of the LXX. version which read *ἐκτήσατο*. It is clear from what follows that Mr. Gwatkin is hardly justified in his remark (*Studies of Arianism*, p. 69), that "the whole discussion on Prov. viii. 22 (LXX.), *Κύριος ἔκτισέ με, κ.τ.λ.*, might have been avoided by a glance at the

discussion to explain fully the real meaning of the passage: still it would be possible even in a few words to convey to well-disposed readers the thought intended. Some of those who are accurately versed in theology do say this, that the Hebrew text does not read “created,” and we have ourselves read in more ancient copies “possessed” instead of “created.” Now assuredly “possession” in the allegorical language of the Proverbs marks that slave Who for our sakes “took upon Him the form of a slave<sup>368</sup>.” But if any one should allege in this passage the reading which prevails in the Churches, we do not reject even the expression “created.” For this also in allegorical language is intended to connote the “slave,” since, as the Apostle tells us, “all creation is in bondage<sup>369</sup>.” Thus we say that this expression, as well as the other, admits of an orthodox interpretation. For He Who for our sakes became like as we are, was in the last days truly *created*,—He Who in the beginning being Word and God afterwards became Flesh and Man. For the nature of flesh is created: and by partaking in it in all points like as we do, yet without sin, He was created when He became man: and He was created “after God<sup>370</sup>,” not after man, as the Apostle says, in a new manner and not according to human wont. For we are taught that this “new man” was *created*—albeit of the Holy Ghost and of the power of the Highest—whom Paul, the hierophant of unspeakable mysteries, bids us to “put on,” using two phrases to express the garment that is to be put on, saying in one place, “Put on the new man which after God is created<sup>371</sup>,” and in another, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ<sup>372</sup>.” For thus it is that He, Who said “I am the Way<sup>373</sup>,” becomes to us who have put Him on the beginning of the ways of salvation, that He may make us the work of His own hands, new modelling us from the evil mould of sin once more to His own image. He is at once our foundation before the world to come, according to the words of Paul, who says, “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid<sup>374</sup>,” and it is true that “before the springs of the waters came forth, before the mountains were settled, before He made the depths, and before all hills, He begetteth Me<sup>375</sup>.” For it is possible, according to the usage of the Book of Proverbs, for each of these phrases, taken in a tropical sense,




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original.” The point of the controversy might have been changed, but that would have been all. Gregory seems to feel that ἐκτίσαστο requires an explanation, though he has one ready.

<sup>368</sup> Phil. ii. 7.

<sup>369</sup> Rom. viii. 20–1.

<sup>370</sup> Eph. iv. 24.

<sup>371</sup> Eph. iv. 24.

<sup>372</sup> Rom. xiii. 14.

<sup>373</sup> S. John xiv. 6

<sup>374</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 11.

<sup>375</sup> Prov. viii. 23–25 (not quite verbal, from the LXX.).



to be applied to the Word<sup>376</sup>. For the great David calls righteousness the “mountains of God<sup>377</sup>,” His judgments “deeps<sup>378</sup>,” and the teachers in the Churches “fountains,” saying “Bless God the Lord from the fountains of Israel<sup>379</sup>”; and guilelessness he calls “hills,” as he shows when he speaks of their skipping like lambs<sup>380</sup>. Before these therefore is born in us He Who for our sakes was created as man, that of these things also the creation may find place in us. But we may, I think, pass from the discussion of these points, inasmuch as the truth has been sufficiently pointed out in a few words to well-disposed readers; let us proceed to what Eunomius says next.

“Existing in the Beginning,” he says, “not without beginning.” In what fashion does he who plumes himself on his superior discernment understand the oracles of God? He declares Him Who was in the beginning Himself to have a beginning: and is not aware that if He Who is in the beginning has a beginning, then the Beginning itself must needs have another beginning. Whatever He says of the beginning he must necessarily confess to be true of Him Who was in the beginning: for how can that which is in the beginning be severed from the beginning? and how can any one imagine a “was not” as preceding the “was”? For however far one carries back one’s thought to apprehend the beginning, one most certainly understands as one does so that the Word which was in the beginning (inasmuch as It cannot be separated from the beginning in which It is) does not at any point of time either begin or cease its existence therein. Yet let no one be induced by these words of mine to separate into two the one beginning we acknowledge. For the beginning is most assuredly one, wherein is discerned, indivisibly, that Word Who is completely united to the Father. He who thus thinks will never leave heresy a loophole to impair his piety by the novelty of the term “ungenerate.” But in Eunomius’ next propositions his statements are like bread with a large admixture of sand. For by mixing his heretical opinions with sound doctrines, he makes uneatable even that which is in itself nutritious, by the gravel which he has mingled with it. For he calls the Lord “living wisdom,” “operative truth,” subsistent power, and “life”:—so far is the nutritious portion. But into these assertions he instils the poison of heresy. For when he speaks of the “life” as “generate” he makes a reservation by the implied opposition to the “ungenerate” life, and does not affirm the Son to be the very Life. Next he says:—“As Son of God, quickening the dead, the true light, the light that lighteneth every man coming into the world<sup>381</sup>, good, and the bestower of good things.” All these things he offers for honey to the simple-minded, concealing his deadly drug under the sweetness of terms like these. For he immediately introduces, on the heels of these statements, his pernicious principle, in the words “Not partitioning with Him that begat Him His high estate, not dividing

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376 Or “to be brought into harmony with Christian doctrine” (ἐφαρμόσθῆναι τῷ λόγῳ).

377 Ps. xxxvi. 6.

378 Ps. xxxvi. 6.

379 Ps. lxxviii. 26 (LXX.).

380 Cf. Ps. cxiv. 6

381 Cf. S. John i. 9

with another the essence of the Father, but becoming by generation glorious, yea, the Lord of glory, and receiving glory from the Father, not sharing His glory with the Father, for the glory of the Almighty is incommunicable, as He hath said, ‘My glory will I not give to another.’<sup>382</sup>” These are his deadly poisons, which they alone can discover who have their souls’ senses trained so to do: but the mortal mischief of the words is disclosed by their conclusion:—Receiving glory from the Father, not sharing glory with the Father, for the glory of the Almighty is incommunicable, as He hath said, ‘My glory will I not give to another.’ Who is that “other” to whom God has said that He will not give His glory? The prophet speaks of the adversary of God, and Eunomius refers the prophecy to the only begotten God Himself! For when the prophet, speaking in the person of God, had said, “My glory will I not give to another,” he added, “neither My praise to graven images.” For when men were beguiled to offer to the adversary of God the worship and adoration due to God alone, paying homage in the representations of graven images to the enemy of God, who appeared in many shapes amongst men in the forms furnished by idols, He Who healeth them that are sick, in pity for men’s ruin, foretold by the prophet the loving-kindness which in the latter days He would show in the abolishing of idols, saying, “When My truth shall have been manifested, My glory shall no more be given to another, nor My praise bestowed upon graven images: for men, when they come to know My glory, shall no more be in bondage to them that by nature are no gods.” All therefore that the prophet says in the person of the Lord concerning the power of the adversary, this fighter against God, refers to the Lord Himself, Who spake these words by the prophet! Who among the tyrants is recorded to have been such a persecutor of the faith as this? Who maintained such blasphemy as this, that He Who, as we believe, was manifested in the flesh for the salvation of our souls, is not very God, but the adversary of God, who puts his guile into effect against men by the instrumentality of idols and graven images? For it is what was said of that adversary by the prophet that Eunomius transfers to the only-begotten God, without so much as reflecting that it is the Only-begotten Himself Who spoke these words by the prophet, as Eunomius himself subsequently confesses when he says, “this is He Who spake by the prophets.”

Why should I pursue this part of the subject in more detail? For the words preceding also are tainted with the same profanity—“receiving glory from the Father, not sharing glory with the Father, for the glory of the Almighty God is incommunicable.” For my own part, even had his words referred to Moses who was glorified in the ministration of the Law,—not even then should I have tolerated such a statement, even if it be conceded that Moses, having no glory from within, appeared completely glorious to the Israelites by the favour bestowed on him from God. For the very glory that was bestowed on the lawgiver was the glory of none other but of God Himself, which glory the Lord in the Gospel bids all to seek, when He blames those who value human glory highly and seek not the glory that cometh from God only<sup>383</sup>. For by the fact that He commanded them to seek the glory that cometh from the only God, He declared the possibility of their obtaining what they

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382 Is. xlii. 8.

383 Cf. S. John v. 44

sought. How then is the glory of the Almighty incommunicable, if it is even our duty to ask for the glory that cometh from the only God, and if, according to our Lord's word, "every one that asketh receiveth<sup>384</sup>?" But one who says concerning the Brightness of the Father's glory, that He has the glory by having received it, says in effect that the Brightness of the glory is in Itself devoid of glory, and needs, in order to become Himself at last the Lord of some glory, to receive glory from another. How then are we to dispose of the utterances of the Truth,—one which tells us that He shall be seen in the glory of the Father<sup>385</sup>, and another which says, "All things that the Father hath are Mine<sup>386</sup>?" To whom ought the hearer to give ear? To him who says, "He that is, as the Apostle says, the 'heir of all things<sup>387</sup>' that are in the Father, is without part or lot in His Father's glory"; or to Him Who declares that all things that the Father hath, He Himself hath also? Now among the "all things," glory surely is included. Yet Eunomius says that the glory of the Almighty is incommunicable. This view Joel does not attest, nor yet the mighty Peter, who adopted, in his speech to the Jews, the language of the prophet. For both the prophet and the apostle say, in the person of God,—“I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh<sup>388</sup>.” He then Who did not grudge the partaking in His own Spirit to all flesh,—how can it be that He does not impart His own glory to the only-begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, Who has all things that the Father has? Perhaps one should say that Eunomius is here speaking the truth, though not intending it. For the term "impart" is strictly used in the case of one who has not his glory from within, whose possession of it is an accession from without, and not part of his own nature: but where one and the same nature is observed in both Persons, He Who is as regards nature all that the Father is believed to be stands in no need of one to impart to Him each several attribute. This it will be well to explain more clearly and precisely. He Who has the Father dwelling in Him in His entirety—what need has He of the Father's glory, when none of the attributes contemplated in the Father is withdrawn from Him?

§11. *After expounding the high estate of the Almighty, the Eternity of the Son, and the phrase "being made obedient," he shows the folly of Eunomius in his assertion that the Son did not acquire His sonship by obedience.*

What, moreover, is the high estate of the Almighty in which Eunomius affirms that the Son has no share? Let those, then, who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight<sup>389</sup>, utter

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384 S. Matt. vii. 8

385 S. Mark viii. 38.

386 S. John xvi. 15

387 Heb. i. 2.

388 Joel ii. 28; Acts ii. 17.

389 Is. v. 21.

their groundling opinions—they who, as the prophet says, “speak out of the ground<sup>390</sup>.” But let us who reverence the Word and are disciples of the Truth, or rather who profess to be so, not leave even this assertion unsifted. We know that of all the names by which Deity is indicated some are expressive of the Divine majesty, employed and understood absolutely, and some are assigned with reference to the operations over us and all creation. For when the Apostle says “Now to the immortal, invisible, only wise God<sup>391</sup>,” and the like, by these titles he suggests conceptions which represent to us the transcendent power, but when God is spoken of in the Scriptures as gracious, merciful, full of pity, true, good, Lord, Physician, Shepherd, Way, Bread, Fountain, King, Creator, Artificer, Protector, Who is over all and through all, Who is all in all, these and similar titles contain the declaration of the operations of the Divine loving-kindness in the creation. Those then who enquire precisely into the meaning of the term “Almighty” will find that it declares nothing else concerning the Divine power than that operation which controls created things and is indicated by the word “Almighty,” stands in a certain relation to something. For as He would not be called a Physician, save on account of the sick, nor merciful and gracious, and the like, save by reason of one who stood in need of grace and mercy, so neither would He be styled Almighty, did not all creation stand in need of one to regulate it and keep it in being. As, then, He presents Himself as a Physician to those who are in need of healing, so He is Almighty over one who has need of being ruled: and just as “they that are whole have no need of a physician<sup>392</sup>,” so it follows that we may well say that He Whose nature contains in it the principle of unerring and unwavering rectitude does not, like others, need a ruler over Him. Accordingly, when we hear the name “Almighty,” our conception is this, that God sustains in being all intelligible things as well as all things of a material nature. For this cause He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, for this cause He holdeth the ends of the earth in His hand, for this cause He “meteth out leaven with the span, and measureth the waters in the hollow of His hand<sup>393</sup>”; for this cause He comprehendeth in Himself all the intelligible creation, that all things may remain in existence controlled by His encompassing power. Let us enquire, then, Who it is that “worketh all in all.” Who is He Who made all things, and without Whom no existing thing does exist? Who is He in Whom all things were created, and in Whom all things that are have their continuance? In Whom do we live and move and have our being? Who is He Who hath in Himself all that the Father hath? Does what has been said leave us any longer in ignorance of Him Who is “God over all<sup>394</sup>,” Who is so entitled by S. Paul,—our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, as He Himself says, holding in His hand “all things that the Father hath<sup>395</sup>,” assuredly grasps all things



390 Is. xxix. 4.

391 Cf. 1 Tim. i. 17

392 Cf. S. Matt. ix. 12, and parallel passages.

393 Cf. Is. xl. 12 and 24. The quotation is not verbally from the LXX.

394 Rom. ix. 5.

395 S. John xvi. 15

in the all-containing hollow of His hand and is sovereign over what He has grasped, and no man taketh from the hand of Him Who in His hand holdeth all things? If, then, He hath all things, and is sovereign over that which He hath, why is He Who is thus sovereign over all things something else and not Almighty? If heresy replies that the Father is sovereign over both the Son and the Holy Spirit, let them first show that the Son and the Holy Spirit are of mutable nature, and then over this mutability let them set its ruler, that by the help implanted from above, that which is so overruled may continue incapable of turning to evil. If, on the other hand, the Divine nature is incapable of evil, unchangeable, unalterable, eternally permanent, to what end does it stand in need of a ruler, controlling as it does all creation, and itself by reason of its immutability needing no ruler to control it? For this cause it is that at the name of Christ “every knee boweth, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth<sup>396</sup>.” For assuredly every knee would not thus bow, did it not recognize in Christ Him Who rules it for its own salvation. But to say that the Son came into being by the goodness of the Father is nothing else than to put Him on a level with the meanest objects of creation. For what is there that did not arrive at its birth by the goodness of Him Who made it? To what is the formation of mankind ascribed? to the badness of its Maker, or to His goodness? To what do we ascribe the generation of animals, the production of plants and herbs? There is nothing that did not take its rise from the goodness of Him Who made it. A property, then, which reason discerns to be common to all things, Eunomius is so kind as to allow to the Eternal Son! But that He did not share His essence or His estate with the Father—these assertions and the rest of his verbiage I have refuted in anticipation, when dealing with his statements concerning the Father, and shown that he has hazarded them at random and without any intelligible meaning. For not even in the case of us who are born one of another is there any division of essence. The definition expressive of essence remains in its entirety in each, in him that begets and in him who is begotten, without admitting diminution in him who begets, or augmentation in him who is begotten. But to speak of division of estate or sovereignty in the case of Him Who hath all things whatsoever that the Father hath, carries with it no meaning, unless it be a demonstration of the propounder’s impiety. It would therefore be superfluous to entangle oneself in such discussions, and so to prolong our treatise to an unreasonable length. Let us pass on to what follows.

“Glorified,” he says, “by the Father before the worlds.” The word of truth hath been demonstrated, confirmed by the testimony of its adversaries. For this is the sum of our faith, that the Son is from all eternity, being glorified by the Father: for “before the worlds” is the same in sense as “from all eternity,” seeing that prophecy uses this phrase to set forth to us God’s eternity, when it speaks of Him as “He that is from before the worlds<sup>397</sup>.” If then to exist before the worlds

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<sup>396</sup> Cf. Phil. ii. 10

<sup>397</sup> Ps. lv. 19 (LXX).



is beyond all beginning, he who confers glory on the Son before the worlds, does thereby assert His existence from eternity before that glory<sup>398</sup>: for surely it is not the non-existent, but the existent which is glorified. Then he proceeds to plant for himself the seeds of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; not with a view to glorify the Son, but that he may wantonly outrage the Holy Ghost. For with the intention of making out the Holy Spirit to be part of the angelic host, he throws in the phrase “glorified eternally by the Spirit, and by every rational and generated being,” so that there is no distinction between the Holy Spirit and all that comes into being; if, that is, the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord in the same sense as all the other existences enumerated by the prophet, “angels and powers, and the heaven of heavens, and the water above the heavens, and all the things of earth, dragons, deeps, fire and hail, snow and vapour, wind of the storm, mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, worms and feathered fowls<sup>399</sup>.” If, then, he says, that along with these the Holy Spirit also glorifies the Lord, surely his God-opposing tongue makes out the Holy Spirit Himself also to be one of them.

The disjointed incoherencies which follow next, I think it well to pass over, not because they give no handle at all to censure, but because their language is such as might be used by the devout, if detached from its malignant context. If he does here and there use some expressions favourable to devotion it is just held out as a bait to simple souls, to the end that the hook of impiety may be swallowed along with it. For after employing such language as a member of the Church might use, he subjoins, “Obedient with regard to the creation and production of all things that are, obedient with regard to every ministration, not having by His obedience attained Sonship or Godhead, but, as a consequence of being Son and being generated as the Only-begotten God, showing Himself obedient in words, obedient in acts.” Yet who of those who are conversant with the oracles of God does not know with regard to what point of time it was said of Him by the mighty Paul, (and that once for all), that He “became obedient<sup>400</sup>”? For it was when He came in the form of a servant to accomplish the mystery of redemption by the cross, Who had emptied Himself, Who humbled Himself by assuming the likeness and fashion of a man, being found as man in man’s lowly nature—then, I say, it was that He became obedient, even He Who “took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses<sup>401</sup>,” healing the disobedience of men by His own obedience, that by His stripes He might heal our wound, and by His own death do away with the common death of all men,—then it was that for our sakes He was made obedient, even as He became “sin<sup>402</sup>” and “a curse<sup>403</sup>” by reason of the dispensation on our behalf, not being so by nature, but becoming so in His love for

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<sup>398</sup> Reading αὐτῆς, with Oehler. The general sense is the same, if αὐτῶ be read; “does yet more strongly attest His existence from all eternity.”

<sup>399</sup> Cf. Ps. cxlviii. 2–10.

<sup>400</sup> Phil. ii. 8.

<sup>401</sup> Cf. S. Matt. viii. 17.

<sup>402</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21.

<sup>403</sup> Gal. iii. 13.

man. But by what sacred utterance was He ever taught His list of so many obediences? Nay, on the contrary every inspired Scripture attests His independent and sovereign power, saying, “He spake the word and they were made: He commanded and they were created<sup>404</sup>”:—for it is plain that the Psalmist says this concerning Him Who upholds “all things by the word of His power<sup>405</sup>,” Whose authority, by the sole impulse of His will, framed every existence and nature, and all things in the creation apprehended by reason or by sight. Whence, then, was Eunomius moved to ascribe in such manifold wise to the King of the universe the attribute of obedience, speaking of Him as “obedient with regard to all the work of creation, obedient with regard to every ministration, obedient in words and in acts”? Yet it is plain to every one, that he alone is obedient to another in acts and words, who has not yet perfectly achieved in himself the condition of accurate working or unexceptionable speech, but keeping his eye ever on his teacher and guide, is trained by his suggestions to exact propriety in deed and word. But to think that Wisdom needs a master and teacher to guide aright Its attempts at imitation, is the dream of Eunomius’ fancy, and of his alone. And concerning the Father he says, that He is faithful in words and faithful in works, while of the Son he does not assert faithfulness in word and deed, but only obedience and not faithfulness, so that his profanity extends impartially through all his statements. But it is perhaps right to pass in silence over the inconsiderate folly of the assertion interposed between those last mentioned, lest some unreflecting persons should laugh at its absurdity when they ought rather to weep over the perdition of their souls, than laugh at the folly of their words. For this wise and wary theologian says that He did not attain to being a Son as the result of His obedience! Mark his penetration! with what cogent force does he lay it down for us that He was not first obedient and afterwards a Son, and that we ought not to think that His obedience was prior to His generation! Now if he had not added this defining clause, who without it would have been sufficiently silly and idiotic to fancy that His generation was bestowed on Him by His Father, as a reward of the obedience of Him Who before His generation had showed due subjection and obedience? But that no one may too readily extract matter for laughter from these remarks, let each consider that even the folly of the words has in it something worthy of tears. For what he intends to establish by these observations is something of this kind, that His obedience is part of His nature, so that not even if He willed it would it be possible for Him not to be obedient.

For he says that He was so constituted that His nature was adapted to obedience alone<sup>406</sup>, just as among instruments that which is fashioned with regard to a certain figure necessarily produces in that which is subjected to its operation the form which the artificer implanted in the construction of the instrument, and cannot possibly trace a straight line upon that which receives its mark, if its own working is in a curve; nor can the instrument, if fashioned to draw a straight line, produce a



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404 Ps. cxlviii. 5.

405 Heb. i. 3.

406 If this phrase is a direct quotation from Eunomius, it is probably from some other context: its grammatical structure does not connect it with what has gone before, nor is it quite clear where the quotation ends, or whether the illustration of the instrument is Eunomius’ own, or is Gregory’s exposition of the statement of Eunomius.

circle by its impress. What need is there of any words of ours to reveal how great is the profanity of such a notion, when the heretical utterance of itself proclaims aloud its monstrosity? For if He was obedient for this reason only that He was so made, then of course He is not on an equal footing even with humanity, since on this theory, while our soul is self-determining and independent, choosing as it will with sovereignty over itself that which is pleasing to it, He on the contrary exercises, or rather experiences, obedience under the constraint of a compulsory law of His nature, while His nature suffers Him not to disobey, even if He would. For it was “as the result of being Son, and being begotten, that He has thus shown Himself obedient in words and obedient in acts.” Alas, for the brutish stupidity of this doctrine! Thou makest the Word obedient to words, and supposest other words prior to Him Who is truly the Word, and another Word of the Beginning is mediator between the Beginning and the Word that was in the Beginning, conveying to Him the decision. And this is not one only: there are several words, which Eunomius makes so many links of the chain between the Beginning and the Word, and which abuse His obedience as they think good. But what need is there to linger over this idle talk? Any one can see that even at that time with reference to which S. Paul says that He became obedient (and he tells us that He became obedient in this wise, namely, by becoming for our sakes flesh, and a servant, and a curse, and sin),—even then, I say, the Lord of glory, Who despised the shame and embraced suffering in the flesh, did not abandon His free will, saying as He does, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up<sup>407</sup>,” and again, “No man taketh My life from Me; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again<sup>408</sup>”; and when those who were armed with swords and staves drew near to Him on the night before His Passion, He caused them all to go backward by saying “I am He<sup>409</sup>,” and again, when the dying thief besought Him to remember him, He showed His universal sovereignty by saying, “To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise<sup>410</sup>.” If then not even in the time of His Passion He is separated from His authority, where can heresy possibly discern the subordination to authority of the King of glory?

§12. *He thus proceeds to a magnificent discourse of the interpretation of “Mediator,” “Like,” “Ungenerate,” and “generate,” and of “The likeness and seal of the energy of the Almighty and of His Works.”*

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407 S. John ii. 19

408 S. John x. 18

409 S. John xviii. 5–6.

410 S. Luke xxiii. 43.



Again, what is the manifold mediation which with wearying iteration he assigns to God, calling Him “Mediator in doctrines, Mediator in the Law<sup>411</sup>”? It is not thus that we are taught by the lofty utterance of the Apostle, who says that having made void the law of commandments by His own doctrines, He is the mediator between God and man, declaring it by this saying, “There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus<sup>412</sup>,” where by the distinction implied in the word “mediator” he reveals to us the whole aim of the mystery of godliness. Now the aim is this. Humanity once revolted through the malice of the enemy, and, brought into bondage to sin, was also alienated from the true Life. After this the Lord of the creature calls back to Him His own creature, and becomes Man while still remaining God, being both God and Man in the entirety of the two several natures, and thus humanity was indissolubly united to God, the Man that is in Christ conducting the work of mediation, to Whom, by the first-fruits assumed for us, all the lump is potentially united<sup>413</sup>. Since, then, a mediator is not a mediator of one<sup>414</sup>, and God is one, not divided among the Persons in Whom we have been taught to believe (for the Godhead in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is one), the Lord, therefore, becomes a mediator once for all betwixt God and men, binding man to the Deity by Himself. But even by the idea of a mediator we are taught the godly doctrine enshrined in the Creed. For the Mediator between God and man entered as it were into fellowship with human nature, not by being merely deemed a man, but having truly become so: in like manner also, being very God, He has not, as Eunomius will have us consider, been honoured by the bare title of Godhead.

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What he adds to the preceding statements is characterized by the same want of meaning, or rather by the same malignity of meaning. For in calling Him “Son” Whom, a little before, he had plainly declared to be created, and in calling Him “only begotten God” Whom he reckoned with the rest of things that have come into being by creation, he affirms that He is like Him that begat Him only “by an especial likeness, in a peculiar sense.” Accordingly, we must first distinguish the significations of the term “like,” in how many senses it is employed in ordinary use, and afterwards proceed to discuss Eunomius’ positions. In the first place, then, all things that beguile our senses, not being really identical in nature, but producing illusion by some of the accidents of the respective subjects, as form, colour, sound, and the impressions conveyed by taste or smell or touch, while really different in nature, but supposed to be other than they truly are, these custom declares to have the relation of “likeness,” as, for example, when the lifeless material is shaped by art, whether carving, painting, or modelling, into an imitation of a living creature, the imitation is said to be “like” the original. For in such a case the nature of the animal is one thing, and that of the material, which cheats the sight by mere colour and form, is another. To the same class of likeness belongs

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411 Here again the exact connexion of the quotation from Eunomius with the extracts preceding is uncertain.

412 Cf. 1 Tim. ii. 5

413 Cf. Rom. xi. 16

414 Gal. iii. 20.

the image of the original figure in a mirror, which gives appearances of motion, without, however, being in nature identical with its original. In just the same way our hearing may experience the same deception, when, for instance, some one, imitating the song of the nightingale with his own voice, persuades our hearing so that we seem to be listening to the bird. Taste, again, is subject to the same illusion, when the juice of figs mimics the pleasant taste of honey: for there is a certain resemblance to the sweetness of honey in the juice of the fruit. So, too, the sense of smell may sometimes be imposed upon by resemblance, when the scent of the herb camomile, imitating the fragrant apple itself, deceives our perception: and in the same way with touch also, likeness belies the truth in various modes, since a silver or brass coin, of equal size and similar weight with a gold one, may pass for the gold piece if our sight does not discern the truth.

We have thus generally described in a few words the several cases in which objects, because they are deemed to be different from what they really are, produce delusions in our senses. It is possible, of course, by a more laborious investigation, to extend one's enquiry through all things which are really different in kind one from another, but are nevertheless thought, by virtue of some accidental resemblance, to be like one to the other. Can it possibly be such a form of "likeness" as this, that he is continually attributing to the Son? Nay, surely he cannot be so infatuated as to discover deceptive similarity in Him Who is the Truth. Again, in the inspired Scriptures, we are told of another kind of resemblance by Him Who said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness<sup>415</sup>;" but I do not suppose that Eunomius would discern this kind of likeness between the Father and the Son, so as to make out the Only-begotten God to be identical with man. We are also aware of another kind of likeness, of which the word speaks in Genesis concerning Seth,— "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image<sup>416</sup>"; and if this is the kind of likeness of which Eunomius speaks, we do not think his statement is to be rejected. For in this case the nature of the two objects which are alike is not different, and the impress and type imply community of nature. These, or such as these, are our views upon the variety of meanings of "like." Let us see, then, with what intention Eunomius asserts of the Son that "especial likeness" to the Father, when he says that He is "like the Father with an especial likeness, in a peculiar sense, not as Father to Father, for they are not two Fathers." He promises to show us the "especial likeness" of the Son to the Father, and proceeds by his definition to establish the position that we ought not to conceive of Him as being like. For by saying, "He is not like as Father to Father," he makes out that He is not like; and again when he adds, "nor as Ungenerate to Ungenerate," by this phrase, too, he forbids us to conceive a likeness in the Son to the Father; and finally, by subjoining "nor as Son to Son," he introduces a third conception, by which he entirely subverts the meaning of "like." So it is that he follows up his own statements, and conducts his demonstration of likeness by establishing unlikeness. And now let us examine the discernment and frankness which he displays in these distinctions. After saying that the Son is like the Father, he guards the statement by adding that we ought not to think

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415 Gen. i. 26.

416 Gen. v. 3.



that the Son is like the Father, “as Father to Father.” Why, what man on earth is such a fool as, on learning that the Son is like the Father, to be brought by any course of reasoning to think of the likeness of Father to Father? “Nor as Son to Son”:—here, again, the acuteness of the distinction is equally conspicuous. When he tells us that the Son is like the Father, he adds the further definition that He must not be understood to be like Him in the same way as He would be like another Son. These are the mysteries of the awful doctrines of Eunomius, by which his disciples are made wiser than the rest of the world, by learning that the Son, by His likeness to the Father, is not like a Son, for the Son is not the Father: nor is He like “as Ungenerate to Ungenerate,” for the Son is not ungenerate. But the mystery which we have received, when it speaks of the Father, certainly bids us understand the Father of the Son, and when it names the Son, teaches us to apprehend the Son of the Father. And until the present time we never felt the need of these philosophic refinements, that by the words Father and Son are suggested two Fathers or two Sons, a pair, so to say, of ungenerate beings.

Now the drift of Eunomius’ excessive concern about the Ungenerate has been often explained before; and it shall here be briefly discovered yet again. For as the term Father points to no difference of nature from the Son, his impiety, if he had brought his statement to a close here, would have had no support, seeing that the natural sense of the names Father and Son excludes the idea of their being alien in essence. But as it is, by employing the terms “generate” and “ungenerate,” since the contradictory opposition between them admits of no mean, just like that between “mortal” and “immortal,” “rational” and “irrational,” and all those terms which are opposed to each other by the mutually exclusive nature of their meaning,—by the use of these terms, I repeat, he gives free course to his profanity, so as to contemplate as existing in the “generate” with reference to the “ungenerate” the same difference which there is between “mortal” and “immortal”: and even as the nature of the mortal is one, and that of the immortal another, and as the special attributes of the rational and of the irrational are essentially incompatible, just so he wants to make out that the nature of the ungenerate is one, and that of the generate another, in order to show that as the irrational nature has been created in subjection to the rational, so the generate is by a necessity of its being in a state of subordination to the ungenerate. For which reason he attaches to the ungenerate the name of “Almighty,” and this he does not apply to express providential operation, as the argument led the way for him in suggesting, but transfers the application of the word to arbitrary sovereignty, so as to make the Son to be a part of the subject and subordinate universe, a fellow-slave with all the rest to Him Who with arbitrary and absolute sovereignty controls all alike. And that it is with an eye to this result that he employs these argumentative distinctions, will be clearly established from the passage before us. For after those sapient and carefully-considered expressions, that He is not like either as Father to Father, or as Son to Son,—and yet there is no necessity that father should invariably be like father or son like son: for suppose there is one father among the Ethiopians, and another among the Scythians, and each of these has a son, the Ethiopian’s son black, but the Scythian white-skinned and with hair of a golden tinge, yet none the more because each is a father does the Scythian turn black on the Ethiopian’s account, nor does the Ethiopian’s body change to

white on account of the Scythian,—after saying this, however, according to his own fancy, Eunomius subjoins that “He is like as Son to Father<sup>417</sup>.” But although such a phrase indicates kinship in nature, as the inspired Scripture attests in the case of Seth and Adam, our doctor, with but small respect for his intelligent readers, introduces his idle exposition of the title “Son,” defining Him to be the image and seal of the energy<sup>418</sup> of the Almighty. “For the Son,” he says, “is the image and seal of the energy of the Almighty.” Let him who hath ears to hear first, I pray, consider this particular point—What is “the seal of the energy”? Every energy is contemplated as exertion in the party who exhibits it, and on the completion of his exertion, it has no independent existence. Thus, for example, the energy of the runner is the motion of his feet, and when the motion has stopped there is no longer any energy. So too about every pursuit the same may be said;—when the exertion of him who is busied about anything ceases, the energy ceases also, and has no independent existence, either when a person is actively engaged in the exertion he undertakes, or when he ceases from that exertion. What then does he tell us that the energy is in itself, which is neither essence, nor image, nor person? So he speaks of the Son as the similitude of the impersonal, and that which is like the non-existent surely has itself no existence at all. This is what his juggling with idle opinions comes to,—belief in nonentity! for that which is like nonentity surely itself is not. O Paul and John and all you others of the band of Apostles and Evangelists, who are they that arm their venomous tongues against your words? who are they that raise their frog-like croakings against your heavenly thunder? What then saith the son of thunder? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God<sup>419</sup>.” And what saith he that came after him, that other who had been within the heavenly temple, who in Paradise had been initiated into mysteries unspeakable? “Being,” he says, “the Brightness of His glory, and the express Image of His person<sup>420</sup>.” What, after these have thus spoken, are the words of our ventriloquist<sup>421</sup>? “The seal,” quoth he, “of the energy of the Almighty.” He makes Him third after the Father, with that non-existent energy mediating between them, or rather moulded at pleasure by non-existence. God the Word, Who was in the beginning, is “the seal of the energy”:—the Only-begotten God, Who is contemplated in the eternity of the Beginning of existent things, Who is in the bosom of the Father<sup>422</sup>, Who sustains all things, by the word of His power<sup>423</sup>, the creator of the ages, from Whom and through Whom and in Whom are all things<sup>424</sup>, Who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and hath meted out heaven with the span,

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417 This is apparently a quotation from Eunomius in continuation of what has gone before.

418 The word employed is ἐνέργεια; which might be translated by “active force,” or “operation,” as elsewhere.

419 S. John i. 1

420 Heb. i. 3.

421 Cf. the use of ἐγγαστήριμος in LXX. (e.g. Lev. xix. 31, Is. xliv. 25).

422 S. John i. 18

423 Cf. Heb. i. 3

424 Cf. Rom. xi. 36

Who measureth the water in the hollow of his hand<sup>425</sup>, Who holdeth in His hand all things that are, Who dwelleth on high and looketh upon the things that are lowly<sup>426</sup>, or rather did look upon them to make all the world to be His footstool<sup>427</sup>, imprinted by the footmark of the Word—the form of God<sup>428</sup> is “the seal” of an “energy.” Is God then an energy, not a Person? Surely Paul when expounding this very truth says He is “the express image,” not of His energy, but “of His Person.” Is the Brightness of His glory a seal of the energy of God? Alas for his impious ignorance! What is there intermediate between God and His own form? and Whom does the Person employ as mediator with His own express image? and what can be conceived as coming between the glory and its brightness? But while there are such weighty and numerous testimonies wherein the greatness of the Lord of the creation is proclaimed by those who were entrusted with the proclamation of the Gospel, what sort of language does this forerunner of the final apostasy hold concerning Him? What says he? “As image,” he says, “and seal of all the energy and power of the Almighty.” How does he take upon himself to emend the words of the mighty Paul? Paul says that the Son is “the Power of God<sup>429</sup>”; Eunomius calls Him “the seal of a power,” not the Power. And then, repeating his expression, what is it that he adds to his previous statement? He calls Him “seal of the Father’s works and words and counsels.” To what works of the Father is He like? He will say, of course, the world, and all things that are therein. But the Gospel has testified that all these things are the works of the Only-begotten. To what works of the Father, then, was He likened? of what works was He made the seal? what Scripture ever entitled Him “seal of the Father’s works”? But if any one should grant Eunomius the right to fashion his words at his own will, as he desires, even though Scripture does not agree with him, let him tell us what works of the Father there are of which he says that the Son was made the seal, apart from those that have been wrought by the Son. All things visible and invisible are the work of the Son: in the visible are included the whole world and all that is therein; in the invisible, the supramundane creation. What works of the Father, then, are remaining to be contemplated by themselves, over and above things visible and invisible, whereof he says that the Son was made the “seal”? Will he perhaps, when driven into a corner, return once more to the fetid vomit of heresy, and say that the Son is a work of the Father? How then does the Son come to be the seal of these works when He Himself, as Eunomius says, is the work of the Father? Or does he say that the same Person is at once a work and the likeness of a work? Let this be granted: let us suppose him to speak of the other works of which he says the Father was the creator, if indeed he intends us to understand likeness by the term “seal.” But what other “words” of the Father does Eunomius know, besides that Word Who was ever in the Father, Whom he calls a “seal”—Him Who is and is called the Word in the absolute, true, and primary sense? And to what

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425 Cf. Isa. xl. 12–22.

426 Cf. Ps. cxxxviii. 6.

427 Cf. Isa. lxvi. 1

428 Cf. Phil. ii. 5

429 1 Cor. i. 24.

counsels can he possibly refer, apart from the Wisdom of God, to which the Wisdom of God is made like, in becoming a “seal” of those counsels? Look at the want of discrimination and circumspection, at the confused muddle of his statement, how he brings the mystery into ridicule, without understanding either what he says or what he is arguing about. For He Who has the Father in His entirety in Himself, and is Himself in His entirety in the Father, as Word and Wisdom and Power and Truth, as His express image and brightness, Himself is all things in the Father, and does not come to be the image and seal and likeness of certain other things discerned in the Father prior to Himself.



Then Eunomius allows to Him the credit of the destruction of men by water in the days of Noah, of the rain of fire that fell upon Sodom, and of the just vengeance upon the Egyptians, as though he were making some great concessions to Him Who holds in His hand the ends of the world, in Whom, as the Apostle says, “all things consist<sup>430</sup>,” as though he were not aware that to Him Who encompasses all things, and guides and sways according to His good pleasure all that hath already been and all that will be, the mention of two or three marvels does not mean the addition of glory, so much as the suppression of the rest means its deprivation or loss. But even if no word be said of these, the one utterance of Paul is enough by itself to point to them all inclusively—the one utterance which says that He “is above all, and through all, and in all<sup>431</sup>.”

§13. *He expounds the passage of the Gospel, “The Father judgeth no man,” and further speaks of the assumption of man with body and soul wrought by the Lord, of the transgression of Adam, and of death and the resurrection of the dead.*

Next he says, “He legislates by the command of the Eternal God.” Who is the eternal God? and who is He that ministers to Him in the giving of the Law? Thus much is plain to all, that through Moses God appointed the Law to those that received it. Now inasmuch as Eunomius himself acknowledges that it was the only-begotten God Who held converse with Moses, how is it that the assertion before us puts the Lord of all in the place of Moses, and ascribes the character of the eternal God to the Father alone, so as, by thus contrasting Him with the Eternal, to make out the only-begotten God, the Maker of the Worlds, to be not Eternal? Our studious friend with his excellent memory seems to have forgotten that Paul uses all these terms concerning himself, announcing among men the proclamation of the Gospel by the command of God<sup>432</sup>. Thus what the Apostle asserts of himself, that Eunomius is not ashamed to ascribe to the Lord of the prophets and apostles, in order to place the Master on the same level with Paul, His own servant. But why should I lengthen

430 Col. i. 17.

431 Eph. iv. 6. The application of the words to the Son is remarkable.

432 Cf. Rom. xvi. 26

out my argument by confuting in detail each of these assertions, where the too unsuspecting reader of Eunomius' writings may think that their author is saying what Holy Scripture allows him to say, while one who is able to unravel each statement critically will find them one and all infected with heretical knavery. For the Churchman and the heretic alike affirm that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son"<sup>433</sup>," but to this assertion they severally attach different meanings. By the same words the Churchman understands supreme authority, the other maintains subservience and subjection.

But to what has been already said, ought to be added some notice of that position which they make a kind of foundation of their impiety in their discussions concerning the Incarnation, the position, namely, that not the whole man has been saved by Him, but only the half of man, I mean the body. Their object in such a malignant perversion of the true doctrine, is to show that the less exalted statements, which our Lord utters in His humanity, are to be thought to have issued from the Godhead Itself, that so they may show their blasphemy to have a stronger case, if it is upheld by the actual acknowledgment of the Lord. For this reason it is that Eunomius says, "He who in the last days became man did not take upon Himself the man made up of soul and body." But, after searching through all the inspired and sacred Scripture, I do not find any such statement as this, that the Creator of all things, at the time of His ministration here on earth for man, took upon Himself flesh only without a soul. Under stress of necessity, then, looking to the object contemplated by the plan of salvation, to the doctrines of the Fathers, and to the inspired Scriptures, I will endeavour to confute the impious falsehood which is being fabricated with regard to this matter. The Lord came "to seek and to save that which was lost"<sup>434</sup>." Now it was not the body merely, but the whole man, compacted of soul and body, that was lost: indeed, if we are to speak more exactly, the soul was lost sooner than the body. For disobedience is a sin, not of the body, but of the will: and the will properly belongs to the soul, from which the whole disaster of our nature had its beginning, as the threat of God, that admits of no falsehood, testifies in the declaration that, in the day that they should eat of the forbidden fruit, death without respite would attach to the act. Now since the condemnation of man was twofold, death correspondingly effects in each part of our nature the deprivation of the twofold life that operates in him who is thus mortally stricken. For the death of the body consists in the extinction of the means of sensible perception, and in the dissolution of the body into its kindred elements: but "the soul that sinneth," he saith, "it shall die"<sup>435</sup>." Now sin is nothing else than alienation from God, Who is the true and only life. Accordingly the first man lived many hundred years after his disobedience, and yet God lied not when He said, "In the day that ye eat thereof ye shall surely die"<sup>436</sup>." For by the fact of his alienation from the true

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433 S. John v. 22

434 Cf. S. Luke xix. 10

435 Ezek. xviii. 20.

436 Cf. Gen. ii. 17

life, the sentence of death was ratified against him that self-same day: and after this, at a much later time, there followed also the bodily death of Adam. He therefore Who came for this cause that He might seek and save that which was lost, (that which the shepherd in the parable calls the sheep,) both finds that which is lost, and carries home on His shoulders the whole sheep, not its skin only, that He may make the man of God complete, united to the deity in body and in soul. And thus He Who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, left no part of our nature which He did not take upon Himself. Now the soul is not sin though it is capable of admitting sin into it as the result of being ill-advised: and this He sanctifies by union with Himself for this end, that so the lump may be holy along with the first-fruits. Wherefore also the Angel, when informing Joseph of the destruction of the enemies of the Lord, said, "They are dead which sought the young Child's life<sup>437</sup>," (or "soul"): and the Lord says to the Jews, "Ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth<sup>438</sup>." Now by "Man" is not meant the body of a man only, but that which is composed of both, soul and body. And again, He says to them, "Are ye angry at Me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day<sup>439</sup>?" And what He meant by "every whit whole," He showed in the other Gospels, when He said to the man who was let down on a couch in the midst, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," which is a healing of the soul, and, "Arise and walk<sup>440</sup>," which has regard to the body: and in the Gospel of S. John, by liberating the soul also from its own malady after He had given health to the body, where He saith, "Thou art made whole, sin no more<sup>441</sup>," thou, that is, who hast been cured in both, I mean in soul and in body. For so too does S. Paul speak, "for to make in Himself of twain one new man<sup>442</sup>." And so too He foretells that at the time of His Passion He would voluntarily detach His soul from His body, saying, "No man taketh" my soul "from Me, but I lay it down of Myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again<sup>443</sup>." Yea, the prophet David also, according to the interpretation of the great Peter, said with foresight of Him, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption<sup>444</sup>," while the Apostle Peter thus expounds the saying, that "His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption." For His Godhead, alike before taking flesh and in the flesh and after His Passion, is immutably the same, being at all times what It was by nature, and so continuing for ever. But in the suffering of His human nature the Godhead fulfilled the dispensation for our benefit by severing the soul for a season from the body, yet without being Itself separated

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437 S. Matt. ii. 20. The word ψυχὴν may be rendered by either "life" or "soul."

438 S. John viii. 40. This is the only passage in which our Lord speaks of Himself by this term.

439 S. John vii. 20

440 Cf. S. Luke v. 20, 23, and the parallel passages in S. Matt. ix. and S. Mark ii.

441 S. John v. 14

442 Eph. ii. 15.

443 Cf. S. John x. 17, 18. Here again the word ψυχὴν is rendered in the A.V. by "life."

444 Ps. xvi. 8. Acts ii. 27, 31.



from either of those elements to which it was once for all united, and by joining again the elements which had been thus parted, so as to give to all human nature a beginning and an example which it should follow of the resurrection from the dead, that all the corruptible may put on incorruption, and all the mortal may put on immortality, our first-fruits having been transformed to the Divine nature by its union with God, as Peter said, “This same Jesus Whom ye crucified, hath God made both Lord and Christ<sup>445</sup>,” and we might cite many passages of Scripture to support such a position, showing how the Lord, reconciling the world to Himself by the Humanity of Christ, apportioned His work of benevolence to men between His soul and His body, willing through His soul and touching them through His body. But it would be superfluous to encumber our argument by entering into every detail.

Before passing on, however, to what follows, I will further mention the one text, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up<sup>446</sup>.” Just as we, through soul and body, become a temple of Him Who “dwelleth in us and walketh in us<sup>447</sup>,” even so the Lord terms their combination a “temple,” of which the “destruction” signifies the dissolution of the soul from the body. And if they allege the passage in the Gospel, “The Word was made flesh<sup>448</sup>,” in order to make out that the flesh was taken into the Godhead without the soul, on the ground that the soul is not expressly mentioned along with the flesh, let them learn that it is customary for Holy Scripture to imply the whole by the part. For He that said, “Unto Thee shall all flesh come<sup>449</sup>,” does not mean that the flesh will be presented before the Judge apart from the souls: and when we read in sacred History that Jacob went down into Egypt with seventy-five souls<sup>450</sup> we understand the flesh also to be intended together with the souls. So, then, the Word, when He became flesh, took with the flesh the whole of human nature; and hence it was possible that hunger and thirst, fear and dread, desire and sleep, tears and trouble of spirit, and all such things, were in Him. For the Godhead, in its proper nature, admits no such affections, nor is the flesh by itself involved in them, if the soul is not affected co-ordinately with the body.



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§14. *He proceeds to discuss the views held by Eunomius, and by the Church, touching the Holy Spirit; and to show that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are not three Gods, but one God. He also discusses different senses of “Subjection,” and therein shows that the subjection of all things to the Son is the same as the subjection of the Son to the Father.*

445 Acts ii. 36. A further exposition of Gregory’s views on this passage will be found in Book V.

446 S. John ii. 19

447 Cf. 2 Cor. vi. 16.

448 S. John i. 14

449 Ps. lxxv. 2.

450 Acts vii. 14. Cf. Gen. xlvi. 27, and Deut. x. 22.

Thus much with regard to his profanity towards the Son. Now let us see what he says about the Holy Spirit. "After Him, we believe," he says, "on the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth." I think it will be plain to all who come across this passage what object he has in view in thus perverting the declaration of the faith delivered to us by the Lord, in his statements concerning the Son and the Father. Though this absurdity has already been exposed, I will nevertheless endeavour, in few words, to make plain the aim of his knavery. As in the former case, he avoided using the name "Father," that so he might not include the Son in the eternity of the Father, so he avoided employing the title Son, that he might not by it suggest His natural affinity to the Father; so here, too, he refrains from saying "Holy Spirit," that he may not by this name acknowledge the majesty of His glory, and His complete union with the Father and the Son. For since the appellation of "Spirit," and that of "Holy," are by the Scriptures equally applied to the Father and the Son (for "God is a Spirit"<sup>451</sup>, and "the anointed Lord is the Spirit before our face"<sup>452</sup>, and "the Lord our God is Holy"<sup>453</sup>, and there is "one Holy, one Lord Jesus Christ"<sup>454</sup>) lest there should, by the use of these terms, be bred in the minds of his readers some orthodox conception of the Holy Spirit, such as would naturally arise in them from His sharing His glorious appellation with the Father and the Son, for this reason, deluding the ears of the foolish, he changes the words of the Faith as set forth by God in the delivery of this mystery, making a way, so to speak, by this sequence, for the entrance of his impiety against the Holy Spirit. For if he had said, "We believe in the Holy Spirit," and "God is a Spirit," any one instructed in things divine would have interposed the remark, that if we are to believe in the Holy Spirit, while God is called a Spirit, He is assuredly not distinct in nature from that which receives the same titles in a proper sense. For of all those things which are indicated not unreally, nor metaphorically, but properly and absolutely, by the same names, we are necessarily compelled to acknowledge that the nature also, which is signified by this identity of names, is one and the same. For this reason it is that, suppressing the name appointed by the Lord in the formula of the faith, he says, "We believe in the Comforter." But I have been taught that this very name is also applied by the inspired Scripture to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost alike. For the Son gives the name of "Comforter" equally to Himself and to the Holy Spirit<sup>455</sup>; and the Father, where He is said to work comfort, surely claims as His own the name of "Comforter." For assuredly he Who does the work of a Comforter does not disdain the name belonging to the work: for David says to the Father, "Thou, Lord, hast holpen me and comforted me"<sup>456</sup>, and the great Apostle applies to the Father the same language, when he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who

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451 S. John iv. 24

452 Cf. Lam. iv. 20 in LXX.

453 Ps. xcix. 9.

454 Cf. the response to the words of the Priest at the elevation the Gifts in the Greek Liturgies.

455 S. John xiv. 16

456 Ps. lxxvi. 17.

comforteth us in all our tribulation<sup>457</sup>”; and John, in one of his Catholic Epistles, expressly gives to the Son the name of Comforter<sup>458</sup>. Nay, more, the Lord Himself, in saying that *another* Comforter would be sent us, when speaking of the Spirit, clearly asserted this title of Himself in the first place. But as there are two senses of the word παρακαλεῖν<sup>459</sup>,—one to *beseech*, by words and gestures of respect, to induce him to whom we apply for anything, to feel with us in respect of those things for which we apply,—the other to *comfort*, to take remedial thought for affections of body and soul,—the Holy Scripture affirms the conception of the Paraclete, in either sense alike, to belong to the Divine nature. For at one time Paul sets before us by the word παρακαλεῖν the healing power of God, as when he says, “God, Who comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus<sup>460</sup>”; and at another time he uses this word in its other meaning, when he says, writing to the Corinthians, “Now we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God<sup>461</sup>.” Now since these things are so, in whatever way you understand the title “Paraclete,” when used of the Spirit, you will not in either of its significations detach Him from His community in it with the Father and the Son. Accordingly, he has not been able, even though he wished it, to belittle the glory of the Spirit by ascribing to Him the very attribute which Holy Scripture refers also to the Father and to the Son. But in styling Him “the Spirit of Truth,” Eunomius’ own wish, I suppose, was to suggest by this phrase subjection, since Christ is the Truth, and he called Him the Spirit of Truth, as if one should say that He is a possession and chattel of the Truth, without being aware that God is called a God of righteousness<sup>462</sup>; and we certainly do not understand thereby that God is a possession of righteousness. Wherefore also, when we hear of the “Spirit of Truth,” we acquire by that phrase such a conception as befits the Deity, being guided to the loftier interpretation by the words which follow it. For when the Lord said “The Spirit of Truth,” He immediately added “Which proceedeth from the Father<sup>463</sup>,” a fact which the voice of the Lord never asserted of any conceivable thing in creation, not of aught visible or invisible, not of thrones, principalities, powers, or dominions, nor of any other name that is named either in this world or in that which is to come. It is plain then that that, from share in which all creation is excluded, is something special and peculiar to uncreated being. But this man bids us believe in “the Guide of godliness.” Let a man then believe in Paul, and Barnabas, and Titus, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, and all those by whom we have been led into the way of the faith. For if

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457 2 Cor. i. 3–4.

458 1 S. John ii. 1. (The word is in the A.V. rendered “advocate.”)

459 From which is derived the name Paraclete, *i.e.* Comforter or Advocate.

460 2 Cor. vii. 6.

461 2 Cor. v. 20.

462 The text reads, “that God is called righteousness,” but the argument seems to require the genitive case. The reference may be to Ps. iv. 1.

463 S. John xv. 26

we are to believe in “that which guides us to godliness,” along with the Father and the Son, all the prophets and lawgivers and patriarchs, heralds, evangelists, apostles, pastors, and teachers, have equal honour with the Holy Spirit, as they have been “guides to godliness” to those who came after them. “Who came into being,” he goes on, “by the only God through the Only-begotten.” In these words he gathers up in one head all his blasphemy. Once more he calls the Father “only God,” who employs the Only-begotten as an instrument for the production of the Spirit. What shadow of such a notion did he find in Scripture, that he ventures upon this assertion? by deduction from what premises did he bring his profanity to such a conclusion as this? Which of the Evangelists says it? what apostle? what prophet? Nay, on the contrary every scripture divinely inspired, written by the afflatus of the Spirit, attests the Divinity of the Spirit. For example (for it is better to prove my position from the actual testimonies), those who receive power to become children of God bear witness to the Divinity of the Spirit. Who knows not that utterance of the Lord which tells us that they who are born of the Spirit are the children of God? For thus He expressly ascribes the birth of the children of God to the Spirit, saying, that as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, so that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. But as many as are born of the Spirit are called the children of God<sup>464</sup>. So also when the Lord by breathing upon His disciples had imparted to them the Holy Spirit, John says, “Of His fulness have all we received<sup>465</sup>.” And that “in Him dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead<sup>466</sup>,” the mighty Paul attests: yea, moreover, through the prophet Isaiah it is attested, as to the manifestation of the Divine appearance vouchsafed to him, when he saw Him that sat “on the throne high and lifted up<sup>467</sup>,” the older tradition, it is true, says that it was the Father Who appeared to him, but the evangelist John refers the prophecy to our Lord, saying, touching those of the Jews who did not believe the words uttered by the prophet concerning the Lord, “These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory and spoke of Him<sup>468</sup>.” But the mighty Paul attributes the same passage to the Holy Spirit in his speech made to the Jews at Rome, when he says, “Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet concerning you, saying, Hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand<sup>469</sup>,” showing, in my opinion, by Holy Scripture itself, that every specially divine vision, every theophany, every word uttered in the Person of God, is to be understood to refer to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Hence when David says, “they provoked God in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert<sup>470</sup>,” the apostle refers to the Holy Spirit the despite done by the Israelites to God, in these terms: “Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, Harden not your hearts, as in the

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464 With this passage cf. S. John i. 12, iii. 6; Rom. viii. 14; 1 S. John iii. 3.

465 S. John xx. 21, and i. 16.

466 Col. ii. 9.

467 Is. vi. 1.

468 S. John xii. 41. The “older tradition” means presumably the ancient interpretation of the Jews.

469 Cf. Acts xxviii. 25, 26. The quotation is not verbal.

470 Cf. Ps. lxxviii. 40.

provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me<sup>471</sup>,” and goes on to refer all that the prophecy refers to God, to the Person of the Holy Ghost. Those who keep repeating against us the phrase “three Gods,” because we hold these views, have perhaps not yet learnt how to count. For if the Father and the Son are not divided into duality, (for they are, according to the Lord’s words, One, and not Two<sup>472</sup>) and if the Holy Ghost is also one, how can one added to one be divided into the number of three Gods? Is it not rather plain that no one can charge us with believing in the number of three Gods, without himself first maintaining in his own doctrine a pair of Gods? For it is by being added to two that the one completes the triad of Gods. But what room is there for the charge of tritheism against those by whom one God is worshipped, the God expressed by the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost?

Let us however resume Eunomius’ statement in its entirety. “Having come into being from the only God through the Only-begotten, this Spirit also—” What proof is there of the statement that “this Spirit also” is one of the things that were made by the Only-begotten? They will say of course that “all things were made by Him<sup>473</sup>,” and that in the term “all things” “this Spirit also” is included. Our answer to them shall be this, All things were made by Him, that were made. Now the things that were made, as Paul tells us, were things visible and invisible, thrones, authorities, dominions, principalities, powers, and among those included under the head of thrones and powers are reckoned by Paul the Cherubim and Seraphim<sup>474</sup>: so far does the term “all things” extend. But of the Holy Spirit, as being above the nature of things that have come into being, Paul said not a word in his enumeration of existing things, not indicating to us by his words either His subordination or His coming into being; but just as the prophet calls the Holy Spirit “good,” and “right,” and “guiding<sup>475</sup>” (indicating by the word “guiding” the power of control), even so the apostle ascribes independent authority to the dignity of the Spirit, when he affirms that He works all in all as He wills<sup>476</sup>. Again, the Lord makes manifest the Spirit’s independent power and operation in His discourse with Nicodemus, when He says, “The Spirit breatheth where He willeth<sup>477</sup>.” How is it then that Eunomius goes so far as to define that He also is one of the things that came into being by the Son, condemned to eternal subjection. For he describes Him as “once for all made subject,” enthralling the guiding and governing Spirit in I know not what form of subjection. For this expression of “subjection”

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471 Heb. iii. 7.

472 S. John x. 30

473 Cf. S. John i. 3

474 Cf. Col. i. 16; but the enumeration varies considerably.

475 The last of these epithets is from Ps. li. 14 (πνεῦμα ἡγεμονικόν, the “Spiritus principalis” of the Vulgate, the “free spirit” of the English version); the “right spirit” of ver. 12 being also applied by S. Gregory to the Holy Spirit, while the epithet “good” is from Ps. cxlii. 10.

476 Cf. 1 Cor. xii. 11.

477 S. John iii. 8

has many significations in Holy Scripture, and is understood and used with many varieties of meaning. For the Psalmist says that even irrational nature is put in subjection<sup>478</sup>, and brings under the same term those who are overcome in war<sup>479</sup>, while the apostle bids servants to be in subjection to their own masters<sup>480</sup>, and that those who are placed over the priesthood should have their children in subjection<sup>481</sup>, as their disorderly conduct brings discredit upon their fathers, as in the case of the sons of Eli the priest. Again, he speaks of the subjection of all men to God, when we all, being united to one another by the faith, become one body of the Lord Who is in all, as the subjection of the Son to the Father, when the adoration paid to the Son by all things with one accord, by things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, redounds to the glory of the Father; as Paul says elsewhere, “To Him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father<sup>482</sup>.” For when this takes place, the mighty wisdom of Paul affirms that the Son, Who is in all, is subject to the Father by virtue of the subjection of those in whom He is. What kind of “subjection once for all” Eunomius asserts of the Holy Spirit, it is thus impossible to learn from the phrase which he has thrown out,—whether he means the subjection of irrational creatures, or of captives, or of servants, or of children who are kept in order, or of those who are saved by subjection. For the subjection of men to God is salvation for those who are so made subject, according to the voice of the prophet, who says that his soul is subject to God, since of Him cometh salvation by subjection<sup>483</sup>, so that subjection is the means of averting perdition. As therefore the help of the healing art is sought eagerly by the sick, so is subjection by those who are in need of salvation. But of what life does the Holy Spirit, that quickeneth all things, stand in need, that by subjection He should obtain salvation for Himself? Since then it is not on the strength of any Divine utterance that he asserts such an attribute of the Spirit, nor yet is it as a consequence of probable arguments that he has launched this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, it must be plain at all events to sensible men that he vents his impiety against Him without any warrant whatsoever, unsupported as it is by any authority from Scripture or by any logical consequence.



§15. *Lastly he displays at length the folly of Eunomius, who at times speaks of the Holy Spirit as created, and as the fairest work of the Son, and at other times confesses, by the operations attributed to Him, that He is God, and thus ends the book.*

478 Ps. viii. 7, 8.

479 Ps. xlvii. 3.

480 Tit. ii. 9.

481 1 Tim. iii. 4.

482 Cf. Phil. ii. 10, 11, a passage which is apparently considered as explanatory of 1 Cor. xv. 28.

483 Cf. Ps. lxii. 1 (LXX.).

He goes on to add, “Neither on the same level with the Father, nor connumerated with the Father (for God over all is one and only Father), nor on an equality with the Son, for the Son is only-begotten, having none begotten with Him.” Well, for my own part, if he had only added to his previous statement the remark that the Holy Ghost is not the Father of the Son, I should even then have thought it idle for him to linger over what no one ever doubted, and forbid people to form notions of Him which not even the most witless would entertain. But since he endeavours to establish his impiety by irrelevant and unconnected statements, imagining that by denying the Holy Spirit to be the Father of the Only-begotten he makes out that He is subject and subordinate, I therefore made mention of these words, as a proof of the folly of the man who imagines that he is demonstrating the Spirit to be subject to the Father on the ground that the Spirit is not Father of the Only-begotten. For what compels the conclusion, that if He be not Father, He must be subject? If it had been demonstrated that “Father” and “despot” were terms identical in meaning, it would no doubt have followed that, as absolute sovereignty was part of the conception of the Father, we should affirm that the Spirit is subject to Him Who surpassed Him in respect of authority. But if by “Father” is implied merely His relation to the Son, and no conception of absolute sovereignty or authority is involved by the use of the word, how does it follow, from the fact that the Spirit is not the Father of the Son, that the Spirit is subject to the Father? “Nor on an equality with the Son,” he says. How comes he to say this? for to be, and to be unchangeable, and to admit no evil whatsoever, and to remain unalterably in that which is good, all this shows no variation in the case of the Son and of the Spirit. For the incorruptible nature of the Spirit is remote from corruption equally with that of the Son, and in the Spirit, just as in the Son, His essential goodness is absolutely apart from its contrary, and in both alike their perfection in every good stands in need of no addition.

Now the inspired Scripture teaches us to affirm all these attributes of the Spirit, when it predicates of the Spirit the terms “good,” and “wise,” and “incorruptible,” and “immortal,” and all such lofty conceptions and names as are properly applied to Godhead. If then He is inferior in none of these respects, by what means does Eunomius determine the inequality of the Son and the Spirit? “For the Son is,” he tells us, “Only-begotten, having no brother begotten with Him.” Well, the point, that we are not to understand the “Only-begotten” to have brethren, we have already discussed in our comments upon the phrase “first-born of all creation<sup>484</sup>.” But we ought not to leave unexamined the sense that Eunomius now unfairly attaches to the term. For while the doctrine of the Church declares that in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost there is one power, and goodness, and essence, and glory, and the like, saving the difference of the Persons, this man, when he wishes to make the essence of the Only-begotten common to the creation, calls Him “the first-born of all creation” in respect of His pre-temporal existence, declaring by this mode of expression that all conceivable objects in creation are in brotherhood with the Lord; for assuredly the first-born is not

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484 See above, §8 of this book.

the first-born of those otherwise begotten, but of those begotten like Himself<sup>485</sup>. But when he is bent upon severing the Spirit from union with the Son, he calls Him “Only-begotten, not having any brother begotten with Him,” not with the object of conceiving of Him as without brethren, but that by the means of this assertion he may establish touching the Spirit His essential alienation from the Son. It is true that we learn from Holy Scripture not to speak of the Holy Ghost as brother of the Son: but that we are not to say that the Holy Ghost is homogeneous<sup>486</sup> with the Son, is nowhere shown in the divine Scriptures. For if there does reside in the Father and the Son a life-giving power, it is ascribed also to the Holy Spirit, according to the words of the Gospel. If one may discern alike in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit the properties of being incorruptible, immutable, of admitting no evil, of being good, right, guiding, of working all in all as He wills, and all the like attributes, how is it possible by identity in these respects to infer difference in kind? Accordingly the word of godliness agrees in affirming that we ought not to regard any kind of brotherhood as attaching to the Only-begotten; but to say that the Spirit is not homogeneous with the Son, the upright with the upright, the good with the good, the life-giving with the life-giving, this has been clearly demonstrated by logical inference to be a piece of heretical knavery.

Why then is the majesty of the Spirit curtailed by such arguments as these? For there is nothing which can be the cause of producing in him deviation by excess or defect from conceptions such as befit the Godhead, nor, since all these are by Holy Scripture predicated equally of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, can he inform us wherein he discerns inequality to exist. But he launches his blasphemy against the Holy Ghost in its naked form, ill-prepared and unsupported by any consecutive argument. “Nor yet ranked,” he says, “with any other: for He has gone above<sup>487</sup> all the creatures that came into being by the instrumentality of the Son in mode of being, and nature, and glory, and knowledge, as the first and noblest work of the Only-begotten, the greatest and most glorious.” I will leave, however, to others the task of ridiculing the bad taste and surplusage of his style, thinking as I do that it is unseemly for the gray hairs of age, when dealing with the argument before us, to make vulgarity of expression an objection against one who is guilty of impiety. I will just add to my investigation this remark. If the Spirit has “gone above” all the creations of the Son, (for I will use his own ungrammatical and senseless phrase, or rather, to make things clearer, I will present his idea in my own language) if he transcends all things wrought by the Son, the Holy Spirit cannot be ranked with the rest of the creation; and if, as Eunomius says, he surpasses them by virtue of priority of birth, he must needs confess, in the case of the rest of creation, that the objects which are first in order of production are more to be esteemed than those which come after them. Now the creation of the irrational animals was prior to that of man. Accordingly he will of course declare

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<sup>485</sup> Or, “not the first-born of beings of a different race, but of those of his own stock.”

<sup>486</sup> ὁμογενῆ, “of the same stock”: the word being the same which (when coupled with ἀδελφὸν) has been translated, in the passages preceding, by “begotten with.”

<sup>487</sup> ἀναβέβηκε: the word apparently is intended by Eunomius to have the force of “transcended”; Gregory, later on, criticizes its employment in this sense.



that the irrational nature is more honourable than rational existence. So too, according to the argument of Eunomius, Cain will be proved superior to Abel, in that he was before him in time of birth, and so the stars will be shown to be lower and of less excellence than all the things that grow out of the earth; for these last sprang from the earth on the third day, and all the stars are recorded by Moses to have been created on the fourth. Well, surely no one is such a simpleton as to infer that the grass of the earth is more to be esteemed than the marvels of the sky, on the ground of its precedence in time, or to award the meed to Cain over Abel, or to place below the irrational animals man who came into being later than they. So there is no sense in our author's contention that the nature of the Holy Spirit is superior to that of the creatures that came into being subsequently, on the ground that He came into being before they did. And now let us see what he who separates Him from fellowship with the Son is prepared to concede to the glory of the Spirit: "For he too," he says, "being one, and first and alone, and surpassing all the creations of the Son in essence and dignity of nature, accomplishing every operation and all teaching according to the good pleasure of the Son, being sent by Him, and receiving from Him, and declaring to those who are instructed, and guiding into truth." He speaks of the Holy Ghost as "accomplishing every operation and all teaching." What operation? Does he mean that which the Father and the Son execute, according to the word of the Lord Himself Who "hitherto worketh"<sup>488</sup> man's salvation, or does he mean some other? For if His work is that named, He has assuredly the same power and nature as Him Who works it, and in such an one difference of kind from Deity can have no place. For just as, if anything should perform the functions of fire, shining and warming in precisely the same way, it is itself certainly fire, so if the Spirit does the works of the Father, He must assuredly be acknowledged to be of the same nature with Him. If on the other hand He operates something else than our salvation, and displays His operation in a contrary direction, He will thereby be proved to be of a different nature and essence. But Eunomius' statement itself bears witness that the Spirit quickeneth in like manner with the Father and the Son. Accordingly, from the identity of operations it results assuredly that the Spirit is not alien from the nature of the Father and the Son. And to the statement that the Spirit accomplishes the operation and teaching of the Father according to the good pleasure of the Son we assent. For the community of nature gives us warrant that the will of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is one, and thus, if the Holy Spirit wills that which seems good to the Son, the community of will clearly points to unity of essence. But he goes on, "being sent by Him, and receiving from Him, and declaring to those who are instructed, and guiding into truth." If he had not previously said what he has concerning the Spirit, the reader would surely have supposed that these words applied to some human teacher. For to receive a mission is the same thing as to be sent, and to have nothing of one's own, but to receive of the free favour of him who gives the mission, and to minister his words to those who are under instruction, and to be a guide into truth for those that are astray. All these things, which Eunomius is good enough to allow to the Holy

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488 S. John v. 17



Spirit, belong to the present pastors and teachers of the Church,—to be sent, to receive, to announce, to teach, to suggest the truth. Now, as he had said above “He is one, and first, and alone, and surpassing all,” had he but stopped there, he would have appeared as a defender of the doctrines of truth. For He Who is indivisibly contemplated in the One is most truly One, and first Who is in the First, and alone Who is in the Only One. For as the spirit of man that is in him, and the man himself, are but one man, so also the Spirit of God which is in Him, and God Himself, would properly be termed One God, and First and Only, being incapable of separation from Him in Whom He is. But as things are, with his addition of his profane phrase, “surpassing all the creatures of the Son,” he produces turbid confusion by assigning to Him Who “breatheth where He willeth<sup>489</sup>,” and “worketh all in all<sup>490</sup>,” a mere superiority in comparison with the rest of created things.

Let us now see further what he adds to this “sanctifying the saints.” If any one says this also of the Father and of the Son, he will speak truly. For those in whom the Holy One dwells, He makes holy, even as the Good One makes men good. And the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are holy and good, as has been shown. “Acting as a guide to those who approach the mystery.” This may well be said of Apollos who watered what Paul planted. For the Apostle plants by his guidance<sup>491</sup>, and Apollos, when he baptizes, waters by Sacramental regeneration, bringing to the mystery those who were instructed by Paul. Thus he places on a level with Apollos that Spirit Who perfects men through baptism. “Distributing every gift.” With this we too agree; for everything that is good is a portion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. “Co-operating with the faithful for the understanding and contemplation of things appointed.” As he does not add by whom they are appointed, he leaves his meaning doubtful, whether it is correct or the reverse. But we will by a slight addition advance his statement so as to make it consistent with godliness. For since, whether it be the word of wisdom, or the word of knowledge, or faith, or help, or government, or aught else that is enumerated in the lists of saving gifts, “all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will<sup>492</sup>,” we therefore do not reject the statement of Eunomius when he says that the Spirit “co-operates with the faithful for understanding and contemplation of things appointed” by Him, because by Him all good teachings are appointed for us. “Sounding an accompaniment to those who pray.” It would be foolish seriously to examine the meaning of this expression, of which the ludicrous and meaningless character is at once manifest to all. For who is so demented and beside himself as to wait for us to tell him that the Holy Spirit is not a bell nor an empty cask sounding an accompaniment and made to ring by the voice of him who prays as it were by a blow? “Leading us to that which is expedient for us.” This the Father and the Son likewise

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489 S. John iii. 8

490 1 Cor. xii. 6.

491 If we read *κατηχσέως* for the *καθηγησέως* of Oehler’s text we have a clearer sense, “the Apostle plants by his instruction.”

492 1 Cor. xii. 11.

do: for “He leadeth Joseph like a sheep<sup>493</sup>,” and, “led His people like sheep<sup>494</sup>,” and, “the good Spirit leadeth us in a land of righteousness<sup>495</sup>.” “Strengthening us to godliness.” To strengthen man to godliness David says is the work of God; “For Thou art my strength and my refuge<sup>496</sup>,” says the Psalmist, and “the Lord is the strength of His people<sup>497</sup>,” and, “He shall give strength and power unto His people<sup>498</sup>.” If then the expressions of Eunomius are meant in accordance with the mind of the Psalmist, they are a testimony to the Divinity of the Holy Ghost: but if they are opposed to the word of prophecy, then by this very fact a charge of blasphemy lies against Eunomius, because he sets up his own opinions in opposition to the holy prophets. Next he says, “Lightening souls with the light of knowledge.” This grace also the doctrine of godliness ascribes alike to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. For He is called a light by David<sup>499</sup>, and from thence the light of knowledge shines in them who are enlightened. In like manner also the cleansing of our thoughts of which the statement speaks is proper to the power of the Lord. For it was “the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of His person,” Who “purged our sins<sup>500</sup>.” Again, to banish devils, which Eunomius says is a property of the Spirit, this also the only-begotten God, Who said to the devil, “I charge thee<sup>501</sup>,” ascribes to the power of the Spirit, when He says, “If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils<sup>502</sup>,” so that the expulsion of devils is not destructive of the glory of the Spirit, but rather a demonstration of His divine and transcendent power. “Healing the sick,” he says, “curing the infirm, comforting the afflicted, raising up those who stumble, recovering the distressed.” These are the words of those who think reverently of the Holy Ghost, for no one would ascribe the operation of any one of these effects to any one except to God. If then heresy affirms that those things which it belongs to none save God alone to effect, are wrought by the power of the Spirit, we have in support of the truths for which we are contending the witness even of our adversaries. How does the Psalmist seek his healing from God, saying, “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed<sup>503</sup>!” It is to God that Isaiah says, “The dew that is from Thee is healing unto them<sup>504</sup>.” Again, prophetic language attests that the conversion of those




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493 Ps. lxxx. 1.  
 494 Ps. lxxvii. 20.  
 495 Cf. Ps. cxliii. 10.  
 496 Cf. Ps. xxxi. 3  
 497 Ps. xxviii. 8.  
 498 Ps. lxviii. 35.  
 499 Ps. xxvii. 1.  
 500 Heb. i. 3.  
 501 Cf. S. Mark ix. 25  
 502 S. Matt. xii. 28.  
 503 Ps. vi. 3.  
 504 Is. xxvi. 19 (LXX).

in error is the work of God. For “they went astray in the wilderness in a thirsty land,” says the Psalmist, and he adds, “So He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to the city where they dwelt<sup>505</sup>.” and, “when the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion<sup>506</sup>.” In like manner also the comfort of the afflicted is ascribed to God, Paul thus speaking, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who comforteth us in all our tribulation<sup>507</sup>.” Again, the Psalmist says, speaking in the person of God, “Thou calledst upon Me in trouble and I delivered thee<sup>508</sup>.” And the setting upright of those who stumble is innumerable times ascribed by Scripture to the power of the Lord: “Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall, but the Lord was my help<sup>509</sup>,” and “Though he fall, he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand<sup>510</sup>,” and “The Lord helpeth them that are fallen<sup>511</sup>.” And to the loving-kindness of God confessedly belongs the recovery of the distressed, if Eunomius means the same thing of which we learn in prophecy, as the Scripture says, “Thou laidest trouble upon our loins; Thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and water, and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place<sup>512</sup>.”

Thus far then the majesty of the Spirit is demonstrated by the evidence of our opponents, but in what follows the limpid waters of devotion are once more defiled by the mud of heresy. For he says of the Spirit that He “cheers on those who are contending”: and this phrase involves him in the charge of extreme folly and impiety. For in the stadium some have the task of arranging the competitions between those who intend to show their athletic vigour; others, who surpass the rest in strength and skill, strive for the victory and strip to contend with one another, while the rest, taking sides in their good wishes with one or other of the competitors, according as they are severally disposed towards or interested in one athlete or another, cheer him on at the time of the engagement, and bid him guard against some hurt, or remember some trick of wrestling, or keep himself unthrown by the help of his art. Take note from what has been said to how low a rank Eunomius degrades the Holy Spirit. For while on the course there are some who arrange the contests, and others who settle whether the contest is conducted according to rule, others who are actually engaged, and yet others who cheer on the competitors, who are acknowledged to be far inferior to the athletes themselves, Eunomius considers the Holy Spirit as one of the mob who look on, or as one of those who attend upon the athletes, seeing that He neither determines the contest nor awards the victory, nor contends with the adversary, but merely cheers without contributing at all to the victory. For

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505 Ps. cviii. 4–7.  
 506 Ps. cxxvi. 1.  
 507 2 Cor. i. 3, 4.  
 508 Ps. lxxxi. 17.  
 509 Ps. cxviii. 13.  
 510 Ps. xxxvii. 24.  
 511 Ps. cxlvi. 8.  
 512 Ps. lxvi. 10, 11.

He neither joins in the fray, nor does He implant the power to contend, but merely wishes that the athlete in whom He is interested may not come off second in the strife. And so Paul wrestles “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places<sup>513</sup>,” while the Spirit of power does not strengthen the combatants nor distribute to them His gifts, “dividing to every man severally as He will<sup>514</sup>,” but His influence is limited to cheering on those who are engaged.

Again he says, “Emboldening the faint-hearted.” And here, while in accordance with his own method he follows his previous blasphemy against the Spirit, the truth for all that manifests itself, even through unfriendly lips. For to none other than to God does it belong to implant courage in the fearful, saying to the faint-hearted, “Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed<sup>515</sup>,” as says the Psalmist, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me<sup>516</sup>.” Nay, the Lord Himself says to the fearful,—“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid<sup>517</sup>,” and, “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith<sup>518</sup>?” and, “Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid<sup>519</sup>,” and again, “Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world<sup>520</sup>.” Accordingly, even though this may not have been the intention of Eunomius, orthodoxy asserts itself by means even of the voice of an enemy. And the next sentence agrees with that which went before:—“Caring for all, and showing all concern and forethought.” For in fact it belongs to God alone to care and to take thought for all, as the mighty David has expressed it, “I am poor and needy, but the Lord careth for me<sup>521</sup>.” And if what remains seems to be resolved into empty words, with sound and without sense, let no one find fault, seeing that in most of what he says, so far as any sane meaning is concerned, he is feeble and untutored. For what on earth he means when he says, “for the onward leading of the better disposed and the guardianship of the more faithful,” neither he himself, nor they who senselessly admire his follies, could possibly tell us.

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513 Eph. vi. 12.

514 1 Cor. xii. 11.

515 Is. xli. 10.

516 Ps. xxiii. 4.

517 S. John xiv. 27

518 S. Matt. viii. 26.

519 S. Mark vi. 50

520 S. John xvi. 33

521 Ps. xl. 20.



## Book III.

§1. *This third book shows a third fall of Eunomius, as refuting himself, and sometimes saying that the Son is to be called Only-begotten in virtue of natural generation, and that Holy Scripture proves this from the first; at other times, that by reason of His being created He should not be called a Son, but a “product,” or “creature.”*

IF, when a man “strives lawfully<sup>522</sup>,” he finds a limit to his struggle in the contest by his adversary’s either refusing the struggle, and withdrawing of his own accord in favour of his conqueror from his effort for victory, or being thrown according to the rules of wrestling in three falls (whereby the glory of the crown is bestowed with all the splendour of proclamation upon him who has proved victorious in the umpire’s judgment), then, since Eunomius, though he has been already twice thrown in our previous arguments, does not consent that truth should hold the tokens of her victory over falsehood, but yet a third time raises the dust against godly doctrine in his accustomed arena of falsehood with his composition, strengthening himself for his struggle on the side of deceit, our statement of truth must also be now called forth to put his falsehood to rout, placing its hopes in Him Who is the Giver and the Judge of victory, and at the same time deriving strength from the very unfairness of the adversaries’ tricks of wrestling. For we are not ashamed to confess that we have prepared for our contest no weapon of argument sharpened by rhetoric, that we can bring forward to aid us in the fight with those arrayed against us, no cleverness or sharpness of dialectic, such as with inexperienced judges lays even on truth the suspicion of falsehood. One strength our reasoning against falsehood has—first the very Word Himself, Who is the might of our word,<sup>523</sup> and in the next place the rottenness of the arguments set against us, which is overthrown and falls by its own spontaneous action. Now in order that it may be made as clear as possible to all men, that the very efforts of Eunomius serve as means for his own overthrow to those who contend with him, I will set forth to my readers his phantom doctrine (for so I think that doctrine may be called which is quite outside the truth), and I would have you all, who are present at our struggle, and watch the encounter now taking place between my doctrine and that which is matched with it, to be just judges of the lawful striving of our arguments, that by your just award the reasoning of godliness may be proclaimed as victor to the whole theatre of the Church, having won undisputed victory over ungodliness, and being decorated, in virtue of the three falls of its enemy, with the unfading crown of them that are saved. Now this statement is set forth against the truth by way of preface to his third discourse, and this is the fashion of it:—“Preserving,” he says, “natural order, and abiding by those things which are known to us from above, we do not refuse to speak of the

<sup>522</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>523</sup> The earlier editions here omit a long passage, which Oehler restores.

Son, seeing He is begotten, even by the name of ‘product of generation<sup>524</sup>,’ since the generated essence and<sup>525</sup> the appellation of Son make such a relation of words appropriate.” I beg the reader to give his attention carefully to this point, that while he calls God both “begotten” and “Son,” he refers the reason of such names to “natural order,” and calls to witness to this conception the knowledge possessed from above: so that if anything should be found in the course of what follows contrary to the positions he has laid down, it is clear to all that he is overthrown by himself, refuted by his own arguments before ours are brought against him. And so let us consider his statement in the light of his own words. He confesses that the name of “Son” would by no means be properly applied to the Only-begotten God, did not “natural order,” as he says, confirm the appellation. If, then, one were to withdraw the order of nature from the consideration of the designation of “Son,” his use of this name, being deprived of its proper and natural significance, will be meaningless. And moreover the fact that he says these statements are confirmed, in that they abide by the knowledge possessed from above, is a strong additional support to the orthodox view touching the designation of “Son,” seeing that the inspired teaching of the Scriptures, which comes to us from above, confirms our argument on these matters. If these things are so, and this is a standard of truth that admits of no deception, that these two concur—the “natural order,” as he says, and the testimony of the knowledge given from above confirming the natural interpretation—it is clear, that to assert anything contrary to these, is nothing else than manifestly to fight against the truth itself. Let us hear again what this writer, who makes nature his instructor in the matter of this name, and says that he abides by the knowledge given to us from above by the instruction<sup>526</sup> of the saints, sets out at length a little further on, after the passage I have just quoted. For I will pretermit for the time the continuous recital of what is set next in order in his treatise, that the contradiction in what he has written may not escape detection, being veiled by the reading of the intervening matter. “The same argument,” he says, “will apply also in the case of what is made and created, as both the natural interpretation and the mutual relation of the things, and also the use of the saints, give us free authority for the use of the formula: wherefore one would not be wrong in treating the thing made as corresponding to the maker, and the thing created to the creator.” Of what product of making or of creation does he speak, as having naturally the relation expressed in its name towards its maker and creator? If of those we contemplate in the creation, visible and invisible (as Paul recounts, when he says that by Him all things were created, visible and invisible)<sup>526</sup>, so that this relative conjunction of names has a proper and special application, that which is made being set in relation to the maker, that which is created to the creator,—if this is his meaning, we agree with him. For in fact, since the Lord is the Maker of angels, the angel is assuredly a thing made by Him that made



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<sup>524</sup> γέννημα.

<sup>525</sup> Inserting καὶ, which does not appear here in Oehler’s text, but is found in later quotations of the same passage: αὐτῆς is also found in the later citations.

<sup>526</sup> Cf. Col. i. 16

him: and since the Lord is the Creator of the world, clearly the world itself and all that is therein are called the creature of Him that created them. If however it is with this intention that he makes his interpretation of “natural order,” systematizing the appropriation of relative terms with a view to their mutual relation in verbal sense, even thus it would be an extraordinary thing, seeing that every one is aware of this, that he should leave his doctrinal statement to draw out for us a system of grammatical trivialities<sup>527</sup>. But if it is to the Only-begotten God that he applies such phrases, so as to say that He is a thing made by Him that made Him, a creature of Him that created Him, and to refer this terminology to “the use of the saints,” let him first of all show us in his statement what saints he says there are who declared the Maker of all things to be a product and a creature, and whom he follows in this audacity of phrase. The Church knows as saints those whose hearts were divinely guided by the Holy Spirit,—patriarchs, lawgivers, prophets, evangelists, apostles. If any among these is found to declare in his inspired words that God over all, Who “upholds all things with the word of His power,” and grasps with His hand all things that are, and by Himself called the universe into being by the mere act of His will, is a thing created and a product, he will stand excused, as following, as he says, the “use of the saints<sup>528</sup>” in proceeding to formulate such doctrines. But if the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is freely placed within the reach of all, and nothing is forbidden to or hidden from any of those who choose to share in the divine instruction, how comes it that he endeavours to lead his hearers astray by his misrepresentation of the Scriptures, referring the term “creature,” applied to the Only-begotten, to “the use of the saints”? For that by Him all things were made, you may hear almost from the whole of their holy utterance, from Moses and the prophets and apostles who come after him, whose particular expressions it would be tedious here to set forth. Enough for our purpose, with the others, and above the others, is the sublime John, where in the preface to his discourse on the Divinity of the Only-begotten he proclaims aloud the fact that there is none of the things that were made which was not made through Him<sup>529</sup>, a fact which is an incontestable and positive proof of His being Lord of the creation, not reckoned in the list of created things. For if all things that are made exist by no other but by Him (and John bears witness that nothing among the things that are, throughout the creation, was made without Him), who is so blinded in understanding as not to see in the Evangelist’s proclamation the truth, that He Who made all the creation is assuredly something else besides the creation? For if all that is numbered among the things that were made has its being through Him, while He Himself is “in the beginning,” and is “with God,” being God, and Word, and Life, and Light, and express Image, and

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<sup>527</sup> Oehler’s punctuation here seems to admit of alteration.

<sup>528</sup> Reading τῆ χρήσει τῶν ἁγίων for τῆ κρίσει τῶν ἁγίων, the reading of Oehler: the words are apparently a quotation from Eunomius, from whom the phrase χρήσις τῶν ἁγίων has already been cited.

<sup>529</sup> Cf. S. John i. 3





Brightness, and if none of the things that were made throughout creation is named by the same names—(not Word, not God, not Life, not Light, not Truth, not express Image, not Brightness, not any of the other names proper to the Deity is to be found employed of the creation)—then it is clear that He Who is these things is by nature something else besides the creation, which neither is nor is called any of these things. If, indeed, there existed in such phrases an identity of names between the creation and its Maker, he might perhaps be excused for making the name of “creation” also common to the thing created and to Him Who made it, on the ground of the community of the other names: but if the characteristics which are contemplated by means of the names, in the created and in the uncreated nature, are in no case reconcilable or common to both, how can the misrepresentation of that man fail to be manifest to all, who dares to apply the name of servitude to Him Who, as the Psalmist declares, “ruleth with His power for ever<sup>530</sup>,” and to bring Him Who, as the Apostle says, “in all things hath the pre-eminence<sup>531</sup>,” to a level with the servile nature, by means of the name and conception of “creation”? For that all<sup>532</sup> the creation is in bondage the great Paul declares<sup>533</sup>,— he who in the schools above the heavens was instructed in that knowledge which may not be spoken, learning these things in that place where every voice that conveys meaning by verbal utterance is still, and where unspoken meditation becomes the word of instruction, teaching to the purified heart by means of the silent illumination of the thoughts those truths which transcend speech. If then on the one hand Paul proclaims aloud “the creation is in bondage,” and on the other the Only-begotten God is truly Lord and God over all, and John bears witness to the fact that the whole creation of the things that were made is by Him, how can any one, who is in any sense whatever numbered among Christians, hold his peace when he sees Eunomius, by his inconsistent and inconsequent systematizing, degrading to the humble state of the creature, by means of an identity of name that tends to servitude, that power of Lordship which surpasses all rule and all authority? And if he says that he has some of the saints who declared Him to be a slave, or created, or made, or any of these lowly and servile names, lo, here are the Scriptures. Let him, or some other on his behalf, produce to us one such phrase, and we will hold our peace. But if there is no such phrase (and there could never be found in those inspired Scriptures which we believe any such thought as to support this impiety), what need is there to strive further upon points admitted with one who not only misrepresents the words of the saints, but even contends against his own definitions? For if the “order of nature,” as he himself admits, bears additional testimony to the Son’s name by reason of His being begotten, and thus the correspondence of the name is according to the relation of the Begotten to the Begetter, how comes it that he wrests the significance of the word “Son” from its natural application, and changes the relation to “the thing made and its maker”—a relation which

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<sup>530</sup> Ps. lxxvi. 6 (LXX.).

<sup>531</sup> Col. i. 18.

<sup>532</sup> Substituting *πάσαν* for the *πᾶσιν* of Oehler’s text.

<sup>533</sup> Rom. viii. 21.

applies not only in the case of the elements of the universe, but might also be asserted of a gnat or an ant—that in so far as each of these is a thing made, the relation of its name to its maker is similarly equivalent? The blasphemous nature of his doctrine is clear, not only from many other passages, but even from those quoted: and as for that “use of the saints” which he alleges that he follows in these expressions, it is clear that there is no such use at all.

§2. *He then once more excellently, appropriately, and clearly examines and expounds the passage, “The Lord Created Me.”*

Perhaps that passage in the Proverbs might be brought forward against us which the champions of heresy are wont to cite as a testimony that the Lord was created—the passage, “The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways, for His works<sup>534</sup>.” For because these words are spoken by Wisdom, and the Lord is called Wisdom by the great Paul<sup>535</sup>, they allege this passage as though the Only-begotten God Himself, under the name of Wisdom, acknowledges that He was created by the Maker of all things. I imagine, however, that the godly sense of this utterance is clear to moderately attentive and painstaking persons, so that, in the case of those who are instructed in the dark sayings of the Proverbs, no injury is done to the doctrine of the faith. Yet I think it well briefly to discuss what is to be said on this subject, that when the intention of this passage is more clearly explained, the heretical doctrine may have no room for boldness of speech on the ground that it has evidence in the writing of the inspired author. It is universally admitted that the name of “proverb,” in its scriptural use, is not applied with regard to the evident sense, but is used with a view to some hidden meaning, as the Gospel thus gives the name of “proverbs<sup>536</sup>” to dark and obscure sayings; so that the “proverb,” if one were to set forth the interpretation of the name by a definition, is a form of speech which, by means of one set of ideas immediately presented, points to something else which is hidden, or a form of speech which does not point out the aim of the thought directly, but gives its instruction by an indirect signification. Now to this book such a name is especially attached as a title, and the force of the appellation is at once interpreted in the preface by the wise Solomon. For he does not call the sayings in this book “maxims,” or “counsels,” or “clear instruction,” but “proverbs,” and proceeds to add an explanation. What is the force of the signification of this word? “To know,” he tells us, “wisdom and instruction<sup>537</sup>”; not setting before us the course of instruction in wisdom according to the method common in other kinds of learning; he bids a man, on the other



534 Prov. viii. 22 (LXX.). On this passage see also Book II. §10.

535 1 Cor. i. 24.

536 E. g. S. John xvii. 25.

537 Prov. i. 2.

hand<sup>538</sup>, first to become wise by previous training, and then so to receive the instruction conveyed by proverb. For he tells us that there are “words of wisdom” which reveal their aim “by a turn<sup>539</sup>.” For that which is not directly understood needs some turn for the apprehension of the thing concealed; and as Paul, when about to exchange the literal sense of the history for figurative contemplation, says that he will “change his voice<sup>540</sup>,” so here the manifestation of the hidden meaning is called by Solomon a “turn of the saying,” as if the beauty of the thoughts could not be perceived, unless one were to obtain a view of the revealed brightness of the thought by turning the apparent meaning of the saying round about, as happens with the plumage with which the peacock is decked behind. For in him, one who sees the back of his plumage quite despises it for its want of beauty and tint, as a mean sight; but if one were to turn it round and show him the other view of it, he then sees the varied painting of nature, the half-circle shining in the midst with its dye of purple, and the golden mist round the circle ringed round and glistening at its edge with its many rainbow hues. Since then there is no beauty in what is obvious in the saying (for “all the glory of the king’s daughter is within<sup>541</sup>,” shining with its hidden ornament in golden thoughts), Solomon of necessity suggests to the readers of this book “the turn of the saying,” that thereby they may “understand a parable and a dark saying, words of the wise and riddles<sup>542</sup>.” Now as this proverbial teaching embraces these elements, a reasonable man will not receive any passage cited from this book, be it never so clear and intelligible at first sight, without examination and inspection; for assuredly there is some mystical contemplation underlying even those passages which seem manifest. And if the obvious passages of the work necessarily demand a somewhat minute scrutiny, how much more do those passages require it where even immediate apprehension presents to us much that is obscure and difficult?

Let us then begin our examination from the context of the passage in question, and see whether the reading of the neighbouring clauses gives any clear sense. The discourse describes Wisdom as uttering certain sayings in her own person. Every student knows what is said in the passage<sup>543</sup> where Wisdom makes counsel her dwelling-place, and calls to her knowledge and understanding, and says that she has as a possession strength and prudence (while she is herself called intelligence), and that she walks in the ways of righteousness and has her conversation in the ways of just judgment, and declares that by her kings reign, and princes write the decree of equity, and monarchs win possession of their own land. Now every one will see that the considerate reader will receive none of the phrases quoted without scrutiny according to the obvious sense. For if by her kings are

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538 The hiatus in the Paris editions ends here.

539 Cf. Prov. i. 3 (LXX.).

540 Gal. iv. 20.

541 Ps. xlv. 13 (LXX.).

542 Prov. i. 6 (LXX.).

543 Compare with what follows Prov. viii. 12, *sqq.* (LXX.).

advanced to their rule, and if from her monarchy derives its strength, it follows of necessity that Wisdom is displayed to us as a king-maker, and transfers to herself the blame of those who bear evil rule in their kingdoms. But we know of kings who in truth advance under the guidance of Wisdom to the rule that has no end—the poor in spirit, whose possession is the kingdom of heaven<sup>544</sup>, as the Lord promises, Who is the Wisdom of the Gospel: and such also we recognize as the princes who bear rule over their passions, who are not enslaved by the dominion of sin, who inscribe the decree of equity upon their own life, as it were upon a tablet. Thus, too, that laudable despotism which changes, by the alliance of Wisdom, the democracy of the passions into the monarchy of reason, brings into bondage what were running unrestrained into mischievous liberty, I mean all carnal and earthly thoughts: for “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit<sup>545</sup>,” and rebels against the government of the soul. Of this land, then, such a monarch wins possession, whereof he was, according to the first creation, appointed as ruler by the Word.

Seeing then that all reasonable men admit that these expressions are to be read in such a sense as this, rather than in that which appears in the words at first sight, it is consequently probable that the phrase we are discussing, being written in close connection with them, is not received by prudent men absolutely and without examination. “If I declare to you,” she says, “the things that happen day by day, I will remember to recount the things from everlasting: the Lord created me<sup>546</sup>.” What, pray, has the slave of the literal text, who sits listening closely to the sound of the syllables, like the Jews, to say to this phrase? Does not the conjunction, “If I declare to you the things that happen day by day, the Lord created me,” ring strangely in the ears of those who listen attentively? as though, if she did not declare the things that happen day by day, she will by consequence deny absolutely that she was created. For he who says, “If I declare, I was created,” leaves you by his silence to understand, “I was not created, if I do not declare.” “The Lord created me,” she says, “in the beginning of His ways, for His works. He set me up from everlasting, in the beginning, before He made the earth, before He made the depths, before the springs of the waters came forth, before the mountains were settled, before all hills, He begetteth me<sup>547</sup>.” What new order of the formation of a creature is this? First it is created, and after that it is set up, and then it is begotten. “The Lord made,” she says, “lands, even uninhabited, and the inhabited extremes of the earth under heaven<sup>548</sup>.” Of what Lord does she speak as the maker of land both uninhabited and inhabited? Of Him surely, who made wisdom. For both the one saying and the other are uttered by the same person; both that which says, “the Lord created me,” and that which adds, “the Lord made land, even uninhabited.” Thus the Lord will be the maker equally of both, of Wisdom herself, and of the inhabited and uninhabited land. What then are we to make of the saying, “All things were made by Him, and



544 S. Matt. v. 3

545 Gal. v. 17.

546 Prov. viii. 21–22 (LXX.).

547 Prov. viii. 22 *sqq.* (LXX.).

548 Prov. viii. 26 (LXX.).

without Him was not anything made<sup>549</sup>”? For if one and the same Lord creates both Wisdom (which they advise us to understand of the Son), and also the particular things which are included in the Creation, how does the sublime John speak truly, when he says that all things were made by Him? For this Scripture gives a contrary sound to that of the Gospel, in ascribing to the Creator of Wisdom the making of land uninhabited and inhabited. So, too, with all that follows<sup>550</sup>:—she speaks of a Throne of God set apart upon the winds, and says that the clouds above are made strong, and the fountains under the heaven sure; and the context contains many similar expressions, demanding in a marked degree that interpretation by a minute and clear-sighted intelligence, which is to be observed in the passages already quoted. What is the throne that is set apart upon the winds? What is the security of the fountains under the heaven? How are the clouds above made strong? If any one should interpret the passage with reference to visible objects<sup>551</sup>, he will find that the facts are at considerable variance with the words. For who knows not that the extreme parts of the earth under heaven, by excess in one direction or in the other, either by being too close to the sun’s heat, or by being too far removed from it, are uninhabitable; some being excessively dry and parched, other parts superabounding in moisture, and chilled by frost, and that only so much is inhabited as is equally removed from the extreme of each of the two opposite conditions? But if it is the midst of the earth that is occupied by man, how does the proverb say that the extremes of the earth under heaven are inhabited? Again, what strength could one perceive in the clouds, that that passage may have a true sense, according to its apparent intention, which says that the clouds above have been made strong? For the nature of cloud is a sort of rather slight vapour diffused through the air, which, being light, by reason of its great subtilty, is borne on the breath of the air, and, when forced together by compression, falls down through the air that held it up, in the form of a heavy drop of rain. What then is the strength in these, which offer no resistance to the touch? For in the cloud you may discern the slight and easily dissolved character of air. Again, how is the Divine throne set apart on the winds that are by nature unstable? And as for her saying at first that she is “created,” finally, that she is “begotten,” and between these two utterances that she is “set up,” what account of this could any one profess to give that would agree with the common and obvious sense? The point also on which a doubt was previously raised in our argument, the declaring, that is, of the things that happen day by day, and the remembering to recount the things from everlasting, is, as it were, a condition of Wisdom’s assertion that she was created by God.

Thus, since it has been clearly shown by what has been said, that no part of this passage is such that its language should be received without examination and reflection, it may be well, perhaps, as with the rest, so not to interpret the text, “The Lord created me,” according to that sense which immediately presents itself to us from the phrase, but to seek with all attention and care what is to be piously understood from the utterance. Now, to apprehend perfectly the sense of the passage

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549 S. John i. 3

550 Cf. Prov. viii. 27–8 (LXX.).

551 Or “according to the apparent sense.”



before us, would seem to belong only to those who search out the depths by the aid of the Holy Spirit, and know how to speak in the Spirit the divine mysteries: our account, however, will only busy itself with the passage in question so far as not to leave its drift entirely unconsidered. What, then, is our account? It is not, I think, possible that that wisdom which arises in any man from divine illumination should come alone, apart from the other gifts of the Spirit, but there must needs enter in therewith also the grace of prophecy. For if the apprehension of the truth of the things that are is the peculiar power of wisdom, and prophecy includes the clear knowledge of the things that are about to be, one would not be possessed of the gift of wisdom in perfection, if he did not further include in his knowledge, by the aid of prophecy, the future likewise. Now, since it is not mere human wisdom that is claimed for himself by Solomon, who says, “God hath taught me wisdom<sup>552</sup>,” and who, where he says “all my words are spoken from God<sup>553</sup>,” refers to God all that is spoken by himself, it might be well in this part of the Proverbs to trace out the prophecy that is mingled with his wisdom. But we say that in the earlier part of the book, where he says that “Wisdom has builded herself a house<sup>554</sup>,” he refers darkly in these words to the preparation of the flesh of the Lord: for the trite Wisdom did not dwell in another’s building, but built for Itself that dwelling-place from the body of the Virgin. Here, however, he adds to his discourse<sup>555</sup> that which of both is made one—of the house, I mean, and of the Wisdom which built the house, that is to say, of the Humanity and of the Divinity that was commingled with man<sup>556</sup>; and to each of these he applies suitable and fitting terms, as you may see to be the case also in the Gospels, where the discourse, proceeding as befits its subject, employs the more lofty and divine phraseology to indicate the Godhead, and that which is humble and lowly to indicate the Manhood. So we may see in this passage also Solomon prophetically moved, and delivering to us in its fulness the mystery of the Incarnation<sup>557</sup>. For we speak first of the eternal power and energy of Wisdom; and here the evangelist, to a certain extent, agrees with him in his very words. For as the latter in his comprehensive<sup>558</sup> phrase proclaimed Him

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552 Prov. xxx. 3 (LXX. ch. xxiv.).

553 Prov. xxxi. 1 (LXX. ch. xxiv.). The ordinary reading in the LXX. seems to be ὑπὸ θεοῦ, while Oehler retains in his text of Greg. Nyss. the ἀπὸ θεοῦ of the Paris editions.

554 Prov. ix. 1, which seems to be spoken of as “earlier” in contrast, not with the main passage under examination, but with those just cited.

555 If προσιθῆσι be the right reading, it would almost seem that Gregory had forgotten the order of the passages, and supposed Prov. viii. 22 to have been written *after* Prov. ix. 1. To read προσιθῆσι, (“presents to us”) would get rid of this difficulty, but it may be that Gregory only intends to point out that the idea of the union of the two natures, from which the “communicatio idiomatum” results, is distinct from that of the preparation for the Nativity, not to insist upon the order in which, as he conceives, they are set forth in the book of Proverbs.

556 ἀνακραθείσης τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ

557 τῆς οἰκονομίας

558 περιληπτῆ appears to be used as equivalent to περιληπτικῆ

to be the cause and Maker of all things, so Solomon says that by Him were made those individual things which are included in the whole. For he tells us that God by Wisdom established the earth, and in understanding prepared the heavens, and all that follows these in order, keeping to the same sense: and that he might not seem to pass over without mention the gift of excellence in men, he again goes on to say, speaking in the person of Wisdom, the words we mentioned a little earlier; I mean, “I made counsel my dwelling-place, and knowledge, and understanding<sup>559</sup>,” and all that relates to instruction in intellect and knowledge.

After recounting these and the like matters, he proceeds to introduce also his teaching concerning the dispensation with regard to man, why the Word was made flesh. For seeing that it is clear to all that God Who is over all has in Himself nothing as a thing created or imported, not power nor wisdom, nor light, nor word, nor life, nor truth, nor any at all of those things which are contemplated in the fulness of the Divine bosom (all which things the Only-begotten God is, Who is in the bosom of the Father<sup>560</sup>, the name of “creation” could not properly be applied to any of those things which are contemplated in God, so that the Son Who is in the Father, or the Word Who is in the Beginning, or the Light Who is in the Light, or the Life Who is in the Life, or the Wisdom Who is in the Wisdom, should say, “the Lord created me.” For if the Wisdom of God is created (and Christ is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God<sup>561</sup>), God, it would follow, has His Wisdom as a thing imported, receiving afterwards, as the result of making, something which He had not at first. But surely He Who is in the bosom of the Father does not permit us to conceive the bosom of the Father as ever void of Himself. He Who is in the beginning is surely not of the things which come to be in that bosom from without, but being the fulness of all good, He is conceived as being always in the Father, not waiting to arise in Him as the result of creation, so that the Father should not be conceived as at any time void of good, but He Who is conceived as being in the eternity of the Father’s Godhead is always in Him, being Power, and Life, and Truth, and Wisdom, and the like. Accordingly the words “created me” do not proceed from the Divine and immortal nature, but from that which was commingled with it in the Incarnation from our created nature. How comes it then that the same, called wisdom, and understanding, and intelligence, establishes the earth, and prepares the heavens, and breaks up the deeps, and yet is here “created for the beginning of His works<sup>562</sup>”? Such a dispensation, he tells us, is not set forward without great cause. But since men, after receiving the commandment of the things we should observe, cast away by disobedience the grace of memory, and became forgetful, for this cause, “that I may declare to you the things that happen day by day for your salvation, and may put you in mind by recounting the things from everlasting, which you have forgotten (for it is no new gospel that I now proclaim, but I labour at your restoration to your first estate),—for this cause I was created, Who ever am, and need no creation in order to be; so



559 Cf. Prov. viii. 12 (LXX.).

560 S. John i. 18

561 1 Cor. i. 24.

562 The quotation is an inexact reproduction of Prov. viii. 22 (LXX.).

that I am the beginning of ways for the works of God, that is for men. For the first way being destroyed, there must needs again be consecrated for the wanderers a new and living way<sup>563</sup>, even I myself, Who am the way.” And this view, that the sense of “created me” has reference to the Humanity, the divine apostle more clearly sets before us by his own words when he charges us, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ<sup>564</sup>,” and also where (using the same word) he says, “Put on the new man which after God is created.<sup>565</sup>” For if the garment of salvation is one, and that is Christ, one cannot say that “the new man, which after God is created,” is any other than Christ, but it is clear that he who has “put on Christ” has “put on the new man which after God is created.” For actually He alone is properly named “the new man,” Who did not appear in the life of man by the known and ordinary ways of nature, but in His case alone creation, in a strange and special form, was instituted anew. For this reason he names the same Person, when regarding the wonderful manner of His birth<sup>566</sup>, “the new man, which after God is created,” and, when looking to the Divine nature, which was blended<sup>567</sup> in the creation of this “new man,” he calls Him “Christ”: so that the two names (I mean the name of “Christ” and the name of “the new man which after God is created”) are applied to one and the same Person.

Since, then, Christ is Wisdom, let the intelligent reader consider our opponent’s account of the matter, and our own, and judge which is the more pious, which better preserves in the text those conceptions which are befitting the Divine nature; whether that which declares the Creator and Lord of all to have been made, and places Him on a level with the creation that is in bondage, or that rather which looks to the Incarnation, and preserves the due proportion with regard to our conception alike of the Divinity and of the Humanity, bearing in mind that the great Paul testifies in favour of our view, who sees in the “new man” creation, and in the true Wisdom the power of creation. And, further, the order of the passage agrees with this view of the doctrine it conveys. For if the “beginning of the ways” had not been created among us, the foundation of those ages for which we look would not have been laid; nor would the Lord have become for us “the Father of the age to come<sup>568</sup>,” had not a Child been born to us, according to Isaiah, and His name been called, both all the other titles which the prophet gives Him, and withal “The Father of the age to come.” Thus first there came to pass the mystery wrought in virginity, and the dispensation of the Passion, and then the wise master-builders of the Faith laid the foundation of the Faith: and this is Christ, the Father of the age to come, on Whom is built the life of the ages that have no end. And when this has come to pass, to the end that in each individual believer may be wrought the divine decrees

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<sup>563</sup> Cf. Heb. x. 20

<sup>564</sup> Rom. xiii. 14.

<sup>565</sup> Eph. iv. 24.

<sup>566</sup> γεννησέως

<sup>567</sup> ἐγκραθεῖσαν

<sup>568</sup> Is. ix. 6 (LXX.). “The Everlasting Father” of the English Version.



of the Gospel law, and the varied gifts of the Holy Spirits—(all which the divine Scripture figuratively names, with a suitable significance, “mountains” and “hills,” calling righteousness the “mountains” of God, and speaking of His judgments as “deeps”<sup>569</sup>,” and giving the name of “earth” to that which is sown by the Word and brings forth abundant fruit; or in that sense in which we are taught by David to understand peace by the “mountains,” and righteousness by the “hills”<sup>570</sup>),—Wisdom is begotten in the faithful, and the saying is found true. For He Who is in those who have received Him, is not yet begotten in the unbelieving. Thus, that these things may be wrought in us, their Maker must be begotten in us. For if Wisdom is begotten in us, then in each of us is prepared by God both land, and land uninhabited,—the land, that which receives the sowing and the ploughing of the Word, the uninhabited land, the heart cleared of evil inhabitants,—and thus our dwelling will be upon the extreme parts of the earth. For since in the earth some is depth, and some is surface, when a man is not buried in the earth, or, as it were, dwelling in a cave by reason of thinking of things beneath (as is the life of those who live in sin, who “stick fast in the deep mire where no ground is”<sup>571</sup>,” whose life is truly a pit, as the Psalm says, “let not the pit shut her mouth upon me”<sup>572</sup>)—if, I say, a man, when Wisdom is begotten in him, thinks of the things that are above, and touches the earth only so much as he needs must, such a man inhabits “the extreme parts of the earth under heavens,” not plunging deep in earthly thought; with him Wisdom is present, as he prepares in himself heaven instead of earth: and when, by carrying out the precepts into act, he makes strong for himself the instruction of the clouds above, and, enclosing the great and widespread sea of wickedness, as it were with a beach, by his exact conversation, hinders the troubled water from proceeding forth from his mouth; and if by the grace of instruction he be made to dwell among the fountains, pouring forth the stream of his discourse with sure caution, that he may not give to any man for drink the turbid fluid of destruction in place of pure water, and if he be lifted up above all earthly paths and become aerial in his life, advancing towards that spiritual life which he speaks of as “the winds,” so that he is set apart to be a throne of Him Who is seated in him (as was Paul separated for the Gospel to be a chosen vessel to bear the name of God, who, as it is elsewhere expressed, was made a throne, bearing Him that sat upon him)—when, I say, he is established in these and like ways, so that he who has already fully made up in himself the land inhabited by God, now rejoices in gladness that he is made the father, not of wild and senseless beasts, but of men (and these would be godlike thoughts, which are fashioned according to the Divine image, by faith in Him Who has been created and begotten, and set up in us;—and faith, according to the words of Paul, is conceived as the foundation whereby wisdom is begotten in the faithful, and all the things that I have spoken of are wrought)—then, I say, the life of the man who has been thus established is truly blessed, for Wisdom is at all times in agreement with him, and

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569 Cf. Ps. xxxvi. 6

570 Ps. lxxii. 3.

571 Ps. lxix. 2.

572 Ps. lxix. 16.

rejoices with him who daily finds gladness in her alone. For the Lord rejoices in His saints, and there is joy in heaven over those who are being saved, and Christ, as the father, makes a feast for his rescued son. Though we have spoken hurriedly of these matters, let the careful man read the original text of the Holy Scripture, and fit its dark sayings to our reflections, testing whether it is not far better to consider that the meaning of these dark sayings has this reference, and not that which is attributed to it at first sight. For it is not possible that the theology of John should be esteemed true, which recites that all created things are the work of the Word, if in this passage He Who created Wisdom be believed to have made together with her all other things also. For in that case all things will not be by her, but she will herself be counted with the things that were made.

And that this is the reference of the enigmatical sayings is clearly revealed by the passage that follows, which says, “Now therefore hearken unto me, my son: and blessed is he that keepeth my ways<sup>573</sup>,” meaning of course by “ways” the approaches to virtue, the beginning of which is the possession of Wisdom. Who, then, who looks to the divine Scripture, will not agree that the enemies of the truth are at once impious and slanderous?—impious, because, so far as in them lies, they degrade the unspeakable glory of the Only-begotten God, and unite it with the creation, striving to show that the Lord Whose power over all things is only-begotten, is one of the things that were made by Him: slanderous, because, though Scripture itself gives them no ground for such opinions, they arm themselves against piety as though they drew their evidence from that source. Now since they can by no means show any passage of the Holy Scriptures which leads us to look upon the pre-temporal glory of the Only-begotten God in conjunction with the subject creation, it is well, these points being proved, that the tokens of victory over falsehood should be adduced as testimony to the doctrine of godliness, and that sweeping aside these verbal systems of theirs by which they make the creature answer to the creator, and the thing made to the maker, we should confess, as the Gospel from heaven teaches us, the well-beloved Son—not a bastard, not a counterfeit; but that, accepting with the name of Son all that naturally belongs to that name, we should say that He Who is of Very God is Very God, and that we should believe of Him all that we behold in the Father, because They are One, and in the one is conceived the other, not overpassing Him, not inferior to Him, not altered or subject to change in any Divine or excellent property.

§3. *He then shows, from the instance of Adam and Abel, and other examples, the absence of alienation of essence in the case of the “generate” and “ungenerate.”*

Now seeing that Eunomius’ conflict with himself has been made manifest, where he has been shown to contradict himself, at one time saying, “He ought to be called ‘Son,’ according to nature, because He is begotten,” at another that, because He is created, He is no more called “Son,” but a “product,” I think it right that the careful and attentive reader, as it is not possible, when two

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<sup>573</sup> Prov. viii. 32 (not verbally agreeing with the LXX.).

statements are mutually at variance, that the truth should be found equally in both, should reject of the two that which is impious and blasphemous—that, I mean, with regard to the “creature” and the “product,” and should assent to that only which is of orthodox tendency, which confesses that the appellation of “Son” naturally attaches to the Only-begotten God: so that the word of truth would seem to be recommended even by the voice of its enemies.

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I resume my discourse, however, taking up that point of his argument which we originally set aside. “We do not refuse,” he says, “to call the Son, seeing He is generate, even by the name of ‘product of generation<sup>574</sup>,’ since the generated essence itself, and the appellation of ‘Son,’ make such a relation of words appropriate.” Meanwhile let the reader who is critically following the argument remember this, that in speaking of the “generated essence” in the case of the Only-begotten, he by consequence allows us to speak of the “ungenerate essence” in the case of the Father, so that neither absence of generation, nor generation, can any longer be supposed to constitute the essence, but the essence must be taken separately, and its being, or not being begotten, must be conceived separately by means of the peculiar attributes contemplated in it. Let us, however, consider more carefully his argument on this point. He says that an essence has been begotten, and that the name of this generated essence is “Son.” Well, at this point our argument will convict that of our opponents on two grounds, first, of an attempt at knavery, secondly, of slackness in their attempt against ourselves. For he is playing the knave when he speaks of “generation of essence,” in order to establish his opposition between the essences, when once they are divided in respect of a difference of nature between “generate” and “ungenerate”: while the slackness of their attempt is shown by the very positions their knavery tries to establish. For he who says the essence is generate, clearly defines generation as being something else distinct from the essence, so that the significance of generation cannot be assigned to the word “essence.” For he has not in this passage represented the matter as he often does, so as to say that generation is itself the essence, but acknowledges that the essence is generated, so that there is produced in his readers a distinct notion in the case of each word: for one conception arises in him who hears that it was generated, and another is called up by the name of “essence.” Our argument may be made clearer by example. The Lord says in the Gospel<sup>575</sup> that a woman, when her travail is drawing near, is in sorrow, but afterwards rejoices in gladness because a man is born into the world. As then in this passage we derive from the Gospel two distinct conceptions,—one the birth which we conceive to be by way of generation, the other that which results from the birth (for the birth is not the man, but the man is by the birth),—so here too, when Eunomius confesses that the essence was generated, we learn by the latter word that the essence comes from something, and by the former we conceive that subject itself which has its real

<sup>574</sup> γέννημα. This word, in what follows, is sometimes translated simply by the word “product,” where it is not contrasted with ποίημα (the “product of making”), or where the argument depends especially upon its grammatical form (which indicates that the thing denoted is the *result of a process*), rather than upon the idea of the particular process.

<sup>575</sup> Cf. S. John xvi. 21

being from something. If then the signification of essence is one thing, and the word expressing generation suggests to us another conception, their clever contrivances are quite gone to ruin, like earthen vessels hurled one against the other, and mutually smashed to pieces. For it will no longer be possible for them, if they apply the opposition of “generate” and “ungenerate” to the essence of the Father and the Son, to apply at the same time to the things themselves the mutual conflict between these names<sup>576</sup>. For as it is confessed by Eunomius that the essence is generate (seeing that the example from the Gospel explains the meaning of such a phrase, where, when we hear that a man is generated, we do not conceive the man to be the same thing as his generation, but receive a separate conception in each of the two words), heresy will surely no longer be permitted to express by such words her doctrine of the difference of the essences. In order, however, that our account of these matters may be cleared up as far as possible, let us once more discuss the point in the following way. He Who framed the universe made the nature of man with all things in the beginning, and after Adam was made, He then appointed for men the law of generation one from another, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply<sup>577</sup>.” Now while Abel came into existence by way of generation, what reasonable man would deny that, in the actual sense of human generation, Adam existed ungenerately? Yet the first man had in himself the complete definition of man’s essential nature, and he who was generated of him was enrolled under the same essential name. But if the essence that was generated was made anything other than that which was not generated, the same essential name would not apply to both: for of those things whose essence is different, the essential name also is not the same. Since, then, the essential nature of Adam and of Abel is marked by the same characteristics, we must certainly agree that one essence is in both, and that the one and the other are exhibited in the same nature. For Adam and Abel are both one so far as the definition of their nature is concerned, but are distinguished one from the other without confusion by the individual attributes observed in each of them. We cannot therefore properly say that Adam generated another essence besides himself, but rather that of himself he generated another self, with whom was produced the whole definition of the essence of him who generated him. What, then, we learn in the case of human nature by means of the inferential guidance afforded to us by the definition, this I think we ought to take for our guidance also to the pure apprehension of the Divine doctrines. For when we have shaken off from the Divine and exalted doctrines all carnal and material notions, we shall be most surely led by the remaining conception, when it is purged of such ideas, to the lofty and unapproachable heights. It is confessed even by our adversaries that God, Who is over all, both is and is called the Father of the Only-begotten, and they moreover give to the Only-begotten God, Who is of the Father, the name of “begotten,” by reason of His being generated. Since then among men the word “father” has certain significances attaching to it, from which the pure nature is alien,




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<sup>576</sup> If, that is, they speak of the “generated essence” in contra-distinction to “ungenerate essence” they are precluded from saying that the essence of the Son *is* that He is begotten, and that the essence of the Father *is* that He is ungenerate: that which constitutes the essence cannot be made an epithet of the essence.

<sup>577</sup> Gen. i. 28.

it behoves a man to lay aside all material conceptions which enter in by association with the carnal significance of the word “father,” and to form in the case of the God and Father a conception befitting the Divine nature, expressive only of the reality of the relationship. Since, therefore, in the notion of a human father there is included not only all that the flesh suggests to our thoughts, but a certain notion of interval is also undoubtedly conceived with the idea of human fatherhood, it would be well, in the case of the Divine generation, to reject, together with bodily pollution, the notion of interval also, that so what properly belongs to matter may be completely purged away, and the transcendent generation may be clear, not only from the idea of passion, but from that of interval. Now he who says that God is a Father will unite with the thought that God is, the further thought that He is something: for that which has its being from some beginning, certainly also derives from something the beginning of its being, whatever it is: but He in Whose case being had no beginning, has not His beginning from anything, even although we contemplate in Him some other attribute than simple existence. Well, God is a Father. It follows that He is what He is from eternity: for He did not become, but *is* a Father: for in God that which was, both is and will be. On the other hand, if He once was not anything, then He neither is nor will be that thing: for He is not believed to be the Father of a Being such that it may be piously asserted that God once existed by Himself without that Being. For the Father is the Father of Life, and Truth, and Wisdom, and Light, and Sanctification, and Power, and all else of a like kind that the Only-begotten is or is called. Thus when the adversaries allege that the Light “once was not,” I know not to which the greater injury is done, whether to the Light, in that the Light is not, or to Him that has the Light, in that He has not the Light. So also with Life and Truth and Power, and all the other characters in which the Only-begotten fills the Father’s bosom, being all things in His own fulness. For the absurdity will be equal either way, and the impiety against the Father will equal the blasphemy against the Son: for in saying that the Lord “once was not,” you will not merely assert the non-existence of Power, but you will be saying that the Power of God, Who is the Father of the Power, “was not.” Thus the assertion made by your doctrine that the Son “once was not,” establishes nothing else than a destitution of all good in the case of the Father. See to what an end these wise men’s acuteness leads, how by them the word of the Lord is made good, which says, “He that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me<sup>578</sup>.” for by the very arguments by which they despise the existence at any time of the Only-begotten, they also dishonour the Father, stripping off by their doctrine from the Father’s glory every good name and conception.

§4. *He thus shows the oneness of the Eternal Son with the Father the identity of essence and the community of nature (wherein is a natural inquiry into the production of wine), and that the*

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578 S. Luke x. 16

*terms “Son” and “product” in the naming of the Only-Begotten include a like idea of relationship.*

What has been said, therefore, has clearly exposed the slackness which is to be found in the knavery of our author, who, while he goes about to establish the opposition of the essence of the Only-begotten to that of the Father, by the method of calling the one “ungenerate,” and the other “generate,” stands convicted of playing the fool with his inconsistent arguments. For it was shown from his own words, first, that the name of “essence” means one thing, and that of “generation” another; and next, that there did not come into existence, with the Son, any new and different essence besides the essence of the Father, but that what the Father is as regards the definition of His nature, that also He is Who is of the Father, as the nature does not change into diversity in the Person of the Son, according to the truth of the argument displayed by our consideration of Adam and Abel. For as, in that instance, he that was not generated after a like sort was yet, so far as concerns the definition of essence, the same with him that was generated, and Abel’s generation did not produce any change in the essence, so, in the case of these pure doctrines, the Only-begotten God did not, by His own generation, produce in Himself any change in the essence of Him Who is ungenerate (coming forth, as the Gospel says, from the Father, and being in the Father,) but is, according to the simple and homely language of the creed we profess, “Light of Light, very God of very God,” the one being all that the other is, save being that other. With regard, however, to the aim for the sake of which he carries on this system-making, I think there is no need for me at present to express any opinion, whether it is audacious and dangerous, or a thing allowable and free from danger, to transform the phrases which are employed to signify the Divine nature from one to another, and to call Him Who is generated by the name of “product of generation.”

I let these matters pass, that my discourse may not busy itself too much in the strife against lesser points, and neglect the greater; but I say that we ought carefully to consider the question whether the natural relation does introduce the use of these terms: for this surely Eunomius asserts, that with the affinity of the appellations there is also asserted an essential relationship. For he would not say, I presume, that the mere names themselves, apart from the sense of the things signified, have any mutual relation or affinity; but all discern the relationship or diversity of the appellations by the meanings which the words express. If, therefore, he confesses that “the Son” has a natural relation with “the Father,” let us leave the appellations, and consider the force that is found in their significations, whether in their affinity we discern diversity of essence, or that which is kindred and characteristic. To say that we find diversity is downright madness. For how does something without kinship or community “preserve order,” connected and conformable, in the names, where “the generated essence itself,” as he says, “and the appellation of ‘Son,’ make such a relation of words appropriate”? If, on the other hand, he should say that these appellations signify relationship, he will necessarily appear in the character of an advocate of the community of essence, and as maintaining the fact that by affinity of names is signified also the connection of subjects: and this

he often does in his composition without being aware of it<sup>579</sup>. For, by the arguments wherewith he endeavours to destroy the truth, he is often himself unwittingly drawn into an advocacy of the very doctrines against which he is contending. Some such thing the history tells us concerning Saul, that once, when moved with wrath against the prophets, he was overcome by grace, and was found as one of the inspired, (the Spirit of prophecy willing, as I suppose, to instruct the apostate by means of himself,) whence the surprising nature of the event became a proverb in his after life, as the history records such an expression by way of wonder, “Is Saul also among the prophets<sup>580</sup>?”

At what point, then, does Eunomius assent to the truth? When he says that the Lord Himself, “being the Son of the living God, not being ashamed of His birth from the Virgin, often named Himself, in His own sayings, ‘the Son of Man’”? For this phrase we also allege for proof of the community of essence, because the name of “Son” shows the community of nature to be equal in both cases. For as He is called the Son of Man by reason of the kindred of His flesh to her of whom He was born, so also He is conceived, surely, as the Son of God, by reason of the connection of His essence with that from which He has His existence, and this argument is the greatest weapon of the truth. For nothing so clearly points to Him Who is the “mediator between God and man<sup>581</sup>” (as the great Apostle called Him), as the name of “Son,” equally applicable to either nature, Divine or Human. For the same Person is Son of God, and was made, in the Incarnation, Son of Man, that, by His communion with each, He might link together by Himself what were divided by nature. Now if, in becoming Son of Man, he were without participation in human nature, it would be logical to say that neither does He share in the Divine essence, though He is Son of God. But if the whole compound nature of man was in Him (for He was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin<sup>582</sup>”), it is surely necessary to believe that every property of the transcendent essence is also in Him, as the Word “Son” claims for Him both alike—the Human in the man, but in the God the Divine.

If then the appellations, as Eunomius says, indicate relationship, and the existence of relationship is observed in the things, not in the mere sound of the words (and by things I mean the things conceived in themselves, if it be not over-bold thus to speak of the Son and the Father), who would deny that the very champion of blasphemy has by his own action been dragged into the advocacy of orthodoxy, overthrowing by his own means his own arguments, and proclaiming community of essence in the case of the Divine doctrines? For the argument that he unwillingly casts into the scale on the side of truth does not speak falsely as regards this point,—that He would not have been called Son if the natural conception of the names did not verify this calling. For as a bench is not called the son of the workman, and no sane man would say that the builder engendered the house,

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579 Oehler’s punctuation is here slightly altered.

580 1 Sam. xix. 24.

581 1 Tim. ii. 5.

582 Heb. iv. 15.

and we do not say that the vineyard is the “product<sup>583</sup>” of the vine-dresser, but call what a man makes his work, and him who is begotten of him the son of a man, (in order, I suppose, that the proper meaning might be attached by means of the names to the respective subjects,) so too, when we are taught that the Only-begotten is Son of God, we do not by this appellation understand a creature of God, but what the word “Son” in its signification really displays. And even though wine be named by Scripture the “product<sup>584</sup>” of the vine, not even so will our argument with regard to the orthodox doctrine suffer by this identity of name. For we do not call wine the “product” of the oak, nor the acorn the “product” of the vine, but we use the word only if there is some natural community between the “product” and that from which it comes. For the moisture in the vine, which is drawn out from the root through the stem by the pith, is, in its natural power, water: but, as it passes in orderly sequence along the ways of nature, and flows from the lowest to the highest, it changes to the quality of wine, a change to which the rays of the sun contribute in some degree, which by their warmth draw out the moisture from the depth to the shoots, and by a proper and suitable process of ripening make the moisture wine: so that, so far as their nature is concerned, there is no difference between the moisture that exists in the vine and the wine that is produced from it. For the one form of moisture comes from the other, and one could not say that the cause of wine is anything else than the moisture which naturally exists in the shoots. But, so far as moisture is concerned, the differences of quality produce no alteration, but are found when some peculiarity discerns the moisture which is in the form of wine from that which is in the shoots, one of the two forms being accompanied by astringency, or sweetness, or sourness, so that in substance the two are the same, but are distinguished by qualitative differences. As, therefore, when we hear from Scripture that the Only-begotten God is Son of man, we learn by the kindred expressed in the name His kinship with true man, so even, if the Son be called, in the adversaries’ phrase, a “product,” we none the less learn, even by this name, His kinship in essence with Him that has “produced<sup>585</sup>” Him, by the fact that wine, which is called the “product” of the vine has been found not to be alien, as concerns the idea of moisture, from the natural power that resides in the vine. Indeed, if one were judiciously to examine the things that are said by our adversaries, they tend to our doctrine, and their sense cries out against their own fabrications, as they strive at all points to establish their “difference in essence.” Yet it is by no means an easy matter to conjecture whence they were led to such conceptions. For if the appellation of “Son” does not merely signify “being from something,” but by its signification presents to us specially, as Eunomius himself says, relationship in point of nature, and wine is not called the “product” of an oak, and those “products” or “generation of vipers<sup>586</sup>,” of which the Gospel somewhere speaks, are snakes and not sheep, it is clear, that in the case of the Only-begotten also, the appellation of “Son” or of “product” would not convey the

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583 γέννημα.

584 γέννημα. *E.g.* S. Matt. xxvi. 29.

585 γεγεννηκότα: which, as answering to γέννημα, is here translated “produced” rather than “begotten.”

586 γεννήματα ἔχιδνῶν. *E.g.* S. Matt. iii. 7.



meaning of relationship to something of another kind: but even if, according to our adversaries' phrase, He is called a "product of generation," and the name of "Son," as they confess, has reference to nature, the Son is surely of the essence of Him Who has generated or "produced" Him, not of that of some other among the things which we contemplate as external to that nature. And if He is truly from Him, He is not alien from all that belongs to Him from Whom He is, as in the other cases too it was shown that all that has its existence from anything by way of generation is clearly of the same kind as that from whence it came.

§5. *He discusses the incomprehensibility of the Divine essence, and the saying to the woman of Samaria, "Ye worship ye know not what."*

Now if any one should ask for some interpretation, and description, and explanation of the Divine essence, we are not going to deny that in this kind of wisdom we are unlearned, acknowledging only so much as this, that it is not possible that that which is by nature infinite should be comprehended in any conception expressed by words. The fact that the Divine greatness has no limit is proclaimed by prophecy, which declares expressly that of His splendour, His glory, His holiness, "there is no end<sup>587</sup>:" and if His surroundings have no limit, much more is He Himself in His essence, whatever it may be, comprehended by no limitation in any way. If then interpretation by way of words and names implies by its meaning some sort of comprehension of the subject, and if, on the other hand, that which is unlimited cannot be comprehended, no one could reasonably blame us for ignorance, if we are not bold in respect of what none should venture upon. For by what name can I describe the incomprehensible? by what speech can I declare the unspeakable? Accordingly, since the Deity is too excellent and lofty to be expressed in words, we have learnt to honour in silence what transcends speech and thought: and if he who "thinketh more highly than he ought to think<sup>588</sup>," tramples upon this cautious speech of ours making a jest of our ignorance of things incomprehensible, and recognizes a difference of unlikeness in that which is without figure, or limit, or size, or quantity (I mean in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit), and brings forward to reproach our ignorance that phrase which is continually alleged by the disciples of deceit, "'Ye worship ye know not what<sup>589</sup>,' if ye know not the essence of that which ye worship," we shall follow the advice of the prophet, and not fear the reproach of fools<sup>590</sup>, nor be led by their reviling to talk boldly of things unspeakable, making that unpractised speaker Paul our teacher in the mysteries that transcend knowledge, who is so far from thinking that the Divine nature is within the reach of

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587 Cf. Ps. cxlv. 3

588 Rom. xii. 3.

589 S. John iv. 22

590 Cf. Is. li. 7

human perception, that he calls even the judgments of God “unsearchable,” and His ways “past finding out<sup>591</sup>,” and affirms that the things promised to them that love Him, for their good deeds done in this life, are above comprehension so that it is not possible to behold them with the eye, nor to receive them by hearing, nor to contain them in the heart<sup>592</sup>. Learning this, therefore, from Paul, we boldly declare that, not only are the judgments of God too high for those who try to search them out, but that the ways also that lead to the knowledge of Him are even until now untrodden and impassable. For this is what we understand that the Apostle wishes to signify, when he calls the ways that lead to the incomprehensible “past finding out,” showing by the phrase that that knowledge is unattainable by human calculations, and that no one ever yet set his understanding on such a path of reasoning, or showed any trace or sign of an approach, by way of perception, to the things incomprehensible.

Learning these things, then, from the lofty words of the Apostle, we argue, by the passage quoted, in this way:—If His judgments cannot be searched out, and His ways are not traced, and the promise of His good things transcends every representation that our conjectures can frame, by how much more is His actual Godhead higher and loftier, in respect of being unspeakable and unapproachable, than those attributes which are conceived as accompanying it, whereof the divinely instructed Paul declares that there is no knowledge:—and by this means we confirm in ourselves the doctrine they deride, confessing ourselves inferior to them in the knowledge of those things which are beyond the range of knowledge, and declare that we really worship what we know. Now we know the loftiness of the glory of Him Whom we worship, by the very fact that we are not able by reasoning to comprehend in our thoughts the incomparable character of His greatness; and that saying of our Lord to the Samaritan woman, which is brought forward against us by our enemies, might more properly be addressed to them. For the words, “Ye worship ye know not what,” the Lord speaks to the Samaritan woman, prejudiced as she was by corporeal ideas in her opinions concerning God: and to her the phrase well applies, because the Samaritans, thinking that they worship God, and at the same time supposing the Deity to be corporeally settled in place, adore Him in name only, worshipping something else, and not God. For nothing is Divine that is conceived as being circumscribed, but it belongs to the Godhead to be in all places, and to pervade all things, and not to be limited by anything: so that those who fight against Christ find the phrase they adduce against us turned into an accusation of themselves. For, as the Samaritans, supposing the Deity to be compassed round by some circumscription of place, were rebuked by the words they heard, “‘Ye worship ye know not what,’ and your service is profitless to you, for a God that is deemed to be settled in any place is no God,”—so one might well say to the new Samaritans, “In supposing the Deity to be limited by the absence of generation, as it were by some local limit, ‘ye worship ye

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591 Rom. xi. 33.

592 Cf. 1 Cor. ii. 9

know not what,' doing service to Him indeed as God, but not knowing that the infinity of God exceeds all the significance and comprehension that names can furnish."

§6. *Thereafter he expounds the appellation of "Son," and of "product of generation," and very many varieties of "sons," of God, of men, of rams, of perdition, of light, and of day.*

But our discourse has diverged too far from the subject before us, in following out the questions which arise from time to time by way of inference. Let us therefore once more resume its sequence, as I imagine that the phrase under examination has been sufficiently shown, by what we have said, to be contradictory not only to the truth, but also to itself. For if, according to their view, the natural relation to the Father is established by the appellation of "the Son," and so with that of the "product of generation" to Him Who has begotten Him (as these men's wisdom falsely models the terms significant of the Divine nature into a verbal arrangement, according to some grammatical frivolity), no one could longer doubt that the mutual relation of the names which is established by nature is a proof of their kindred, or rather of their identity of essence. But let not our discourse merely turn about our adversaries' words, that the orthodox doctrine may not seem to gain the victory only by the weakness of those who fight against it, but appear to have an abundant supply of strength in itself. Let the adverse argument, therefore, be strengthened as much as may be by us ourselves with more energetic advocacy, that the superiority of our force may be recognized with full confidence, as we bring to the unerring test of truth those arguments also which our adversaries have omitted. He who contends on behalf of our adversaries will perhaps say that the name of "Son," or "product of generation," does not by any means establish the fact of kindred in nature. For in Scripture the term "child of wrath<sup>593</sup>" is used, and "son of perdition<sup>594</sup>," and "product of a viper<sup>595</sup>;" and in such names surely no community of nature is apparent. For Judas, who is called "the son of perdition," is not in his substance the same with perdition, according to what we understand by the word<sup>596</sup>. For the signification of the "man" in Judas is one thing, and that of "perdition" is another. And the argument may be established equally from an opposite instance. For those who are called in a certain sense "children of light," and "children of the day<sup>597</sup>," are not the same with light and day in respect of the definition of their nature, and the stones are made Abraham's children<sup>598</sup> when



593 Cf. Eph. ii. 3

594 S. John xvii. 12.

595 Cf. S. Matt. iii. 7

596 Reading κατὰ τὸ νοούμενον, for κατὰ τὸν νοούμενον as the words stand in the text of Oehler, who cites no MSS. in favour of the change which he has made.

597 Cf. 1 Thess. v. 5.

598 Cf. S. Matt. iii. 9

they claim their kindred with him by faith and works; and those who are “led by the Spirit of God,” as the Apostle says, are called “Sons of God<sup>599</sup>,” without being the same with God in respect of nature; and one may collect many such instances from the inspired Scripture, by means of which deceit, like some image decked with the testimonies of Scripture, masquerades in the likeness of truth.

Well, what do we say to this? The divine Scripture knows how to use the word “Son” in both senses, so that in some cases such an appellation is derived from nature, in others it is adventitious and artificial. For when it speaks of “sons of men,” or “sons of rams<sup>600</sup>,” it marks the essential relation of that which is begotten to that from which it has its being: but when it speaks of “sons of power,” or “children of God,” it presents to us that kinship which is the result of choice. And, moreover, in the opposite sense, too, the same persons are called “sons of Eli,” and “sons of Belial<sup>601</sup>,” the appellation of “sons” being easily adapted to either idea. For when they are called “sons of Eli,” they are declared to have natural relationship to him, but in being called “sons of Belial,” they are reproved for the wickedness of their choice, as no longer emulating their father in their life, but addicting their own purpose to sin. In the case, then, of this lower nature of ours, and of the things with which we are concerned, by reason of human nature being equally inclined to either side (I mean, to vice and to virtue), it is in our power to become sons either of night or of day, while our nature yet remains, so far as the chief part of it is concerned, within its proper limits. For neither is he who by sin becomes a child of wrath alienated from his human generation, nor does he who by choice addicts himself to good reject his human origin by the refinement of his habits, but, while their nature in each case remains the same, the differences of their purpose assume the names of their relationship, according as they become either children of God by virtue, or of the opposite by vice.

But how does Eunomius, in the case of the divine doctrines at least—he who “preserves the natural order” (for I will use our author’s very words), “and abides by those things which are known to us from the beginning, and does not refuse to call Him that is begotten by the name of ‘product of generation,’ since the generated essence itself” (as he says) “and the appellation of ‘Son’ makes such a relation of words appropriate”,—how does he alienate the Begotten from essential kindred with Him that begat Him? For in the case of those who are called “sons” or “products” by way of reproach, or again where some praise accompanies such names, we cannot say that any one is called “a child of wrath,” being at the same time actually begotten by wrath; nor again had any one the day for his mother, in a corporeal sense, that he should be called its son; but it is the difference of their will which gives occasion for names of such relationship. Here, however, Eunomius says,

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<sup>599</sup> Rom. viii. 14.

<sup>600</sup> Ps. xxix. 1 (LXX).

<sup>601</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 12. The phrase is υἱὸν λοιμοῦ, or “pestilent sons,” as in the LXX. Gregory’s argument would seem to require the reading υἱὸν λοιμοῦ.



“we do not refuse to call the Son, seeing He is begotten, by the name of ‘product of generation,’ since the generated essence,” he tells us, “and the appellation of ‘Son,’ makes such a relation of words appropriate.” If, then, he confesses that such a relation of words is made appropriate by the fact that the Son is really a “product of generation,” how is it opportune to assign such a rationale of names, alike to those which are used inexactly by way of metaphor, and to those where the natural relation, as Eunomius tells us, makes such a use of names appropriate? Surely such an account is true only in the case of those whose nature is a border-land between virtue and vice, where one often shares in turn opposite classes of names, becoming a child, now of light, then again of darkness, by reason of affinity to the good or to its opposite. But where contraries have no place, one could no longer say that the word “Son” is applied metaphorically, in like manner as in the case of those who by choice appropriate the title to themselves. For one could not arrive at this view, that, as a man casting off the works of darkness becomes, by his decent life, a child of light, so too the Only-begotten God received the more honourable name as the result of a change from the inferior state. For one who is a man becomes a son of God by being joined to Christ by spiritual generation: but He Who by Himself makes the man to be a son of God does not need another Son to bestow on Him the adoption of a son, but has the name also of that which He is by nature. A man himself changes himself, exchanging the old man for the new; but to what shall God be changed, so that He may receive what He has not? A man puts off himself, and puts on the Divine nature; but what does He put off, or in what does He array Himself, Who is always the same? A man becomes a son of God, receiving what he has not, and laying aside what he has; but He Who has never been in the state of vice has neither anything to receive nor anything to relinquish. Again, the man may be on the one hand truly called some one’s son, when one speaks with reference to his nature; and, on the other hand, he may be so called inexactly, when the choice of his life imposes the name. But God, being One Good, in a single and uncompounded nature, looks ever the same way, and is never changed by the impulse of choice, but always wishes what He is, and is, assuredly, what He wishes: so that He is in both respects properly and truly called Son of God, since His nature contains the good, and His choice also is never severed from that which is more excellent, so that this word is employed, without inexactness, as His name. Thus there is no room for these arguments (which, in the person of our adversaries, we have been opposing to ourselves), to be brought forward by our adversaries as a demurrer to the affinity in respect of nature.

*§7. Then he ends the book with an exposition of the Divine and Human names of the Only-Begotten, and a discussion of the terms “generate” and “ungenerate.”*

But as, I know not how or why, they hate and abhor the truth, they give Him indeed the name of “Son,” but in order to avoid the testimony which this word would give to the community of essence, they separate the word from the sense included in the name, and concede to the Only-begotten the name of “Son” as an empty thing, vouchsafing to Him only the mere sound of

the word. That what I say is true, and that I am not taking a false aim at the adversaries' mark, may be clearly learnt from the actual attacks they make upon the truth. Such are those arguments which are brought forward by them to establish their blasphemy, that we are taught by the divine Scriptures many names of the Only-begotten—a stone, an axe, a rock, a foundation, bread, a vine, a door, a way, a shepherd, a fountain, a tree, resurrection, a teacher, light, and many such names. But we may not piously use any of these names of the Lord, understanding it according to its immediate sense. For surely it would be a most absurd thing to think that what is incorporeal and immaterial, simple, and without figure, should be fashioned according to the apparent senses of these names, whatever they may be, so that when we hear of an axe we should think of a particular figure of iron, or when we hear of light, of the light in the sky, or of a vine, of that which grows by the planting of shoots, or of any one of the other names, as its ordinary use suggests to us to think; but we transfer the sense of these names to what better becomes the Divine nature, and form some other conception, and if we do designate Him thus, it is not as being any of these things, according to the definition of His nature, but as being called these things while He is conceived by means of the names employed as something else than the things themselves. But if such names are indeed truly predicated of the Only-begotten God, without including the declaration of His nature, they say that, as a consequence, neither should we admit the signification of “Son,” as it is understood according to the prevailing use, as expressive of nature, but should find some sense of this word also, different from that which is ordinary and obvious. These, and others like these, are their philosophical arguments to establish that the Son is not what He is and is called. Our argument was hastening to a different goal, namely to show that Eunomius' new discourse is false and inconsistent, and argues neither with the truth nor with itself. Since, however, the arguments which we employ to attack their doctrine are brought into the discussion as a sort of support for their blasphemy<sup>602</sup>, it may be well first briefly to discuss his point, and then to proceed to the orderly examination of his writings.


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What can we say, then, to such things without relevance? That while, as they say, the names which Scripture applies to the Only-begotten are many, we assert that none of the other names is closely connected with the reference to Him that begat Him. For we do not employ the name “Stone,” or “Resurrection,” or “Shepherd,” or “Light,” or any of the rest, as we do the name “Son of the Father,” with a reference to the God of all. It is possible to make a twofold division of the signification of the Divine names, as it were by a scientific rule: for to one class belongs the indication of His lofty and unspeakable glory; the other class indicates the variety of the providential dispensation: so that, as we suppose, if that which received His benefits did not exist, neither would

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<sup>602</sup> The meaning of this seems to be that the Anomœan party make the same charge of “inconsistency” against the orthodox, which Gregory makes against Eunomius, basing that charge on the fact that the title “Son” is not interpreted in the same figurative way as the other titles recited. Gregory accordingly proceeds to show why the name of “Son” stands on a different level from those titles, and is to be treated in a different way.

those words be applied with respect to them<sup>603</sup> which indicate His bounty. All those on the other hand, that express the attributes of God, are applied suitably and properly to the Only-begotten God, apart from the objects of the dispensation. But that we may set forth this doctrine clearly, we will examine the names themselves. The Lord would not have been called a vine, save for the planting of those who are rooted in Him, nor a shepherd, had not the sheep of the house of Israel been lost, nor a physician, save for the sake of them that were sick, nor would He have received for Himself the rest of these names, had He not made the titles appropriate, in a manner advantageous with regard to those who were benefited by Him, by some action of His providence. What need is there to mention individual instances, and to lengthen our argument upon points that are acknowledged? On the other hand, He is certainly called “Son,” and “Right Hand,” and “Only-begotten,” and “Word,” and “Wisdom,” and “Power,” and all other such relative names, as being named together with the Father in a certain relative conjunction. For He is called the “Power of God,” and the “Right Hand of God,” and the “Wisdom of God,” and the “Son and Only-begotten of the Father,” and the “Word with God,” and so of the rest. Thus, it follows from what we have stated, that in each of the names we are to contemplate some suitable sense appropriate to the subject, so that we may not miss the right understanding of them, and go astray from the doctrine of godliness. As, then, we transfer each of the other terms to that sense in which they may be applied to God, and reject in their case the immediate sense, so as not to understand material light, or a trodden way, or the bread which is produced by husbandry, or the word that is expressed by speech, but, instead of these, all those thoughts which present to us the magnitude of the power of the Word of God,—so, if one were to reject the ordinary and natural sense of the word “Son,” by which we learn that He is of the same essence as Him that begat Him, he will of course transfer the name to some more divine interpretation. For since the change to the more glorious meaning which has been made in each of the other terms has adapted them to set forth the Divine power, it surely follows that the significance of this name also should be transferred to what is loftier. But what more Divine sense could we find in the appellation of “Son,” if we were to reject, according to our adversaries’ view, the natural relation to Him that begat Him? I presume no one is so daring in impiety as to think that, in speech concerning the Divine nature, what is humble and mean is more appropriate than what is lofty and great. If they can discover, therefore, any sense of more exalted character than this, so that to be of the nature of the Father seems a thing unworthy to conceive of the Only-begotten, let them tell us whether they know, in their secret wisdom, anything more exalted than the nature of the Father, that, in raising the Only-begotten God to this level, they should lift Him also above His relation to the Father. But if the majesty of the Divine nature transcends all height, and excels every power that calls forth our wonder, what idea remains that can carry the meaning of the name “Son” to something greater still? Since it is acknowledged, therefore, that every significant phrase employed of the Only-begotten, even if the name be derived from the

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<sup>603</sup> ἐπ’ αὐτῶν: perhaps “with reference to man,” the plural being employed here to denote the race of men, spoken of in the preceding clause collectively as τὸ εὐεργετούμενον

ordinary use of our lower life, is properly applied to Him with a difference of sense in the direction of greater majesty, and if it is shown that we can find no more noble conception of the title “Son” than that which presents to us the reality of His relationship to Him that begat Him, I think that we need spend no more time on this topic, as our argument has sufficiently shown that it is not proper to interpret the title of “Son” in like manner with the other names.

But we must bring back our enquiry once more to the book. It does not become the same persons “not to refuse” (for I will use their own words) “to call Him that is generated a ‘product of generation,’ since both the generated essence itself and the appellation of Son make such a relation of words appropriate,” and again to change the names which naturally belong to Him into metaphorical interpretations: so that one of two things has befallen them,—either their first attack has failed, and it is in vain that they fly to “natural order” to establish the necessity of calling Him that is generated a “product of generation”; or, if this argument holds good, they will find their second argument brought to nought by what they have already established. For the person who is called a “product of generation” because He is generated, cannot, for the very same reason, be possibly called a “product of making,” or a “product of creation.” For the sense of the several terms differs very widely, and one who uses his phrases advisedly ought to employ words with due regard to the subject, that we may not, by improperly interchanging the sense of our phrases, fall into any confusion of ideas. Hence we call that which is wrought out by a craft the work of the craftsman, and call him who is begotten by a man that man’s son; and no sane person would call the work a son, or the son a work; for that is the language of one who confuses and obscures the true sense by an erroneous use of names. It follows that we must truly affirm of the Only-begotten one of these two things,—if He is a Son, that He is not to be called a “product of creation,” and if He is created, that He is alien from the appellation of “Son<sup>604</sup>,” just as heaven and sea and earth, and all individual things, being things created, do not assume the name of “Son.” But since Eunomius bears witness that the Only-begotten God is begotten (and the evidence of enemies is of additional value for establishing the truth), he surely testifies also, by saying that He is begotten, to the fact that He is not created. Enough, however, on these points: for though many arguments crowd upon us, we will be content, lest their number lead to disproportion, with those we have already adduced on the subject before us.

## Book IV.

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<sup>604</sup> Oehler’s punctuation here seems faulty, and is accordingly not followed.



§1. *The fourth book discusses the account of the nature of the “product of generation,” and of the passionless generation of the Only-Begotten, and the text, “In the beginning was the Word,” and the birth of the Virgin.*

It is, perhaps, time to examine in our discourse that account of the nature of the “product of generation” which is the subject of his ridiculous philosophizing. He says, then (I will repeat word for word his beautifully composed argument against the truth):—“Who is so indifferent and inattentive to the nature of things as not to know, that of all bodies which are on earth, in their generating and being generated, in their activity and passivity, those which generate are found on examination to communicate their own essence, and those which are generated naturally receive the same, inasmuch as the material cause and the supply which flows in from without are common to both; and the things begotten are generated by passion, and those which beget, naturally have an action which is not pure, by reason of their nature being linked with passions of all kinds?” See in what fitting style he discusses in his speculation the pre-temporal generation of the Word of God that was in the beginning! he who closely examines the nature of things, bodies on the earth, and material causes, and passion of things generating and generated, and all the rest of it,—at which any man of understanding would blush, even were it said of ourselves, if it were our nature, subject as it is to passion, which is thus exposed to scorn by his words. Yet such is our author’s brilliant enquiry into nature with regard to the Only-begotten God. Let us lay aside complaints, however, (for what will sighing do to help us to overthrow the malice of our enemy?) and make generally known, as best we may, the sense of what we have quoted—concerning what sort of “product” the speculation was proposed,—that which exists according to the flesh, or that which is to be contemplated in the Only-begotten God.

As the speculation is two-fold, concerning that life which is Divine, simple, and immaterial, and concerning that existence which is material and subject to passion, and as the word “generation” is used of both, we must needs make our distinction sharp and clear, lest the ambiguity of the term “generation” should in any way pervert the truth. Since, then, the entrance into being through the flesh is material, and is promoted by passion, while that which is bodiless, impalpable, without form, and free from any material commixture, is alien from every condition that admits of passion, it is proper to consider about what sort of generation we are enquiring—that which is pure and Divine, or that which is subject to passion and pollution. Now, no one, I suppose, would deny that with regard to the Only-begotten God, it is pre-temporal existence that is proposed for the consideration<sup>605</sup> of Eunomius’ discourse. Why, then, does he linger over this account of corporeal nature, defiling our nature by the loathsome presentment of his argument, and setting forth openly the passions that gather round human generation, while he deserts the subject set before him? for it was not about this animal generation, that is accomplished by means of the flesh, that we had

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<sup>605</sup> Reading, with the older editions, τῆ θεωρίᾳ 139'. Oehler substitutes τὴν θεωρίαν (a variation which seems to give no good sense, unless θεωρία be translated as “subject of contemplation”), but alleges no MS. authority for the change.

any need to learn. Who is so foolish, when he looks on himself, and considers human nature in himself, as to seek another interpreter of his own nature, and to need to be told all the unavoidable passions which are included in the thought of bodily generation—that he who begets is affected in one way, that which is begotten in another—so that the man should learn from this instruction that he himself begets by means of passion, and that passion was the beginning of his own generation? For it is all the same whether these things are passed over or spoken, and whether one publishes these secrets at length, or keeps hidden in silence things that should be left unsaid, we are not ignorant of the fact that our nature progresses by way of passion. But what we are seeking is that a clear account should be given of the exalted and unspeakable existence of the Only-begotten, whereby He is believed to be of the Father.

Now, while this is the enquiry set before him, our new theologian enriches his discourse with “flowing,” and “passion,” and “material cause,” and some “action” which “is not pure” from pollution, and all other phrases of this kind<sup>606</sup>. I know not under what influence it is that he who says, in the superiority of his wisdom, that nothing incomprehensible is left beyond his own knowledge, and promises to explain the unspeakable generation of the Son, leaves the question before him, and plunges like an eel into the slimy mud of his arguments, after the fashion of that Nicodemus who came by night, who, when our Lord was teaching him of the birth from above, rushed in thought to the hollow of the womb, and raised a doubt how one could enter a second time into the womb, with the words, “How can these things be?<sup>607</sup>” thinking that he would prove the spiritual birth impossible, by the fact that an old man could not again be born within his mother’s bowels. But the Lord corrects his erroneous idea, saying that the properties of the flesh and the spirit are distinct. Let Eunomius also, if he will, correct himself by the like reflection. For he who ponders on the truth ought, I imagine, to contemplate his subject according to its own properties, not to slander the immaterial by a charge against things material. For if a man, or a bull, or any other of those things which are generated by the flesh, is not free from passion in generating or being generated, what has this to do with that Nature which is without passion and without corruption? The fact that we are mortal is no objection to the immortality of the Only-begotten, nor does men’s propensity to vice render doubtful the immutability that is found in the Divine Nature, nor is any other of our proper attributes transferred to God; but the peculiar nature of the human and the Divine life is separated, and without common ground, and their distinguishing properties stand entirely apart, so that those of the latter are not apprehended in the former, nor, conversely, those of the former in the latter.

How comes it, therefore, that Eunomius, when the Divine generation is the subject for discourse, leaves his subject, and discusses at length the things of earth, when on this matter we have no dispute with him? Surely our craftsman’s aim is clear,—that by the slanderous insinuation of passion he may raise an objection to the generation of the Lord. And here I pass by the blasphemous nature

<sup>606</sup> Oehler’s punctuation seems less clear than that of the older editions, which is here followed.

<sup>607</sup> S. John iii. 10

of his view, and admire the man for his acuteness,—how mindful he is of his own zealous endeavour, who, having by his previous statements established the theory that the Son must be, and must be called, a “product of generation,” now contends for the view that we ought not to entertain regarding Him the conception of generation. For, if all generation, as this author imagines, has linked with it the condition of passion, we are hereby absolutely compelled to admit that what is foreign to passion is alien also from generation: for if these things, passion and generation, are considered as conjoined, He that has no share in the one would not have any participation in the other. How then does he call Him a “product” by reason of His generation, of Whom he tries to show by the arguments he now uses, that He was not generated? and for what cause does he fight against our master<sup>608</sup>, who counsels us in matters of Divine doctrine not to presume in name-making, but to confess that He is generated without transforming this conception into the formula of a name, so as to call Him Who is generated “a product of generation,” as this term is properly applied in Scripture to things inanimate, or to those which are mentioned “as a figure of wickedness<sup>609</sup>”? When we speak of the propriety of avoiding the use of the term “product,” he prepares for action that invincible rhetoric of his, and takes also to support him his frigid grammatical phraseology, and by his skilful misuse of names, or equivocation, or whatever one may properly call his processes—by these means, I say, he brings his syllogisms to their conclusion, “not refusing to call Him Who is begotten by the name of ‘product of generation.’” Then, as soon as we admit the term, and proceed to examine the conception involved in the name, on the theory that thereby is vindicated the community of essence, he again retracts his own words, and contends for the view that the “product of generation” is not generated, raising an objection by his foul account of bodily generation, against the pure and Divine and passionless generation of the Son, on the ground that it is not possible that the two things, the true relationship to the Father, and exemption of His nature from passion, should be found to coincide in God, but that, if there were no passion, there would be no generation, and that, if one should acknowledge the true relationship, he would thereby, in admitting generation, certainly admit passion also.

Not thus speaks the sublime John, not thus that voice of thunder which proclaims the mystery of the Theology, who both names Him Son of God and purges his proclamation from every idea of passion. For behold how in the very beginning of his Gospel he prepares our ears, how great forethought is shown by the teacher that none of his hearers should fall into low ideas on the subject, slipping by ignorance into any incongruous conceptions. For in order to lead the untrained hearing as far away as possible from passion, he does not speak in his opening words of “Son,” or “Father,” or “generation,” that no one should either, on hearing first of all of a “Father,” be hurried on to the obvious signification of the word, or, on learning the proclamation of a “Son,” should understand

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<sup>608</sup> *i.e.* S. Basil.

<sup>609</sup> The reference is to S. Basil’s treatise against Eunomius (ii. 7–8; p. 242–4 in the Benedictine ed.). Oehler’s punctuation is apparently wrong, for Gregory paraphrases not only the rule, but the reason given for it, from S. Basil, from whom the last words of the sentence are a direct quotation.

that name in the ordinary sense, or stumble, as at a “stone of stumbling<sup>610</sup>,” at the word “generation”; but instead of “the Father,” he speaks of “the Beginning”: instead of “was begotten,” he says “was”: and instead of “the Son,” he says “the Word”: and declares “In the Beginning was the Word<sup>611</sup>.” What passion, pray, is to be found in these words, “beginning,” and “was,” and “Word”? Is “the beginning” passion? does “was” imply passion? does “the Word” exist by means of passion? Or are we to say, that as passion is not to be found in the terms used, so neither is affinity expressed by the proclamation? Yet how could the Word’s community of essence, and real relationship, and coeternity with the Beginning, be more strongly shown by other words than by these? For he does not say, “Of the Beginning was begotten the Word,” that he may not separate the Word from the Beginning by any conception of extension in time, but he proclaims together with the Beginning Him also Who was in the Beginning, making the word “was” common to the Beginning and to the Word, that the Word may not linger after the Beginning, but may, by entering in together with the faith as to the Beginning, by its proclamation forestall our hearing, before this admits the Beginning itself in isolation. Then he declares, “And the Word was with God.” Once more the Evangelist fears for our untrained state, once more he dreads our childish and untaught condition: he does not yet entrust to our ears the appellation of “Father,” lest any of the more carnally minded, learning of “the Father,” may be led by his understanding to imagine also by consequence a mother. Neither does he yet name in his proclamation the Son; for he still suspects our customary tendency to the lower nature, and fears lest any, hearing of the Son, should humanize the Godhead by an idea of passion. For this reason, resuming his proclamation, he again calls him “the Word,” making this the account of His nature to thee in thine unbelief. For as thy word proceeds from thy mind, without requiring the intervention of passion, so here also, in hearing of the Word, thou shalt conceive that which is from something, and shalt not conceive passion. Hence, once more resuming his proclamation, he says, “And the Word was with God.” O, how does he make the Word commensurate with God! rather, how does he extend the infinite in comparison with the infinite! “The Word was with God”—the whole being of the Word, assuredly, with the whole being of God. Therefore, as great as God is, so great, clearly, is the Word also that is with Him; so that if God is limited, then will the Word also, surely, be subject to limitation. But if the infinity of God exceeds limit, neither is the Word that is contemplated with Him comprehended by limits and measures. For no one would deny that the Word is contemplated together with the entire Godhead of the Father, so that he should make one part of the Godhead appear to be in the Word, and another destitute of the Word. Once more the spiritual voice of John speaks, once more the Evangelist in his proclamation takes tender care for the hearing of those who are in childhood: not yet have we so much grown by the hearing of his first words as to hear of “the Son,” and yet remain firm without being moved from our footing by the influence of the wonted sense. Therefore our herald, crying once more aloud, still proclaims in his third utterance “the Word,” and not “the Son,” saying, “And the Word was God.” First he

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610 1 S. Pet. ii. 8.

611 S. John i. 1

declared wherein He was, then with whom He was, and now he says what He is, completing, by his third repetition, the object of his proclamation. For he says, “It is no Word of those that are readily understood, that I declare to you, but God under the designation of the Word.” For this Word, that was in the Beginning, and was with God, was not anything else besides God, but was also Himself God. And forthwith the herald, reaching the full height of his lofty speech, declares that this God Whom his proclamation sets forth is He by Whom all things were made, and is life, and the light of men, and the true light that shineth in darkness, yet is not obscured by the darkness, sojourning with His own, yet not received by His own: and being made flesh, and tabernacling, by means of the flesh, in man’s nature. And when he has first gone through this number and variety of statements, he then names the Father and the Only-begotten, when there can be no danger that what has been purified by so many precautions should be allowed, in consequence of the sense of the word “Father,” to sink down to any meaning tainted with pollution, for, “we beheld His glory,” he says, “the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father.”

Repeat, then, Eunomius, repeat this clever objection of yours to the Evangelist: “How dost thou give the name of ‘Father’ in thy discourse, how that of Only-begotten, seeing that all bodily generation is operated by passion?” Surely truth answers you on his behalf, that the mystery of theology is one thing, and the physiology of unstable bodies is another. Wide is the interval by which they are fenced off one from the other. Why do you join together in your argument what cannot blend? how do you defile the purity of the Divine generation by your foul discourse? how do you make systems for the incorporeal by the passions that affect the body? Cease to draw your account of the nature of things above from those that are below. I proclaim the Lord as the Son of God, because the gospel from heaven, given through the bright cloud, thus proclaimed Him; for “This,” He saith, “is My beloved Son<sup>612</sup>.” Yet, though I was taught that He is the Son, I was not dragged down by the name to the earthly significance of “Son,” but I both know that He is from the Father and do not know that He is from passion. And this, moreover, I will add to what has been said, that I know even a bodily generation which is pure from passion, so that even on this point Eunomius’ physiology of bodily generation is proved false, if, that is to say, a bodily birth can be found which does not admit passion. Tell me, was the Word made flesh, or not? You would not, I presume, say that It was not. It was so made, then, and there is none who denies it. How then was it that “God was manifested in the flesh<sup>613</sup>”? “By birth,” of course you will say. But what sort of birth do you speak of? Surely it is clear that you speak of that from the virginity, and that “that which was conceived in her was of the Holy Ghost<sup>614</sup>,” and that “the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth<sup>615</sup>,” and none the less was her purity preserved in her child-bearing. You believe, then, that that birth which took place from a woman was pure from

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612 S. Matt. xvii. 5.

613 1 Tim. iii. 16. Here, as elsewhere in Gregory’s writings, it appears that he read θεός in this passage.

614 S. Matt. i. 20

615 S. Luke ii. 6, 7.

passion, if you do believe, but you refuse to admit the Divine and incorruptible generation from the Father, that you may avoid the idea of passion in generation. But I know well that it is not passion he seeks to avoid in his doctrine, for that he does not discern at all in the Divine and incorruptible nature; but to the end that the Maker of all creation may be accounted a part of creation, he builds up these arguments in order to a denial of the Only-begotten God, and uses his pretended caution about passion to help him in his task.

*§2. He convicts Eunomius of having used of the Only-begotten terms applicable to the existence of the earth, and thus shows that his intention is to prove the Son to be a being mutable and created.*

And this he shows very plainly by his contention against our arguments, where he says that “the essence of the Son came into being from the Father, not put forth by way of extension, not separated from its conjunction with Him that generated Him by flux or division, not perfected by way of growth, not transformed by way of change, but obtaining existence by the mere will of the Generator.” Why, what man whose mental senses are not closed up is left in ignorance by this utterance that by these statements the Son is being represented by Eunomius as a part of the creation? What hinders us from saying all this word for word as it stands, about every single one of the things we contemplate in creation? Let us apply, if you will, the definition to any of the things that appear in creation, and if it does not admit the same sequence, we will condemn ourselves for having examined the definition slightly, and not with the care that befits the truth. Let us exchange, then, the name of the Son, and so read the definition word by word. We say that the essence of the *earth* came into being from the Father, not separated by way of extension or division from its conjunction with Him Who generated it, nor perfected by way of growth, nor put forth by way of change, but obtaining existence by the mere will of Him Who generated it. Is there anything in what we have said that does not apply to the existence of the earth? I think no one would say so: for God did not put forth the earth by being extended, nor bring its essence into existence by flowing or by dissevering Himself from conjunction with Himself, nor did He bring it by means of gradual growth from being small to completeness of magnitude, nor was He fashioned into the form of earth by undergoing mutation or alteration, but His will sufficed Him for the existence of all things that were made: “He spake and they were generated<sup>616</sup>,” so that even the name of “generation” does not fail to accord with the existence of the earth. Now if these things may be truly said of the parts of the universe, what doubt is still left as to our adversaries’ doctrine, that while, so far as words go, they call Him “Son,” they represent Him as being one of the things that came into existence by creation, set before the rest only in precedence of order? just as you might say about the trade of a

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<sup>616</sup> Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 9, and Ps. cxlviii. 5, in LXX. (reading ἐγεννήθησαν).



smith, that from it come all things that are wrought out of iron; but that the instrument of the tongs and hammer, by which the iron is fashioned for use, existed before the making of the rest; yet, while this has precedence of the rest, there is not on that account any difference in respect of matter between the instrument that fashions and the iron that is shaped by the instrument, (for both one and the other are iron,) but the one form is earlier than the other. Such is the theology of heresy touching the Son,—to imagine that there is no difference between the Lord Himself and the things that were made by Him, save the difference in respect of order.

Who that is in any sense classed among Christians admits that the definition<sup>617</sup> of the essence of the parts of the world, and of Him Who made the world, is the same? For my own part I shudder at the blasphemy, knowing that where the definition of things is the same neither is their nature different. For as the definition of the essence of Peter and John and other men is common and their nature is one, in the same way, if the Lord were in respect of nature even as the parts of the world, they must acknowledge that He is also subject to those things, whatever they may be, which they perceive in them. Now the world does not last for ever: thus, according to them, the Lord also will pass away with the heaven and the earth, if, as they say, He is of the same kind with the world. If on the other hand He is confessed to be eternal, we must needs suppose that the world too is not without some part in the Divine nature, if, as they say, it corresponds with the Only-begotten in the matter of creation. You see where this fine process of inference makes the argument tend, like a stone broken off from a mountain ridge and rushing down-hill by its own weight. For either the elements of the world must be Divine, according to the foolish belief of the Greeks, or the Son must not be worshipped. Let us consider it thus. We say that the creation, both what is perceived by the mind, and that which is of a nature to be perceived by sense, came into being from nothing: this they declare also of the Lord. We say that all things that have been made consist by the will of God: this they tell us also of the Only-begotten. We believe that neither the angelic creation nor the mundane is of the essence of Him that made it: and they make Him also alien from the essence of the Father. We confess that all things serve Him that made them: this view they also hold of the Only-begotten. Therefore, of necessity, whatever else it may be that they conceive of the creation, all these attributes they will also attach to the Only-begotten: and whatever they believe of Him, this they will also conceive of the creation: so that, if they confess the Lord as God, they will also deify the rest of the creation. On the other hand, if they define these things to be without share in the Divine nature, they will not reject the same conception touching the Only-begotten also. Moreover no sane man asserts Godhead of the creation. Then neither—I do not utter the rest, lest I lend my tongue to the blasphemy of the enemy. Let those say what consequence follows, whose mouth is well trained in blasphemy. But their doctrine is evident even if they hold their peace. For one of two things must necessarily happen:—either they will depose the Only-begotten God, so that with

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<sup>617</sup> The force of λόγος here appears to be nearly equivalent to “idea,” in the sense of an exact expression of the nature of a thing. Gulonius renders it by “ratio.”

them He will no more either be, or be called so: or, if they assert Godhead of Him, they will equally assert it of all creation:—or, (for this is still left to them,) they will shun the impiety that appears on either side, and take refuge in the orthodox doctrine, and will assuredly agree with us that He is not created, that they may confess Him to be truly God.

What need is there to take time to recount all the other blasphemies that underlie his doctrine, starting from this beginning? For by what we have quoted, one who considers the inference to be drawn will understand that the father of falsehood, the maker of death, the inventor of wickedness, being created in a nature intellectual and incorporeal, was not by that nature hindered from becoming what he is by way of change. For the mutability of essence, moved either way at will, involves a capacity of nature that follows the impulse of determination, so as to become that to which its determination leads it. Accordingly they will define the Lord as being capable even of contrary dispositions, drawing Him down as it were to a rank equal with the angels, by the conception of creation<sup>618</sup>. But let them listen to the great voice of Paul. Why is it that he says that He alone has been called Son? Because He is *not* of the nature of angels, but of that which is more excellent. “For unto which of the angels said He at any time, ‘Thou art My Son, This day have I begotten Thee’? and when again He bringeth the first-begotten into the world He saith, ‘And let all the angels of God worship Him.’ And of the angels He saith, ‘Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire’: but of the Son He saith, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom<sup>619</sup>,’” and all else that the prophecy recites together with these words in declaring His Godhead. And he adds also from another Psalm the appropriate words, “Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thine hands,” and the rest, as far as “But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail<sup>620</sup>,” whereby he describes the immutability and eternity of His nature. If, then, the Godhead of the Only-begotten is as far above the angelic nature as a master is superior to his slaves, how do they make common either with the sensible creation Him Who is Lord of the creation, or with the nature of the angels Him Who is worshipped by them<sup>621</sup>, by detailing, concerning the manner of His existence, statements which will properly apply to the individual things we contemplate in creation, even as we already showed the account given by heresy, touching the Lord, to be closely and appropriately applicable to the making of the earth?

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<sup>618</sup> The argument appears to be this:—The Anomœans assert, on the ground that He is created, that the Son’s essence is *τρέπτων*, liable to change; where there is the possibility of change, the nature must have a capacity of inclining one way or the other, according to the balance of will determining to which side the nature shall incline: and that this is the condition of the angels may be seen from the instance of the fallen angels, whose nature was inclined to evil by their *προαίρεσις*. It follows that to say the Son is *τρέπτος* implies that He is on a level with the angelic nature, and might fall even as the angels fell.

<sup>619</sup> Cf. Heb. i. 4, and foll. It is to be noted that Gregory connects *πάντα* in v. 6, with *εἰσαγάγη*, not treating it, as the A.V. does, as simply introducing another quotation. This appears from his later reference to the text.

<sup>620</sup> Cf. Ps. cii. 25, 26.

<sup>621</sup> Oehler’s punctuation here seems to be unsatisfactory.



§3. *He then again admirably discusses the term πρωτότοκος as it is four times employed by the Apostle.*

But that the readers of our work may find no ambiguity left of such a kind as to afford any support to the heretical doctrines, it may be worth while to add to the passages examined by us this point also from Holy Scripture. They will perhaps raise a question from the very apostolic writings which we quoted: “How could He be called ‘the first-born of creation’<sup>622</sup> if He were not what creation is? for every first-born is the first-born not of another kind, but of its own: as Reuben, having precedence in respect of birth of those who are counted after him, was the first-born, a man the first-born of men; and many others are called the first-born of the brothers who are reckoned with them.” They say then, “We assert that He Who is ‘the first-born of creation’ is of that same essence which we consider the essence of all creation. Now if the whole creation is of one essence with the Father of all, we will not deny that the first-born of creation is this also: but if the God of all differs in essence from the creation, we must of necessity say that neither has the first-born of creation community in essence with God.” The structure of this objection is not, I think, at all less imposing in the form in which it is alleged by us, than in the form in which it would probably be brought against us by our adversaries. But what we ought to know as regards this point shall now, so far as we are able, be plainly set forth in our discourse.

Four times the name of “first-born” or “first-begotten” is used by the Apostle in all his writings: but he has made mention of the name in different senses and not in the same manner. For now he speaks of “the first-born of all creation”<sup>623</sup>, and again of “the first-born among many brethren”<sup>624</sup>, then of “the first-born from the dead”<sup>625</sup>; and in the Epistle to the Hebrews the name of “first-begotten” is absolute, being mentioned by itself: for he speaks thus, “When again He bringeth the first-begotten into the world, He saith, ‘Let all the angels worship Him’<sup>626</sup>.” As these passages are thus distinct, it may be well to interpret each of them separately by itself, how He is the “first-born of creation,” how “among many brethren,” how “from the dead,” and how, spoken of by Himself apart from each of these, when He is again brought into the world, He is worshipped by all His angels. Let us begin then, if you will, our survey of the passages before us with the last-mentioned.

“When again He bringeth in,” he says, “the first-begotten into the world.” The addition of “again” shows, by the force of this word, that this event happens not for the first time: for we use this word of the repetition of things which have once happened. He signifies, therefore, by the

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<sup>622</sup> Cf. Col. i. 15 Πρωτότοκος may be, as it is in the Authorized Version, translated either by “first born,” or by “first-begotten.” Compare with this passage Book II. §8, where the use of the word in Holy Scripture is discussed.

<sup>623</sup> Cf. Col. i. 15

<sup>624</sup> Rom. viii. 29.

<sup>625</sup> Col. i. 18.

<sup>626</sup> Cf. Heb. i. 6

phrase, the dread appearing of the Judge at the end of the ages, when He is seen no more in the form of a servant, but seated in glory upon the throne of His kingdom, and worshipped by all the angels that are around Him. Therefore He Who once entered into the world, becoming the first-born “from the dead,” and “of His brethren,” and “of all creation,” does not, when He comes again into the world as He that judges the world in righteousness<sup>627</sup>, as the prophecy saith, cast off the name of the first-begotten, which He once received for our sakes; but as at the name of Jesus, which is above every name, every knee bows<sup>628</sup>, so also the company of all the angels worships Him Who comes in the name of the First-begotten, in their rejoicing over the restoration of men, wherewith, by becoming the first-born among us, He restored us again to the grace which we had at the beginning<sup>629</sup>. For since there is joy among the angels over those who are rescued from sin, (because until now that creation groaneth and travaileth in pain at the vanity that affects us<sup>630</sup>, judging our perdition to be their own loss,) when that manifestation of the sons of God takes place which they look for and expect, and when the sheep is brought safe to the hundred above, (and we surely—humanity that is to say—are that sheep which the Good Shepherd saved by becoming the first-begotten<sup>631</sup>;) then especially will they offer, in their intense thanksgiving on our behalf, their worship to God, Who by being first-begotten restored him that had wandered from his Father’s home.

Now that we have arrived at the understanding of these words, no one could any longer hesitate as to the other passages, for what reason He is the first-born, either “of the dead,” or “of the creation,” or “among many brethren.” For all these passages refer to the same point, although each of them sets forth some special conception. He is the first-born from the dead, Who first by Himself loosed the pains of death<sup>632</sup>, that He might also make that birth of the resurrection a way for all men<sup>633</sup>. Again, He becomes “the first-born among many brethren,” Who is born before us by the new birth of regeneration in water, for the travail whereof the hovering of the Dove was the midwife, whereby He makes those who share with Him in the like birth to be His own brethren, and becomes the first-born of those who after Him are born of water and of the Spirit<sup>634</sup>: and to speak briefly, as there

627 Ps. xcvi. 10.

628 Cf. Phil. ii. 10

629 Oehler’s punctuation, which is probably due to a printer’s error, is here a good deal altered.

630 Cf. Rom. viii. 19–23.

631 This interpretation is of course common to many of the Fathers, though S. Augustine, for instance, explains the “ninety and nine” otherwise, and his explanation has been often followed by modern writers and preachers. The present interpretation is assumed in a prayer, no doubt of great antiquity, which is found in the Liturgy of S. James, both in the Greek and the Syriac version, and also in the Greek form of the Coptic Liturgy of S. Basil, where it is said to be “from the Liturgy of S. James.”

632 Acts ii. 24.

633 See Book II. §§4 and 8, and note on the former passage.

634 With this passage may be compared the parallel passage in Bk. II. §8. The interpretation of the “many brethren” of those baptized suggests that Gregory understood the “predestination” spoken of in Rom. viii. 29 to be predestination to *baptism*.

are in us three births, whereby human nature is quickened, one of the body, another in the sacrament of regeneration, another by that resurrection of the dead for which we look, He is first-born in all three:—of the twofold regeneration which is wrought by two (by baptism and by the resurrection), by being Himself the leader in each of them; while in the flesh He is first-born, as having first and alone devised in His own case that birth unknown to nature, which no one in the many generations of men had originated. If these passages, then, have been rightly understood, neither will the signification of the “creation,” of which He is first-born, be unknown to us. For we recognize a twofold creation of our nature, the first that whereby we were made, the second that whereby we were made anew. But there would have been no need of the second creation had we not made the first unavailing by our disobedience. Accordingly, when the first creation had waxed old and vanished away, it was needful that there should be a new creation in Christ, (as the Apostle says, who asserts that we should no longer see in the second creation any trace of that which has waxed old, saying, “Having put off the old man with his deeds and his lusts, put on the new man which is created according to God<sup>635</sup>,” and “If any man be in Christ,” he says, “he is a new creature: the old things are passed away, behold all things are become new<sup>636</sup>.”) — for the maker of human nature at the first and afterwards is one and the same. *Then* He took dust from the earth and formed man: again, He took dust from the Virgin, and did not merely form man, but formed man about Himself: *then*, He created; afterwards, He was created: *then*, the Word made flesh; afterwards, the Word became flesh, that He might change our flesh to spirit, by being made partaker with us in flesh and blood. Of this new creation therefore in Christ, which He Himself began, He was called the first-born, being the first-fruits of all, both of those begotten into life, and of those quickened by resurrection of the dead, “that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living<sup>637</sup>,” and might sanctify the whole lump<sup>638</sup> by means of its first-fruits in Himself. Now that the character of “first-born” does not apply to the Son in respect of His pre-temporal existence the appellation of “Only-begotten” testifies. For he who is truly only-begotten has no brethren, for how could any one be only-begotten if numbered among brethren? but as He is called God and man, Son of God and Son of man,—for He has the form of God and the form of a servant<sup>639</sup>, being some things according to His supreme nature, becoming other things in His dispensation of love to man,—so too, being the Only-begotten God, He becomes the first-born of all creation,—the Only-begotten, He that is in the bosom of the Father, yet, among those who are saved by the new creation, both becoming and being called the first born of the creation. But if, as heresy will have it, He is called first-born because He was made before the rest of the creation, the name does not agree with what they maintain concerning the Only-begotten God. For they do not say this,—that the Son and the universe were from the Father

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635 Cf. Col. iii. 9, and Eph. iv. 24.

636 Cf. 2 Cor. v. 17

637 Rom. xiv. 9.

638 Cf. Rom. xi. 16

639 Cf. Phil. ii. 6

in like manner,—but they say, that the Only-begotten God was made by the Father, and that all else was made by the Only-begotten. Therefore on the same ground on which, while they hold that the Son was created, they call God the Father of the created Being, on the same ground, while they say that all things were made by the Only-begotten God, they give Him the name not of the “first-born” of the things that were made by Him, but more properly of their “Father,” as the same relation existing in both cases towards the things created, logically gives rise to the same appellation. For if God, Who is over all, is not properly called the “First-born,” but the Father of the Being He Himself created, the Only-begotten God will surely also be called, by the same reasoning, the “father,” and not properly the “first-born” of His own creatures, so that the appellation of “first-born” will be altogether improper and superfluous, having no place in the heretical conception.

§4. *He proceeds again to discuss the impassibility of the Lord's generation; and the folly of Eunomius, who says that the generated essence involves the appellation of Son, and again, forgetting this, denies the relation of the Son to the Father: and herein he speaks of Circe and of the mandrake poison.*

We must, however, return to those who connect passion with the Divine generation, and on this account deny that the Lord is truly begotten, in order to avoid the conception of passion. To say that passion is absolutely linked with generation, and that on this account, in order that the Divine nature may continue in purity beyond the reach of passion, we ought to consider that the Son is alien to the idea of generation, may perhaps appear reasonable in the eyes of those who are easily deceived, but those who are instructed in the Divine mysteries<sup>640</sup> have an answer ready to hand, based upon admitted facts. For who knows not that it is generation that leads us back to the true and blessed life, not being the same with that which takes place “of blood and of the will of the flesh<sup>641</sup>,” in which are flux and change, and gradual growth to perfection, and all else that we observe in our earthly generation: but the other kind is believed to be from God, and heavenly, and, as the Gospel says, “from above<sup>642</sup>,” which excludes the passions of flesh and blood? I presume that they both admit the existence of this generation, and find no passion in it. Therefore not all generation is naturally connected with passion, but the material generation is subject to passion, the immaterial pure from passion. What constrains him then to attribute to the incorruptible generation of the Son what properly belongs to the flesh, and, by ridiculing the lower form of generation with his unseemly physiology, to exclude the Son from affinity with the Father? For if, even in our own case, it is generation that is the beginning of either life,—that generation which is through the flesh of a life

<sup>640</sup> That is, in the sacramental doctrine with regard to Holy Baptism.

<sup>641</sup> S. John i. 13

<sup>642</sup> S. John iii. 3, where ἄνωθεν may be interpreted either “from above” or as in A.V.

of passion, that which is spiritual of a life of purity, (and no one who is in any sense numbered among Christians would contradict this statement,)—how is it allowable to entertain the idea of passion in thinking of generation as it concerns the incorruptible Nature? Let us moreover examine this point in addition to those we have mentioned. If they disbelieve the passionless character of the Divine generation on the ground of the passion that affects the flesh, let them also, from the same tokens, (those, I mean, to be found in ourselves,) refuse to believe that God acts as a Maker without passion. For if they judge of the Godhead by comparison of our own conditions, they must not confess that God either begets or creates; for neither of these operations is exercised by ourselves without passion. Let them therefore either separate from the Divine nature both creation and generation, that they may guard the impassibility of God on either side, and let them, that the Father may be kept safely beyond the range of passion, neither growing weary by creation, nor being defiled by generation, entirely reject from their doctrine the belief in the Only-begotten, or, if they agree<sup>643</sup> that the one activity is exercised by the Divine power without passion, let them not quarrel about the other: for if He creates without labour or matter, He surely also begets without labour or flux.

And here once more I have in this argument the support of Eunomius. I will state his nonsense concisely and briefly, epitomizing his whole meaning. That men do not make materials for us, but only by their art add form to matter,—this is the drift of what he says in the course of a great quantity of nonsensical language. If, then, understanding conception and formation to be included in the lower generation, he forbids on this ground the pure notion of generation, by consequence, on the same reasoning, since earthly creation is busied with the form, but cannot furnish matter together with the form, let him forbid us also, on this ground, to suppose that the Father is a Creator. If, on the other hand, he refuses to conceive creation in the case of God according to man's measure of power, let him also cease to slander Divine generation by human imperfections. But, that his accuracy and circumspection in argument may be more clearly established, I will again return to a small point in his statements. He asserts that “things which are respectively active and passive share one another's nature,” and mentions, after bodily generation, “the work of the craftsman as displayed in materials.” Now let the acute hearer mark how he here fails in his proper aim, and wanders about among whatever statements he happens to invent. He sees in things that come into being by way of the flesh the “active and passive conceived, with the same essence, the one imparting the essence, the other receiving it.” Thus he knows how to discern the truth with accuracy as regards the nature of existing things, so as to separate the imparter and the receiver from the essence, and to say that each of these is distinct in himself apart from the essence. For he that receives or imparts is surely another besides that which is given or received, so that we must first conceive some one by himself, viewed in his own separate existence, and then speak of him as giving that which he has, or receiving

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<sup>643</sup> Reading εἶ for εἷς, according to Oehler's suggestion.

that which he has not<sup>644</sup>. And when he has sputtered out this argument in such a ridiculous fashion, our sage friend does not perceive that by the next step he overthrows himself once more. For he who by his art forms at his will the material before him, surely in this operation *acts*; and the material, in receiving its form at the hand of him who exercises the art, is passively affected: for it is not by remaining unaffected and unimpressionable that the material receives its form. If then, even in the case of things wrought by art, nothing can come into being without passivity and action concurring to produce it, how can our author think that he here abides by his own words? seeing that, in declaring community of essence to be involved in the relation of action and passion, he seems not only to attest in some sense community of essence in Him that is begotten with Him that begat Him, but also to make the whole creation of one essence<sup>645</sup> with its Maker, if, as he says, the active and the passive are to be defined as mutually akin in respect of nature. Thus, by the very arguments by which he establishes what he wishes, he overthrows the main object of his effort, and makes the glory of the coessential Son more secure by his own contention. For if the fact of origination from anything shows the essence of the generator to be in the generated, and if artificial fabrication (being accomplished by means of action and passion) reduces both that which makes and that which is produced to community of essence, according to his account, our author in many places of his own writings maintains that the Lord has been begotten. Thus by the very arguments whereby he seeks to prove the Lord alien from the essence of the Father, he asserts for Him intimate connexion. For if, according to his account, separation in essence is not observed either in generation or in fabrication, then, whatever he allows the Lord to be, whether “created” or a “product of generation,” he asserts, by both names alike, the affinity of essence, seeing that he makes community of nature in active and passive, in generator and generated, a part of his system.

Let us turn however to the next point of the argument. I beg my readers not to be impatient at the minuteness of examination which extends our argument to a length beyond what we would desire. For it is not any ordinary matters on which we stand in danger, so that our loss would be slight if we should hurry past any point that required more careful attention, but it is the very sum of our hope that we have at stake. For the alternative before us is, whether we should be Christians, not led astray by the destructive wiles of heresy, or whether we should be completely swept away into the conceptions of Jews or heathen. To the end, then, that we may not suffer either of these things forbidden, that we may neither agree with the doctrine of the Jews by a denial of the verily begotten Son, nor be involved in the downfall of the idolaters by the adoration of the creature, let us perforce spend some time in the discussion of these matters, and set forth the very words of Eunomius, which run thus:—

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<sup>644</sup> It is not quite clear whether any of this passage, or, if so, how much of it, is a direct quotation from Eunomius. Probably only the phrase about the imparting and receiving of the essence is taken from him, the rest of the passage being Gregory's expansion of the phrase into a distinction between the essence and the thing of which it is the essence, so that the thing can be viewed apart from its own essence.

<sup>645</sup> ὁμοούσιον

“Now as these things are thus divided, one might reasonably say that the most proper and primary essence, and that which alone exists by the operation of the Father, admits for itself the appellations of ‘product of generation,’ ‘product of making,’ and ‘product of creation’:” and a little further on he says, “But the Son alone, existing by the operation of the Father, possesses His nature and His relation to Him that begat Him, without community<sup>646</sup>.” Such are his words. But let us, like men who look on at their enemies engaged in a factious struggle among themselves, consider first our adversaries’ contention against themselves, and so proceed to set forth on the other side the true doctrine of godliness. “The Son alone,” he says, “existing by the operation of the Father, possesses His nature and His relation to Him that begat Him, without community.” But in his previous statements, he says that he “does not refuse to call Him, that is begotten a ‘product of generation,’ as the generated essence itself, and the appellation of Son, make such a relation of words appropriate.”



The contradiction existing in these passages being thus evident, I am inclined to admire for their acuteness those who praise this doctrine. For it would be hard to say to which of his statements they could turn without finding themselves at variance with the remainder. His earlier statement represented that the generated essence, and the appellation of “Son,” made such a relation of words appropriate. His present system says the contrary:—that “the Son possesses His relation to Him that begat Him without community.” If they believe the first statement, they will surely not accept the second: if they incline to the latter, they will find themselves opposed to the earlier conception. Who will stay the combat? Who will mediate in this civil war? Who will bring this discord into agreement, when the very soul is divided against itself by the opposing statements, and drawn in different ways to contrary doctrines? Perhaps we may see here that dark saying of prophecy which David speaks of the Jews—“They were divided but were not pricked at heart<sup>647</sup>.” For lo, not even when they are divided among contrariety of doctrines have they a sense of their discordancy, but they are carried about by their ears like wine-jars, borne around at the will of him who shifts them. It pleased him to say that the generated essence was closely connected with the appellation of “Son”: straightway, like men asleep, they nodded assent to his remarks. He changed his statement again to the contrary one, and denies the relation of the Son to Him that begat Him: again his well-beloved friends join in assent to this also, shifting in whatever direction he chooses, as the shadows of bodies change their form by spontaneous mimicry with the motion of the advancing figure, and even if he contradicts himself, accepting that also. This is another form of the drought that Homer tells us of, not changing the bodies of those who drink its poison into the forms of brutes, but acting on their souls to produce in them a change to a state void of reason. For of those men, the tale tells that their mind was sound, while their form was changed to that of beasts, but

<sup>646</sup> This seems to be the force of ἀκοινωνήτων: it is clear from what follows that it is to be understood as denying community of essence between the Father and the Son, not as asserting only the unique character alike of the Son and of His relation to the Father.

<sup>647</sup> This is the LXX. version of the last part of Ps. xxxv. 15, a rendering with which the Vulgate version practically agrees.

here, while their bodies remain in their natural state, their souls are transformed to the condition of brutes. And as there the poet's tale of wonder says that those who drank the drug were changed into the forms of various beasts, at the pleasure of her who beguiled their nature, the same thing happens now also from this Circe's cup. For they who drink the deceit of sorcery from the same writing are changed to different forms of doctrine, transformed now to one, now to another. And meanwhile these very ridiculous people, according to the revised edition of the fable, are still well pleased with him who leads them to such absurdity, and stoop to gather the words he scatters about, as if they were cornel fruit or acorns, running greedily like swine to the doctrines that are shed on the ground, not being naturally capable of fixing their gaze on those which are lofty and heavenly. For this reason it is that they do not see the tendency of his argument to contrary positions, but snatch without examination what comes in their way: and as they say that the bodies of men stupefied with mandrake are held in a sort of slumber and inability to move, so are the senses of these men's souls affected, being made torpid as regards the apprehension of deceit. It is certainly a terrible thing to be held in unconsciousness by hidden guile, as the result of some fallacious argument: yet where it is involuntary the misfortune is excusable: but to be brought to make trial of evil as the result of a kind of forethought and zealous desire, not in ignorance of what will befall, surpasses every extreme of misery. Surely we may well complain, when we hear that even greedy fish avoid the steel when it comes near them unbaited, and take down the hook only when hope of food decoys them to a bait: but where the evil is apparent, to go over of their own accord to this destruction is a more wretched thing than the folly of the fish: for these are led by their greediness to a destruction that is concealed from them, but the others swallow with open mouth the hook of impiety in its bareness, satisfied with destruction under the influence of some unreasoning passion. For what could be clearer than this contradiction—than to say that the same Person was begotten and is a thing created, and that something is closely connected with the name of "Son," and, again, is alien from the sense of "Son"? But enough of these matters.

§5. *He again shows Eunomius, constrained by truth, in the character of an advocate of the orthodox doctrine, confessing as most proper and primary, not only the essence of the Father, but the essence also of the Only-begotten.*

It might, however, be useful to look at the sense of the utterance of Eunomius that is set before us in orderly sequence, recurring to the beginning of his statement. For the points we have now examined were an obvious incitement to us to begin our reply with the last passage, on account of the evident character of the contradiction involved in his words.

This, then, is what Eunomius says at the beginning:—

“Now, as these things are thus divided, one might reasonably say that the most proper and primary essence, and that which alone exists by the operation of the Father, admits for itself the appellations of ‘product of generation,’ ‘product of making,’ and ‘product of creation.’” First, then,



I would ask those who are attending to this discourse to bear in mind, that in his first composition he says that the essence of the Father also is “most proper,” introducing his statement with these words, “The whole account of our teaching is completed with the supreme and most proper essence.” And here he calls the essence of the Only-begotten “most proper and primary.” Thus putting together Eunomius’ phrases from each of his books, we shall call him himself as a witness of the community of essence, who in another place makes a declaration to this effect, that “of things which have the same appellations, the nature also is not different” in any way. For our self-contradictory friend would not indicate things differing in nature by identity of appellation, but it is surely for this reason, that the definition of essence in Father and Son is one, that he says that the one is “most proper,” and that the other also is “most proper.” And the general usage of men bears witness to our argument, which does not apply the term “most proper” where the name does not truly agree with the nature. For instance, we call a likeness, inexactly, “a man,” but what we properly designate by this name is the animal presented to us in nature. And similarly, the language of Scripture recognizes the appellation of “god” for an idol, and for a demon, and for the belly: but here too the name has not its proper sense; and in the same way with all other cases. A man is said to have eaten food in the fancy of a dream, but we cannot call this fancy food, in the proper sense of the term. As, then, in the case of two men existing naturally, we properly call both equally by the name of man, while if any one should join an inanimate portrait in his enumeration with a real man, one might perhaps speak of him who really exists and of the likeness, as “two men,” but would no longer attribute to both the proper meaning of the word, so, on the supposition that the nature of the Only-begotten was conceived as something else than the essence of the Father, our author would not have called each of the essences “most proper.” For how could any one signify things differing in nature by identity of names? Surely the truth seems to be made plain even by those who fight against it, as falsehood is unable, even when expressed in the words of the enemy, utterly to prevail over truth. Hence the doctrine of orthodoxy is proclaimed by the mouth of its opponents, without their knowing what they say, as the saving Passion of the Lord for us had been foretold in the case of Caiaphas, not knowing what he said<sup>648</sup>. If, therefore, true propriety of essence is common to both (I mean to the Father and the Son), what room is there for saying that their essences are mutually divergent? Or how is a difference by way of superior power, or greatness, or honour, contemplated in them, seeing that the “most proper” essence admits of no diminution? For that which is whatever it is imperfectly, is not that thing “most properly,” be it nature, or power, or rank, or any other individual object of contemplation, so that the superiority of the Father’s essence, as heresy will have it, proves the imperfection of the essence of the Son. If then it is imperfect, it is not proper; but if it is “most proper” it is also surely perfect. For it is not possible to call that which is deficient perfect. But neither is it possible, when, in comparing them, that which is perfect is set beside that which is perfect, to perceive any difference by way of excess or defect: for perfection is one in both cases, as in a rule, not showing a hollow by defect, nor a projection by excess. Thus, from these passages

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648 S. John xi. 51

Eunomius' advocacy in favour of our doctrine may be sufficiently seen—I should rather say, not his earnestness on our behalf, but his conflict with himself. For he turns against himself those devices whereby he establishes our doctrines by his own arguments. Let us, however, once more follow his writings word for word, that it may be clear to all that their argument has no power for evil except the desire to do mischief.

§6. *He then exposes argument about the “Generate,” and the “product of making,” and “product of creation,” and shows the impious nature of the language of Eunomius and Theognostus on the “immediate” and “undivided” character of the essence, and its “relation to its creator and maker.”*

Let us listen, then, to what he says. “One might reasonably say that the most proper and primary essence, and that which alone exists by the operation of the Father, admits for itself the appellations of ‘product of generation,’ ‘product of making,’ and ‘product of creation.’” Who knows not that what separates the Church from heresy is this term, “product of creation,” applied to the Son? Accordingly, the doctrinal difference being universally acknowledged, what would be the reasonable course for a man to take who endeavours to show that his opinions are more true than ours? Clearly, to establish his own statement, by showing, by such proofs as he could, that we ought to consider that the Lord is created. Or omitting this, should he rather lay down a law for his readers that they should speak of matters of controversy as if they were acknowledged facts? For my own part, I think he should take the former course, and perhaps all who possess any share of intelligence demand this of their opponents, that they should, to begin with, establish upon some incontrovertible basis the first principle of their argument, and so proceed to press their theory by inferences. Now our writer leaves alone the task of establishing the view that we should think He is created, and goes on to the next steps, fitting on the inferential process of his argument to this unproved assumption, being just in the condition of those men whose minds are deep in foolish desires, with their thoughts wandering upon a kingdom, or upon some other object of pursuit. They do not think how any of the things on which they set their hearts could possibly be, but they arrange and order their good fortune for themselves at their pleasure, as if it were theirs already, straying with a kind of pleasure among non-existent things. So, too, our clever author somehow or other lulls his own renowned dialectic to sleep, and before giving a demonstration of the point at issue, he tells, as if to children, the tale of this deceitful and inconsequent folly of his own doctrine, setting it forth like a story told at a drinking-party. For he says that the essence which “exists by the operation of the Father” admits the appellation of “product of generation,” and of “product of making,” and of “product of creation.” What reasoning showed us that the Son exists by any constructive operation, and that the nature of the Father remains inoperative with regard to the Personal existence<sup>649</sup> of the

<sup>649</sup> ὑπόστασιν

Son? This was the very point at issue in the controversy, whether the essence of the Father begat the Son, or whether it made Him as one of the external things which accompany His nature<sup>650</sup>. Now seeing that the Church, according to the Divine teaching, believes the Only-begotten to be verily God, and abhors the superstition of polytheism, and for this cause does not admit the difference of essences, in order that the Godheads may not, by divergence of essence, fall under the conception of number (for this is nothing else than to introduce polytheism into our life)—seeing, I say, that the Church teaches this in plain language, that the Only-begotten is essentially God, very God of the essence of the very God, how ought one who opposes her decisions to overthrow the preconceived opinion? Should he not do so by establishing the opposing statement, demonstrating the disputed point from some acknowledged principle? I think no sensible man would look for anything else than this. But our author starts from the disputed points, and takes, as though it were admitted, matter which is in controversy as a principle for the succeeding argument. If it had first been shown that the Son had His existence through some operation, what quarrel should we have with what follows, that he should say that the essence which exists through an operation admits for itself the name of “product of making”? But let the advocates of error tell us how the consequence has any force, so long as the antecedent remains unestablished. For supposing one were to grant by way of hypothesis that man is winged, there will be no question of concession about what comes next: for he who becomes winged will fly in some way or other, and lift himself up on high above the earth, soaring through the air on his wings. But we have to see how he whose nature is not aerial could become winged, and if this condition does not exist, it is vain to discuss the next point. Let our author, then, show this to begin with, that it is in vain that the Church has believed that the Only-begotten Son truly exists, not adopted by a Father falsely so called, but existing according to nature, by generation from Him Who is, not alienated from the essence of Him that begat Him. But so long as his primary proposition remains unproved, it is idle to dwell on those which are secondary. And let no one interrupt me, by saying that what we confess should also be confirmed by constructive reasoning: for it is enough for proof of our statement, that the tradition has come down to us from our fathers, handed on, like some inheritance, by succession from the apostles and the saints who came after them. They, on the other hand, who change their doctrines to this novelty, would need the support of arguments in abundance, if they were about to bring over to their views, not men light as dust, and unstable, but men of weight and steadiness: but so long as their statement is advanced without being established, and without being proved, who is so foolish and so brutish as to account the teaching of the evangelists and apostles, and of those who have successively shone like lights in the churches, of less force than this undemonstrated nonsense?

Let us further look at the most remarkable instance of our author’s cleverness; how, by the abundance of his dialectic skill, he ingeniously draws over to the contrary view the more simple

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<sup>650</sup> At a later stage Gregory points out that the idea of creation is involved, if the thing produced is external to the nature of the Maker.



sort. He throws in, as an addition to the title of “product of making,” and that of “product of creation,” the further phrase, “product of generation,” saying that the essence of the Son “admits these names for itself”; and thinks that, so long as he harangues as if he were in some gathering of toppers, his knavery in dealing with doctrine will not be detected by any one. For in joining “product of generation” with “product of making,” and “product of creation,” he thinks that he stealthily makes away with the difference in significance between the names, by putting together what have nothing in common. These are his clever tricks of dialectic; but we mere laymen in argument<sup>651</sup> do not deny that, so far as voice and tongue are concerned, we are what his speech sets forth about us, but we allow also that our ears, as the prophet says, are made ready for intelligent hearing. Accordingly, we are not moved, by the conjunction of names that have nothing in common, to make a confusion between the things they signify: but even if the great Apostle names together wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, and precious stones<sup>652</sup>, we reckon up summarily the number of things he mentions, and yet do not fail to recognize separately the nature of each of the substances named. So here, too, when “product of generation” and “product of making” are named together, we pass from the sounds to the sense, and do not behold the same meaning in each of the names; for “product of creation” means one thing, and “product of generation” another: so that even if he tries to mingle what will not blend, the intelligent hearer will listen with discrimination, and will point out that it is an impossibility for any one nature to “admit for itself” the appellation of “product of generation,” and that of “product of creation.” For, if one of these were true, the other would necessarily be false, so that, if the thing were a product of creation, it would not be a product of generation, and conversely, if it were called a product of generation, it would be alienated from the title of “product of creation.” Yet Eunomius tells us that the essence of the Son “admits for itself the appellations of ‘product of generation,’ ‘product of making,’ and ‘product of creation’”!

Does he, by what still remains, make at all more secure this headless and rootless statement of his, in which, in its earliest stage, nothing was laid down that had any force with regard to the point he is trying to establish? or does the rest also cling to the same folly, not deriving its strength from any support it gets from argument, but setting out its exposition of blasphemy with vague details like the recital of dreams? He says (and this he subjoins to what I have already quoted)—“Having its generation without intervention, and preserving indivisible its relation to its Generator, Maker, and Creator.” Well, if we were to leave alone the absence of intervention and of division, and look at the meaning of the words as it stands by itself, we shall find that everywhere his absurd teaching is cast upon the ears of those whom he deceives, without corroboration from a single argument. “Its Generator, and Maker, and Creator,” he says. These names, though they seem to be three, include the sense of but two concepts, since two of the words are equivalent in meaning. For to make is the same as to create, but generation is another thing distinct from those spoken of. Now,

<sup>651</sup> This phrase seems to be quoted from Eunomius. The reference to the “prophet” may possibly be suggested by Is. vi. 9–10: but it is more probably only concerned with the words *ὠτία* and *ἀκοήν*, as applied to convey the idea of mental alertness.

<sup>652</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 12.

seeing that the result of the signification of the words is to divide the ordinary apprehension of men into different ideas, what argument demonstrates to us that making is the same thing with generation, to the end that we may accommodate the one essence to this difference of terms? For so long as the ordinary significance of the words holds, and no argument is found to transfer the sense of the terms to an opposite meaning, it is not possible that any one nature should be divided between the conception of “product of making,” and that of “product of generation.” Since each of these terms, used by itself, has a meaning of its own, we must also suppose the relative conjunction in which they stand to be appropriate and germane to the terms. For all other relative terms have their connection, not with what is foreign and heterogeneous, but, even if the correlative term be suppressed, we hear spontaneously, together with the primary word, that which is linked with it, as in the case of “maker,” “slave,” “friend,” “son,” and so forth. For all names that are considered as relative to another, present to us, by the mention of them, each its proper and closely connected relationship with that which it declares, while they avoid all mixture of that which is heterogeneous<sup>653</sup>. For neither is the name of “maker” linked with the word “son,” nor the term “slave” referred to the term “maker,” nor does “friend” present to us a “slave,” nor “son” a “master,” but we recognize clearly and distinctly the connection of each of these with its correlative, conceiving by the word “friend” another friend; by “slave,” a master; by “maker,” work; by “son,” a father. In the same way, then, “product of generation” has its proper relative sense; with the “product of generation,” surely, is linked the *generator*, and with the “product of creation” the *creator*; and we must certainly, if we are not prepared by a substitution of names to introduce a confusion of things, preserve for each of the relative terms that which it properly connotes.

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Now, seeing that the tendency of the meaning of these words is manifest, how comes it that one who advances his doctrine by the aid of logical system failed to perceive in these names their proper relative sense? But he thinks that he is linking on the “product of generation” to “maker,” and the “product of making” to “generator,” by saying that the essence of the Son “admits for itself the appellations of ‘product of generation,’ ‘product of making,’ and ‘product of creation,’” and “preserves indivisible its relation to its Generator, Maker, and Creator.” For it is contrary to nature, that a single thing should be split up into different relations. But the Son is properly related to the Father, and that which is begotten to him that begat it, while the “product of making” has its relation to its “maker”; save if one might consider some inexact use, in some undistinguishing way of common parlance, to overrule the strict signification.

By what reasoning then is it, and by what arguments, according to that invincible logic of his, that he wins back the opinion of the mass of men, and follows out at his pleasure this line of thought, that as the God Who is over all is conceived and spoken of both as “Creator” and as “Father,” the Son has a close connection with both titles, being equally called both “product of creation” and

<sup>653</sup> E.g. “A thing made” suggests to us the thought of a “maker,” “a maker” the thought of the thing made; and they suggest also a close connection as existing between the two correlative terms of one of which the name is uttered; but neither suggests in the same way any term which is not correlative, or with which it is not, in some manner, *in pari materia*.

“product of generation”? For as customary accuracy of speech distinguishes between names of this kind, and applies the name of “generation” in the case of things generated from the essence itself, and understands that of “creation” of those things which are external to the nature of their maker, and as on this account the Divine doctrines, in handing down the knowledge of God, have delivered to us the names of “Father” and “Son,” not those of “Creator” and “work,” that there might arise no error tending to blasphemy (as might happen if an appellation of the latter kind repelled the Son to the position of an alien and a stranger), and that the impious doctrines which sever the Only-begotten from essential affinity with the Father might find no entrance—seeing all this, I say, he who declares that the appellation of “product of making” is one befitting the Son, will safely say by consequence that the name of “Son” is properly applicable to that which is the product of making; so that, if the Son is a “product of making,” the heaven is called “Son,” and the individual things that have been made are, according to our author, properly named by the appellation of “Son.” For if He has this name, not because He shares in nature with Him that begat Him, but is called Son for this reason, that He is created, the same argument will permit that a lamb, a dog, a frog, and all things that exist by the will of their maker, should be named by the title of “Son.” If, on the other hand, each of these is not a Son and is not called God, by reason of its being external to the nature of the Son, it follows, surely, that He Who is truly Son is Son, and is confessed to be God by reason of His being of the very nature of Him that begat Him. But Eunomius abhors the idea of generation, and excludes it from the Divine doctrine, slandering the term by his fleshly speculations. Well, our discourse, in what precedes, showed sufficiently on this point that, as the Psalmist says, “they are afraid where no fear is<sup>654</sup>.” For if it was shown in the case of men that not all generation exists by way of passion, but that that which is material is by passion, while that which is spiritual is pure and incorruptible, (for that which is begotten of the Spirit is spirit and not flesh, and in spirit we see no condition that is subject to passion,) since our author thought it necessary to estimate the Divine power by means of examples among ourselves, let him persuade himself to conceive from the other mode of generation the passionless character of the Divine generation. Moreover, by mixing up together these three names, of which two are equivalent, he thinks that his readers, by reason of the community of sense in the two phrases, will jump to the conclusion that the third is equivalent also. For since the appellation of “product of making,” and “product of creation,” indicate that the thing made is external to the nature of the maker, he couples with these the phrase, “product of generation,” that this too may be interpreted along with those above mentioned. But argument of this sort is termed fraud and falsehood and imposition, not a thoughtful and skilful demonstration. For that only is called demonstration which shows what is unknown from what is acknowledged; but to reason fraudulently and fallaciously, to conceal your own reproach, and to confound by superficial deceits the understanding of men, as the Apostle says, “of corrupt minds<sup>655</sup>,” this no sane man would call a skilful demonstration.

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654 Cf. Ps. liii. 6

655 2 Tim. iii. 8.



Let us proceed, however, to what follows in order. He says that the generation of the essence is “without intervention,” and that it “preserves indivisible its relation to its Generator, Maker, and Creator.” Well, if he had spoken of the immediate and indivisible character of the essence, and stopped his discourse there, it would not have swerved from the orthodox view, since we too confess the close connection and relation of the Son with the Father, so that there is nothing inserted between them which is found to intervene in the connection of the Son with the Father, no conception of interval, not even that minute and indivisible one, which, when time is divided into past, present, and future, is conceived indivisibly by itself as the present, as it cannot be considered as a part either of the past or of the future, by reason of its being quite without dimensions and incapable of division, and unobservable, to whichever side it might be added. That, then, which is perfectly immediate, admits we say, of no such intervention; for that which is separated by any interval would cease to be immediate. If, therefore, our author, likewise, in saying that the generation of the Son is “without intervention,” excluded all these ideas, then he laid down the orthodox doctrine of the conjunction of Him Who is with the Father. When, however, as though in a fit of repentance, he straightway proceeded to add to what he had said that the essence “preserves its relation to its Generator, Maker, and Creator,” he polluted his first statement by his second, vomiting forth his blasphemous utterance upon the pure doctrine. For it is clear that there too his “without intervention” has no orthodox intention, but, as one might say that the hammer is mediate between the smith and the nail, but its own making is “without intervention,” because, when tools had not yet been found out by the craft, the hammer came first from the craftsman’s hands by some inventive process, not<sup>656</sup> by means of any other tool, and so by it the others were made; so the phrase, “without intervention,” indicates that this is also our author’s conception touching the Only-begotten. And here Eunomius is not alone in his error as regards the enormity of his doctrine, but you may find a parallel also in the works of Theognostus<sup>657</sup>, who says that God, wishing to make this universe, first brought the Son into existence as a sort of standard of the creation; not perceiving that in his statement there is involved this absurdity, that what exists, not for its own sake, but for the sake of something else, is surely of less value than that for the sake of which it exists: as we provide an implement of husbandry for the sake of life, yet the plough is surely not reckoned as equally valuable with life. So, if the Lord also exists on account of the world, and not all things on account of Him, the whole of the things for the sake of which they say He exists, would be more valuable than the Lord. And this is what they are here establishing by their argument, where they insist that the Son has His relation to His Creator and Maker “without intervention.”

<sup>656</sup> It seems necessary for the sense to read οὐ δι’ ἑτέρου τινὸς ὀργάνου, since the force of the comparison consists in the hammer being produced immediately by the smith: otherwise we must understand δι’ ἑτέρου τινὸς ὀργάνου to refer to the employment of some tool not properly belonging to the τέχνη of the smith: but even so the parallel would be destroyed.

<sup>657</sup> Theognostus, a writer of the third century, is said to have been the head of the Catechetical School at Alexandria, and is quoted by S. Athanasius as an authority against the Arians. An account of his work is to be found in Photius, and this is extracted and printed with the few remaining fragments of his actual writings in the 3rd volume of Routh’s *Reliquiæ Sacrae*.

§7. *He then clearly and skilfully criticises the doctrine of the impossibility of comparison with the things made after the Son, and exposes the idolatry contrived by Eunomius, and concealed by the terminology of “Son” and “Only-begotten,” to deceive his readers.*

In the remainder of the passage, however, he becomes conciliatory, and says that the essence “is not compared with any of the things that were made by it and after it<sup>658</sup>.” Such are the gifts which the enemies of the truth offer to the Lord<sup>659</sup>, by which their blasphemy is made more manifest. Tell me what else is there of all things in creation that admits of comparison with a different thing, seeing that the characteristic nature that appears in each absolutely rejects community with things of a different kind<sup>660</sup>? The heaven admits no comparison with the earth, nor this with the stars, nor the stars with the seas, nor water with stone, nor animals with trees, nor land animals with winged creatures, nor four-footed beasts with those that swim, nor irrational with rational creatures. Indeed, why should one take up time with individual instances, in showing that we may say of every single thing that we behold in the creation, precisely what was thrown to the Only-begotten, as if it were something special—that He admits of comparison with none of the things that have been produced after Him and by Him? For it is clear that everything which you conceive by itself is incapable of comparison with the universe, and with the individual things which compose it; and it is this, which may be truly said of any creature you please, which is allotted by the enemies of the truth, as adequate and sufficient for His honour and glory, to the Only-begotten God! And once more, putting together phrases of the same sort in the remainder of the passage, he dignifies Him with his empty honours, calling Him “Lord” and “Only-begotten”: but that no orthodox meaning may be conveyed to his readers by these names, he promptly mixes up blasphemy with the more notable of them. His phrase runs thus:—“Inasmuch,” he says, “as the generated essence leaves no room for community to anything else (for it is only-begotten<sup>661</sup>), nor is the operation of the Maker contemplated as common.” O marvellous insolence! as though he were addressing his harangue to brutes, or senseless beings “which have no understanding<sup>662</sup>,” he twists his argument about in contrary ways, as he pleases; or rather he suffers as men do who are deprived of sight; for they too behave often in

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<sup>658</sup> Oehler’s proposal to read “*vel invitis libris quod sententia flagitat τῶν δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ μετ’ αὐτὸν*” does not seem necessary. αὐτῆς and αὐτὴν refer to οὐσία, the quotation being made (not verbally) from *Eunomius*, not from Theognostus, and following apparently the phrase about “preserving the relation,” etc. If the clause were a continuation of the quotation from Theognostus, we should have to follow Oehler’s proposal.

<sup>659</sup> Reading, according to Cotelerius’ suggestion, (mentioned with approval by Oehler, though not followed by him,) δωροφοροῦσιν for δορυφοροῦσιν

<sup>660</sup> That is to say, because there is no “common measure” of the distinct natures.

<sup>661</sup> Altering Oehler’s punctuation; it is the fact that the essence is μονογενής which excludes all other things from community with it.

<sup>662</sup> Ps. xxxii. 9.



unseemly ways before the eyes of those who see, supposing, because they themselves cannot see, that they are also unseen. For what sort of man is it who does not see the contradiction in his words? Because it is “generated,” he says, the essence leaves other things no room for community, for it is only-begotten; and then when he has uttered these words, really as though he did not see or did not suppose himself to be seen, he tacks on, as if corresponding to what he has said, things that have nothing in common with them, coupling “the operation of the maker” with the essence of the Only-begotten. That which is generated is correlative to the generator, and the Only-begotten, surely, by consequence, to the Father; and he who looks to the truth beholds, in co-ordination with the Son, not “the operation of the maker,” but the nature of Him that begat Him. But he, as if he were talking about plants or seeds, or some other thing in the order of creation, sets “the operation of the maker” by the side of the existence<sup>663</sup> of the Only-begotten. Why, if a stone or a stick, or something of that sort, were the subject of consideration, it would be logical to pre-suppose “the operation of the maker”; but if the Only-begotten God is confessed, even by His adversaries, to be a Son, and to exist by way of generation, how do the same words befit Him that befit the lowest portions of the creation? how do they think it pious to say concerning the Lord the very thing which may be truly said of an ant or a gnat? For if any one understood the nature of an ant, and its peculiar ties in reference to other living things, he would not be beyond the truth in saying that “the operation of its maker is not contemplated as common” with reference to the other things. What, therefore, is affirmed of such things as these, this they predicate also of the Only-begotten, and as hunters are said to intercept the passage of their game with holes, and to conceal their design by covering over the mouths of the holes with some unsound and unsubstantial material, in order that the pit may seem level with the ground about it, so heresy contrives against men something of the same sort, covering over the hole of their impiety with these fine-sounding and pious names, as it were with a level thatch, so that those who are rather unintelligent, thinking that these men’s preaching is the same with the true faith, because of the agreement of their words, hasten towards the mere name of the Son and the Only-begotten, and step into emptiness in the hole, since the significance of these titles will not sustain the weight of their tread, but lets them down into the pitfall of the denial of Christ. This is why he speaks of the generated essence that leaves nothing room for community, and calls it “Only-begotten.” These are the coverings of the hole. But when any one stops before he is caught in the gulf, and puts forth the test of argument, like a hand, upon his discourse, he sees the dangerous downfall of idolatry lying beneath the doctrine. For when he draws near, as though to God and the Son of God, he finds a creature of God set forth for his worship. This is why they proclaim high and low the name of the Only-begotten, that the destruction may be readily accepted by the victims of their deceit, as though one were to mix up poison in bread, and give a deadly greeting to those who asked for food, who would not have been willing to take the poison by itself, had they not been enticed to what they saw. Thus he has a sharp eye to the object of his efforts, at

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<sup>663</sup> ὑποστάσε.

least so far as his own opinion goes. For if he had entirely rejected from his teaching the name of the Son, his falsehood would not have been acceptable to men, when his denial was openly stated in a definite proclamation; but now leaving only the name, and changing the signification of it to express creation, he at once sets up his idolatry, and fraudulently hides its reproach. But since we are bidden not to honour God with our lips<sup>664</sup>, and piety is not tested by the sound of a word, but the Son must first be the object of belief in the heart unto righteousness, and then be confessed with the mouth unto salvation<sup>665</sup>, and those who say in their hearts that He is not God, even though with their mouths they confess Him as Lord, are corrupt and became abominable<sup>666</sup>, as the prophet says,—for this cause, I say, we must look to the mind of those who put forward, forsooth, the words of the faith, and not be enticed to follow their sound. If, then, one who speaks of the Son does not by that word refer to a creature, he is on our side and not on the enemy's; but if any one applies the name of Son to the creation, he is to be ranked among idolaters. For they too gave the name of God to Dagon and Bel and the Dragon, but they did not on that account worship God. For the wood and the brass and the monster were not God.



§8. *He proceeds to show that there is no “variance” in the essence of the Father and the Son: wherein he expounds many forms of variation and harmony, and explains the “form,” the “seal,” and the “express image.”*

But what need is there in our discourse to reveal his hidden deceit by mere guesses at his intention, and possibly to give our hearers occasions for objection, on the ground that we make these charges against our enemies untruly? For lo, he sets forth to us his blasphemy in its nakedness, not hiding his guile by any veil, but speaking boldly in his absurdities with unrestrained voice. What he has written runs thus:—“We, for our part,” he says, “as we find nothing else besides the essence of the Son which admits of the generation, are of opinion that we must assign the appellations to the essence itself, or else we speak of ‘Son’ and ‘begotten’ to no purpose, and as a mere verbal matter, if we are really to separate them from the essence; starting from these names, we also confidently maintain that the essences are variant from each other<sup>667</sup>.”

<sup>664</sup> Cf. Is. xxix. 13

<sup>665</sup> Cf. Rom. x. 10

<sup>666</sup> Cf. Ps. xiii. 2

<sup>667</sup> The whole passage is rather obscure, and Oehler's punctuation renders it perhaps more obscure than that which is here adopted. The argument seems to be something like this:—“The generated essence is not compared with any of the things made by it, or after it, because being *only-begotten* it leaves no room for a common basis of comparison with anything else, and the operation of its maker is also peculiar to itself (since it is immediate, the operation in the case of other things being *mediate*). The essence of the Son, then, being so far isolated, it is to it that the appellations of γέννημα, ποίημα, and κτίσμα are to be

There is no need, I imagine, that the absurdity here laid down should be refuted by arguments from us. The mere reading of what he has written is enough to pillory his blasphemy. But let us thus examine it. He says that the essences of the Father and the Son are “variant.” What is meant by “variant”? Let us first of all examine the force of the term as it is applied by itself<sup>668</sup>, that by the interpretation of the word its blasphemous character may be more clearly revealed. The term “variance” is used, in the inexact sense sanctioned by custom, of bodies, when, by palsy or any other disease, any limb is perverted from its natural co-ordination. For we speak, comparing the state of suffering with that of health, of the condition of one who has been subjected to a change for the worse, as being a “variation” from his usual health; and in the case of those who differ in respect of virtue and vice, comparing the licentious life with that of purity and temperance, or the unjust life with that of justice, or the life which is passionate, warlike, and prodigal of anger, with that which is mild and peaceful—and generally all that is reproached with vice, as compared with what is more excellent, is said to exhibit “variance” from it, because the marks observed in both—in the good, I mean, and the inferior—do not mutually agree. Again, we say that those qualities observed in the elements are “at variance” which are mutually opposed as contraries, having a power reciprocally destructive, as heat and cold, or dryness and moisture, or, generally, anything that is opposed to another as a contrary; and the absence of union in these we express by the term “variation”; and generally everything which is out of harmony with another in their observed characteristics, is said to be “at variance” with it, as health with disease, life with death, war with peace, virtue with vice, and all similar cases.

Now that we have thus analyzed these expressions, let us also consider in regard to our author in what sense he says that the essences of the Father and the Son are “variant from each other.” What does he mean by it? Is it in the sense that the Father is according to nature, while the Son “varies” from that nature? Or does he express by this word the perversion of virtue, separating the evil from the more excellent by the name of “variation,” so as to regard the one essence in a good, the other in a contrary aspect? Or does he assert that one Divine essence also is variant from another, in the manner of the opposition of the elements? or as war stands to peace, and life to death, does he also perceive in the essences the conflict which so exists among all such things, so that they cannot unite one with another, because the mixture of contraries exerts upon the things mingled a consuming force, as the wisdom of the Proverbs saith of such a doctrine, that water and fire never say “It is enough<sup>669</sup>,” expressing enigmatically the nature of contraries of equal force and equal

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assigned; otherwise the terms ‘Son’ and ‘Only-begotten’ are meaningless. Therefore the Son, being in essence a ποίημα or κτίσμα, is alien from the Father Who made or created Him.” The word παρελλάχθαι, used to express the difference of essence between the Father and the Son, is one for which it is hard to find an equivalent which shall suit all the cases of the use of the word afterwards instanced: the idea of “variation,” however, seems to attach to all these cases, and the verb has been translated accordingly.

<sup>668</sup> Following Oehler’s suggestion and reading ἐφ’ ἑαυτῆς.

<sup>669</sup> Cf. Prov. xxx. 15 (LXX.).



balance, and their mutual destruction? Or is it in none of these ways that he sees “variance” in the essences? Let him tell us, then, what he conceives besides these. He could not say, I take it, even if he were to repeat his wonted phrase<sup>670</sup>, “The Son is variant from Him Who begat Him”; for thereby the absurdity of his statements is yet more clearly shown. For what mutual relation is so closely and concordantly engrafted and fitted together as that meaning of relation to the Father expressed by the word “Son”? And a proof of this is that even if both of these names be not spoken, that which is omitted is connoted by the one that is uttered, so closely is the one implied in the other, and concordant with it: and both of them are so discerned in the one that one cannot be conceived without the other. Now that which is “at variance” is surely so conceived and so called, in opposition to that which is “in harmony,” as the plumb-line is in harmony with the straight line, while that which is crooked, when set beside that which is straight, does not harmonize with it. Musicians also are wont to call the agreement of notes “harmony,” and that which is out of tune and discordant “inharmonious.” To speak of things as at “variance,” then, is the same as to speak of them as “out of harmony.” If, therefore, the nature of the Only-begotten God is at “variance,” to use the heretical phrase, with the essence of the Father, it is surely not in harmony with it: and inharmoniousness cannot exist where there is no possibility of harmony<sup>671</sup>. For the case is as when, the figure in the wax and in the graying of the signet being one, the wax that has been stamped by the signet, when it is fitted again to the latter, makes the impression on itself accord with that which surrounds it, filling up the hollows and accommodating the projections of the engraving with its own patterns: but if some strange and different pattern is fitted to the engraving of the signet, it makes its own form rough and confused, by rubbing off its figure on an engraved surface that does not correspond with it. But He Who is “in the form of God<sup>672</sup>” has been formed by no impression different from the Father, seeing that He is “the express image” of the Father’s Person<sup>673</sup>, while the “form of God” is surely the same thing as His essence. For as, “being made in the form of a servant<sup>674</sup>,” He was formed in the essence of a servant, not taking upon Him the form merely, apart from the essence, but the essence is involved in the sense of “form,” so, surely, he who says that He is “in the form of God” signified essence by “form.” If, therefore, He is “in the form of God,”

<sup>670</sup> The sense given would perhaps be clearer if we were to read (as Gulonius seems to have done) ἀσυνήθη for συνήθη. This might be interpreted, “He could not say, I take it, even if he uses the words in an unwonted sense, that the Son is at variance with Him Who begat Him.” The συνήθη would thus be the senses already considered and set aside: and the point would be that such a statement could not be made without manifest absurdity, even if some out-of-the-way sense were attached to the words. As the passage stands, it must mean that even if Eunomius repeats his wonted phrase, that can suggest no other sense of “variance” than those enumerated.

<sup>671</sup> The reading of Oehler is here followed: but the sense of the clause is not clear either in his text or in that of the Paris editions.

<sup>672</sup> Phil. ii. 6.

<sup>673</sup> Heb. i. 3.

<sup>674</sup> Phil. ii. 7.

and being in the Father is sealed with the Father's glory, (as the word of the Gospel declares, which saith, "Him hath God the Father sealed<sup>675</sup>,"—whence also "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father<sup>676</sup>,") then "the image of goodness" and "the brightness of glory," and all other similar titles, testify that the essence of the Son is not out of harmony with the Father. Thus by the text cited is shown the insubstantial character of the adversaries' blasphemy. For if things at "variance" are not in harmony, and He Who is sealed by the Father, and displays the Father in Himself, both being in the Father, and having the Father in Himself<sup>677</sup>, shows in all points His close relation and harmony, then the absurdity of the opposing views is hereby overwhelmingly shown. For as that which is at "variance" was shown to be out of harmony, so conversely that which is harmonious is surely confessed beyond dispute not to be at "variance." For as that which is at "variance" is not harmonious, so the harmonious is not at "variance." Moreover, he who says that the nature of the Only-begotten is at "variance" with the good essence of the Father, clearly has in view variation in the good itself. But as for what that is which is at variance with the good—"O ye simple," as the Proverb saith, "understand his craftiness<sup>678</sup>!"

§9. *Then, distinguishing between essence and generation, he declares the empty and frivolous language of Eunomius to be like a rattle. He proceeds to show that the language used by the great Basil on the subject of the generation of the Only-begotten has been grievously slandered by Eunomius, and so ends the book.*

I will pass by these matters, however, as the absurdity involved is evident; let us examine what precedes. He says that nothing else is found, "besides the essence of the Son, which admits of the generation." What does he mean when he says this? He distinguishes two names from each other, and separating by his discourse the things signified by them, he sets each of them individually apart by itself. "The generation" is one name, and "the essence" is another. The essence, he tells us, "admits of the generation," being therefore of course something distinct from the generation. For if the generation were the essence (which is the very thing he is constantly declaring), so that the two appellations are equivalent in sense, he would not have said that the essence "admits of the generation": for that would amount to saying that the essence admits of the essence, or the generation the generation,—if, that is, the generation were the same thing as the essence. He understands, then, the generation to be one thing, and the essence to be another, which "admits of generation": for that which is taken cannot be the same with that which admits it. Well, this is what the sage and

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<sup>675</sup> S. John vi. 27

<sup>676</sup> S. John xiv. 9

<sup>677</sup> Cf. S. John xiv. 10

<sup>678</sup> Prov. viii. 5 (LXX.).

systematic statement of our author says: but as to whether there is any sense in his words, let him consider who is expert in judging. I will resume his actual words.

He says that he finds “nothing else besides the essence of the Son which admits of the generation”; that there is no sense in his words however, is clear to every one who hears his statement at all: the task which remains seems to be to bring to light the blasphemy which he is trying to construct by aid of these meaningless words. For he desires, even if he cannot effect his purpose, to produce in his hearers by this slackness of expression, the notion that the essence of the Son is the result of construction: but he calls its construction “generation,” decking out his horrible blasphemy with the fairest phrase, that if “construction” is the meaning conveyed by the word “generation,” the idea of the creation of the Lord may receive a ready assent. He says, then, that the essence “admits of generation,” so that every construction may be viewed, as it were, in some subject matter. For no one would say that that is constructed which has no existence, so extending “making” in his discourse, as if it were some constructed fabric, to the nature of the Only-begotten God<sup>679</sup>. “If, then,” he says, “it admits of this generation,” — wishing to convey some such meaning as this, that it would not have been, had it not been constructed. But what else is there among the things we contemplate in the creation which *is* without being made? Heaven, earth, air, sea, everything whatever that is, surely *is* by being made. How, then, comes it that he considered it a peculiarity in the nature of the Only begotten, that it “admits generation” (for this is his name for making) “into its actual essence,” as though the humble-bee or the gnat did not admit generation into itself<sup>680</sup>, but into something else besides itself. It is therefore acknowledged by his own writings, that by them the essence of the Only-begotten is placed on the same level with the smallest parts of the creation: and every proof by which he attempts to establish the alienation of the Son from the Father has the same force also in the case of individual things. What need has he, then, for this varied acuteness to establish the diversity of nature, when he ought to have taken the short cut of

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679 This whole passage, as it stands in Oehler’s text, (which has here been followed without alteration,) is obscure: the connection between the clauses themselves is by no means clear; and the general meaning of the passage, in view of the succeeding sentences, seems doubtful. For it seems here to be alleged that Eunomius considered the κατασκευή to imply the previous existence of some material, so to say, which was moulded by generation—on the ground that no one would say that the essence, or anything else, was constructed without being existent. On the other hand it is immediately urged that this is just what would be said of all created things. If the passage might be emended thus:—ἵν’, ὡςπερ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ τινὶ πράγματι πᾶσα κατασκευή θεωρεῖται, (οὐ γὰρ ἂν τις εἴποι κατασκευάσθαι ὃ μὴ ὑφέστηκεν), οὕτως οἷον κατασκευάσματι τῇ τοῦ μονογενοῦς φύσει προτείνῃ τῷ λόγῳ τὴν ποιήσιν—we should have a comparatively clear sense—“in order that as all construction is observed in some subject matter, (for no one would say that that is constructed which has not existence) so he may extend the process of ‘making’ by his argument to the nature of the Only-begotten God, as to some product of construction.” The force of this would be, that Eunomius is really employing the idea of “receiving generation,” to imply that the essence of the Only-begotten is ἀκατασκευάσμα: and this, Gregory says, puts him at once on a level with the physical creation.

680 Oehler’s punctuation seems faulty here.

denial, by openly declaring that the name of the Son ought not to be confessed, or the Only-begotten God to be preached in the churches, but that we ought to esteem the Jewish worship as superior to the faith of Christians, and, while we confess the Father as being alone Creator and Maker of the world, to reduce all other things to the name and conception of the creation, and among these to speak of that work which preceded the rest as a “thing made,” which came into being by some constructive operation, and to give Him the title of “First created,” instead of Only-begotten and Very Son. For when these opinions have carried the day, it will be a very easy matter to bring doctrines to a conclusion in agreement with the aim they have in view, when all are guided, as you might expect from such a principle, to the consequence that it is impossible that He Who is neither begotten nor a Son, but has His existence through some energy, should share in essence with God. So long, however, as the declarations of the Gospel prevail, by which He is proclaimed as “Son,” and “Only-begotten,” and “of the Father,” and “of God,” and the like, Eunomius will talk his nonsense to no purpose, leading himself and his followers astray by such idle chatter. For while the title of “Son” speaks aloud the true relation to the Father, who is so foolish that, while John and Paul and the rest of the choir of the Saints proclaim these words,— words of truth, and words that point to the close affinity,—he does not look to them, but is led by the empty rattle of Eunomius’ sophisms to think that Eunomius is a truer guide than the teaching of these who by the Spirit speak mysteries<sup>681</sup>, and who bear Christ in themselves? Why, who is this Eunomius? Whence was he raised up to be the guide of Christians?

But let all this pass, and let our earnestness about what lies before us calm down our heart, that is swollen with jealousy on behalf of the faith against the blasphemers. For how is it possible not to be moved to wrath and hatred, while our God, and Lord, and Life-giver, and Saviour is insulted by these wretched men? If he had reviled my father according to the flesh, or been at enmity with my benefactor, would it have been possible to bear without emotion his anger against those I love? And if the Lord of my soul, Who gave it being when it was not, and redeemed it when in bondage, and gave me to taste of this present life, and prepared for me the life to come, Who calls us to a kingdom, and gives us His commands that we may escape the damnation of hell,—these are small things that I speak of, and not worthy to express the greatness of our common Lord—He that is worshipped by all creation, by things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, by Whom stand the unnumbered myriads of the heavenly ministers, to Whom is turned all that is under rule here, and that has the desire of good—if He is exposed to reviling by men, for whom it is not enough to associate themselves with the party of the apostate, but who count it loss not to draw others by their scribbling into the same gulf with themselves, that those who come after may not lack a hand to lead them to destruction, is there any one<sup>682</sup> who blames us for our anger against these men? But let us return to the sequence of his discourse.

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<sup>681</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 2.

<sup>682</sup> Reading ἄρα τις for ἄρα τις of Oehler’s text.

He next proceeds once more to slander us as dishonouring the generation of the Son by human similitudes, and mentions what was written on these points by our father<sup>683</sup>, where he says that while by the word “Son” two things are signified, the being formed by passion, and the true relationship to the begetter, he does not admit in discourses upon things divine the former sense, which is unseemly and carnal, but in so far as the latter tends to testify to the glory of the Only-begotten, this alone finds a place in the sublime doctrines. Who, then, dishonours the generation of the Son by human notions? He who sets far from the Divine generation what belongs to passion and to man, and joins the Son impassibly to Him that begat Him? or he who places Him Who brought all things into being on a common level with the lower creation? Such an idea, however, as it seems,—that of associating the Son in the majesty of the Father,—this new wisdom seems to regard as dishonouring; while it considers as great and sublime the act of bringing Him down to equality with the creation that is in bondage with us. Empty complaints! Basil is slandered as dishonouring the Son, who honours Him even as he honours the Father<sup>684</sup>, and Eunomius is the champion of the Only-begotten, who severs Him from the good nature of the Father! Such a reproach Paul also once incurred with the Athenians, being charged therewith by them as “a setter forth of strange gods<sup>685</sup>,” when he was reproofing the wandering among their gods of those who were mad in their idolatry, and was leading them to the truth, preaching the resurrection by the Son. These charges are now brought against Paul’s follower by the new Stoics and Epicureans, who “spend their time in nothing else,” as the history says of the Athenians, “but either to tell or to hear some new thing<sup>686</sup>.” For what could be found newer than this,—a Son of an energy, and a Father of a creature, and a new God springing up from nothing, and good at variance with good? These are they who profess to honour Him with due honour by saying that He is not that which the nature of Him that begat Him is. Is Eunomius not ashamed of the form of such honour, if one were to say that he himself is not akin in nature to his father, but has community with something of another kind? If he who brings the Lord of the creation into community with the creation declares that he honours Him by so doing, let him also himself be honoured by having community assigned him with what is brute and senseless: but, if he finds community with an inferior nature hard and insolent treatment, how is it honour for Him Who, as the prophet saith, “ruleth with His power for ever<sup>687</sup>,” to be ranked with that nature which is in subjection and bondage? But enough of this.

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<sup>683</sup> That is, by S. Basil: the reference seems to be to the treatise *Adv. Eunomium* ii. 24 (p. 260 C. in the Benedictine edition), but the quotation is not exact.

<sup>684</sup> Cf. S. John v. 23

<sup>685</sup> Acts xvii. 18.

<sup>686</sup> Acts xvii. 21.

<sup>687</sup> Ps. lxvi. 6 (LXX.).





## Book V.

§1. *The fifth book promises to speak of the words contained in the saying of the Apostle Peter, but delays their exposition. He discourses first of the creation, to the effect that, while nothing therein is deserving of worship, yet men, led astray by their ill-informed and feeble intelligence, and marvelling at its beauty, deified the several parts of the universe. And herein he excellently expounds the passage of Isaiah, "I am God, the first."*

It is now, perhaps, time to make enquiry into what is said concerning the words of the Apostle Peter<sup>688</sup>, by Eunomius himself, and by our father<sup>689</sup> concerning the latter. If a detailed examination should extend our discourse to considerable length, the fair-minded reader will no doubt pardon this, and will not blame us for wasting time in words, but lay the blame on him who has given occasion for them. Let me be allowed also to make some brief remarks preliminary to the proposed enquiry: it may be that they too will be found not to be out of keeping with the aim of our discussion.

That no created thing is deserving of man's worship, the divine word so clearly declares as a law, that such a truth may be learned from almost the whole of the inspired Scripture. Moses, the Tables, the Law, the Prophets that follow, the Gospels, the decrees of the Apostles, all alike forbid the act of reverencing the creation. It would be a lengthy task to set out in order the particular passages which refer to this matter; but though we set out only a few from among the many instances of the inspired testimony, our argument is surely equally convincing, since each of the divine words, albeit the least, has equal force for declaration of the truth. Seeing, then, that our conception of existences is divided into two, the creation and the uncreated Nature, if the present contention of our adversaries should prevail, so that we should say that the Son of God is created, we should be absolutely compelled either to set at naught the proclamation of the Gospel, and to refuse to worship that God the Word Who was in the beginning, on the ground that we must not address worship to the creation, or, if these marvels recorded in the Gospels are too urgent for us, by which we are led to reverence and to worship Him Who is displayed in them, to place, in that case, the created and the Uncreated on the same level of honour; seeing that if, according to our adversaries' opinion, even the created God is worshipped, though having in His nature no prerogative above the rest of the creation, and if this view should get the upper hand, the doctrines of religion will be entirely transformed to a kind of anarchy and democratic independence. For when men believe that the nature they worship is not one, but have their thoughts turned away to diverse Godheads, there will be none who will stay the conception of the Deity in its progress through creation, but the Divine element, once recognized in creation, will become a stepping-stone to the like conception in the

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688 The words referred to are those in Acts ii. 36.

689 S. Basil: the passages discussed are afterwards referred to in detail.

case of that which is next contemplated, and that again for the next in order, and as a result of this inferential process the error will extend to all things, as the first deceit makes its way by contiguous cases even to the very last.

To show that I am not making a random statement beyond what probability admits of, I will cite as a credible testimony in favour of my assertion the error which still prevails among the heathen<sup>690</sup>. Seeing that they, with their untrained and narrow intelligence, were disposed to look with wonder on the beauties of nature, not employing the things they beheld as a leader and guide to the beauty of the Nature that transcends them, they rather made their intelligence halt on arriving at the objects of its apprehension, and marvelled at each part of the creation severally—for this cause they did not stay their conception of the Deity at any single one of the things they beheld, but deemed everything they looked on in creation to be divine. And thus with the Egyptians, as the error developed its force more in respect of intellectual objects, the countless forms of spiritual beings were reckoned to be so many natures of Gods; while with the Babylonians the unerring circuit of the firmament was accounted a God, to whom they also gave the name of Bel. So, too, the foolishness of the heathen deifying individually the seven successive spheres, one bowed down to one, another to another, according to some individual form of error. For as they perceived all these circles moving in mutual relation, seeing that they had gone astray as to the most exalted, they maintained the same error by logical sequence, even to the last of them. And in addition to these, the æther itself, and the atmosphere diffused beneath it, the earth and sea and the subterranean region, and in the earth itself all things which are useful or needful for man's life,—of all these there was none which they held to be without part or lot in the Divine nature, but they bowed down to each of them, bringing themselves, by means of some one of the objects conspicuous in the creation, into bondage to all the successive parts of the creation, in such a way that, had the act of reverencing the creation been from the beginning even to them a thing evidently unlawful, they would not have been led astray into this deceit of polytheism. Let us look to it, then, lest we too share the same fate,—we who in being taught by Scripture to reverence the true Godhead, were trained to consider all created existence as external to the Divine nature, and to worship and revere that uncreated Nature alone, Whose characteristic and token is that it never either begins to be or ceases to be; since the great Isaiah thus speaks of the Divine nature with reference to these doctrines, in his exalted utterance,—who speaks in the person of the Deity, “I am the first, and hereafter am I, and no God was before Me, and no God shall be after Me<sup>691</sup>.” For knowing more perfectly than all others the mystery of the religion of the Gospel, this great prophet, who foretold even that marvellous sign concerning the Virgin, and gave us the good tidings<sup>692</sup> of the birth of the Child,



<sup>690</sup> With the following passage may be compared the parallel account in the Book of Wisdom (ch. xiii.).

<sup>691</sup> Cf. Is. xli. 4, xlv. 6, xlvi. 12 (LXX.). If the whole passage is intended to be a quotation, it is not made exactly from any one of these; the opening words are from the second passage referred to; and perhaps this is the only portion intended to be a quotation, the second clause being explanatory; the words of the second clause are varied in the repetition immediately afterwards.

<sup>692</sup> εὐαγγελισάμενος

and clearly pointed out to us that Name of the Son,—he, in a word, who by the Spirit includes in himself all the truth,—in order that the characteristic of the Divine Nature, whereby we discern that which really *is* from that which came into being, might be made as plain as possible to all, utters this saying in the person of God: “I am the first, and hereafter am I, and before Me no God hath been, and after Me is none.” Since, then, neither is that God which was before God, nor is that God which is after God, (for that which is after God is the creation, and that which is anterior to God is nothing, and Nothing is not God;—or one should rather say, that which is anterior to God is God in His eternal blessedness, defined in contradistinction to Nothing<sup>693</sup>;—since, I say, this inspired utterance was spoken by the mouth of the prophet, we learn by his means the doctrine that the Divine Nature is one, continuous with Itself and indiscerptible, not admitting in Itself priority and posteriority, though it be declared in Trinity, and with no one of the things we contemplate in it more ancient or more recent than another. Since, then, the saying is the saying of God, whether you grant that the words are the words of the Father or of the Son, the orthodox doctrine is equally upheld by either. For if it is the Father that speaks thus, He bears witness to the Son that He is not “after” Himself: for if the Son is God, and whatever is “after” the Father is not God, it is clear that the saying bears witness to the truth that the Son is in the Father, and not after the Father. If, on the other hand, one were to grant that this utterance is of the Son, the phrase, “None hath been before Me,” will be a clear intimation that He Whom we contemplate “in the Beginning<sup>694</sup>” is apprehended together with the eternity of the Beginning. If, then, anything is “after” God, this is discovered, by the passages quoted, to be a creature, and not God: for He says, “That which is after Me is not God<sup>695</sup>.”

§2. *He then explains the phrase of S. Peter, “Him God made Lord and Christ.” And herein he sets forth the opposing statement of Eunomius, which he made on account of such phrase against S. Basil, and his lurking revilings and insults.*

Now that we have had presented to us this preliminary view of existences, it may be opportune to examine the passage before us. It is said, then, by Peter to the Jews, “Him God made Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified<sup>696</sup>,” while on our part it is said that it is not pious to refer the

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<sup>693</sup> πρὸς οὐδὲν ὀριζόμενος; *i.e.* before the name of “God” could be applied, as now, in contradistinction to *creation*, it was applied in contradistinction to nothing, and that distinction was in a sense the definition of God. Or the words may be turned, as Gulonius turns them, “nulla re determinatus,” “with no limitation”—the contradistinction to creation being regarded as a limitation by way of definition.

<sup>694</sup> S. John i. 1

<sup>695</sup> Taking the whole phrase τὸ μετ’ ἐμὲ οὐκ ὄν as a loose quotation.

<sup>696</sup> Acts ii. 36.

word “made” to the Divine Nature of the Only-begotten, but that it is to be referred to that “form of a servant<sup>697</sup>,” which came into being by the Incarnation<sup>698</sup>, in the due time of His appearing in the flesh; and, on the other hand, those who press the phrase the contrary way say that in the word “made” the Apostle indicates the pretemporal generation of the Son. We shall, therefore, set forth the passage in the midst, and after a detailed examination of both the suppositions, leave the judgment of the truth to our reader. Of our adversaries’ view Eunomius himself may be a sufficient advocate, for he contends gallantly on the matter, so that in going through his argument word by word we shall completely follow out the reasoning of those who strive against us: and we ourselves will act as champion of the doctrine on our side as best we may, following so far as we are able the line of the argument previously set forth by the great Basil. But do you, who by your reading act as judges in the cause, “execute true judgment,” as one of the prophets<sup>699</sup> says, not awarding the victory to contentious preconceptions, but to the truth as it is manifested by examination. And now let the accuser of our doctrines come forward, and read his indictment, as in a court of law.

“In addition, moreover, to what we have mentioned, by his refusal to take the word ‘made’ as referring to the essence of the Son, and withal by his being ashamed of the Cross, he ascribes to the Apostles what no one even of those who have done their best to speak ill of them on the score of stupidity, lays to their charge; and at the same time he clearly introduces, by his doctrines and arguments, two Christs and two Lords; for he says that it was not the Word Who was in the beginning Whom God made Lord and Christ, but He Who ‘emptied Himself to take the form of a servant<sup>700</sup>,’ and ‘was crucified through weakness<sup>701</sup>.’ At all events the great Basil writes expressly as follows<sup>702</sup>:— ‘Nor, moreover, is it the intention of the Apostle to present to us that existence of the Only-begotten which was before the ages (which is now the subject of our argument), for he clearly speaks, not of the very essence of God the Word, Who was in the beginning with God, but of Him Who emptied Himself to take the form of a servant, and became conformable to the body of our humiliation<sup>703</sup>, and was crucified through weakness.’ And again, ‘This is known to any one who even in a small degree applies his mind to the meaning of the Apostle’s words, that he is not setting forth to us the mode of the Divine existence, but is introducing the terms which belong to the

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<sup>697</sup> Phil. ii. 7.

<sup>698</sup> οἰκονομικῶς γενομένην

<sup>699</sup> Zech. vii. 9.

<sup>700</sup> Cf. Phil. ii. 7

<sup>701</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

<sup>702</sup> The quotations are from S. Basil c. Eunomius II. 3. (pp. 239–40 in the Benedictine edition.)

<sup>703</sup> Cf. Phil. iii. 21.

Incarnation; for he says, *Him* God made Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified, evidently laying stress by the demonstrative word on that in Him which was human and was seen by all<sup>704</sup>.’

“This, then, is what the man has to say who substitutes,—for we may not speak of it as ‘application,’ lest any one should blame for such madness men holy and chosen for the preaching of godliness, so as to reproach their doctrine with a fall into such extravagance,—who substitutes his own mind<sup>705</sup> for the intention of the Apostles! With what confusion are they not filled, who refer their own nonsense to the memory of the saints! With what absurdity do they not abound, who imagine that the man ‘emptied himself’ to become man, and who maintain that He Who by obedience ‘humbled himself’ to take the form of a servant was made conformable to men even before He took that form upon Him! Who, pray, ye most reckless of men, when he *has* the form of a servant, takes the form of a servant? and how can any one ‘empty himself’ to become the very thing which he is? You will find no contrivance to meet this, bold as you are in saying or thinking things uncontrivable. Are you not verily of all men most miserable, who suppose that a man has suffered death for all men, and ascribe your own redemption to him? For if it is not of the Word Who was in the beginning and was God that the blessed Peter speaks, but of him who was ‘seen,’ and who ‘emptied Himself,’ as Basil says, and if the man who was seen ‘emptied Himself’ to take ‘the form of a servant,’ and He Who ‘emptied Himself’ to take ‘the form of a servant,’ emptied Himself to come into being as man, then the man who was seen emptied himself to come into being as man<sup>706</sup>. The very nature of things is repugnant to this; and it is expressly contradicted by that writer<sup>707</sup> who celebrates this dispensation in his discourse concerning the Divine Nature, when he says not that the man who was seen, but that the Word Who was in the beginning and was God took upon Him flesh, which is equivalent in other words to taking ‘the form of a servant.’ If, then, you hold that these things are to be believed, depart from your error, and cease to believe that the man ‘emptied himself’ to become man. And if you are not able to persuade those who will not be persuaded,

<sup>704</sup> The latter part of the quotation from S. Basil does not exactly agree with the Benedictine text, but the variations are not material.

<sup>705</sup> Reading *ἑαυτοῦ* for the *ἑαυτῶν* of Oehler’s text, for which no authority is alleged by the editor, and which is probably a mere misprint.

<sup>706</sup> The argument here takes the form of a *reductio ad absurdum*; assuming that S. Peter’s reference is to the “visible man,” and bearing in mind S. Basil’s words that S. Peter refers to Him Who “emptied Himself,” it is said “then it was the ‘visible man’ who ‘emptied himself.’ But the purpose of that ‘emptying’ was the ‘taking the form of a servant,’ which again is the coming into being as man: therefore the ‘visible man’ ‘emptied himself,’ to come into being as man, which is absurd.” The wording of S. Basil’s statement makes the argument in a certain degree plausible;—if he had said that S. Peter referred to the Son, not in regard to his actual essence, but in regard to the fact that He “emptied Himself” to become man, and as so having “emptied Himself” (which is no doubt what he intended his words to mean), then the *reductio ad absurdum* would not apply; nor would the later arguments, by which Eunomius proceeds to prove that He Who “emptied Himself” was no mere man, but the Word Who was in the beginning, have any force as against S. Basil’s statement.

<sup>707</sup> S. John i. 1 sqq.



destroy their incredulity by another saying, a second decision against them. Remember him who says, ‘Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant.’ There is none among men who will appropriate this phrase to himself. None of the saints that ever lived was the Only-begotten God and became man:—for that is what it means to ‘take the form of a servant,’ ‘being in the form of God.’ If, then, the blessed Peter speaks of Him Who ‘emptied Himself’ to ‘take the form of a servant,’ and if He Who was ‘in the form of God’ did ‘empty Himself’ to ‘take the form of a servant,’ and if He Who in the beginning was God, being the Word and the Only-begotten God, is He Who was ‘in the form of God,’ then the blessed Peter speaks to us of Him Who was in the beginning and was God, and expounds to us that it was He Who became Lord and Christ. This, then, is the conflict which Basil wages against himself, and he clearly appears neither to have ‘applied his own mind to the intention of the Apostles’, nor to be able to preserve the sequence of his own arguments; for, according to them, he must, if he is conscious of their irreconcilable character, admit that the Word Who was in the beginning and was God became Lord; or if he tries to fit together statements that are mutually conflicting, and contentiously stands by them, he will add to them others yet more hostile, and maintain that there are two Christs and two Lords. For if the Word that was in the beginning and was God be one, and He Who ‘emptied Himself’ and ‘took the form of a servant’ be another, and if God the Word, by Whom are all things, be Lord, and this Jesus, Who was crucified after all things had come into being, be Lord also, there are, according to his view, two Lords and Christs. Our author, then, cannot by any argument clear himself from this manifest blasphemy. But if any one were to say in support of him that the Word Who was in the beginning is indeed the same Who became Lord, but that He became Lord and Christ in respect of His presence in the flesh, He will surely be constrained to say that the Son was not Lord before His presence in the flesh. At all events, even if Basil and his faithless followers falsely proclaim two Lords and two Christs, for us there is one Lord and Christ, by Whom all things were made, not becoming Lord by way of promotion, but existing before all creation and before all ages, the Lord Jesus, by Whom are all things, while all the saints with one harmonious voice teach us this truth and proclaim it as the most excellent of doctrines. Here the blessed John teaches us that God the Word, by Whom all things were made, has become incarnate, saying, ‘And the Word was made flesh<sup>708</sup>’; here the most admirable Paul, urging those who attend to him to humility, speaks of Christ Jesus, Who was in the form of God, and emptied Himself to take the form of a servant, and was humbled to death, even the death of the Cross<sup>709</sup>; and again in another passage calls Him Who was crucified ‘the Lord of Glory’: ‘for had they known it,’ he says, ‘they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory<sup>710</sup>’. Indeed, he speaks far more openly than this of the very essential nature by the name of ‘Lord,’ where he says, ‘Now

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708 S. John i. 14

709 Cf. Phil. ii. 7, 8.

710 1 Cor. ii. 8.

the Lord is the Spirit<sup>711</sup>. If, then, the Word Who was in the beginning, in that He is Spirit, is Lord, and the Lord of glory, and if God made Him Lord and Christ, it was the very Spirit and God the Word that God so made, and not some other Lord Whom Basil dreams about.”

§3. *A remarkable and original reply to these utterances, and a demonstration of the power of the Crucified, and of the fact that this subjection was of the Human Nature, not that which the Only-Begotten has from the Father. Also an explanation of the figure of the Cross, and of the appellation “Christ,” and an account of the good gifts bestowed on the Human Nature by the Godhead which was commingled with it.*

Well, such is his accusation. But I think it necessary in the first place to go briefly, by way of summary, over the points that he urges, and then to proceed to correct by my argument what he has said, that those who are judging the truth may find it easy to remember the indictment against us, which we have to answer, and that we may be able to dispose of each of the charges in regular order. He says that we are ashamed of the Cross of Christ, and slander the saints, and say that a man has “emptied himself” to become man, and suppose that the Lord had the “form of a servant” before His presence by the Incarnation, and ascribe our redemption to a man, and speak in our doctrine of two Christs and two Lords, or, if we do not do this, then we deny that the Only-begotten was Lord and Christ before the Passion. So that we may avoid this blasphemy, he will have us confess that the essence of the Son has been made, on the ground that the Apostle Peter by his own voice establishes such a doctrine. This is the substance of the accusation; for all that he has been at the trouble of saying by way of abuse of ourselves, I will pass by in silence, as being not at all to the point. It may be that this rhetorical stroke of phrases framed according to some artificial theory is the ordinary habit of those who play the rhetorician, an invention to swell the bulk of their indictment. Let our sophist then use his art to display his insolence, and vaunt his strength in reproaches against us, showing off his strokes in the intervals of the contest; let him call us foolish, call us of all men most reckless, of all men most miserable, full of confusion and absurdity, and make light of us at his good pleasure in any way he likes, and we will bear it; for to a reasonable man disgrace lies, not in hearing one who abuses him, but in making retort to what he says. There may even be some good in his expenditure of breath against us; for it may be that while he occupies his railing tongue in denouncing us he will at all events make some truce in his conflict against God. So let him take his fill of insolence as he likes: none will reply to him. For if a man has foul and loathsome breath, by reason of bodily disorder, or of some pestilential and malignant disease, he would not rouse any healthy person to emulate his misfortune so that one should choose, by himself acquiring disease, to repay, in the same evil kind, the unpleasantness of the man’s ill odour. Such men our common nature bids us to pity, not to imitate. And so let us pass by everything of



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711 2 Cor. iii. 17.

this kind which by mockery, indignation, provocation, and abuse, he has assiduously mixed up with his argument, and examine only his arguments as they concern the doctrinal points at issue. We shall begin again, then, from the beginning, and meet each of his charges in turn.

The beginning of his accusation was that we are ashamed of the Cross of Him Who for our sakes underwent the Passion. Surely he does not intend to charge against us also that we preach the doctrine of dissimilarity in essence! Why, it is rather to those who turn aside to this opinion that the reproach belongs of going about to make the Cross a shameful thing. For if by both parties alike the dispensation of the Passion is held as part of the faith, while we hold it necessary to honour, even as the Father is honoured, the God Who was manifested by the Cross, and *they* find the Passion a hindrance to glorifying the Only-begotten God equally with the Father that begat Him, then our sophist's charges recoil upon himself, and in the words with which he imagines himself to be accusing us, he is publishing his own doctrinal impiety. For it is clear that the reason why he sets the Father above the Son, and exalts Him with supreme honour, is this,—that in Him is not seen the shame of the Cross: and the reason why he asseverates that the nature of the Son varies in the sense of inferiority is this,—that the reproach of the Cross is referred to Him alone, and does not touch the Father. And let no one think that in saying this I am only following the general drift of his composition, for in going through all the blasphemy of his speech, which is there laboriously brought together, I found, in a passage later than that before us, this very blasphemy clearly expressed in undisguised language; and I propose to set forth, in the orderly course of my own argument, what they have written, which runs thus:—“If,” he says, “he can show that the God Who is over all, Who is the unapproachable Light, was incarnate, or could be incarnate, came under authority, obeyed commands, came under the laws of men, bore the Cross, then let him say that the Light is equal to the Light.” Who then is it who is ashamed of the Cross? he who, even after the Passion, worships the Son equally with the Father, or he who even before the Passion insults Him, not only by ranking Him with the creation, but by maintaining that He is of passible nature, on the ground that He could not have come to experience His sufferings had He not had a nature capable of such sufferings? We on our part assert that even the body in which He underwent His Passion, by being mingled with the Divine Nature, was made by that commixture to be that which the assuming<sup>712</sup> Nature is. So far are we from entertaining any low idea concerning the Only-begotten God, that if anything belonging to our lowly nature was assumed in His dispensation of love for man, we believe that even this was transformed to what is Divine and incorruptible<sup>713</sup>; but Eunomius makes the suffering of the Cross to be a sign of divergence in essence, in the sense of inferiority, considering, I know not how, the surpassing act of power, by which He was able to perform this, to be an evidence

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712 Or “resuming.” Cf. Book II. §8 (*sup.* p. 113, where see note 7).

713 With S. Gregory's language here may be compared that of S. Athanasius (*Or. adv. Arian.* iii. 53), “It was not the Wisdom, quâ Wisdom, that ‘advanced’; but the humanity in the Wisdom that did advance, gradually ascending above the human nature and being made Divine (θεοποιούμενον).”



of weakness; failing to perceive the fact that, while nothing which moves according to its own nature is looked upon as surprisingly wonderful, all things that overpass the limitations of their own nature become especially the objects of admiration, and to them every ear is turned, every mind is attentive, in wonder at the marvel. And hence it is that all who preach the word point out the wonderful character of the mystery in this respect,—that “God was manifested in the flesh<sup>714</sup>,” that “the Word was made flesh<sup>715</sup>,” that “the Light shined in darkness<sup>716</sup>,” “the Life tasted death,” and all such declarations which the heralds of the faith are wont to make, whereby is increased the marvellous character of Him Who manifested the superabundance of His power by means external to his own nature. But though they think fit to make this a subject for their insolence, though they make the dispensation of the Cross a reason for partitioning off the Son from equality of glory with the Father, we believe, as those “who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word<sup>717</sup>” delivered to us by the Holy Scriptures, that the God who was in the beginning, “afterwards”, as Baruch says, “was seen upon the earth, and conversed with men<sup>718</sup>,” and, becoming a ransom for our death, loosed by His own resurrection the bonds of death, and by Himself made the resurrection a way for all flesh<sup>719</sup>, and being on the same throne and in the same glory with His own Father, will in the day of judgment give sentence upon those who are judged, according to the desert of the lives they have led. These are the things which we believe concerning Him Who was crucified, and for this cause we cease not to extol Him exceedingly, according to the measure of our powers, that He Who by reason of His unspeakable and unapproachable greatness is not comprehensible by any, save by Himself and the Father and the Holy Spirit, He, I say, was able even to descend to community with our weakness. But they adduce this proof of the Son’s alienation in nature from the Father, that the Lord was manifested by the flesh and by the Cross, arguing on the ground that the Father’s nature remained pure in impassibility, and could not in any way admit of a community which tended to passion, while the Son, by reason of the divergence of His nature by way of humiliation, was not incapable of being brought to experience the flesh and death, seeing that the change of condition was not great, but one which took place in a certain sense from one like state to another state kindred and homogeneous, because the nature of man is created, and the nature of the Only-begotten is created also. Who then is fairly charged with being ashamed of the Cross? he who speaks basely of it<sup>720</sup>, or he who contends for its more exalted aspect? I know not whether our



714 1 Tim. iii. 16, where it would appear that Gregory read θεός; not ὄς.

715 S. John i. 14

716 S. John i. 5 (not verbally).

717 S. Luke i. 2

718 Bar. iii. 37.

719 See Note 2, p. 104, *sup.*

720 Reading αὐτοῦ (for which Oehler cites good ms. authority), for ἑαυτοῦ (the reading of his text, as well as of the Paris editions).

accuser, who thus abases the God Who was made known upon the Cross, has heard the lofty speech of Paul, in what terms and at what length he discourses with his exalted lips concerning that Cross. For he, who was able to make himself known by miracles so many and so great, says, “God forbid that I should glory in anything else, than in the Cross of Christ<sup>721</sup>.” And to the Corinthians he says that the word of the Cross is “the power of God to them that are in a state of salvation<sup>722</sup>.” To the Ephesians, moreover, he describes by the figure of the Cross the power that controls and holds together the universe, when he expresses a desire that they may be exalted to know the exceeding glory of this power, calling it height, and depth, and breadth, and length<sup>723</sup>, speaking of the several projections we behold in the figure of the Cross by their proper names, so that he calls the upper part “height,” and that which is below, on the opposite side of the junction, “depth,” while by the name “length and breadth” he indicates the cross-beam projecting to either side, that hereby might be manifested this great mystery, that both things in heaven, and things under the earth, and all the furthest bounds of the things that are, are ruled and sustained by Him Who gave an example of this unspeakable and mighty power in the figure of the Cross. But I think there is no need to contend further with such objections, as I judge it superfluous to be anxious about urging arguments against calumny when even a few words suffice to show the truth. Let us therefore pass on to another charge.

He says that by us the saints are slandered. Well, if he has heard it himself, let him tell us the words of our defamation: if he thinks we have uttered it to others, let him show the truth of his charge by witnesses: if he demonstrates it from what we have written, let him read the words, and we will bear the blame. But he cannot bring forward anything of the kind: our writings are open for examination to any one who desires it. If it was not said to himself, and he has not heard it from others, and has no proof to offer from our writings, I think he who has to make answer on this point may well hold his peace: silence is surely the fitting answer to an unfounded charge.

The Apostle Peter says, “God made this Jesus, Whom ye crucified, Lord and Christ<sup>724</sup>.” We, learning this from him, say that the whole context of the passage tends one way,—the Cross itself, the human name, the indicative turn of the phrase. For the word of the Scripture says that in regard to one person two things were wrought,—by the Jews, the Passion, and by God, honour; not as though one person had suffered and another had been honoured by exaltation: and he further explains this yet more clearly by his words in what follows, “being exalted by the right hand of God.” Who then was “exalted”? He that was lowly, or He that was the Highest? and what else is the lowly, but the Humanity? what else is the Highest, but the Divinity? Surely, God needs not to be exalted,

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721 Gal. vi. 14 (not verbally).

722 Cf. 1 Cor. i. 18

723 Cf. Eph. iii. 18

724 Acts ii. 36.



seeing that He is the Highest. It follows, then, that the Apostle's meaning is that the Humanity was exalted: and its exaltation was effected by its becoming Lord and Christ. And this took place after the Passion.<sup>725</sup> It is not therefore the pre-temporal existence of the Lord which the Apostle indicates by the word "made," but that change of the lowly to the lofty which was effected "by the right hand of God." Even by this phrase is declared the mystery of godliness; for he who says "exalted by the right hand of God" manifestly reveals the unspeakable dispensation of this mystery, that the Right Hand of God, that made all things that are, (which is the Lord, by Whom all things were made, and without Whom nothing that is subsists,) Itself raised to Its own height the Man united with It, making Him also to be what It is by nature. Now It is Lord and King: Christ is the King's name: these things It made Him too. For as He was highly exalted by being in the Highest, so too He became all else,—Immortal in the Immortal, Light in the Light, Incorruptible in the Incorruptible, Invisible in the Invisible, Christ in the Christ, Lord in the Lord. For even in physical combinations. when one of the combined parts exceeds the other in a great degree, the inferior is wont to change completely to that which is more potent. And this we are plainly taught by the voice of the Apostle Peter in his mystic discourse, that the lowly nature of Him Who was crucified through weakness, (and weakness, as we have heard from the Lord, marks the flesh<sup>726</sup>.) that lowly nature, I say, by virtue of its combination with the infinite and boundless element of good, remained no longer in its own measures and properties, but was by the Right Hand of God raised up together with Itself, and became Lord instead of servant, Christ a King instead of a subject, Highest instead of Lowly, God instead of man. What handle then against the saints did he who pretends to give warning against us in defence of the Apostles find in the material of our writings? Let us pass over this charge also in silence; for I think it a mean and unworthy thing to stand up against charges that are false and unfounded. Let us pass on to the more pressing part of his accusation.

§4. *He shows the falsehood of Eunomius' calumnious charge that the great Basil had said that "man was emptied to become man," and demonstrates that the "emptying" of the Only-begotten took place with a view to the restoration to life of the Man Who had suffered*<sup>727</sup>.

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<sup>725</sup> It can hardly be supposed that it is intended by S. Gregory that we should understand that, during the years of His life on earth, our Lord's Humanity was not so united with His Divinity that "the visible man" was then both Lord and Christ. He probably refers more especially to the manifestation of His Messiahship afforded by the Resurrection and Ascension; but he also undoubtedly dwells on the exaltation of the Human Nature after the Passion in terms which would perhaps imply more than he intended to convey. His language on this point may be compared with the more guarded and careful statement of Hooker. (Eccl. Pol. V. iv. 8.) The point of his argument is that S. Peter's words apply to the Human Nature, not to the Divine.

<sup>726</sup> Cf. S. Mark xiv. 38

<sup>727</sup> This seems to be the sense of the Greek title. The Latin version of the earlier editions appears to represent a different reading, "contigisse, quando in passione homo Christus passus est."

He asserts that we say that man has emptied Himself to become man, and that He Who by obedience humbled Himself to the form of the servant shared the form of men even before He took that form. No change has been made in the wording; we have simply transferred the very words from his speech to our own. Now if there is anything of this sort in our writings, (for I call my master's writings *ours*) let no one blame our orator for calumny. I ask for all regard for the truth: and we ourselves will give evidence. But if there is nothing of all this in our writings, while his language not merely lays blame upon us, but is indignant and wrathful as if the matter were clearly proved, calling us full of absurdity, nonsense, confusion, inconsistency, and so on, I am at a loss to see the right course to take. Just as men who are perplexed at the groundless rages of madmen can decide upon no plan to follow, so I myself can find no device to meet this perplexity. Our master says (for I will again recite his argument verbally), "He is not setting forth to us the mode of the Divine existence, but the terms which belong to the Incarnation." Our accuser starts from this point, and says that we maintain that man emptied Himself to become man! What community is there between one statement and the other? If we say that the Apostle has not set forth to us the mode of the Divine existence, but points by his phrase to the dispensation of the Passion, we are on this ground charged with speaking of the "emptying" of man to become man, and with saying that the "form of the servant" had pretemporal existence, and that the Man Who was born of Mary existed before the coming in the flesh! Well, I think it superfluous to spend time in discussing what is admitted, seeing that truth itself frees us from the charge. In a case, indeed, where one may have given the calumniators some handle against oneself, it is proper to resist accusers: but where there is no danger of being suspected of some absurd charge, the accusation becomes a proof, not of the false charge made against him who is calumniated, but of the madness of the accuser. As, however, in dealing with the charge of being ashamed of the Cross, we showed by our examination that the charge recoiled upon the accuser, so we shall show how this charge too returns upon those who make it, since it is they, and not we, who lay down the doctrine of the change of the Son from like to like in the dispensation of the Passion. We will examine briefly, bringing them side by side, the statements of each party. We say that the Only-begotten God, having by His own agency brought all things into being, by Himself<sup>728</sup> has full power over all things, while the nature of man is also one of the things that were made by Him: and that when this had fallen away to evil, and come to be in the destruction of death, He by His own agency drew it up once more to immortal life, by means of the Man in whom He tabernacled, taking to Himself humanity in completeness, and that He mingled His life-giving power with our mortal and perishable nature, and changed, by the combination with Himself, our deadness to living grace and power. And this we declare to be the mystery of the Lord according to the flesh, that He Who is immutable came to be in that which is mutable, to the end that altering it for the better, and changing it from the worse, He might abolish

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<sup>728</sup> This seems to be the force of  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}$ ;  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\tilde{\omega}\nu$  might give a simpler construction, but the sense would not be changed. Oehler, who here restores some words which were omitted in the earlier editions, makes no mention of any variation of reading.

the evil which is mingled with our mutable condition, destroying the evil in Himself. For “our God is a consuming fire<sup>729</sup>,” by whom all the material of wickedness is done away. This is our statement. What does our accuser say? Not that He Who was immutable and uncreated was mingled with that which came into being by creation, and which had therefore suffered a change in the direction of evil; but he does say that He, being Himself created, came to that which was kindred and homogeneous with Himself, not coming from a transcendent nature to put on the lowlier nature by reason of His love to man, but becoming that very thing which He was.

For as regards the general character of the appellation, the name of “creature” is one, as predicated of all things that have come into being from nothing, while the divisions into sections of the things which we contemplate as included in the term “creature”, are separated one from the other by the variation of their properties: so that if He is created, and man is created, He was “emptied,” to use Eunomius’ phrase, to become Himself, and changed His place, not from the transcendent to the lowly, but from what is similar in kind to what (save in regard of the special character of body and the incorporeal) is similar in dignity. To whom now will the just vote of those who have to try our cause be given, or who will seem to them to be under the weight of these charges? he who says that the created was saved by the uncreated God, or he who refers the cause of our salvation to the creature? Surely the judgment of pious men is not doubtful. For any one who knows clearly the difference which there is between the created and the uncreated, (terms of which the divergence is marked by dominion and slavery, since the uncreated God, as the prophet says, “ruleth with His power for ever<sup>730</sup>,” while all things in the creation are servants to Him, according to the voice of the same prophet, which says “all things serve Thee<sup>731</sup>,”) he, I say, who carefully considers these matters, surely cannot fail to recognize the person who makes the Only-begotten change from servitude to servitude. For if, according to Paul, the whole creation “is in bondage<sup>732</sup>,” and if, according to Eunomius, the essential nature of the Only-begotten is created, our adversaries maintain, surely, by their doctrines, not that the master was mingled with the servant, but that a servant came to be among servants. As for our saying that the Lord was in the form of a servant before His presence in the flesh, that is just like charging us with saying that the stars are black and the sun misty, and the sky low, and water dry, and so on: — a man who does not maintain a charge on the ground of what he has heard, but makes up what seems good to him at his own sweet will, need not be sparing in making against us such charges as these. It is just the same thing for us to be called to account for the one set of charges as for the other, so far as concerns the fact that they have no basis for them in anything that we have said. How could one who says distinctly that the true Son was in the glory of the Father, insult the eternal glory of the Only-begotten by conceiving

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729 Heb. xii. 29.

730 Ps. lxvi. 6 (LXX.).

731 Ps. cxix. 91.

732 Cf. Rom. viii. 21.

it to have been “in the form of a servant”? When our author thinks proper to speak evil of us, and at the same time takes care to present his case with some appearance of truth, it may perhaps not be superfluous or useless to rebut his unfounded accusations.

§5. *Thereafter he shows that there are not two Christs or two Lords, but one Christ and one Lord, and that the Divine nature, after mingling with the Human, preserved the properties of each nature without confusion, and declares that the operations are, by reason of the union, predicated of the two natures in common, in the sense that the Lord took upon Himself the sufferings of the servant, and the humanity is glorified with Him in the honour that is the Lord's, and that by the power of the Divine Nature that is made anew, conformably with that Divine Nature Itself.*

His next charge too has its own absurdity of the same sort. For he reproaches us with saying that there are “two Christs,” and “two Lords,” without being able to make good his charge from our words, but employing falsehood at discretion to suit his fancy. Since, then, he deems it within his power to say what he likes, why does he utter his falsehood with such care about detail, and maintain that we speak but of two Christs? Let him say, if he likes, that we preach ten Christs, or ten times ten, or extend the number to a thousand, that he may handle his calumny more vigorously. For blasphemy is equally involved in the doctrine of two Christs, and in that of more, and the character of the two charges is also equally devoid of proof. When he shows, then, that we do speak of two Christs, let him have a verdict against us, as much as though he had given proof of ten thousand. But he says that he convicts us by our own statements. Well, let us look once more at those words of our master by means of which he thinks to raise his charges against us. He says “he” (he, that is, who says “Him God made Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified”) “is not setting forth to us the mode of the Divine existence, but the terms which belong to the Incarnation...laying stress by the demonstrative word on that in Him which was human and was seen by all.” This is what he wrote. But whence has Eunomius managed by these words to bring on the stage his “two Christs”? Does saying that the demonstrative word lays stress on that which is visible, convey the proof of maintaining “two Christs”? Ought we (to avoid being charged with speaking of “two Highests”) to deny the fact that by Him the Lord was highly exalted after His Passion? seeing that God the Word, Who was in the beginning, was Highest, and was also highly exalted after His Passion when He rose from the dead, as the Apostle says. We must of necessity choose one of two courses—either say that He was highly exalted after the Passion (which is just the same as saying that He was made Lord and Christ), and be impeached by Eunomius, or, if we avoid the accusation, deny the confession of the high exaltation of Him Who suffered.

Now at this point it seems right to put forward once more our accuser's statement in support of our own defence. We shall therefore repeat word for word the statement laid down by him, which supports our argument as follows:—“The blessed John,” he says, “teaches us that God the Word,

by Whom all things were made, has become incarnate, saying ‘And the Word was made flesh.’” Does he understand what he is writing when he adds this to his own argument? I can hardly myself think that the same man can at once be aware of the meaning of these words and contend against our statement. For if any one examines the words carefully, he will find that there is no mutual conflict between what is said by us and what is said by him. For we both consider the dispensation in the flesh apart, and regard the Divine power in itself: and he, in like manner with ourselves, says that the Word that was in the beginning has been manifested in the flesh: yet no one ever charged him, nor does he charge himself, with preaching “two Words”, Him Who was in the beginning, and Him Who was made flesh; for he knows, surely, that the Word is identical with the Word, He who appeared in the flesh with Him Who was with God. But the flesh was not identical with the Godhead, till this too was transformed to the Godhead, so that of necessity one set of attributes befits God the Word, and a different set of attributes befits the “form of the servant<sup>733</sup>.” If, then, in view of such a confession, he does not reproach himself with the duality of Words, why are we falsely charged with dividing the object of our faith into “two Christs”?—we, who say that He Who was highly exalted after His Passion, was made Lord and Christ by His union<sup>734</sup> with Him Who is verily Lord and Christ, knowing by what we have learnt that the Divine Nature is always one and the same, and with the same mode of existence, while the flesh in itself is that which reason and sense apprehend concerning it, but when mixed<sup>735</sup> with the Divine no longer remains in its own limitations and properties, but is taken up to that which is overwhelming and transcendent. Our contemplation, however, of the respective properties of the flesh and of the Godhead remains free from confusion, so long as each of these is contemplated by itself<sup>736</sup>, as, for example, “the Word was before the ages, but the flesh came into being in the last times”: but one could not reverse this statement, and say that the latter is pretemporal, or that the Word has come into being in the last times. The flesh is of a passible, the Word of an operative nature: and neither is the flesh capable of making the things that are, nor is the power possessed by the Godhead capable of suffering. The

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733 This statement would seem to imply that, at some time after the Incarnation, the Humanity of Christ was transformed to the Divine Nature, and made identical with It. From other passages in what has preceded, it would seem that this change in the mutual relation of the two Natures might, according to the words of S. Gregory, be conceived as taking place *after the Passion*. Thus it might be said that S. Gregory conceived the union of the two Natures to be, since the Passion (or, more strictly, since the “exaltation”), what the Monophysites conceived it to be from the moment of the Incarnation. But other phrases, again, seem to show that he conceived the two Natures still to remain distinct (see note 4 *inf.*). There is, however, ample justification in S. Gregory’s language for the remark of Bp. Hefele, that S. Gregory “cannot entirely free himself from the notion of a transmutation of the Human Nature into the Divine.” (Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils*, Eng. Trans. vol. iii. p. 4.)

734 ἐνωσέως.

735 ἀνακραθεῖσα πρὸς τὸ θεῖον.

736 Here S. Gregory seems to state accurately the differentiation of the two Natures, while he recognizes the possibility of the *communicatio idiomatum*: but it is not clear that he would acknowledge that the two Natures *still remain* distinct. Even this, however, seems to be implied in his citation of Phil. ii. 11, at a later point.



Word was in the beginning with God, the man was subject to the trial of death; and neither was the Human Nature from everlasting, nor the Divine Nature mortal: and all the rest of the attributes are contemplated in the same way. It is not the Human Nature that raises up Lazarus, nor is it the power that cannot suffer that weeps for him when he lies in the grave: the tear proceeds from the Man, the life from the true Life. It is not the Human Nature that feeds the thousands, nor is it omnipotent might that hastens to the fig-tree. Who is it that is weary with the journey, and Who is it that by His word made all the world subsist? What is the brightness of the glory, and what is that that was pierced with the nails? What form is it that is buffeted in the Passion, and what form is it that is glorified from everlasting? So much as this is clear, (even if one does not follow the argument into detail,) that the blows belong to the servant in whom the Lord was, the honours to the Lord Whom the servant compassed about, so that by reason of contact and the union of Natures the proper attributes of each belong to both<sup>737</sup>, as the Lord receives the stripes of the servant, while the servant is glorified with the honour of the Lord; for this is why the Cross is said to be the Cross of the Lord of glory<sup>738</sup>, and why every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father<sup>739</sup>.

But if we are to discuss the other points in the same way, let us consider what it is that dies, and what it is that destroys death; what it is that is renewed, and what it is that empties itself. The Godhead “empties” Itself that It may come within the capacity of the Human Nature, and the Human Nature is renewed by becoming Divine through its commixture<sup>740</sup> with the Divine. For as air is not retained in water when it is dragged down by some weighty body and left in the depth of the water, but rises quickly to its kindred element, while the water is often raised up together with the air in its upward rush, being moulded by the circle of air into a convex shape with a slight and membrane-like surface, so too, when the true Life that underlay the flesh sped up, after the Passion, to Itself, the flesh also was raised up with It, being forced upwards from corruption to incorruptibility by the Divine immortality. And as fire that lies in wood hidden below the surface is often unobserved by the senses of those who see, or even touch it, but is manifest when it blazes up, so too, at His death (which He brought about at His will, Who separated His soul from His Body, Who said to His own Father “Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit<sup>741</sup>,” Who, as He says, “had power to lay it down and had power to take it again<sup>742</sup>”), He Who, because He is the Lord of glory, despised that

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<sup>737</sup> Here is truly stated the ground of the *communicatio idiomatum*: while the illustrations following seem to show that S. Gregory recognized this *communicatio* as existing at the time of our Lord’s humiliation, and as continuing to exist after His “exaltation”; that he acknowledged, that is, the union of the two Natures before the “exaltation,” and the distinction of the two Natures after that event.

<sup>738</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 8.

<sup>739</sup> Phil. ii. 11.

<sup>740</sup> ἀνακρασεως

<sup>741</sup> S. Luke xxiii. 46.

<sup>742</sup> S. John x. 18



which is shame among men, having concealed, as it were, the flame of His life in His bodily Nature, by the dispensation of His death<sup>743</sup>, kindled and inflamed it once more by the power of His own Godhead, fostering into life that which had been brought to death, having infused with the infinity of His Divine power that humble first-fruits of our nature, made it also to be that which He Himself was—making the servile form to be Lord, and the Man born of Mary to be Christ, and Him Who was crucified through weakness to be Life and power, and making all that is piously conceived to be in God the Word to be also in that which the Word assumed, so that these attributes no longer seem to be in either Nature by way of division, but that the perishable Nature being, by its commixture with the Divine, made anew in conformity with the Nature that overwhelms it, participates in the power of the Godhead, as if one were to say that mixture makes a drop of vinegar mingled in the deep to be sea, by reason that the natural quality of this liquid does not continue in the infinity of that which overwhelms it<sup>744</sup>. This is our doctrine, which does not, as Eunomius charges against it, preach a plurality of Christs, but the union of the Man with the Divinity, and which calls by the name of “making” the transmutation of the Mortal to the Immortal, of the Servant to the Lord, of Sin<sup>745</sup> to Righteousness, of the Curse<sup>746</sup> to the Blessing, of the Man to Christ. What further have our slanderers left to say, to show that we preach “two Christs” in our doctrine, if we refuse to say that He Who was in the beginning from the Father uncreatedly Lord, and Christ, and the Word, and God, was “made,” and declare that the blessed Peter was pointing briefly and incidentally to the mystery of the Incarnation, according to the meaning now explained, that the Nature which was crucified through weakness has Itself also, as we have said, become, by the overwhelming power of Him Who dwells in It, that which the Indweller Himself is in fact and in name, even Christ and Lord?



## Book VI.

<sup>743</sup> Altering Oehler’s punctuation, which would connect ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὸν θάνατον οἰκονομίᾳ 139’, not with συγκαλύψας, but with ἀνήψε.

<sup>744</sup> Here may be observed at once a conformity to the phraseology of the Monophysites (bearing in mind that S. Gregory is not speaking, as they were, of the union of the two Natures in the Incarnation, but of the change wrought by the “exaltation”), and a suggestion that the Natures still remain distinct, as otherwise it would be idle to speak of the Human Nature as *participating* in the power of the Divine.

<sup>745</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. v. 21

<sup>746</sup> Cf. Gal. iii. 13

§1. *The sixth book shows that He Who came for man's salvation was not a mere man, as Eunomius, falsely slandering him, affirmed that the great Basil had said, but the Only-begotten Son of God, putting on human flesh, and becoming a mediator between God and man, on Whom we believe, as subject to suffering in the flesh, but impassible in His Godhead; and demonstrates the calumny of Eunomius.*

BUT I perceive that while the necessities of the subject compelled me to follow this line of thought, I have lingered too long over this passage<sup>747</sup>. I must now resume the train of his complaints, that we may pass by none of the charges brought against us without an answer. And first I propose that we should examine this point, that he charges us with asserting that an ordinary man has wrought the salvation of the world. For although this point has been to some extent already cleared up by the investigations we have made, we shall yet briefly deal with it once more, that the mind of those who are acting as our judges on this slanderous accusation may be entirely freed from misapprehension. So far are we from referring to an ordinary man the cause of this great and unspeakable grace, that even if any should refer so great a boon to Peter and Paul, or to an angel from heaven, we should say with Paul, "let him be anathema<sup>748</sup>." For Paul was not crucified for us, nor were we baptized into a human name<sup>749</sup>. Surely the doctrine which our adversaries oppose to the truth is not thereby strengthened when we confess that the saving power of Christ is more potent than human nature<sup>750</sup>:—yet it may seem to be so, for their aim is to maintain at all points the difference of the essence of the Son from that of the Father, and they strive to show the dissimilarity of essence not only by the contrast of the Generated with the Ungenerate, but also by the opposition of the passible to the impassible. And while this is more openly maintained in the last part of their argument, it is also clearly shown in their present discourse<sup>751</sup>. For if he finds fault with those who refer the Passion to the Human Nature, his intention is certainly to subject to the Passion the Godhead Itself. For our conception being twofold, and admitting of two developments, accordingly as the Divinity or the Humanity is held to have been in a condition of suffering, an attack on one of these views is clearly a maintaining of the other. Accordingly, if they find fault with those who look upon the Passion as concerning the Man, they will clearly approve those who say that the Godhead of the Son was subject to passion, and the position which these last maintain becomes an argument

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747 The passage in S. Peter's speech (Acts ii. 36) discussed in the preceding book.

748 Cf. Gal. i. 8, 9

749 1 Cor. i. 13.

750 The sense of this passage is rather obscure. S. Gregory intends, it would seem, to point out that, although an acknowledgment that the suffering Christ was more than man may seem at first sight to support the Eunomian view of the passibility of the Godhead of the Son, this is not its necessary effect. Apparently either οὐ μὴν must be taken as equivalent to οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ, or a clause such as that expressed in the translation must be supplied before τοῖς μὲν γὰρ κ.τ.λ.

751 Altering Oehler's punctuation, which here follows that of the earlier editions.

in favour of their own absurd doctrine. For if, according to their statement, the Godhead of the Son suffers, while that of the Father is preserved in absolute impassibility, then the impassible Nature is essentially different from that which admits passion. Seeing, therefore, that the dictum before us, though, so far as it is limited by number of words, it is a short one, yet affords principles and hypotheses for every kind of doctrinal pravity, it would seem right that our readers should require in our reply not so much brevity as soundness. We, then, neither attribute our own salvation to a man, nor admit that the incorruptible and Divine Nature is capable of suffering and mortality: but since we must assuredly believe the Divine utterances which declare to us that the Word that was in the beginning was God<sup>752</sup>, and that afterward the Word made flesh was seen upon the earth and conversed with men<sup>753</sup>, we admit in our creed those conceptions which are consonant with the Divine utterance. For when we hear that He is Light, and Power, and Righteousness, and Life, and Truth, and that by Him all things were made, we account all these and such-like statements as things to be believed, referring them to God the Word: but when we hear of pain, of slumber, of need, of trouble, of bonds, of nails, of the spear, of blood, of wounds, of burial, of the sepulchre, and all else of this kind, even if they are somewhat opposed to what has previously been stated, we none the less admit them to be things to be believed, and true, having regard to the flesh; which we receive by faith as conjoined with the Word. For as it is not possible to contemplate the peculiar attributes of the flesh as existing in the Word that was in the beginning, so also on the other hand we may not conceive those which are proper to the Godhead as existing in the nature of the flesh. As, therefore, the teaching of the Gospel concerning our Lord is mingled, partly of lofty and Divine ideas, partly of those which are lowly and human, we assign every particular phrase accordingly to one or other of these Natures which we conceive in the mystery, that which is human to the Humanity, that which is lofty to the Godhead, and say that, as God, the Son is certainly impassible and incapable of corruption: and whatever suffering is asserted concerning Him in the Gospel, He assuredly wrought by means of His Human Nature which admitted of such suffering. For verily the Godhead works the salvation of the world by means of that body which encompassed It, in such wise that the suffering was of the body, but the operation was of God; and even if some wrest to the support of the opposite doctrine the words of the Apostle, “God spared not His own Son,<sup>754</sup>” and, “God sent His own Son<sup>755</sup>,” and other similar phrases which seem to refer, in the matter of the Passion, to the Divine Nature, and not to the Humanity, we shall none the less refuse to abandon sound doctrine, seeing that Paul himself declares to us more clearly the mystery of this subject. For he everywhere attributes to the Human element in Christ the dispensation of the Passion, when he



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752 Cf. S. John i. 1

753 Cf. Bar. iii. 37

754 Rom. viii. 32.

755 Cf. Rom. viii. 3

says, “for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead<sup>756</sup>,” and, “God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh<sup>757</sup>” (for he says, “in the *flesh*,” not “in the Godhead”); and “He was crucified through weakness” (where by “weakness” he means “the flesh”), “yet liveth by power<sup>758</sup>” (while he indicates by “power” the Divine Nature); and, “He died unto sin” (that is, with regard to the body), “but liveth unto God<sup>759</sup>” (that is, with regard to the Godhead, so that by these words it is established that, while the Man tasted death, the immortal Nature did not admit the suffering of death); and again; “He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin<sup>760</sup>,” giving once more the name of “sin” to the flesh.

§2. *Then he again mentions S. Peter’s word, “made,” and the passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which says that Jesus was made by God “an Apostle and High Priest”: and, after giving a sufficient answer to the charges brought against him by Eunomius, shows that Eunomius himself supports Basil’s arguments, and says that the Only-begotten Son, when He had put on the flesh, became Lord.*

And although we make these remarks in passing, the parenthetic addition seems, perhaps, not less important than the main question before us. For since, when St. Peter says, “He made Him Lord and Christ<sup>761</sup>,” and again, when the Apostle Paul says to the Hebrews that He made Him a priest<sup>762</sup>, Eunomius catches at the word “made” as being applicable to His pre-temporal existence, and thinks thereby to establish his doctrine that the Lord is a thing made<sup>763</sup>, let him now listen to Paul when he says, “He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew not sin<sup>764</sup>.” If he refers the word “made,” which is used of the Lord in the passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and from the words of Peter, to the pretemporal idea, he might fairly refer the word in that passage which says that God made Him to be sin, to the first existence of His essence, and try to show by this, as in the case of his other testimonies, that he was “made”, so as to refer the word “made” to the essence, acting consistently with himself, and to discern sin in that essence. But if he shrinks from this by

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756 1 Cor. xv. 21.

757 Cf. Rom. viii. 3

758 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

759 Rom. vi. 10.

760 2 Cor. v. 21.

761 Acts ii. 36.

762 Cf. Heb. v. 5

763 Altering Oehler’s punctuation.

764 2 Cor. v. 21.

reason of its manifest absurdity, and argues that, by saying, “He made Him to be sin,” the Apostle indicates the dispensation of the last times, let him persuade himself by the same train of reasoning that the word “made” refers to that dispensation in the other passages also.

Let us, however, return to the point from which we digressed; for we might gather together from the same Scripture countless other passages, besides those quoted, which bear upon the matter. And let no one think that the divine Apostle is divided against himself in contradiction, and affords by his own utterances matter for their contentions on either side to those who dispute upon the doctrines. For careful examination would find that his argument is accurately directed to one aim; and he is not halting in his opinions: for while he everywhere proclaims the combination of the Human with the Divine, he none the less discerns in each its proper nature, in the sense that while the human weakness is changed for the better by its communion with the imperishable, the Divine power, on the other hand, is not abased by its contact with the lowly form of nature. When therefore he says, “He spared not His own Son,” he contrasts the true Son with the other sons, begotten, or exalted, or adopted<sup>765</sup> (those, I mean, who were brought into being at His command), marking the specialty of nature by the addition of “own.” And, to the end that no one should connect the suffering of the Cross with the imperishable nature, he gives in other words a fairly distinct correction of such an error, when he calls Him “mediator between God and men<sup>766</sup>” and “man<sup>767</sup>,” and “God<sup>768</sup>,” that, from the fact that both are predicated of the one Being, the fit conception might be entertained concerning each Nature—concerning the Divine Nature, impassibility, concerning the Human Nature, the dispensation of the Passion. As his thought, then, divides that which in love to man was made one, but is distinguished in idea, he uses, when he is proclaiming that nature which transcends and surpasses all intelligence, the more exalted order of names, calling Him “God over all<sup>769</sup>,” “the great God<sup>770</sup>,” “the power” of God, and “the wisdom” of God<sup>771</sup>, and the like; but when he is alluding to all that experience of suffering which, by reason of our weakness, was necessarily assumed with our nature, he gives to the union of the Natures<sup>772</sup> that name which is derived from ours, and calls Him Man, not by this word placing Him Whom he is setting forth to us on a common level with the rest of nature, but so that orthodoxy is protected as regards each Nature, in the sense that the

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765 Reading, as Gulonius seems to have done, and according to Oehler’s suggestion (which he does not himself follow), *νιοθετηθεῖσι* for *ἀθετήσασι*. In the latter reading the mss. seem to agree, but the sense is doubtful. It may be rendered, perhaps, “Who were begotten and exalted, and who rejected Him.” The quotation from S. Paul is from Rom. viii. 32.

766 1 Tim. ii. 5.

767 1 Tim. ii. 5.

768 The reference is perhaps to 1 Tim. iii. 16, but more probably to 1 Tim. ii. 5.

769 Rom. ix. 5.

770 Tit. ii. 13.

771 1 Cor. i. 24.

772 τὸ συναμφοτέρον

Human Nature is glorified by His assumption of it, and the Divine is not polluted by Its condescension, but makes the Human element subject to sufferings, while working, through Its Divine power, the resurrection of that which suffered. And thus the experience of death is not<sup>773</sup> referred to Him Who had communion in our passible nature by reason of the union with Him of the Man, while at the same time the exalted and Divine names descend to the Man, so that He Who was manifested upon the Cross is called even “the Lord of glory<sup>774</sup>,” since the majesty implied in these names is transmitted from the Divine to the Human by the commixture of Its Nature with that Nature which is lowly. For this cause he describes Him in varied and different language, at one time as Him Who came down from heaven, at another time as Him Who was born of woman, as God from eternity, and Man in the last days; thus too the Only-begotten God is held to be impassible, and Christ to be capable of suffering; nor does his discourse speak falsely in these opposing statements, as it adapts in its conceptions to each Nature the terms that belong to it. If then these are the doctrines which we have learnt from inspired teaching, how do we refer the cause of our salvation to an ordinary man? and if we declare the word “made” employed by the blessed Peter to have regard not to the pre-temporal existence, but to the new dispensation of the Incarnation, what has this to do with the charge against us? For this great Apostle says that that which was seen in the form of the servant has been made, by being assumed, to be that which He Who assumed it was in His own Nature. Moreover, in the Epistle to the Hebrews we may learn the same truth from Paul, when he says that Jesus was made an Apostle and High Priest by God, “being faithful to him that made Him so<sup>775</sup>.” For in that passage too, in giving the name of High Priest to Him Who made with His own Blood the priestly propitiation for our sins, he does not by the word “made” declare the first existence of the Only-begotten, but says “made” with the intention of representing that grace which is commonly spoken of in connection with the appointment of priests. For Jesus, the great High Priest (as Zechariah says<sup>776</sup>), Who offered up his own lamb, that is, His own Body, for the sin of the world; Who, by reason of the children that are partakers of flesh and blood, Himself also in like manner took part with them in blood<sup>777</sup> (not in that He was in the beginning, being the Word and God, and being in the form of God, and equal with God, but in that He emptied Himself in the form of the servant, and offered an oblation and sacrifice for us), He, I say, became a High

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<sup>773</sup> Reading οὔτε, in favour of which apparently lies the weight of MSS. The reading of the Paris edition gives an easier connection, but has apparently no MS. authority. The distinction S. Gregory draws is this:—“You may not say ‘*God died*,’ for human weakness does not attach to the Divine Nature; you may say ‘He who died is the Lord of glory,’ for the Human Nature is actually made partaker of the power and majesty of the Divine.”

<sup>774</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 8.

<sup>775</sup> Cf. Heb. iii. 1, 2.

<sup>776</sup> Cf. Zech. iii. 1

<sup>777</sup> Cf. Heb. ii. 14

Priest many generations later, after the order of Melchisedech<sup>778</sup>. Surely a reader who has more than a casual acquaintance with the discourse to the Hebrews knows the mystery of this matter. As, then, in that passage He is said to have been made Priest and Apostle, so here He is said to have been made Lord and Christ,—the latter for the dispensation on our behalf, the former by the change and transformation of the Human to the Divine (for by “making” the Apostle means “making anew”). Thus is manifest the knavery of our adversaries, who insolently wrest the words referring to the dispensation to apply them to the pretemporal existence. For we learn from the Apostle not to know Christ in the same manner now as before, as Paul thus speaks, “Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now know we Him no more<sup>779</sup>,” in the sense that the one knowledge manifests to us His temporary dispensation, the other His eternal existence. Thus our discourse has made no inconsiderable answer to his charges:—that we neither hold two Christs nor two Lords, that we are not ashamed of the Cross, that we do not glorify a mere man as having suffered for the world, that we assuredly do not think that the word “made” refers to the formation of the essence. But, such being our view, our argument has no small support from our accuser himself, where in the midst of his discourse he employs his tongue in a flourishing onslaught upon us, and produces this sentence among others: “This, then, is the conflict that Basil wages against himself, and he clearly appears neither to have ‘applied his own mind to the intention of the Apostles,’ nor to be able to preserve the sequence of his own arguments; for according to them he must, if he is conscious of their irreconcilable character, admit that the Word Who was in the beginning and was God became Lord,” or he fits together “statements that are mutually conflicting.” Why, this is actually our statement which Eunomius repeats, who says that “the Word that was in the beginning and was God became Lord.” For, being what He was, God, and Word, and Life, and Light, and Grace, and Truth, and Lord, and Christ, and every name exalted and Divine, He did become, in the Man assumed by Him, Who was none of these, all else which the Word was and among the rest did become Lord and Christ, according to the teaching of Peter, and according to the confession of Eunomius;—not in the sense that the Godhead acquired anything by way of advancement, but (all exalted majesty being contemplated in the Divine Nature) He thus becomes Lord and Christ, not by arriving at any addition of grace in respect of His Godhead (for the Nature of the Godhead is acknowledged to be lacking in no good), but by bringing the Human Nature to that participation in the Godhead which is signified by the terms “Christ” and “Lord.”


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§3. *He then gives a notable explanation of the saying of the Lord to Philip, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;” and herein he excellently discusses the suffering of the Lord in His love*

<sup>778</sup> Cf. Heb. vii. 21

<sup>779</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. v. 16

*to man, and the impassibility, creative power, and providence of the Father, and the composite nature of men, and their resolution into the elements of which they were composed.*

Sufficient defence has been offered on these points, and as for that which Eunomius says by way of calumny against our doctrine, that “Christ was emptied to become Himself” there has been sufficient discussion in what has been said above, where he has been shown to be attributing to our doctrine his own blasphemy.<sup>780</sup> For it is not one who confesses that the immutable Nature has put on the created and perishable, who speaks of the transition from like to like, but one who conceives that there is no change from the majesty of Nature to that which is more lowly. For if, as their doctrine asserts, He is created, and man is created also, the wonder of the doctrine disappears, and there is nothing marvellous in what is alleged, since the created nature comes to be in itself<sup>781</sup>. But we who have learnt from prophecy of “the change of the right hand of the Most High<sup>782</sup>,”—and by the “Right Hand” of the Father we understand that Power of God, which made all things, which is the Lord (not in the sense of depending upon Him as a part upon a whole, but as being indeed from Him, and yet contemplated in individual existence),—say thus: that neither does the Right Hand vary from Him Whose Right Hand It is, in regard to the idea of Its Nature, nor can any other change in It be spoken of besides the dispensation of the Flesh. For verily the Right Hand of God was God Himself; manifested in the flesh, seen through that same flesh by those whose sight was clear; as He did the work of the Father, being, both in fact and in thought, the Right Hand of God, yet being changed, in respect of the veil of the flesh by which He was surrounded, as regarded that which was seen, from that which He was by Nature, as a subject of contemplation. Therefore He says to Philip, who was gazing only at that which was changed, “Look through that which is changed to that which is unchangeable, and if thou seest this, thou hast seen that Father Himself, Whom thou seekest to see; for he that hath seen Me—not Him Who appears in a state of change, but My very self, Who am in the Father—will have seen that Father Himself in Whom I am, because the very same character of Godhead is beheld in both<sup>783</sup>.” If, then, we believe that the immortal and impassible and uncreated Nature came to be in the passible Nature of the creature, and conceive the “change” to consist in this, on what grounds are we charged with saying that He “was emptied to become Himself,” by those who keep prating their own statements about our doctrines? For the participation of the created with the created is no “change of the Right Hand.” To say that the Right Hand of the uncreated Nature is created belongs to Eunomius alone, and to those who adopt such opinions as

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780 See above, Book V. §4.

781 That is, in a nature created like itself.

782 Ps. lxxvii. 10 (LXX.). This application of the passage is also made by Michael Ayguan (the “Doctor Incognitus”), who is the only commentator mentioned by Neale and Littledale as so interpreting the text.

783 Cf. S. John xiv. 9, 10.





he holds. For the man with an eye that looks on the truth will discern the Right Hand of the Highest to be such as he sees the Highest to be,—Uncreated of Uncreated, Good of Good, Eternal of Eternal without prejudice to Its eternity by Its being in the Father by way of generation. Thus our accuser has unawares been employing against us reproaches that properly fall upon himself.

But with reference<sup>784</sup> to those who stumble at the idea of “passion,” and on this ground maintain the diversity of the Essences,—arguing that the Father, by reason of the exaltation of His Nature, does not admit passion, and that the Son on the other hand condescended, by reason of defect and divergence, to the partaking of His sufferings,—I wish to add these remarks to what has been already said:—That nothing is truly “passion” which does not tend to sin, nor would one strictly call by the name of “passion” the necessary routine of nature, regarding the composite nature as it goes on its course in a kind of order and sequence. For the mutual concurrence of heterogeneous elements in the formation of our body is a kind of a combination harmoniously conjoined out of several dissimilar elements; but when, at the due time, the tie is loosed which bound together this concurrence of the elements, the combined nature is once more dissolved into the elements of which it was composed. This then is rather a work than a passion of the nature<sup>785</sup>. For we give the name of “passion” only to that which is opposed to the virtuous unimpassioned state and of this we believe that He Who granted us salvation was at all times devoid, Who “was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin<sup>786</sup>.” Of that, at least, which is truly passion, which is a diseased condition of the will, He was not a partaker; for it says “He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth<sup>787</sup>”; but the peculiar attributes of our nature, which, by a kind of customary abuse of terms, are called by the same name of “passion,”—of these, we confess, the Lord did partake,—of birth, nourishment, growth, of sleep and toil, and all those natural dispositions which the soul is wont to experience with regard to bodily inconveniences,—the desire of that which is lacking, when the longing passes from the body to the soul, the sense of pain, the dread of death, and all the like, save only such as, if followed, lead to sin. As, then, when we perceive His power extending through all things in heaven, and air, and earth, and sea, whatever there is in heaven, whatever there is beneath the earth, we believe that He is universally present, and yet do not say that He is any of those things in which He is (for He is not the Heaven, Who has marked it out with His enfolding span, nor is He the earth, Who upholds the circle of the earth, nor yet is He the water, Who encompasses the liquid nature), so neither do we say that in passing through those sufferings of the flesh of which we speak He

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784 Oehler’s punctuation, while it does not exactly follow that of the earlier editions, still seems to admit of emendation here.

785 The word *πάθος*, like the English word “passion,” has a double sense: in one sense it connotes a tendency to evil action or evil habit—and in this sense Christ was not subject to passion. In another sense it has no such connotation, and it is in this sense (a sense, Gregory would say, somewhat inexact), that the term is used to express the sufferings of Christ:—to this case, it may be said, the inexact use of the English word is for the most part restricted.

786 Heb. iv. 15.

787 1 Pet. ii. 22.

was “subject to passion,” but, as we say that He is the cause of all things that are, that He holds the universe in His grasp, that He directs all that is in motion and keeps upon a settled foundation all that is stationary, by the unspeakable power of His own majesty, so we say that He was born among us for the cure of the disease of sin, adapting the exercise of His healing power in a manner corresponding to the suffering, applying the healing in that way which He knew to be for the good of that part of the creation which He knew to be in infirmity. And as it was expedient that He should heal the sufferings by touch, we say that He so healed it; yet is He not, because He is the Healer of our infirmity, to be deemed on this account to have been Himself passible. For even in the case of men, ordinary use does not allow us to affirm such a thing. We do not say that one who touches a sick man to heal him is himself partaker of the infirmity, but we say that he does give the sick man the boon of a return to health, and does not partake of the infirmity: for the suffering does not touch him, it is he who touches the disease. Now if he who by his art works any good in men’s bodies is not called dull or feeble, but is called a lover of men and a benefactor and the like, why do they slander the dispensation to usward as being mean and inglorious, and use it to maintain that the essence of the Son is “divergent by way of inferiority,” on the ground that the Nature of the Father is superior to sufferings, while that of the Son is not pure from passion? Why, if the aim of the dispensation of the Incarnation was not that the Son should be subject to suffering, but that He should be manifested as a lover of men, while the Father also is undoubtedly a lover of men, it follows that if one will but regard the aim, the Son is in the same case with the Father. But if it was not the Father Who wrought the destruction of death, marvel not,—for all judgment also He hath committed unto the Son, Himself judging no man<sup>788</sup>; not doing all things by the Son for the reason that He is unable either to save the lost or judge the sinner, but because He does these things too by His own Power, by which He works all things. Then they who were saved by the Son were saved by the Power of the Father, and they who are judged by Him undergo judgment by the Righteousness of God. For “Christ,” as the Apostle says, “is the Righteousness of God<sup>789</sup>,” which is revealed by the Gospel; and whether you look at the world as a whole, or at the parts of the world which make up that complete whole, all these are works of the Father, in that they are works of His Power; and thus the word which says both that the Father made all things, and that none of these things that are came into being without the Son, speaks truly on both points; for the operation of the Power bears relation to Him Whose Power It is. Thus, since the Son is the Power of the Father, all the works of the Son are works of the Father. That He entered upon the dispensation of the Passion not by weakness of nature but by the power of His will, one might bring countless passages of the Gospel to show; but these, as the matter is clear, I will pretermit, that my discourse may not be prolonged by dwelling on points that are admitted. If, then, that which comes to pass is evil, we have to separate from that evil not the Father only, but the Son also; but if the saving of them that


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788 Cf. S. John v. 22

789 Rom. i. 17.

were lost is good, and if that which took place is not “passion<sup>790</sup>,” but love of men, why do you alienate from our thanksgiving for our salvation the Father, Who by His own Power, which is Christ, wrought for men their freedom from death?

§4. *Then returning to the words of Peter, “God made Him Lord and Christ,” he skilfully explains it by many arguments, and herein shows Eunomius as an advocate of the orthodox doctrine, and concludes the book by showing that the Divine and Human names are applied, by reason of the commixture, to either Nature.*

But we must return once more to our vehement writer of speeches, and take up again that severe invective of his against ourselves. He makes it a complaint against us that we deny that the Essence of the Son has been made, as contradicting the words of Peter, “He made Him Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified<sup>791</sup>”; and he is very forcible in his indignation and abuse upon this matter, and moreover maintains certain points by which he thinks that he refutes our doctrine. Let us see, then, the force of his attempts. “Who, pray, ye most reckless of men,” he says, “when he has the form of a servant, takes the form of a servant?” “No reasonable man,” shall be our reply to him, “would use language of this kind, save such as may be entirely alien from the hope of Christians. But to this class you belong, who charge us with recklessness because we do not admit the Creator to be created. For if the Holy Spirit does not lie, when He says by the prophet, ‘All things serve Thee<sup>792</sup>,’ and the whole creation is in servitude, and the Son is, as you say<sup>793</sup>, created, He is clearly a fellow-servant with all things, being degraded by His partaking of creation to partake also of servitude. And Him Who is in servitude you will surely invest with the servant’s form: for you will not, of course, be ashamed of the aspect of servitude when you acknowledge that He is a servant by nature. Who now is it, I pray, my most keen rhetorician, who transfers the Son from the servile form to another form of a servant? he who claims for Him uncreated being, and thereby proves that He is no servant, or you, rather, who continually cry that the Son is the servant of the Father, and was actually under His dominion before He took the servant’s form? I ask for no other judges; I

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<sup>790</sup> That is, “passion” in the sense defined above, as something with evil tendency. If the γινόμενον (*i.e.* the salvation of men) is evil, then Father and Son alike must be “kept clear” from any participation in it. If it is good, and if, therefore, the means (the actual events) are not “passion” as not tending to evil, while, considered in regard to their aim, they are φιλανθρωπία, then there is no reason why a share in their fulfilment should be denied to the Father, Who, as well as the Son, is φιλόανθρωπος, and Who by His own Power (that is, by Christ) wrought the salvation of men.

<sup>791</sup> Acts ii. 36.

<sup>792</sup> Ps. cxix. 91.

<sup>793</sup> Reading καθ’ ὑμᾶς with the earlier editions. Oehler alleges no authority for his reading καθ’ ἡμᾶς, which is probably a mere misprint.

leave the vote on these questions in your own hands. For I suppose that no one is so shameless in his dealings with the truth as to oppose acknowledged facts out of sheer impudence. What we have said is clear to any one, that by the peculiar attributes of servitude is marked that which is by nature servile, and to be created is an attribute proper to servitude. Thus one who asserts that He, being a servant, took upon Him our form, is surely the man who transfers the Only-begotten from servitude to servitude.”

He tries, however, to fight against our words, and says, a little further on (for I will pass over at present his intermediate remarks, as they have been more or less fully discussed in my previous arguments), when he charges us with being “bold in saying or thinking things uncontrivable,” and calls us “most miserable<sup>794</sup>,”—he adds, I say, this:—“For if it is not of the Word Who was in the beginning and was God that the blessed Peter speaks, but of Him Who was ‘seen,’ and Who ‘emptied Himself,’ as Basil says, and if the man Who was ‘seen’ ‘emptied Himself’ to take ‘the form of a servant,’ and He Who ‘emptied Himself’ to take the form of a servant, ‘emptied Himself’ to come into being as man, then the man who was ‘seen’ ‘emptied himself,’ to come into being as man.” It may be that the judgment of my readers has immediately detected from the above citation the knavery, and, at the same time, the folly of the argument he maintains: yet a brief refutation of what he says shall be subjoined on our side, not so much to overthrow his blundering sophism, which indeed is overthrown by itself for those who have ears to hear, as to avoid the appearance of passing his allegation by without discussion, under the pretence of contempt for the worthlessness of his argument. Let us accordingly look at the point in this way. What are the Apostle’s words? “Be it known,” he says, “that God made Him Lord and Christ<sup>795</sup>.” Then, as though some one had asked him on whom such a grace was bestowed, he points as it were with his finger to the subject, saying, “this Jesus, Whom ye crucified.” What does Basil say upon this? That the demonstrative word declares that *that* person was made Christ, Who had been crucified by the hearers;—for he says, “ye crucified,” and it was likely that those who had demanded the murder that was done upon Him were hearers of the speech; for the time from the crucifixion to the discourse of Peter was not long. What, then, does Eunomius advance in answer to this? “If it is not of the Word Who was in the beginning and was God that the blessed Peter speaks, but of Him Who was ‘seen,’ and Who ‘emptied Himself,’ as Basil says, and if the man who was ‘seen’ ‘emptied himself’ to take ‘the form of a servant’”—Hold! who says this, that the man who was seen emptied himself again to take the form of a servant? or who maintains that the suffering of the Cross took place before the manifestation in the flesh? The Cross did not precede the body, nor the body “the form of the servant.” But God is manifested in the flesh, while the flesh that displayed God in itself, after having by itself fulfilled the great mystery of the Death, is transformed by commixture to that which is exalted and Divine, becoming Christ and Lord, being transferred and changed to that which He was, Who manifested



794 Oehler’s punctuation here seems to require correction.

795 Acts ii. 36.

Himself in that flesh. But if we should say this, our champion of the truth maintains once more that we say that He Who was shown upon the Cross “emptied Himself” to become another man, putting his sophism together as follows in its wording:—“If,” quoth he, “the man who was ‘seen’ ‘emptied himself’ to take the ‘form of a servant,’ and He Who ‘emptied Himself’ to take the ‘form of a servant,’ ‘emptied Himself’ to come into being as man, then the man who was ‘seen’ ‘emptied himself’ to come into being as man.”

How well he remembers the task before him! how much to the point is the conclusion of his argument! Basil declares that the Apostle said that the man who was “seen” was made Christ and Lord, and this clear and quick-witted over-turner of his statements says, “If Peter does not say that the essence of Him Who was in the beginning was made, the man who was ‘seen’ ‘emptied himself’ to take the ‘form of a servant,’ and He Who ‘emptied Himself’ to take the ‘form of a servant,’ emptied Himself to become man.” We are conquered, Eunomius, by this invincible wisdom! The fact that the Apostle’s discourse refers to Him Who was “crucified through weakness<sup>796</sup>” is forsooth powerfully disproved when we learn that if we believe this to be so, the man who was “seen” again becomes another, “emptying Himself” for another coming into being of man. Will you never cease jesting against what should be secure from such attempts? will you not blush at destroying by such ridiculous sophisms the awe that hedges the Divine mysteries? will you not turn now, if never before, to know that the Only-begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father, being Word, and King, and Lord, and all that is exalted in word and thought, needs not to *become* anything that is good, seeing that He is Himself the fulness of all good things? What then is that, by changing into which He becomes what He was not before? Well, as He Who knew not sin becomes sin<sup>797</sup>, that He may take away the sin of the world, so on the other hand the flesh which received the Lord becomes Christ and Lord, being transformed by the commixture into that which it was not by nature: whereby we learn that neither would God have been manifested in the flesh, had not the Word been made flesh, nor would the human flesh that compassed Him about have been transformed to what is Divine, had not that which was apparent to the senses become Christ and Lord. But they treat the simplicity of what we preach with contempt, who use their syllogisms to trample on the being of God, and desire to show that He Who by creation brought into being all things that are, is Himself a part of creation, and wrest, to assist them in such an effort to establish their blasphemy, the words of Peter, who said to the Jews, “Be it known to all the house of Israel that God made Him Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified<sup>798</sup>.” This is the proof they present for the statement that the essence of the Only-begotten God is created! What? tell me, were the Jews, to whom the words were spoken, in existence before the ages? was the Cross before the world? was Pilate before all creation? was Jesus in existence first, and after that the Word? was the flesh more ancient than the Godhead? did Gabriel bring glad tidings to Mary before the world was? did not the Man that was

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<sup>796</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

<sup>797</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. v. 21

<sup>798</sup> Acts ii. 36.

in Christ take beginning by way of birth in the days of Cæsar Augustus, while the Word that was God in the beginning is our King, as the prophet testifies, before all ages<sup>799</sup>? See you not what confusion you bring upon the matter, turning, as the phrase goes, things upside down? It was the fiftieth day after the Passion, when Peter preached his sermon to the Jews and said, “Him Whom ye crucified, God made Christ and Lord.” Do you not mark the order of his saying? which stands first, which second in his words? He did not say, “Him Whom God made Lord, ye crucified,” but, “Whom ye crucified, Him God made Christ and Lord”: so that it is clear from this that Peter is speaking, not of what was before the ages, but of what was after the dispensation.

How comes it, then, that you fail to see that the whole conception of your argument on the subject is being overthrown, and go on making yourself ridiculous with your childish web of sophistry, saying that, if we believe that He who was apparent to the senses has been made by God to be Christ and Lord, it necessarily follows that the Lord once more “emptied Himself” anew to become Man, and underwent a second birth? What advantage does your doctrine get from this? How does what you say show the King of creation to be created? For my own part I assert on the other side that our view is supported by those who contend against us, and that the rhetorician, in his exceeding attention to the matter, has failed to see that in pushing, as he supposed, the argument to an absurdity, he is fighting on the side of those whom he attacks, with the very weapons he uses for their overthrow. For if we are to believe that the change of condition in the case of Jesus was from a lofty state to a lowly one, and if the Divine and uncreated Nature alone transcends the creation, he will, perhaps, when he thoroughly surveys his own argument, come over to the ranks of truth, and agree that the Uncreated came to be in the created, in His love for man. But if he imagines that he demonstrates the created character of the Lord by showing that He, being God, took part in human nature, he will find many such passages to establish the same opinion which carry out their support of his argument in a similar way. For since He was the Word and was God, and “afterwards,” as the prophet says, “was seen upon earth and conversed with men<sup>800</sup>,” He will hereby be proved to be one of the creatures! And if this is held to be beside the question, similar passages too are not quite akin to the subject. For in sense it is just the same to say that the Word that was in the beginning was manifested to men through the flesh, and to say that being in the form of God He put on the form of a servant: and if one of these statements gives no help for the establishment of his blasphemy, he must needs give up the remaining one also. He is kind enough, however, to advise us to abandon our error, and to point out the truth which He himself maintains. He tells us that the Apostle Peter declares Him to have been made Who was in the beginning the Word and God. Well, if he were making up dreams for our amusement, and giving us information about the prophetic interpretation of the visions of sleep, there might be no risk in allowing him to set forth the riddles of his imagination at his pleasure. But when he tells us that he is explaining the Divine utterances, it is no longer safe for us to leave him to interpret the words as he likes. What

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799 Ps. lxxiv. 12 (LXX.).

800 Bar. iii. 37.

does the Scripture say? “God made Lord and Christ this Jesus whom ye crucified<sup>801</sup>.” When everything, then, is found to concur—the demonstrative word denoting Him Who is spoken of by the Name of His Humanity, the charge against those who were stained with blood-guiltiness, the suffering of the Cross—our thought necessarily turns to that which was apparent to the senses. But he asserts that while Peter uses these words it is the pretemporal existence that is indicated by the word “made”<sup>802</sup>. Well, we may safely allow nurses and old wives to jest with children, and to lay down the meaning of dreams as they choose: but when inspired Scripture is set before us for exposition, the great Apostle forbids us to have recourse to old wives’ tattle<sup>803</sup>. When I hear “the Cross” spoken of, I understand the Cross, and when I hear mention of a human name, I understand the nature which that name connotes. So when I hear from Peter that “this” one was made Lord and Christ, I do not doubt that he speaks of Him Who had been before the eyes of men, since the saints agree with one another in this matter as well as in others. For, as he says that He Who was crucified has been made Lord, so Paul also says that He was “highly exalted<sup>804</sup>,” after the Passion and the Resurrection, not being exalted in so far forth as He is God. For what height is there more sublime than the Divine height, that he should say God was exalted thereunto? But he means that the lowliness of the Humanity was exalted, the word, I suppose, indicating the assimilation and union of the Man Who was assumed to the exalted state of the Divine Nature. And even if one were to allow him licence to misinterpret the Divine utterance, not even so will his argument conclude in accordance with the aim of his heresy. For be it granted that Peter *does* say of Him Who was in the beginning, “God made Him Lord and Christ, this Jesus Whom ye crucified,” we shall find that even so his blasphemy does not gain any strength against the truth. “God made Him,” he says, “Lord and Christ.” To which of the words are we to refer the word *made*? with which of those that are employed in this sentence are we to connect the word? There are three before us:—“this,” and “Lord,” and “Christ.” With which of these three will he construct the word “made”? No one is so bold against the truth as to deny that “made” has reference to “Christ” and “Lord”; for Peter says that He, being already whatever He was, was “made Christ and Lord” by the Father.

These words are not mine: they are those of him who fights against the Word. For he says, in the very passage that is before us for examination, exactly thus:—“The blessed Peter speaks of Him Who was in the beginning and was God, and expounds to us that it was He Who became Lord and Christ.” Eunomius, then, says that He Who was whatsoever He was became Lord and Christ, as the history of David tells us that he, being the son of Jesse, and a keeper of the flocks, was anointed to be king: not that the anointing then made him to be a man, but that he, being what he was by his own nature, was transformed from an ordinary man to a king. What follows? Is it thereby


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801 Acts ii. 36.

802 Altering Oehler’s punctuation, which here seems certainly faulty: some slighter alterations have also been made in what precedes, and in what follows.

803 Cf. 1 Tim. iv. 7. The quotation is not verbal.

804 Cf. Phil. ii. 9

the more established that the essence of the Son was *made*, if, as Eunomius says, God made Him, when He was in the beginning and was God, both Lord and Christ? For Lordship is not a name of His *being* but of His *being in authority*, and the appellation of Christ indicates His kingdom, while the idea of His kingdom is one, and that of His Nature another. Suppose that Scripture does say that these things took place with regard to the Son of God. Let us then consider which is the more pious and the more rational view. Which can we allowably say is made partaker of superiority by way of advancement—God or man? Who has so childish a mind as to suppose that the Divinity passes on to perfection by way of addition? But as to the Human Nature, such a supposition is not unreasonable, seeing that the words of the Gospel clearly ascribe to our Lord *increase* in respect of His Humanity: for it says, “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favour<sup>805</sup>.” Which, then, is the more reasonable suggestion to derive from the Apostle’s words?—that He Who was God in the beginning became Lord by way of advancement, or that the lowliness of the Human Nature was raised to the height of majesty as a result of its communion with the Divine? For the prophet David also, speaking in the person of the Lord, says, “I am established as king by Him<sup>806</sup>,” with a meaning very close to “I was made Christ:” and again, in the person of the Father to the Lord, he says, “Be Thou Lord in the midst of Thine enemies<sup>807</sup>,” with the same meaning as Peter, “Be Thou *made* Lord of Thine enemies.” As, then, the establishment of His kingdom does not signify the formation of His essence, but the advance to His dignity, and He Who bids Him “be Lord” does not command that which is non-existent to come into being at that particular time, but gives to Him Who *is* the rule over those who are disobedient,—so also the blessed Peter, when he says that one has been made Christ (that is, king of all) adds the word “Him” to distinguish the idea both from the essence and from the attributes contemplated in connection with it. For He made Him what has been declared when He already *was* that which He is. Now if it were allowable to assert of the transcendent Nature that it became anything by way of advancement, as a king from being an ordinary man, or lofty from being lowly, or Lord from being servant, it might be proper to apply Peter’s words to the Only-begotten. But since the Divine Nature, whatever it is believed to be, always remains the same, being above all augmentation and incapable of diminution, we are absolutely compelled to refer his saying to the Humanity. For God the Word is now, and always remains, that which He was in the beginning, always King, always Lord, always God and Most High, not having become any of these things by way of advancement, but being in virtue of His Nature all that He is declared to be, while on the other hand He Who was, by being assumed, elevated from Man to the Divinity, *being* one thing and *becoming* another, is strictly and truly said to have become Christ and Lord. For He made Him to be Lord from being a servant, to be King from being a subject, to be Christ from being in subordination. He highly exalted that which was

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805 S. Luke ii. 52

806 Ps. ii. 6 (LXX).

807 Ps. cx. 2.



lowly, and gave to Him that had the Human Name that Name which is above every name<sup>808</sup>. And thus came to pass that unspeakable mixture and conjunction of human littleness commingled with Divine greatness, whereby even those names which are great and Divine are properly applied to the Humanity, while on the other hand the Godhead is spoken of by human names<sup>809</sup>. For it is the same Person who both has the Name which is above every name, and is worshipped by all creation in the human Name of Jesus. For he says, “at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father<sup>810</sup>.” But enough of these matters.



## Book VII.

§1. *The seventh book shows from various statements made to the Corinthians and to the Hebrews, and from the words of the Lord, that the word “Lord” is not expressive of essence, according to Eunomius’ exposition, but of dignity. and after many notable remarks concerning “the Spirit” and the Lord, he shows that Eunomius, from his own words, is found to argue in favour of orthodoxy, though without intending it, and to be struck by his own shafts.*

SINCE, however, Eunomius asserts that the word “Lord” is used in reference to the *essence* and not to the *dignity* of the Only-begotten, and cites as a witness to this view the Apostle, when he says to the Corinthians, “Now the Lord is the Spirit<sup>811</sup>,” it may perhaps be opportune that we should not pass over even this error on his part without correction. He asserts that the word “Lord” is significative of essence, and by way of proof of this assumption he brings up the passage above mentioned. “The Lord,” it says, “is the Spirit<sup>812</sup>.” But our friend who interprets Scripture at his own sweet will calls “Lordship” by the name of “*essence*,” and thinks to bring his statement to proof by means of the words quoted. Well, if it had been said by Paul, “Now the Lord is essence,” we too would have concurred in his argument. But seeing that the inspired writing on the one side says, “the Lord is the Spirit,” and Eunomius says on the other, “Lordship is essence,” I do not know

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808 Cf. Phil. ii. 9

809 This passage may be taken as counterbalancing that in which S. Gregory seems to limit the *communicatio idiomatum* (see above, page 184, n. 6): but he here probably means no more than that *names* or *titles* which properly belong to the Human Nature of our Lord are applied to His Divine Personality.

810 Cf. Phil. ii. 10

811 2 Cor. iii. 17.

812 2 Cor. iii. 17.

where he finds support for his statement, unless he is prepared to say again<sup>813</sup> that the word “Spirit” stands in Scripture for “essence.” Let us consider, then, whether the Apostle anywhere, in his use of the term “Spirit,” employs that word to indicate “essence.” He says, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit<sup>814</sup>,” and “no one knoweth the things of a man save the Spirit of man which is in him<sup>815</sup>,” and “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life<sup>816</sup>,” and “if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live<sup>817</sup>,” and “if we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit<sup>818</sup>.” Who indeed could count the utterances of the Apostle on this point? and in them we nowhere find “essence” signified by this word. For he who says that “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,” signifies nothing else than the Holy Spirit Which comes to be in the mind of the faithful; for in many other passages of his writings he gives the name of spirit to the mind, on the reception by which of the communion of the Spirit the recipients attain the dignity of adoption. Again, in the passage, “No one knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him,” if “man” is used of the essence, and “spirit” likewise, it will follow from the phrase that the man is maintained to be of two essences. Again, I know not how he who says that “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life,” sets “essence” in opposition to “letter”; nor, again, how this writer imagines that when Paul says that we ought “through the Spirit” to destroy “the deeds of the body,” he is directing the signification of “spirit” to express “essence”; while as for “living in the Spirit,” and “walking in the Spirit,” this would be quite unintelligible if the sense of the word “Spirit” referred to “essence.” For in what else than in essence do all we who are alive partake of life?—thus when the Apostle is laying down advice for us on this matter that we should “live in essence,” it is as though he said “partake of life by means of yourselves, and not by means of others.” If then it is not possible that this sense can be adopted in any passage, how can Eunomius here once more imitate the interpreters of dreams, and bid us to take “spirit” for “essence,” to the end that he may arrive in due syllogistic form at his conclusion that the word “Lord” is applied to the essence?—for if “spirit” is “essence” (he argues), and “the Lord is Spirit,” the “Lord” is clearly found to be “essence.” How incontestable is the force of this attempt! How can we evade or resolve this irrefragable necessity of demonstration? The word “Lord,” he says, is spoken of the essence. How does he maintain it? Because the Apostle says, “The Lord is the Spirit.” Well, what has this to do with essence? He gives us the further instruction that “spirit” is put for “essence.” These are the arts of his demonstrative method! These are the results of his Aristotelian science! This is why, in your view, we are so much to be pitied, who are uninitiated in this wisdom! and you of course are



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813 It is not quite clear whether *πάλιν* is to be constructed with *λέγοι* or with *κεῖσθαι*, but the difference in sense is slight.

814 Rom. viii. 16.

815 1 Cor. ii. 11.

816 2 Cor. iii. 6.

817 Rom. viii. 13.

818 Gal. v. 25.

to be deemed happy, who track out the truth by a method like this—that the Apostle’s meaning was such that we are to suppose “the Spirit” was put by him for the Essence of the Only-begotten!

Then how will you make it fit with what follows? For when Paul says, “Now the Lord is the Spirit,” he goes on to say, “and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” If then “the Lord is the Spirit,” and “Spirit” means “essence,” what are we to understand by “the essence of the essence”? He speaks again of another Spirit of the Lord Who is the Spirit,—that is to say, according to your interpretation, of another *essence*. Therefore in your view the Apostle, when he writes expressly of “the Lord the Spirit,” and of “the Spirit of the Lord,” means nothing else than an essence of an essence. Well, let Eunomius make what he likes of that which is written; what we understand of the matter is as follows. The Scripture, “given by inspiration of God,” as the Apostle calls it, is the Scripture of the Holy Spirit, and its intention is the profit of men. For “every scripture,” he says, “is given by inspiration of God and is profitable”; and the profit is varied and multiform, as the Apostle says—“for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness<sup>819</sup>.” Such a boon as this, however, is not within any man’s reach to lay hold of, but the Divine intention lies hid under the body of the Scripture, as it were under a veil, some legislative enactment or some historical narrative being cast over the truths that are contemplated by the mind. For this reason, then, the Apostle tells us that those who look upon the body of the Scripture have “a veil upon their heart<sup>820</sup>,” and are not able to look upon the glory of the spiritual law, being hindered by the veil that has been cast over the face of the law-giver. Wherefore he says, “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life,” showing that often the obvious interpretation, if it be not taken according to the proper sense, has an effect contrary to that life which is indicated by the Spirit, seeing that this lays down for all men the perfection of virtue in freedom from passion, while the history contained in the writings sometimes embraces the exposition even of facts incongruous, and is understood, so to say, to concur with the passions of our nature, whereto if any one applies himself according to the obvious sense, he will make the Scripture a doctrine of death. Accordingly, he says that over the perceptive powers of the souls of men who handle what is written in too corporeal a manner, the veil is cast; but for those who turn their contemplation to that which is the object of the intelligence, there is revealed, bared, as it were, of a mask, the glory that underlies the letter. And that which is discovered by this more exalted perception he says is the Lord, which is the Spirit. For he says, “when it shall turn to the Lord the veil shall be taken away: now the Lord is the Spirit<sup>821</sup>.” And in so saying he makes a distinction of contrast between the lordship of the spirit and the bondage of the letter; for as that which gives life is opposed to that which kills, so he contrasts “the Lord” with bondage. And that we may not be under any confusion when we are instructed concerning the Holy Spirit (being led by the word “Lord” to the thought of the Only-begotten), for this reason he guards

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819 2 Tim. iii. 16.

820 2 Cor. iii. 15.

821 2 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

the word by repetition, both saying that “the Lord is the Spirit,” and making further mention of “the Spirit of the Lord,” that the supremacy of His Nature may be shown by the honour implied in lordship, while at the same time he may avoid confusing in his argument the individuality of His Person. For he who calls Him both “Lord” and “Spirit of the Lord,” teaches us to conceive of Him as a separate individual besides the Only-begotten; just as elsewhere he speaks of “the Spirit of Christ<sup>822</sup>,” employing fairly and in its mystic sense this very term which is piously employed in the system of doctrine according to the Gospel tradition. Thus we, the “most miserable of all men,” being led onward by the Apostle in the mysteries, pass from the letter that killeth to the Spirit that giveth life, learning from Him Who was in Paradise initiated into the unspeakable mysteries, that all things the Divine Scripture says are utterances of the Holy Spirit. For “well did the Holy Spirit prophesy<sup>823</sup>,” — this he says to the Jews in Rome, introducing the words of Isaiah; and to the Hebrews, alleging the authority of the Holy Spirit in the words, “wherefore as saith the Holy Spirit<sup>824</sup>,” he adduces the words of the Psalm which are spoken at length in the person of God; and from the Lord Himself we learn the same thing,—that David declared the heavenly mysteries not “in” himself (that is, not speaking according to human nature). For how could any one, being but man, know the supercelestial converse of the Father with the Son? But being “in the Spirit” he said that the Lord spoke to the Lord those words which He has uttered. For if, He says, “David *in the Spirit* calls him Lord, how is He then his son<sup>825</sup>?” Thus it is by the power of the Spirit that the holy men who are under Divine influence are inspired, and every Scripture is for this reason said to be “given by inspiration of God,” because it is the teaching of the Divine afflatus. If the bodily veil of the words were removed, that which remains is Lord and life and Spirit, according to the teaching of the great Paul, and according to the words of the Gospel also. For Paul declares that he who turns from the letter to the Spirit no longer apprehends the bondage that slays, but the Lord which is the life-giving Spirit; and the sublime Gospel says, “the words that I speak are spirit and are life<sup>826</sup>,” as being divested of the bodily veil. The idea, however, that “the Spirit” is the essence of the Only-begotten, we shall leave to our dreamers: or rather, we shall make use, *ex abundantia*, of what they say, and arm the truth with the weapons of the adversary. For it is allowable that the Egyptian should be spoiled by the Israelites, and that we should make their wealth an ornament for ourselves. If the essence of the Son is called “Spirit,” and God also is Spirit, (for so the Gospel tells us<sup>827</sup>), clearly the essence of the Father is called “Spirit” also. But if it is their peculiar argument that things which are introduced by different names are different also in nature, the conclusion surely is, that things which are named alike are not alien one from the other in nature either. Since then, according to

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822 Rom. viii. 9.

823 Cf. Acts xxviii. 25.

824 Heb. iii. 7.

825 S. Matt. xxii. 45; Cf. Ps. cx. 1.

826 Cf. S. John vi. 63

827 S. John iv. 24

their account, the essence of the Father and that of the Son are both called “Spirit,” hereby is clearly proved the absence of any difference in essence. For a little further on Eunomius says:—“Of those essences which are divergent the appellations significant of essence are also surely divergent, but where there is one and the same name, that which is declared by the same appellation will surely be one also”:—so that at all points “He that taketh the wise in their own craftiness<sup>828</sup>” has turned the long labours of our author, and the infinite toil spent on what he has elaborated, to the establishment of the doctrine which we maintain. For if God is in the Gospel called “Spirit,” and the essence of the Only-begotten is maintained by Eunomius to be “Spirit,” as there is no apparent difference in the one name as compared with the other, neither, surely, will the things signified by the names be mutually different in nature.

And now that I have exposed this futile and pointless sham-argument, it seems to me that I may well pass by without discussion what he next puts together by way of attack upon our master’s statement. For a sufficient proof of the folly of his remarks is to be found in his actual argument, which of itself proclaims aloud its feebleness. To be entangled in a contest with such things as this is like trampling on the slain. For when he sets forth with much confidence some passage from our master, and treats it with preliminary slander and contempt, and promises that he will show it to be worth nothing at all, he meets with the same fortune as befalls small children, to whom their imperfect and immature intelligence, and the untrained condition of their perceptive faculties, do not give an accurate understanding of what they see. Thus they often imagine that the stars are but a little way above their heads, and pelt them with clods when they appear, in their childish folly; and then, when the clod falls, they clap their hands and laugh and brag to their comrades as if their throw had reached the stars themselves. Such is the man who casts at the truth with his childish missile, who sets forth like the stars those splendid sayings of our master, and then hurls from the ground,—from his downtrodden and grovelling understanding,—his earthy and unstable arguments. And these, when they have gone so high that they have no place to fall from, turn back again of themselves by their own weight<sup>829</sup>. Now the passage of the great Basil is worded as follows<sup>830</sup>:—

“Yet what sane man would agree with the statement that of those things of which the names are different the essences must needs be divergent also? For the appellations of Peter and Paul, and, generally speaking, of men, are different, while the essence of all is one: wherefore, in most respects we are mutually identical, and differ one from another only in those special properties which are observed in individuals: and hence also appellations are not indicative of essence, but of the properties which mark the particular individual. Thus, when we hear of Peter, we do not by the name understand the essence (and by ‘essence’ I here mean the material substratum), but we are impressed with the conception of the properties which we contemplate in him.” These are the great

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828 1 Cor. iii. 19; cf. Job v. 13.

829 Altering Oehler’s punctuation slightly.

830 S. Basil adv. Eunomium II. 4 (p. 240 C.). The quotation as here given is not in exact verbal agreement with the Benedictine text.

man's words. And what skill he who disputes this statement displays against us, we learn,—any one, that is, who has leisure for wasting time on unprofitable matters,—from the actual composition of Eunomius.

From his writings, I say, for I do not like to insert in my own work the nauseous stuff our rhetorician utters, or to display his ignorance and folly to contempt in the midst of my own arguments. He goes on with a sort of eulogy upon the class of significant words which express the subject, and, in his accustomed style, patches and sticks together the cast-off rags of phrases: poor Isocrates is nibbled at once more, and shorn of words and figures to make out the point proposed,—here and there even the Hebrew Philo receives the same treatment, and makes him a contribution of phrases from his own labours,—yet not even thus is this much-stitched and many-coloured web of words finished off, but every assault, every defence of his conceptions, all his artistic preparation, spontaneously collapses, and, as commonly happens with the bubbles when the drops, borne down from above through a body of waters against some obstacle, produce those foamy swellings which, as soon as they gather, immediately dissolve, and leave upon the water no trace of their own formation—such are the air-bubbles of our author's thoughts, vanishing without a touch at the moment they are put forth. For after all these irrefragable statements, and the dreamy philosophizing wherein he asserts that the distinct character of the essence is apprehended by the divergence of names, as some mass of foam borne downstream breaks up when it comes into contact with any more solid body, so his argument, following its own spontaneous course, and coming unexpectedly into collision with the truth, disperses into nothingness its unsubstantial and bubble-like fabric of falsehood. For he speaks in these words:—“Who is so foolish and so far removed from the constitution of men, as, in discoursing of men to speak of one as a man, and, calling another a horse, so to compare them?” I would answer him,—“You are right in calling any one foolish who makes such blunders in the use of names. And I will employ for the support of the truth the testimony you yourself give. For if it is a piece of extreme folly to call one a horse and another a man, supposing both were really men, it is surely a piece of equal stupidity, when the Father is confessed to be God, and the Son is confessed to be God, to call the one ‘created’ and the other ‘uncreated,’ since, as in the other case humanity, so in this case the Godhead does not admit a change of name to that expressive of another kind. For what the irrational is with respect to man, that also the creature is with respect to the Godhead, being equally unable to receive the same name with the nature that is superior to it. And as it is not possible to apply the same definition to the rational animal and the quadruped alike (for each is naturally differentiated by its special property from the other), so neither can you express by the same terms the created and the uncreated essence, seeing that those attributes which are predicated of the latter essence are not discoverable in the former. For as rationality is not discoverable in a horse, nor solidity of hoofs in a man, so neither is Godhead discoverable in the creature, nor the attribute of being created in the Godhead: but if He be God He is certainly not created, and if He be created He is not God; unless<sup>831</sup>, of course, one were to

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831 Altering Oehler's punctuation.

apply by some misuse or customary mode of expression the mere name of Godhead, as some horses have men's names given them by their owners; yet neither is the horse a man, though he be called by a human name, nor is the created being God, even though some claim for him the name of Godhead, and give him the benefit of the empty sound of a dissyllable." Since, then, Eunomius' heretical statement is found spontaneously to fall in with the truth, let him take his own advice and stand by his own words, and by no means retract his own utterances, but consider that the man is really foolish and stupid who names the subject not according as it is, but says "horse" for "man," and "sea" for "sky," and "creature" for "God." And let no one think it unreasonable that the creature should be set in opposition to God, but have regard to the prophets and to the Apostles. For the prophet says in the person of the Father, "My Hand made all these things"<sup>832</sup>, meaning by "Hand," in his dark saying, the power of the Only-begotten. Now the Apostle says that all things are of the Father, and that all things are by the Son<sup>833</sup>, and the prophetic spirit in a way agrees with the Apostolic teaching, which itself also is given through the Spirit. For in the one passage, the prophet, when he says that all things are the work of the Hand of Him Who is over all, sets forth the nature of those things which have come into being in its relation to Him Who made them, while He Who made them is God over all, Who has the Hand, and by It makes all things. And again, in the other passage, the Apostle makes the same division of entities, making all things depend upon their productive cause, yet not reckoning in the number of "all things" that which produces them: so that we are hereby taught the difference of nature between the created and the uncreated, and it is shown that, in its own nature, that which makes is one thing and that which is produced is another. Since, then, all things are of God, and the Son is God, the creation is properly opposed to the Godhead; while, since the Only-begotten is something else than the nature of the universe (seeing that not even those who fight against the truth contradict this), it follows of necessity that the Son also is equally opposed to the creation, unless the words of the saints are untrue which testify that by Him all things were made.



§2. *He then declares that the close relation between names and things is immutable, and thereafter proceeds accordingly, in the most excellent manner, with his discourse concerning "generated" and "ungenerate."*

Now seeing that the Only-begotten is in the Divine Scriptures proclaimed to be God, let Eunomius consider his own argument, and condemn for utter folly the man who parts the Divine into created and uncreated, as he does him who divides "man" into "horse" and "man." For he himself says, a little further on, after his intermediate nonsense, "the close relation of names to things is immutable," where he himself by this statement assents to the fixed character of the true

<sup>832</sup> Is. lxvi. 2. Not verbally from the LXX.

<sup>833</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

connection of appellations with their subject. If, then, the name of Godhead is properly employed in close connection with the Only-begotten God (and Eunomius, though he may desire to be out of harmony with us, will surely concede that the Scripture does not lie, and that the name of the Godhead is not inharmoniously attributed to the Only-begotten), let him persuade himself by his own reasoning that if “the close relation of names to things is immutable,” and the Lord is called by the name of “God,” he cannot apprehend any difference in respect of the conception of Godhead between the Father and the Son, seeing that this name is common to both,—or rather not this name only, but there is a long list of names in which the Son shares, without divergence of meaning, the appellations of the Father,—“good,” “incorruptible,” “just,” “judge,” “long-suffering,” “merciful,” “eternal,” “everlasting,” all that indicate the expression of majesty of nature and power,—without any reservation being made in His case in any of the names in regard of the exalted nature of the conception. But Eunomius passes by, as it were with closed eye, the number, great as it is, of the Divine appellations, and looks only to one point, his “generate and ungenerate,”—trusting to a slight and weak cord his doctrine, tossed and driven as it is by the blasts of error.

He asserts that “no man who has any regard for the truth either calls any generated thing ‘ungenerate,’ or calls God Who is over all ‘Son’ or ‘generate.’” This statement needs no further arguments on our part for its refutation. For he does not shelter his craft with any veils, as his wont is, but treats the inversion of his absurd statement as equivalent<sup>834</sup>, while he says that neither is any generated thing spoken of as “ungenerate,” nor is God Who is over all called “Son” or “generate,” without making any special distinction for the Only-begotten Godhead of the Son as compared with the rest of the “generated,” but makes his opposition of “all things that have come into being” to “God” without discrimination, not excepting the Son from “all things.” And in the inversion of his absurdities he clearly separates, forsooth, the Son from the Divine Nature, when he says that neither is any generated thing spoken of as “ungenerate,” nor is God called “Son” or “generate,” and manifestly reveals by this contradistinction the horrid character of his blasphemy. For when he has distinguished the “things that have come into being” from the “ungenerate,” he goes on to say, in that antistrophal induction of his, that it is impossible to call (not the “unbegotten,” but) “God,” “Son” or “generate,” trying by these words to show that which is not ungenerate is not God, and that the Only-begotten God is, by the fact of being begotten, as far removed from being God as the ungenerate is from being generated in fact or in name. For it is not in ignorance of the consequence of his argument that he makes an inversion of the terms employed thus inharmonious and incongruous: it is in his assault on the doctrine of orthodoxy that he opposes “the Godhead” to “the generate”—and this is the point he tries to establish by his words, that that which is not ungenerate is not God. What was the true sequence of his argument? that having said “no generated

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<sup>834</sup> That is, in making a rhetorical inversion of a proposition in itself objectionable, he so re-states it as to make it really a different proposition while treating it as equivalent. The original proposition is objectionable as classing the Son with all generated existences: the inversion of it, because the term “God” is substituted illicitly for the term “ungenerate.”



thing is ungenerate,” he should proceed with the inference, “nor, if anything is naturally ungenerate, can it be generate.” Such a statement at once contains truth and avoids blasphemy. But now by his premise that no generated thing is ungenerate, and his inference that God is not generated, he clearly shuts out the Only-begotten God from being God, laying down that because He is not ungenerate, neither is He God. Do we then need any further proofs to expose this monstrous blasphemy? Is not this enough by itself to serve for a record against the adversary of Christ, who by the arguments cited maintains that the Word, Who in the beginning was God, is not God? What need is there to engage further with such men as this? For we do not entangle ourselves in controversy with those who busy themselves with idols and with the blood that is shed upon their altars, not that we acquiesce in the destruction of those who are besotted about idols, but because their disease is too strong for our treatment. Thus, just as the fact itself declares idolatry, and the evil that men do boldly and arrogantly anticipates the reproach of those who accuse it, so here too I think that the advocates of orthodoxy should keep silence towards one who openly proclaims his impiety to his own discredit, just as medicine also stands powerless in the case of a cancerous complaint, because the disease is too strong for the art to deal with.



§3. *Thereafter he discusses the divergence of names and of things, speaking, of that which is ungenerate as without a cause, and of that which is non-existent, as the Scindapsus, Minotaur, Blityri, Cyclops, Scylla, which never were generated at all, and shows that things which are essentially different, are mutually destructive, as fire of water, and the rest in their several relations. But in the case of the Father and the Son, as the essence is common, and the properties reciprocally interchangeable, no injury results to the Nature.*

Since, however, after the passage cited above, he professes that he will allege something stronger still, let us examine this also, as well as the passage cited, lest we should seem to be withdrawing our opposition in face of an overwhelming force. “If, however,” he says, “I am to abandon all these positions, and fall back upon my stronger argument, I would say this, that even if all the terms that he advances by way of refutation were established, our statement will none the less be manifestly shown to be true. If, as will be admitted, the divergence of the names which are significant of properties marks the divergence of the things, it is surely necessary to allow that with the divergence of the names significant of essence is also marked the divergence of the essences. And this would be found to hold good in all cases, I mean in the case of essences, energies, colours, figures, and other qualities. For we denote by divergent appellations the different essences, fire and water, air and earth, cold and heat, white and black, triangle and circle. Why need we mention the intelligible essences, in enumerating which the Apostle marks, by difference of names, the divergence of essence?”

Who would not be dismayed at this irresistible power of attack? The argument transcends the promise, the experience is more terrible than the threat. “I will come,” he says, “to my stronger

argument.” What is it? That as the differences of properties are recognized by those names which signify the special attributes, we must of course, he says, allow that differences of essence are also expressed by divergence of names. What then are these appellations of essences by which we learn the divergence of Nature between the Father and the son? He talks of fire and water, air and earth, cold and heat, white and black, triangle and circle. His illustrations have won him the day: his argument carries all before it: I cannot contradict the statement that those names which are entirely incommunicable indicate difference of natures. But our man of keen and quick-sighted intellect has just missed seeing these points:—that in this case the Father is God and the Son is God; that “just,” and “incorruptible,” and all those names which belong to the Divine Nature, are used equally of the Father and of the Son; and thus, if the divergent character of appellations indicates difference of natures, the community of names will surely show the common character of the essence. And if we must agree that the Divine essence is to be expressed by names<sup>835</sup>, it would behove us to apply to that Nature these lofty and Divine names rather than the terminology of “generate” and “ungenerate,” because “good” and “incorruptible,” “just” and “wise,” and all such terms as these are strictly applicable only to that Nature which passes all understanding, whereas “generated” exhibits community of name with even the inferior forms of the lower creation. For we call a dog, and a frog, and all things that come into the world by way of generation, “generated.” And moreover, the term “ungenerate” is not only employed of that which exists without a cause, but has also a proper application to that which is nonexistent. The Scindapsus<sup>836</sup> is called ungenerate, the Blityri<sup>837</sup> is ungenerate, the Minotaur is ungenerate, the Cyclops, Scylla, the Chimæra are ungenerate, not in the sense of existing without generation, but in the sense of never having come into being at all. If, then, the names more peculiarly Divine are common to the Son with the Father, and if it is the others, those which are equivocally employed either of the non-existent or of the lower animals—if it is these, I say, which are divergent, let his “generate and ungenerate” be so: Eunomius’ powerful argument against us itself upholds the cause of truth in testifying that there is no divergence in respect of nature, because no divergence can be perceived in the names<sup>838</sup>. But if he asserts the difference of essence to exist between the “generate” and the “ungenerate,” as it does between fire and water, and is of opinion that the names, like those which he has mentioned in his examples, are in the same mutual relation as “fire” and “water,” the horrid character of his blasphemy will here again be brought to light, even if we hold our peace. For fire and water have a nature mutually destructive, and each is destroyed, if it comes to be in the other, by the prevalence of the more powerful element. If, then, he lays down the doctrine that the Nature of the Ungenerate differs thus from that of the Only-begotten, it is surely clear that he logically makes this destructive opposition to be involved in the divergence of their essences, so that their nature will be, by this reasoning,

835 On this point, besides what follows here, see the treatise against Tritheism addressed to Ablabius.

836 These are names applied to denote existences purely imaginary; the other names belong to classical mythology.

837 These are names applied to denote existences purely imaginary; the other names belong to classical mythology.

838 That is, in the names more peculiarly appropriate to the Divine Nature.

incompatible and incommunicable, and the one would be consumed by the other, if both should be found to be mutually inclusive or co-existent.

How then is the Son “in the Father” without being destroyed, and how does the Father, coming to be “in the Son,” remain continually unconsumed, if, as Eunomius says, the special attribute of fire, as compared with water, is maintained in the relation of the Generate to the Ungenerate? Nor does their definition regard communion as existing between earth and air, for the former is stable, solid, resistant, of downward tendency and heavy, while air has a nature made up of the contrary attributes. So white and black are found in opposition among colours, and men are agreed that the circle is not the same with the triangle, for each, according to the definition of its figure, is precisely that which the other is not. But I am unable to discover where he sees the opposition in the case of God the Father and God the Only-begotten Son. One goodness, wisdom, justice, providence, power, incorruptibility,—all other attributes of exalted significance are similarly predicated of each, and the one has in a certain sense His strength in the other; for on the one hand the Father makes all things through the Son, and on the other hand the Only-begotten works all in Himself, being the Power of the Father. Of what avail, then, are fire and water to show essential diversity in the Father and the Son? He calls us, moreover, “rash” for instancing the unity of nature and difference of persons of Peter and Paul, and says we are guilty of gross recklessness, if we apply our argument to the contemplation of the objects of pure reason by the aid of material examples. Fitly, fitly indeed, does the corrector of our errors reprove us for rashness in interpreting the Divine Nature by material illustrations! Why then, deliberate and circumspect sir, do you talk about the elements? Is earth immaterial, fire an object of pure reason, water incorporeal, air beyond the perception of the senses? Is your mind so well directed to its aim, are you so keen-sighted in all directions in your promulgation of this argument, that your adversaries cannot lay hold of, that you do not see in yourself the faults you blame in those you are accusing? Or are we to make concessions to you when you are establishing the diversity of essence by material aid, and to be ourselves rejected when we point out the kindred character of the Nature by means of examples within our compass?

§4. *He says that all things that are in creation have been named by man, if, as is the case, they are called differently by every nation, as also the appellation of “Ungenerate” is conferred by us: but that the proper appellation of the Divine essence itself which expresses the Divine Nature, either does not exist at all, or is unknown to us.*

But Peter and Paul, he says, were named by men, and hence it comes that it is possible in their case to change the appellations. Why, what existing thing has *not* been named by men? I call you to testify on behalf of my argument. For if you make change of names a sign of things having been named by men, you will thereby surely allow that every name has been imposed upon things by us, since the same appellations of objects have not obtained universally. For as in the case of Paul who was once Saul, and of Peter who was formerly Simon, so earth and sky and air and sea and

all the parts of the creation have not been named alike by all, but are named in one way by the Hebrews, and in another way by us, and are denoted by every nation by different names. If then Eunomius' argument is valid when he maintains that it was for this reason, to wit, that their names had been imposed by men, that Peter and Paul were named afresh, our teaching will surely be valid also, starting as it does from like premises, which says that all things are named by us, on the ground that their appellations vary according to the distinctions of nations. Now if all things are so, surely the Generate and the Ungenerate are not exceptions, for even they are among the things that change their name. For when we gather, as it were, into the form of a name the conception of any subject that arises in us, we declare our concept by words that vary at different times, not *making*, but *signifying*, the thing by the name we give it. For the things remain in themselves as they naturally are, while the mind, touching on existing things, reveals its thought by such words as are available. And just as the essence of Peter was not changed with the change of his name, so neither is any other of the things we contemplate changed in the process of mutation of names. And for this reason we say that the term "Ungenerate" was applied by us to the true and first Father Who is the Cause of all, and that no harm would result as regards the signifying of the Subject, if we were to acknowledge the same concept under another name. For it is allowable instead of speaking of Him as "Ungenerate," to call Him the "First Cause" or "Father of the Only-begotten," or to speak of Him as "existing without cause," and many such appellations which lead to the same thought; so that Eunomius confirms our doctrines by the very arguments in which he makes complaint against us, because we know no name significant of the Divine Nature. We are taught the fact of Its existence, while we assert that an appellation of such force as to include the unspeakable and infinite Nature, either does not exist at all, or at any rate is unknown to us. Let him then leave his accustomed language of fable, and show us the names which signify the essences, and then proceed further to divide the subject by the divergence of their names. But so long as the saying of the Scripture is true that Abraham and Moses were not capable of the knowledge of the Name, and that "no man hath seen God at any time<sup>839</sup>," and that "no man hath seen Him, nor can see<sup>840</sup>," and that the light around Him is unapproachable<sup>841</sup>, and "there is no end of His greatness<sup>842</sup>";—so long as we say and believe these things, how like is an argument that promises any comprehension and expression of the infinite Nature, by means of the significance of names, to one who thinks that he can enclose the whole sea in his own hand! for as the hollow of one's hand is to the whole deep, so is all the power of language in comparison with that Nature which is unspeakable and incomprehensible.




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839 S. John i. 18

840 1 Tim. vi. 16.

841 1 Tim. vi. 16.

842 Ps. cxlv. 3.

§5. *After much discourse concerning the actually existent, and ungenerate and good, and upon the consubstantiality of the heavenly powers, showing the uncharted character of their essence, yet the difference of their ranks, he ends the book.*

Now in saying these things we do not intend to deny that the Father exists without generation, and we have no intention of refusing to agree to the statement that the Only-begotten God is generated;—on the contrary the latter has been generated, the former has not been generated. But what He *is*, in His own Nature, Who exists apart from generation, and what He *is*, Who is believed to have been generated, we do not learn from the signification of “having been generated,” and “not having been generated.” For when we say “this person was generated” (or “was not generated”), we are impressed with a two-fold thought, having our eyes turned to the subject by the demonstrative part of the phrase, and learning that which is contemplated in the subject by the words “was generated” or “was not generated,”—as it is one thing to think of that which is, and another to think of what we contemplate in that which is. But, moreover, the word “*is*” is surely understood with every name that is used concerning the Divine Nature,—as “just,” “incorruptible,” “immortal,” and “ungenerate,” and whatever else is said of Him; even if this word does not happen to occur in the phrase, yet the thought both of the speaker and the hearer surely makes the name attach to “*is*,” so that if this word were not added, the appellation would be uttered in vain. For instance (for it is better to present an argument by way of illustration), when David says, “God, a righteous judge, strong and patient<sup>843</sup>,” if “*is*” were not understood with each of the epithets included in the phrase, the enumerations of the appellations will seem purposeless and unreal, not having any subject to rest upon; but when “*is*” is understood with each of the names, what is said will clearly be of force, being contemplated in reference to that which is. As, then, when we say “He is a judge,” we conceive concerning Him some operation of judgment, and by the “*is*” carry our minds to the subject, and are hereby clearly taught not to suppose that the account of His being is the same with the action, so also as a result of saying, “He is generated (or ungenerate),” we divide our thought into a double conception, by “*is*” understanding the subject, and by “generated,” or “ungenerate,” apprehending that which belongs to the subject. As, then, when we are taught by David that God is “a judge,” or “patient,” we do not learn the Divine essence, but one of the attributes which are contemplated in it, so in this case too when we hear of His being not generated, we do not by this negative predication understand the *subject*, but are guided as to what we must not think concerning the subject, while what He essentially is remains as much as ever unexplained. So too, when Holy Scripture predicates the other Divine names of Him Who is, and delivers to Moses the Being without a name, it is for him who discloses the Nature of that Being, not to rehearse the attributes of the Being, but by his words to make manifest to us its actual Nature. For every name which you may use is an attribute of the Being, but is not the Being,—“good,” “ungenerate,” “incorruptible,”—but to each of these “*is*” does not fail to be supplied. Any one, then, who undertakes to give the account of this good

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843 Cf. Ps. vii. 8



Being, of this ungenerate Being, as He is, would speak in vain, if he rehearsed the attributes contemplated in Him, and were silent as to that essence which he undertakes by his words to explain. To be *without generation* is one of the attributes contemplated in the Being, but the definition of “Being” is one thing, and that of “being in some particular way” is another; and this<sup>844</sup> has so far remained untold and unexplained by the passages cited. Let him then first disclose to us the names of the essence, and then divide the Nature by the divergence of the appellations;—so long as what we require remains unexplained, it is in vain that he employs his scientific skill upon names, seeing that the names<sup>845</sup> have no separate existence.

Such then is Eunomius’ stronger handle against the truth, while we pass by in silence many views which are to be found in this part of his composition; for it seems to me right that those who run in this armed race<sup>846</sup> against the enemies of the truth should arm themselves against those who are fairly fenced about with the plausibility of falsehood, and not defile their argument with such conceptions as are already dead and of offensive odour. His supposition that whatever things are united in the idea of their essence<sup>847</sup> must needs exist corporeally and be joined to corruption (for this he says in this part of his work), I shall willingly pass by like some cadaverous odour, since I think every reasonable man will perceive how dead and corrupt such an argument is. For who knows not that the multitude of human souls is countless, yet one essence underlies them all, and the consubstantial substratum in them is alien from bodily corruption? so that even children can plainly see the argument that bodies are corrupted and dissolved, not because they have the same essence one with another, but because of their possessing a compound nature. The idea of the compound nature is one, that of the common nature of their essence is another, so that it is true to say, “corruptible bodies are of one essence,” but the converse statement is not true at all, if it be anything like, “this consubstantial nature is also surely corruptible,” as is shown in the case of the souls which have one essence, while yet corruption does not attach to them in virtue of the community of essence. And the account given of the souls might properly be applied to every intellectual existence which we contemplate in creation. For the words brought together by Paul do not signify, as Eunomius will have them do, some mutually divergent natures of the supra-mundane powers; on the contrary, the sense of the names clearly indicates that he is mentioning in his argument, not diversities of *natures*, but the varied peculiarities of the *operations* of the

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844 What “this” means is not clear: it may be “the Being,” but most probably is the distinction which S. Gregory is pointing out between the Being and Its attributes, which he considers has not been sufficiently recognized.

845 Reading τῶν ὀνομάτων οὐκ ὄντων with the Paris editions. Oehler reads νοημάτων, but does not give any authority for the change.

846 The metaphor seems slightly confused, being partly taken from a tournament, or gladiatorial contest, partly from a race in armour.

847 The word οὐσία seems to have had in Eunomius’ mind something of the same idea of *corporeal* existence attaching to it which has been made to attach to the Latin “substantia,” and to the English “substance.”

heavenly host: for there are, he says, “principalities,” and “thrones,” and “powers,” and “might,” and “dominions”<sup>848</sup>. Now these names are such as to make it at once clear to every one that their significance is arranged in regard to some operation. For to rule, and to exercise power and dominion, and to be the throne of some one,—all these conceptions would not be held by any one versed in argument to apply to diversities of *essence*, since it is clearly *operation* that is signified by every one of the names: so that any one who says that diversities of *nature* are signified by the names rehearsed by Paul deceives himself, “understanding,” as the Apostle says, “neither what he says, nor whereof he affirms”<sup>849</sup>, since the sense of the names clearly shows that the Apostle recognizes in the intelligible powers distinctions of certain ranks, but does not by these names indicate varieties of essences.



## Book VIII.

§1. *The eighth book very notably overthrows the blasphemy of the heretics who say that the Only-begotten came from nothing, and that there was a time when He was not, and shows the Son to be no new being, but from everlasting, from His having said to Moses, “I am He that is,” and to Manoah, “Why askest thou My name? It also is wonderful”;—moreover David also says to God, “Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail;” and furthermore Isaiah says, “I am God, the first, and hereafter am I:” and the Evangelist, “He was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God:”—and that He has neither beginning nor end:—and he proves that those who say that He is new and comes from nothing are idolaters. And herein he very finely interprets “the brightness of the glory, and the express image of the Person.”*

THESE, then, are the strong points of Eunomius’ case; and I think that when those which promised to be powerful are proved by argument to be so rotten and unsubstantial, I may well keep silence concerning the rest, since the others are practically refuted, concurrently with the refutation of the stronger ones; just as it happens in warlike operations that when a force more powerful than the rest has been beaten, the remainder of the army are no longer of any account in the eyes of those by whom the strong portion of it has been overcome. But the fact that the chief part of his blasphemy lies in the later part of his discourse forbids me to be silent. For the transition of the Only-begotten from nothing into being, that horrid and godless doctrine of Eunomius, which is more to be shunned than all impiety, is next maintained in the order of his argument. And since every one who has been bewitched by this deceit has the phrase, “If He was, He has not been begotten, and if He has been

<sup>848</sup> Cf. Col. i. 16, and Eph. i. 21.

<sup>849</sup> I Tim. i. 7.

begotten, He was not,” ready upon his tongue for the maintenance of the doctrine that He Who made of nothing us and all the creation is Himself from nothing, and since the deceit obtains much support thereby, as men of feebler mind are pressed by this superficial bit of plausibility, and led to acquiesce in the blasphemy, we must needs not pass by this doctrinal “root of bitterness,” lest, as the Apostle says, it “spring up and trouble us<sup>850</sup>.” Now I say that we must first of all consider the actual argument itself, apart from our contest with our opponents, and thus afterwards proceed to the examination and refutation of what they have set forth.

One mark of the true Godhead is indicated by the words of Holy Scripture, which Moses learnt by the voice from heaven, when He heard Him Who said, “I am He that is<sup>851</sup>.” We think it right, then, to believe that to be alone truly Divine which is represented as eternal and infinite in respect of being; and all that is contemplated therein is always the same, neither growing nor being consumed; so that if one should say of God, that formerly He was, but now is not, or that He now is, but formerly was not, we should consider each of the sayings alike to be godless: for by both alike the idea of eternity is mutilated, being cut short on one side or the other by non-existence, whether one contemplates “nothing” as preceding “being<sup>852</sup>,” or declares that “being” ends in “nothing”; and the frequent repetition of “first of all” or “last of all” concerning God’s non-existence does not make amends for the impious conception touching the Divinity. For this reason we declare the maintenance of their doctrine as to the non-existence at some time of Him Who truly is, to be a denial and rejection of His true Godhead; and this on the ground that, on the one hand, He Who showed Himself to Moses by the light speaks of Himself as *being*, when He says, “I am He that is<sup>853</sup>,” while on the other, Isaiah (being made, so to say, the instrument of Him Who spoke in him) says in the person of Him that is, “I am the first, and hereafter am I<sup>854</sup>,” so that hereby, whichever way we consider it, we conceive eternity in God. And so, too, the word that was spoken to Manoah shows the fact that the Divinity is not comprehensible by the significance of His name, because, when Manoah asks to know His name, that, when the promise has come actually to pass, he may by name glorify his benefactor, He says to him, “Why askest thou this? It also is wonderful<sup>855</sup>”; so that by this we learn that there is one name significant of the Divine Nature—the wonder, namely, that arises unspeakably in our hearts concerning It. So, too, great David, in his discourses with himself, proclaims the same truth, in the sense that all the creation was brought into being by God, while He alone exists always in the same manner, and abides for ever, where he says, “But Thou

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850 Cf. Heb. xii. 15

851 Exod. iii. 4.

852 Reading προθεωροίη for προσθεωροίη

853 Exod. iii. 4.

854 See note 4 on Book V. §1, where these words are also treated of.

855 Cf. Judges xiii. 18 (LXX.).



art the same, and Thy years shall not fail<sup>856</sup>.” When we hear these sayings, and others like them, from men inspired by God, let us leave all that is not from eternity to the worship of idolaters, as a new thing alien from the true Godhead. For that which now is, and formerly was not, is clearly new and not eternal, and to have regard to any new object of worship is called by Moses the service of demons, when he says, “They sacrificed to devils and not to God, to gods whom their fathers knew not; new gods were they that came newly up<sup>857</sup>.” If then everything that is new in worship is a service of demons, and is alien from the true Godhead, and if what is now, but was not always, is new and not eternal, we who have regard to that which *is*, necessarily reckon those who contemplate non-existence as attaching to Him Who is, and who say that “He once was not,” among the worshippers of idols. For we may also see that the great John, when declaring in his own preaching the Only-begotten God, guards his own statement in every way, so that the conception of non-existence shall find no access to Him Who is. For he says<sup>858</sup> that He “was in the beginning,” and “was with God,” and “was God,” and was light, and life, and truth, and all good things at all times, and never at any time failed to be anything that is excellent, Who is the fulness of all good, and is in the bosom of the Father. If then Moses lays down as a law for us some such mark of true Godhead as this, that we know nothing else of God but this one thing, that He *is* (for to this point the words, “I am He that is<sup>859</sup>”); while Isaiah in his preaching declares aloud the absolute infinity of Him Who is, defining the existence of God as having no regard to beginning or to end (for He Who says “I am the first, and hereafter am I,” places no limit to His eternity in either direction, so that neither, if we look to the beginning, do we find any point marked *since* which He is, and beyond which He was not, nor, if we turn our thought to the future, can we cut short by any boundary the eternal progress of Him Who is),—and if the prophet David forbids us to worship any new and strange God<sup>860</sup> (both of which are involved in the heretical doctrine; “newness” is clearly indicated in that which is not eternal, and “strangeness” is alienation from the Nature of the very God),—if, I say, these things are so, we declare all the sophistical fabrication about the non-existence at some time of Him Who truly is, to be nothing else than a departure from Christianity, and a turning to idolatry. For when the Evangelist, in his discourse concerning the Nature of God, separates at all points non-existence from Him Who is, and, by his constant repetition of the word “was,” carefully destroys the suspicion of non-existence, and calls Him the Only-begotten God, the Word of God, the Son of God, equal with God, and all such names, we have this judgment fixed and settled in us, that if the Only-begotten Son is God, we must believe that He Who is believed to be God is eternal. And indeed He is verily God, and assuredly is eternal, and is never at any time found to be non-existent. For God, as we have often said, if He now is, also assuredly always was, and if He

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856 Ps. cii. 27.

857 Cf. Deut. xxxii. 17 (LXX.). The quotation is not exact.

858 Cf. S. John i

859 Exod. iii. 4.

860 Cf. Ps. lxxxi. 10.

once was not, neither does He now exist at all. But since even the enemies of the truth confess that the Son is and continually abides the Only-begotten God, we say this, that, being in the Father, He is not in Him in one respect only, but He is in Him altogether, in respect of all that the Father is conceived to be. As, then, being in the incorruptibility of the Father, He is incorruptible, good in His goodness, powerful in His might, and, as being in each of these attributes of special excellence which are conceived of the Father, He is that particular thing, so, also, being in His eternity, He is assuredly eternal. Now the eternity of the Father is marked by His never having taken His being from nonexistence, and never terminating His being in non-existence. He, therefore, Who hath all things that are the Father's<sup>861</sup>, and is contemplated in all the glory of the Father, even as, being in the endlessness of the Father, He has no end, so, being in the unoriginateness of the Father, has, as the Apostle says, "no beginning of days<sup>862</sup>," but at once is "of the Father," and is regarded in the eternity of the Father: and in this respect, more especially, is seen the complete absence of divergence in the Likeness, as compared with Him Whose Likeness He is. And herein is His saying found true which tells us, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father<sup>863</sup>." Moreover, it is in this way that those words of the Apostle, that the Son is "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person<sup>864</sup>," are best understood to have an excellent and close application. For the Apostle conveys to those hearers who are unable, by the contemplation of purely intellectual objects, to elevate their thought to the height of the knowledge of God, a sort of notion of the truth, by means of things apparent to sense. For as the body of the sun is expressly imaged by the whole disc that surrounds it, and he who looks on the sun argues, by means of what he sees, the existence of the whole solid substratum, so, he says, the majesty of the Father is expressly imaged in the greatness of the power of the Son, that the one may be believed to be as great as the other is known to be: and again, as the radiance of light sheds its brilliancy from the whole of the sun's disc (for in the disc one part is not radiant, and the rest dim), so all that glory which the Father is, sheds its brilliancy from its whole extent by means of the brightness that comes from it, that is, by the true Light; and as the ray is of the sun (for there would be no ray if the sun were not), yet the sun is never conceived as existing by itself without the ray of brightness that is shed from it, so the Apostle delivering to us the continuity and eternity of that existence which the Only-begotten has of the Father, calls the Son "the brightness of His glory."



§2. *He then discusses the "willing" of the Father concerning the generation of the Son, and shows that the object of that good will is from eternity, which is the Son, existing in the Father, and*

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861 S. John xvi. 15

862 Heb. vii. 3.

863 S. John xiv. 8

864 Heb. i. 3.

*being closely related to the process of willing, as the ray to the flame, or the act of seeing to the eye.*

After these distinctions on our part no one can well be longer in doubt how the Only-begotten at once is believed to be “of the Father,” and *is* eternally, even if the one phrase does not at first sight seem to agree with the other,—that which declares Him to be “of the Father” with that which asserts His eternity. But if we are to confirm our statement by further arguments, it may be possible to apprehend the doctrine on this point by the aid of things cognizable by our senses. And let no one deride our statement, if it cannot find among existing things a likeness of the object of our enquiry such as may be in all respects sufficient for the presentation of the matter in hand by way of analogy and resemblance. For we should like to persuade those who say that the Father first willed and so proceeded to become a Father, and on this ground assert posteriority in existence as regards the Word, by whatever illustrations may make it possible, to turn to the orthodox view. Neither does this immediate conjunction exclude the “willing” of the Father, in the sense that He had a Son without choice, by some necessity of His Nature, nor does the “willing” separate the Son from the Father, coming in between them as a kind of interval: so that we neither reject from our doctrine the “willing” of the Begetter directed to the Son, as being, so to say, forced out by the conjunction of the Son’s oneness with the Father, nor do we by any means break that inseparable connection, when “willing” is regarded as involved in the generation. For to our heavy and inert nature it properly belongs that the wish and the possession of a thing are not often present with us at the same moment; but now we wish for something we have not, and at another time we obtain what we do not wish to obtain. But, in the case of the simple and all-powerful Nature, all things are conceived together and at once, the willing of good as well as the possession of what He wills. For the good and the eternal will is contemplated as operating, indwelling, and co-existing in the eternal Nature, not arising in it from any separate principle, nor capable of being conceived apart from the object of will: for it is not possible that with God either the good will should not be, or the object of will should not accompany the act of will, since no cause can either bring it about that that which befits the Father should not always be, or be any hindrance to the possession of the object of will. Since, then, the Only-begotten God is by nature the good (or rather beyond all good), and since the good does not fail to be the object of the Father’s will, it is hereby clearly shown, both that the conjunction of the Son with the Father is without any intermediary, and also that the will, which is always present in the good Nature, is not forced out nor excluded by reason of this inseparable conjunction. And if any one is listening to my argument in no scoffing spirit, I should like to add to what I have already said something of the following kind.

Just as, if one were to grant (I speak, of course, hypothetically) the power of deliberate choice to belong to flame, it would be clear that the flame will at once upon its existence *will* that its radiance should shine forth from itself, and when it wills it will not be impotent (since, on the appearance of the flame, its natural power at once fulfils its will in the matter of the radiance), so that undoubtedly, if it be granted that the flame is moved by deliberate choice, we conceive the



concurrence of all these things simultaneously—of the kindling of the fire, of its act of will concerning the radiance, and of the radiance itself; so that the movement by way of choice is no hindrance to the dignity of the existence of the radiance,—even so, according to the illustration we have spoken of, you will not, by confessing the good act of will as existing in the Father, separate by that act of will the Son from the Father. For it is not reasonable to suppose that the act of willing that He should be, could be a hindrance to His immediately coming into being; but just as, in the eye, seeing and the will to see are, one an operation of nature, the other an impulse of choice, yet no delay is caused to the act of sight by the movement of choice in that particular direction<sup>865</sup>,—(for each of these is regarded separately and by itself, not as being at all a hindrance to the existence of the other, but as both being somehow interexistent, the natural operation concurring with the choice, and the choice in turn not failing to be accompanied by the natural motion)—as, I say, perception naturally belongs to the eye, and the willing to see produces no delay in respect to actual sight, but one wills that it should have vision, and immediately what he wills *is*, so also in the case of that Nature which is unspeakable and above all thought, our apprehension of all comes together simultaneously—of the eternal existence of the Father, and of an act of will concerning the Son, and of the Son Himself, Who is, as John says, “in the beginning,” and is not conceived as coming after the beginning. Now the beginning of all is the Father; but in this beginning the Son also is declared to be, being in His Nature that very thing which the Beginning is. For the Beginning is God, and the Word Who “was in the Beginning” is God. As then the phrase “the beginning” points to eternity, John well conjoins “the Word in the Beginning,” saying that the Word was in It; asserting, I suppose, this fact to the end that the first idea present to the mind of his hearer may not be “the Beginning” alone by itself, but that, before this has been impressed upon him, there should also be presented to his mind, together with the Beginning the Word Who was in It, entering with It into the hearer’s understanding, and being present to his hearing at the same time with the Beginning.

§3. *Then, thus passing over what relates to the essence of the Son as having been already discussed, he treats of the sense involved in “generation,” saying that there are diverse generations, those effected by matter and art, and of buildings,—and that by succession of animals,—and those by efflux, as by the sun and its beam. The lamp and its radiance, scents and ointments and the quality diffused by them,—and the word produced by the mind; and cleverly discusses generation<sup>866</sup> from rotten wood; and from the condensation of fire, and countless other causes.*

<sup>865</sup> Oehler’s punctuation here seems faulty.

<sup>866</sup> To make the grammar of the sentence exact τὴν should here be substituted for τὸν, the object of the verb being apparently γέννησιν not λόγον. The whole section of the analysis is rather confused, and does not clearly reproduce S. Gregory’s division of the subject. A large part of this section, and of that which follows it, is repeated with very slight alteration from Bk. II. §9

Now that we have thus thoroughly scrutinized our doctrine, it may perhaps be time to set forth and to consider the opposing statement, examining it side by side in comparison with our own opinion. He states it thus: —“For while there are,” he says, “two statements which we have made, the one, that the essence of the Only-begotten was not before its own generation, the other that, being generated, it was before all things, he<sup>867</sup> does not prove either of these statements to be untrue; for he did not venture to say that He was before that supreme<sup>868</sup> generation and formation, seeing that he is opposed at once by the Nature of the Father, and the judgment of sober-minded men. For what sober man could admit the Son to be and to be begotten before that supreme generation? and He Who is without generation needs not generation in order to His being what He is.” Well, whether he speaks truly, when he says that our master<sup>869</sup> opposed his antitheses to no purpose, all may surely be aware who have been conversant with that writer’s works. But for my own part (for I think that the refutation of his calumny on this matter is a small step towards the exposure of his malice), I will leave the task of showing that this point was not passed over by our master without discussion, and turn my argument to the discussion, as far as in me lies, of the points now advanced. He says that he has in his own discourse spoken of two matters,—one, that the essence of the Only-begotten was not before Its own generation, the other, that, being generated, It was before all things. Now I think that by what we have already said, the fact has been sufficiently shown that no new essence was begotten by the Father besides that which is contemplated in the Father Himself, and that there is no need for us to be entangled in a contest with blasphemy of this kind, as if the argument were now propounded to us for the first time; and further, that the real force of our argument must be directed to one point, I mean to his horrible and blasphemous utterance, which clearly states concerning God the Word that “He was not.” Moreover, as our argument in the foregoing discourse has already to some extent dealt with the question of his blasphemy, it would perhaps be superfluous again to establish by like considerations what we have proved already. For it was to this end that we made those former statements, that by the earlier impression upon our hearers of an orthodox mode of thought, the blasphemy of our adversaries, who assert that non-existence preceded existence in the case of the Only-begotten God, might be more manifest.

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It seems at this point well to investigate in our argument, by a more careful examination, the actual significance of “generation.” That this name presents to us the fact of being as the result of some cause is clear to every one, and about this point there is, I suppose, no need to dispute. But since the account to be given of things which exist as the result of cause is various, I think it proper that this matter should be cleared up in our discourse by some sort of scientific division. Of things,

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(see pp. 113–115 above). The resemblances are much closer in the Greek text than they appear in the present translation, in which different hands have been at work in the two books.

867 *i.e.*S. Basil.

868 ἄνωτάτω may be “supreme,” in the sense of “ultimate” or “most remote,” or in the more ordinary sense of “most exalted.”

869 *i.e.*S. Basil.

then, which are the result of something, we understand the varieties to be as follows. Some are the result of matter and art, as the structure of buildings and of other works, coming into being by means of their respective matter, and these are directed by some art that accomplishes the thing proposed, with a view to the proper aim of the results produced. Others are the results of matter and nature; for the generations of animals are the building<sup>870</sup> of nature, who carries on her own operation by means of their material bodily subsistence. Others are the result of material efflux, in which cases the antecedent remains in its natural condition, while that which flows from it is conceived separately, as in the case of the sun and its beam, or the lamp and its brightness, or of scents and ointments and the quality they emit; for these, while they remain in themselves without diminution, have at the same time, each concurrently with itself, that natural property which they emit: as the sun its beam, the lamp its brightness, the scents the perfume produced by them in the air. There is also another species of “generation” besides these, in which the cause is immaterial and incorporeal, but the generation is an object of sense and takes place by corporeal means;—I speak of the word which is begotten by the mind: for the mind, being itself incorporeal, brings forth the word by means of the organs of sense. All these varieties of generation we mentally include, as it were, in one general view. For all the wonders that are wrought by nature, which changes the bodies of some animals to something of a different kind, or produces some animals from a change in liquids, or a corruption of seed, or the rotting of wood, or out of the condensed mass of fire transforms the cold vapour that issues from the firebrands, shut off in the heart of the fire, to produce an animal which they call the salamander,—these, even if they seem to be outside the limits we have laid down, are none the less included among the cases we have mentioned. For it is by means of bodies that nature fashions these varied forms of animals; for it is such and such a change of body, disposed by nature in this or that particular way, which produces this or that particular animal; and this is not a distinct species of generation besides that which is accomplished as the result of nature and matter.

§4. *He further shows the operations of God to be expressed by human illustrations; for what hands and feet and the other parts of the body with which men work are, that, in the case of God, the will alone is, in place of these. And so also arises the divergence of generation; wherefore He is called Only-begotten, because He has no community with other generation such as is observed in creation<sup>871</sup>, but in that He is called the “brightness of glory,” and the “savour of ointment,” He shows the close conjunction and co-eternity of His Nature with the Father<sup>872</sup>*

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<sup>870</sup> Or (reading as proposed above, p. 114, οἰκονομεῖ for οἰκοδομεῖ), “the ordering of nature.”

<sup>871</sup> This passage is clearly corrupt: the general sense as probably intended is given here.

<sup>872</sup> See note 7 in the last section.

Now these modes of generation being well known to men, the loving dispensation of the Holy Spirit, in delivering to us the Divine mysteries, conveys its instruction on those matters which transcend language by means of what is within our capacity, as it does also constantly elsewhere, when it portrays the Divinity in bodily terms, making mention, in speaking concerning God, of His eye, His eyelids, His ear, His fingers, His hand, His right hand, His arm, His feet, His shoes<sup>873</sup>, and the like,—none of which things is apprehended to belong in its primary sense to the Divine Nature,—but turning its teaching to what we can easily perceive, it describes by terms well worn in human use, facts that are beyond every name, while by each of the terms employed concerning God we are led analogically to some more exalted conception. In this way, then, it employs the numerous forms of generation to present to us, from the inspired teaching, the unspeakable existence of the Only-begotten, taking just so much from each as may be reverently admitted into our conceptions concerning God. For as its mention of “fingers,” “hand,” and “arm,” in speaking of God, does not by the phrase portray the structure of the limb out of bones and sinews and flesh and ligaments, but signifies by such an expression His effective and operative power, and as it indicates by each of the other words of this kind those conceptions concerning God which correspond to them, not admitting the corporeal senses of the words, so also it speaks indeed of the forms of these modes of coming into being as applied to the Divine Nature, yet does not speak in that sense which our customary knowledge enables us to understand. For when it speaks of the formative power, it calls that particular energy by the name of “generation,” because the word expressive of Divine power must needs descend to our lowliness, yet it does not indicate all that is associated with formative generation among ourselves,—neither place nor time nor preparation of material, nor the co-operation of instruments, nor the purpose in the things produced, but it leaves these out of sight, and greatly and loftily claims for God the generation of the things that are, where it says, “He spake and they were begotten, He commanded and they were created<sup>874</sup>.” Again, when it expounds that unspeakable and transcendent existence which the Only-begotten has from the Father, because human poverty is incapable of the truths that are too high for speech or thought, it uses our language here also, and calls Him by the name of “Son,”—a name which our ordinary use applies to those who are produced by matter and nature. But just as the word, which tells us in reference to God of the “generation” of the creation, did not add the statement that it was generated by the aid of any material, declaring that its material substance, its place, its time, and all the like, had their existence in the power of His will, so here too, in speaking of the “Son,” it leaves out of sight both all other things which human nature sees in earthly generation (passions, I mean, and dispositions, and the co-operation of time and the need of place, and especially matter), without all which earthly generation as a result of nature does not occur. Now every such conception of matter and interval being excluded from the sense of the word “Son,” nature alone remains, and hereby in the word



873 The reference is probably to Ps. lx. 8, and Ps. cviii. 9.

874 Ps. cxlviii. 5 (LXX.).

“Son” is declared concerning the Only-begotten the close and true character of His manifestation from the Father. And since this particular species of generation did not suffice to produce in us an adequate idea of the unspeakable existence of the Only-begotten, it employs also another species of generation, that which is the result of efflux, to express the Divine Nature of the Son, and calls Him “the brightness of glory<sup>875</sup>,” the “savour of ointment<sup>876</sup>,” the “breath of God<sup>877</sup>,” which our accustomed use, in the scientific discussion we have already made, calls material efflux. But just as in the previous cases neither the making of creation nor the significance of the word “Son” admitted time, or matter, or place, or passion, so here also the phrase, purifying the sense of “brightness” and the other terms from every material conception, and employing only that element in this particular species of generation which is suitable to the Divinity, points by the force of this mode of expression to the truth that He is conceived as being both from Him and with Him. For neither does the word “breath” present to us dispersion into the air from the underlying matter, nor “savour” the transference that takes place from the quality of the ointment to the air, nor “brightness” the efflux by means of rays from the body of the sun; but this only, as we have said, is manifested by this particular mode of generation, that He is conceived to be of Him and also with Him, no intermediate interval existing between the Father and that Son Who is of Him. And since, in its abundant loving-kindness, the grace of the Holy Spirit has ordered that our conceptions concerning the Only-begotten Son should arise in us from many sources, it has added also the remaining species of things contemplated in generation,—that, I mean, which is the result of mind and word. But the lofty John uses especial foresight that the hearer may not by any means by inattention or feebleness of thought fall into the common understanding of “Word,” so that the Son should be supposed to be the voice of the Father. For this reason he prepares us at his first proclamation to regard the Word as in essence, and not in any essence foreign to or dissevered from that essence whence It has Its being, but in that first and blessed Nature. For this is what he teaches us when he says the Word “was in the beginning<sup>878</sup>,” and “was with God<sup>879</sup>,” being Himself also both God and all else that the “Beginning” is. For thus it is that he makes his discourse on the Godhead, touching the eternity of the Only-begotten. Seeing then that these modes of generation (those, I mean, which are the result of cause) are ordinarily known among us, and are employed by Holy Scripture for our instruction on the subjects before us, in such a way as it might be expected that each of them would be applied to the presentation of Divine conceptions, let the reader of our argument “judge

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875 Heb. i. 3.

876 Perhaps Cant. i. 3.

877 Wisd. vii. 25.

878 Cf. S. John i. 1

879 Cf. S. John i. 1



righteous judgement<sup>880</sup>,” whether any of the assertions that heresy makes have any force against the truth.

§5. *Then, after showing that the Person of the Only-begotten and Maker of things has no beginning, as have the things that were made by Him, as Eunomius says, but that the Only-begotten is without beginning and eternal, and has no community, either of essence or of names, with the creation, but is co-existent with the Father from everlasting, being, as the all-excellent Wisdom says, “the beginning and end and midst of the times,” and after making many observations on the Godhead and eternity of the Only-begotten, and also concerning souls and angels, and life and death, he concludes the book.*



I will now once more subjoin the actual language of my opponent, word for word. It runs thus:—“While there are,” he says, “two statements which we have made, the one, that the essence of the Only-begotten was not before its own generation, the other, that, being generated, it was before all things—”What kind of generation does our dogmatist propose to us? Is it one of which we may fittingly think and speak in regard to God? And who is so godless as to pre-suppose non-existence in God? But it is clear that he has in view this material generation of ours, and is making the lower nature the teacher of his conceptions concerning the Only-begotten God, and since an ox or an ass or a camel is not before its own generation, he thinks it proper to say even of the Only-begotten God that which the course of the lower nature presents to our view in the case of the animals, without thinking, corporeal theologian that he is, of this fact, that the predicate “*Only-begotten*”, applied to God, signifies by the very word itself that which is not in common with all begetting, and is peculiar to Him. How could the term “*Only-begotten*” be used of this “*generation*,” if it had community and identity of meaning with other generation? That there is something unique and exceptional to be understood in His case, which is not to be remarked in other generation, is distinctly and suitably expressed by the appellation of “*Only-begotten*”; as, were any element of the lower generation conceived in it, He Who in respect of any of the attributes of His generation was placed on a level with other things that are begotten would no longer be “*Only-begotten*.” For if the same things are to be said of Him which are said of the other things that come into being by generation, the definition will transform the sense of “*Only-begotten*” to signify a kind of relationship involving brotherhood. If then the sense of “*Only-begotten*” points to absence of mixture and community with the rest of generated things, we shall not admit that anything which we behold in the lower generation is also to be conceived in the case of that existence which the Son has from the Father. But non-existence before generation is proper to all things that exist by generation: therefore this is foreign to the special character of the *Only-begotten*, to which

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880 S. John vii. 24

the name “Only-begotten” bears witness that there attaches nothing belonging to the mode of that form of common generation which Eunomius misapprehends. Let this materialist and friend of the senses be persuaded therefore to correct the error of his conception by the other forms of generation. What will you say when you hear of the “brightness of glory” or of the “savour of ointment”<sup>881</sup>?” That the “brightness” was not before its own generation? But if you answer thus, you will surely admit that neither did the “glory” exist, nor the “ointment”: for it is not possible that the “glory” should be conceived as having existed by itself, dark and lustreless, or the “ointment” without producing its sweet breath: so that if the “brightness” “was not,” the “glory” also surely “was not,” and the “savour” being non-existent, there is also proved the non-existence of the “ointment.” But if these examples taken from Scripture excite any man’s fear, on the ground that they do not accurately present to us the majesty of the Only-begotten, because neither is essentially the same with its substratum—neither the exhalation with the ointment, nor the beam with the sun—let the true Word correct his fear, Who was in the Beginning and is all that the Beginning is, and existent before all; since John so declares in his preaching, “And the Word was with God, and the Word was God”<sup>882</sup>.” If then the Father is God and the Son is God, what doubt still remains with regard to the perfect Divinity of the Only-begotten, when by the sense of the word “Son” is acknowledged the close relationship of Nature, by “brightness” the conjunction and inseparability, and by the appellation of “God,” applied alike to the Father and the Son, their absolute equality, while the “express image,” contemplated in reference to the whole Person<sup>883</sup> of the Father, marks the absence of any defect in the Son’s proper greatness, and the “form of God” indicates His complete identity by showing in itself all those marks by which the Godhead is betokened.

Let us now set forth Eunomius’ statement once more. “He was not,” he says, “before His own generation.” Who is it of Whom he says “He was not”? Let him declare the Divine names by which He Who, according to Eunomius, “once was not,” is called. He will say, I suppose, “light,” and “blessedness,” “life” and “incorruptibility,” and “righteousness” and “sanctification,” and “power,” and “truth,” and the like. He who says, then, that “He was not before His generation,” absolutely proclaims this,—that when He “was not” there was no truth, no life, no light, no power, no incorruptibility, no other of those pre-eminent qualities which are conceived of Him: and, what is still more marvellous and still more difficult for impiety to face, there was no “brightness,” no “express image.” For in saying that there was no brightness, there is surely maintained also the non-existence of the radiating power, as one may see in the illustration afforded by the lamp. For he who speaks of the ray of the lamp indicates also that the lamp shines, and he who says that the ray “is not,” signifies also the extinction of that which gives light: so that when the Son is said not to be, thereby is also maintained as a necessary consequence the non-existence of the Father. For


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881 Heb. i. 3, and Cant. i. 3, referred to above.

882 S. John i. 1

883 ὑποστάσει

if the one is related to the other by way of conjunction, according to the Apostolic testimony—the “brightness” to the “glory,” the “express image” to the “Person,” the “Wisdom” to God—he who says that one of the things so conjoined “is not,” surely by his abolition of the one abolishes also that which remains; so that if the “brightness” “was not,” it is acknowledged that neither did the illuminating nature exist, and if the “express image” had no existence, neither did the Person imaged exist, and if the wisdom and power of God “was not,” it is surely acknowledged that He also was not, Who is not conceived by Himself without wisdom and power. If, then, the Only-begotten God, as Eunomius says, “was not before His generation,” and Christ is “the power of God and the wisdom of God<sup>884</sup>,” and the “express image”<sup>885</sup> and the “brightness”<sup>886</sup>, neither surely did the Father exist, Whose power and wisdom and express image and brightness the Son is: for it is not possible to conceive by reason either a Person without express image, or glory without radiance, or God without wisdom, or a Maker without hands, or a Beginning without the Word<sup>887</sup>, or a Father without a Son; but all such things, alike by those who confess and by those who deny, are manifestly declared to be in mutual union, and by the abolition of one the other also disappears with it. Since then they maintain that the Son (that is, the “brightness of the glory,”) “was not” before He was begotten, and since logical consequence involves also, together with the non-existence of the brightness, the abolition of the glory, and the Father is the glory whence came the brightness of the Only-begotten Light, let these men who are wise over-much consider that they are manifestly supporters of the Epicurean doctrines, preaching atheism under the guise of Christianity. Now since the logical consequence is shown to be one of two absurdities, either that we should say that God does not exist at all, or that we should say that His being was not unoriginate, let them choose which they like of the two courses before them,—either to be called atheist, or to cease saying that the essence of the Father is un-originate. They would avoid, I suppose, being reckoned atheists. It remains, therefore, that they maintain that God is not eternal. And if the course of what has been proved forces them to this, what becomes of their varied and irreversible conversions of names? What becomes of that invincible compulsion of their syllogisms, which sounded so fine to the ears of old women, with its opposition of “Generated” and “Ungenerate”?

Enough, however, of these matters. But it might be well not to leave his next point unanswered; yet let us pass over in silence the comic interlude, where our clever orator shows his youthful conceit, whether in jest or in earnest, under the impression that he will thereby have an advantage in his argument. For certainly no one will force us to join either with those whose eyes are set askance in distorting our sight, or with those who are stricken with strange disease in being contorted, or in their bodily leaps and plunges. We shall pity them, but we shall not depart from our settled state of mind. He says, then, turning his discourse upon the subject to our master, as if he were

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884 1 Cor. i. 24.

885 Heb. i. 3.

886 Heb. i. 3.

887 Or perhaps “or an irrational first cause,” (ἄλογον ἀρχήν.)

really engaging him face to face, “Thou shalt be taken in thine own snare.” For as Basil had said<sup>888</sup> that what is good is always present with God Who is over all, and that it is good to be the Father of such a Son,—that so what is good was never absent from Him, nor was it the Father’s will to be without the Son, and when He willed He did not lack the power, but having the power and the will to be in the mode in which it seemed good to Him, He also always possessed the Son by reason of His always willing that which is good (for this is the direction in which the intention of our father’s remarks tends), Eunomius pulls this in pieces beforehand, and puts forward to overthrow what has been said some such argument as this, introduced from his extraneous philosophy:—“What will become of you,” he says, “if one of those who have had experience of such arguments should say, ‘If to create is good and agreeable to the Nature of God, how is it that what is good and agreeable to His Nature was not present with Him unoriginately, seeing that God is unoriginate? and that when there was no hindrance of ignorance or impediment of weakness or of age in the matter of creation,’”—and all the rest that he collects together and pours out upon himself,—for I may not say, upon God. Well, if it were possible for our master to answer the question in person, he would have shown Eunomius what would have become of him, as he asked, by setting forth the Divine mystery with that tongue that was taught of God, and by scourging the champion of deceit with his refutations, so that it would have been made clear to all men what a difference there is between a minister of the mysteries of Christ and a ridiculous buffoon or a setter-forth of new and absurd doctrines. But since he, as the Apostle says, “being dead, speaketh<sup>889</sup>” to God, while the other puts forth such a challenge as though there were no one to answer him, even though an answer from us may not have equal force when compared with the words of the great Basil, we shall yet boldly say this in answer to the questioner:—Your own argument, put forth to overthrow our statement, is a testimony that in the charges we make against your impious doctrine we speak truly. For there is no other point we blame so much as this, that you<sup>890</sup> think there is no difference between the Lord of creation and the general body of creation, and what you now allege is a maintaining of the very things which we find fault with. For if you are bound to attach exactly what you see in creation also to the Only-begotten God, our contention has gained its end: your own statements proclaim the absurdity of the doctrine, and it is manifest to all, both that we keep our argument in the straight way of truth, and that your conception of the Only-begotten God is such as you have of the rest of the creation.

Concerning whom was the controversy? Was it not concerning the Only-begotten God, the Maker of all the creation, whether He always was, or whether He came into being afterwards as an addition to His Father? What then do our master’s words say on this matter? That it is irreverent to believe that what is naturally good was not in God: for that he saw no cause by which it was

<sup>888</sup> The reference is to S. Basil adv. Eunomium II. 12 (p. 247 in Ben. ed.)

<sup>889</sup> Cf. Heb. xi. 4

<sup>890</sup> Reading ὑμᾶς for ἡμᾶς. If the reading ἡμᾶς, which Oehler follows, is retained, the force would seem to be “that you think we ought not to make any difference,” but the construction of the sentence in this case is cumbrous.

probable that the good was not always present with Him Who is good, either for lack of power or for weakness of will. What does he who contends against these statements say? “If you allow that God the Word is to be believed eternal, you must allow the same of the things that have been created”—(How well he knows how to distinguish in his argument the nature of the creatures and the majesty of God! How well he knows about each, what befits it, what he may piously think concerning God, what concerning the creation!)—“if the Maker,” he says, “begins from the time of His making: for there is nothing else by which we can mark the beginning of things that have been made, if time does not define by its own interval the beginnings and the endings of the things that come into being.”

On this ground he says that the Maker of time must commence His existence from a like beginning. Well, the creation has the ages for its beginning, but what beginning can you conceive of the Maker of the ages? If any one should say, “The ‘beginning’ which is mentioned in the Gospel”—it is the Father Who is there signified, and the confession of the Son together with Him is there pointed to, nor can it be that He Who is in the Father<sup>891</sup>, as the Lord says, can begin His being in Him from any particular point. And if any one speaks of another beginning besides this, let him tell us the name by which he marks this beginning, as none can be apprehended before the establishment of the ages. Such a statement, therefore, will not move us a whit from the orthodox conception concerning the Only-begotten, even if old women do applaud the proposition as a sound one. For we abide by what has been determined from the beginning, having our doctrine firmly based on truth, to wit, that all things which the orthodox doctrine assumes that we assert concerning the Only-begotten God have no kindred with the creation, but the marks which distinguish the Maker of all and His works are separated by a wide interval. If indeed the Son had in any other respect communion with the creation, we surely ought to say that He did not diverge from it even in the manner of His existence. But if the creation has no share in such things as are all those which we learn concerning the Son, we must surely of necessity say that in this matter also He has no communion with it. For the creation was not in the beginning, and was not with God, and was not, God, nor life, nor light, nor resurrection, nor the rest of the Divine names, as truth, righteousness, sanctification, Judge, just, Maker of all things, existing before the ages, for ever and ever; the creation is not the brightness of the glory, nor the express image of the Person, nor the likeness of goodness, nor grace, nor power, nor truth, nor salvation, nor redemption; nor do we find any one at all of those names which are employed by Scripture for the glory of the Only-begotten, either belonging to the creation or employed concerning it,—not to speak of those more exalted words, “I am in the Father, and the Father in Me<sup>892</sup>,” and, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father<sup>893</sup>,” and, “None hath seen the Son, save the Father<sup>894</sup>.” If indeed our doctrine allowed us to claim for

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891 S. John xiv. 10

892 S. John xiv. 10

893 S. John xiv. 9

894 Apparently an inexact quotation of S. Matt. xi. 27.



the creation things so many and so great as these, he might have been right in thinking that we ought to attach what we observe in it to our conceptions of the Only-begotten also, since the transfer would be from kindred subjects to one nearly allied. But if all these concepts and names involve communion with the Father, while they transcend our notions of the creation, does not our clever and sharp-witted friend slink away in shame at discussing the nature of the Lord of the Creation by the aid of what he observes in creation, without being aware that the marks which distinguish the creation are of a different sort? The ultimate division of all that exists is made by the line between “created” and “uncreated,” the one being regarded as a cause of what has come into being, the other as coming into being thereby. Now the created nature and the Divine essence being thus divided, and admitting no intermixture in respect of their distinguishing properties, we must by no means conceive both by means of similar terms, nor seek in the idea of their nature for the same distinguishing marks in things that are thus separated. Accordingly, as the nature that is in the creation, as the phrase of the most excellent Wisdom somewhere tells us, exhibits “the beginning, ending, and midst of the times<sup>895</sup>” in itself, and extends concurrently with all temporal intervals, we take as a sort of characteristic of the subject this property, that in it we see some beginning of its formation, look on its midst, and extend our expectations to its end. For we have learnt that the heaven and the earth were not from eternity, and will not last to eternity, and thus it is hence clear that those things are both started from some beginning, and will surely cease at some end. But the Divine Nature, being limited in no respect, but passing all limitations on every side in its infinity, is far removed from those marks which we find in creation. For that power which is without interval, without quantity, without circumscription, having in itself all the ages and all the creation that has taken place in them, and over-passing at all points, by virtue of the infinity of its own nature, the unmeasured extent of the ages, either has no mark which indicates its nature, or has one of an entirely different sort, and not that which the creation has. Since, then, it belongs to the creation to have a beginning, that will be alien from the uncreated nature which belongs to the creation. For if any one should venture to suppose the existence of the Only-begotten Son to be, like the creation, from any beginning comprehensible by us, he must certainly append to his statement concerning the Son the rest also of the sequence<sup>896</sup>; for it is not possible to avoid acknowledging, together with the beginning, that also which follows from it. For just as if one were to admit some person to be a man in all<sup>897</sup> the properties of his nature, he would observe that in this confession he declared him to be an animal and rational, and whatever else is conceived of man, so by the same reasoning, if we should understand any of the properties of creation to be present in the Divine essence, it will no longer be open to us to refrain from attaching to that pure Nature the rest of the list of the

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895 Wisd. vii. 18.

896 That is, he must also acknowledge a “middle” and an “end” of the existence which has a “beginning.”

897 Oehler’s emendation, for which he gives weighty MS. authority, is certainly an improvement on the earlier text, but in sense it is a little unsatisfactory. The argument seems to require the hypothesis not of some one acknowledging a person to be a man in *all*, but in *some* attributes. The defect, however, may possibly be in S. Gregory’s argument, not in the text.

attributes contemplated therein. For the “beginning” will demand by force and compulsion that which follows it; for the “beginning,” thus conceived, is a beginning of what comes after it, in such a sense, that if they are, it is, and if the things connected with it are removed, the antecedent also would not remain<sup>898</sup>. Now as the book of Wisdom speaks of “midst” and “end” as well as of “beginning,” if we assume in the Nature of the Only-begotten, according to the heretical dogma, some beginning of existence defined by a certain mark of time, the book of Wisdom will by no means allow us to refrain from subjoining to the “beginning” a “midst” and an “end” also. If this should be done we shall find, as the result of our arguments, that the Divine word shows us that the Deity is mortal. For if, according to the book of Wisdom, the “end” is a necessary consequence of the “beginning,” and the idea of “midst” is involved in that of extremes, he who allows one of these also potentially maintains the others, and lays down bounds of measure and limitation for the infinite Nature. And if this is impious and absurd, the giving a beginning to that argument which ends in impiety deserves equal, or even greater censure; and the beginning of this absurd doctrine was seen to be the supposition that the life of the Son was circumscribed by some beginning. Thus one of two courses is before them: either they must revert to sound doctrine under the compulsion of the foregoing arguments, and contemplate Him Who is of the Father in union with the Father’s eternity, or if they do not like this, they must limit the eternity of the Son in both ways, and reduce the limitless character of His life to non-existence by a beginning and an end. And, granted that the nature both of souls and of the angels has no end, and is no way hindered from going on to eternity, by the fact of its being created, and having the beginning of its existence from some point of time, so that our adversaries can use this fact to assert a parallel in the case of Christ, in the sense that He is not from eternity, and yet endures everlastingly,—let any one who advances this argument also consider the following point, how widely the Godhead differs from the creation in its special attributes. For to the Godhead it properly belongs to lack no conceivable thing which is regarded as good, while the creation attains excellence by partaking in something better than itself; and further, not only had a beginning of its being, but also is found to be constantly in a state of beginning to be in excellence, by its continual advance in improvement, since it never halts at what it has reached, but all that it has acquired<sup>899</sup> becomes by participation a beginning of its ascent to something still greater, and it never ceases, in Paul’s phrase, “reaching forth to the things that are before,” and “forgetting the things that are behind<sup>900</sup>.” Since, then, the Godhead is very life, and the Only-begotten God is God, and life, and truth, and every conceivable thing that is lofty and Divine, while the creation draws from Him its supply of good, it may hence be evident that if it is in life by partaking

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898 *i.e.* “if the ‘middle’ and ‘end’ are not admitted, at the ‘beginning,’ which is the ‘beginning’ of a *sequence*, is thereby implicitly denied.” Oehler’s punctuation has been somewhat altered here, and at several points in the remainder of the book, where it appears to require emendation.

899 Reading κτηθέν, with the Paris ed. of 1638. Oehler’s reading κτισθέν hardly seems to give so good a sense, and he does not give his authority for it.

900 Phil. iii. 13.

of life, it will surely, if it ceases from this participation, cease from life also. If they dare, then, to say also of the Only-begotten God those things which it is true to say of the creation, let them say this too, along with the rest, that He has a beginning of His being like the creation, and abides in life after the likeness of souls. But if He is the very life, and needs not to have life in Himself *ab extra*, while all other things are not life, but are merely participants in life, what constrains us to cancel, by reason of what we see in creation, the eternity of the Son? For that which is always unchanged as regards its nature, admits of no contrary, and is incapable of change to any other condition: while things whose nature is on the boundary line have a tendency that shifts either way, inclining at will to what they find attractive<sup>901</sup>. If, then, that which is truly life is contemplated in the Divine and transcendent nature, the decadence thereof will surely, as it seems, end in the opposite state<sup>902</sup>.

Now the meaning of “life” and “death” is manifold, and not always understood in the same way. For as regards the flesh, the energy and motion of the bodily senses is called “life,” and their extinction and dissolution is named “death.” But in the case of the intellectual nature, approximation to the Divine is the true life, and decadence therefrom is named “death”: for which reason the original evil, the devil, is called both “death,” and the inventor of death: and he is also said by the Apostle to have the power of death<sup>903</sup>. As, then, we obtain, as has been said, from the Scriptures, a twofold conception of death, He Who is truly unchangeable and immutable “alone hath immortality,” and dwells in light that cannot be attained or approached by the darkness of wickedness<sup>904</sup>: but all things that participate in death, being far removed from immortality by their contrary tendency, if they fall away from that which is good, would, by the mutability of their nature, admit community with the worse condition, which is nothing else than death, having a certain correspondence with the death of the body. For as in that case the extinction of the activities of nature is called death, so also, in the case of the intellectual being, the absence of motion towards the good is death and departure from life; so that what we perceive in the bodiless creation<sup>905</sup> does not clash with our argument, which refutes the doctrine of heresy. For that form of death which corresponds to the

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<sup>901</sup> Reading with Oehler, τοῖς κατὰ γνώμην προσκλινομένη. The reading προσκινουμένοις, found in the earlier editions, gives a tolerable sense, but appears to have no MS. authority.

<sup>902</sup> Or (if πάντως be constructed with ἀντικείμενον), “will end, as it seems, in that state which is absolutely opposed to life.”

<sup>903</sup> Cf. Heb. ii. 14

<sup>904</sup> Cf. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>905</sup> *i.e.* the order of spiritual beings, including angels and human souls. Of these S. Gregory argues that they are capable of an ἀκίνησις πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθόν which is death in them, as the absence of motion and sense is *bodily* death: and that they may therefore be said to have an end, as they had a beginning: so far as they *are* eternal it is not by their own power, but by their mutable nature being upheld by grace from this state of ἀκίνησις πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθόν. On both these grounds therefore—that they *have* an end, and that such eternity as they possess is not inherent, but given *ab extra*, and contingent—he says they are not properly eternal, and he therefore rejects the proposed parallel.



intellectual nature (that is, separation from God, Whom we call Life) is, potentially, not separated even from their nature; for their emergence from non-existence shows mutability of nature; and that to which change is in affinity is hindered from participation in the contrary state by the grace of Him Who strengthens it: it does not abide in the good by its own nature: and such a thing is not eternal. If, then, one really speaks truth in saying that we ought not to estimate the Divine essence and the created nature in the same way, nor to circumscribe the being of the Son of God by any beginning, lest, if this be granted, the other attributes of creation should enter in together with our acknowledgment of this one, the absurd character of the teaching of that man, who employs the attributes of creation to separate the Only-begotten God from the eternity of the Father, is clearly shown. For as none other of the marks which characterize the creation appears in the Maker of the creation, so neither is the fact that the creation has its existence from some beginning a proof that the Son was not always in the Father,—that Son, Who is Wisdom, and Power, and Light, and Life, and all that is conceived of in the bosom of the Father.



## Book IX.

§1. *The ninth book declares that Eunomius' account of the Nature of God is, up to a certain point, well stated. Then in succession he mixes up with his own argument, on account of its affinity, the expression from Philo's writings, "God is before all other things, which are generated," adding also the expression, "He has dominion over His own power." Detesting the excessive absurdity, Gregory strikingly confutes it*<sup>906</sup>

BUT he now turns to loftier language, and elevating himself and puffing himself up with empty conceit, he takes in hand to say something worthy of God's majesty. "For God," he says, "being the most highly exalted of all goods, and the mightiest of all, and free from all necessity—" Nobly does the gallant man bring his discourse, like some ship without ballast, driven unguided by the waves of deceit, into the harbour of truth! "God is the most highly exalted of all goods." Splendid acknowledgment! I suppose he will not bring a charge of unconstitutional conduct against the great John, by whom, in his lofty proclamation, the Only-begotten is declared to be God, Who was with God and was God<sup>907</sup>. If he, then, the proclaimer of the Godhead of the Only-begotten, is worthy of credit, and if "God is the most highly exalted of all goods," it follows that the Son is alleged by the enemies of His glory, to be "the most highly exalted of all goods." And as this phrase is also applied

<sup>906</sup> This section of the analysis is so confused that it cannot well be literally translated. In the version given above the general sense rather than the precise grammatical construction has been followed.

<sup>907</sup> S. John i. 1

to the Father, the superlative force of “most highly exalted” admits of no diminution or addition by way of comparison. But, now that we have obtained from the adversary’s testimony these statements for the proof of the glory of the Only-begotten, we must add in support of sound doctrine his next statement too. He says, “God, the most highly exalted of all goods, being without hindrance from nature, or constraint from cause, or impulse from need, begets and creates according to the supremacy of His own authority, having His will as power sufficient for the constitution of the things produced. If, then, all good is according to His will, He not only determines that which is made as good, but also the time of its being good, if, that is to say, as one may assume, it is an indication of weakness to make what one does not will<sup>908</sup>.” We shall borrow so far as this, for the confirmation of the orthodox doctrines, from our adversaries’ statement, percolated as that statement is by vile and counterfeit clauses. Yes, He Who has, by the supremacy of His authority, power in His will that suffices for the constitution of the things that are made, He Who created all things without hindrance from nature or compulsion from cause, does determine not only that which is made as good, but also the time of its being good. But He Who made all things is, as the gospel proclaims, the Only-begotten God. He, at that time when He willed it, did make the creation; at that time, by means of the circumambient essence, He surrounded with the body of heaven all that universe that is shut off within its compass: at that time, when He thought it well that this should be, He displayed the dry land to view, He enclosed the waters in their hollow places; vegetation, fruits, the generation of animals, the formation of man, appeared at that time when each of these things seemed expedient to the wisdom of the Creator: — and He Who made all these things (I will once more repeat my statement) is the Only-begotten God Who made the ages. For if the interval of the ages has preceded existing things, it is proper to employ the temporal adverb, and to say “He *then* willed” and “He *then* made”: but since the age was not, since no conception of interval is present to our minds in regard to that Divine Nature which is not measured by quantity or by interval, the force of temporal expressions must surely be void. Thus to say that the creation has had given to it a beginning in time, according to the good pleasure of the wisdom of Him Who made all things, does not go beyond probability: but to regard the Divine Nature itself as being in a kind of extension measured by intervals, belongs only to those who have been trained in the new wisdom. What a point is this, embedded in his words, which I intentionally passed by in my eagerness to reach the subject! I will now resume it, and read it to show our author’s cleverness.

“For He Who is most highly exalted in God Himself<sup>909</sup> before all other things that are generated,” he says, “has dominion over His own power.” The phrase has been transferred by our pamphleteer

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<sup>908</sup> This quotation would appear from what follows not to be a consecutive extract, but one made “*omissis omittendis*.”

<sup>909</sup> This seems to be the force of the phrase if we are to follow Oehler’s mss. and read ὁ γὰρ ἕξοχώτατος αὐτοῦ θεοῦ. The αὐτὸς θεὸς of the earlier editions gives a simpler sense. The phrase as read by Oehler certainly savours more of Philo than of Eunomius: but it is worth noting that S. Gregory does not dwell upon this part of the clause as being borrowed from Philo (though

word for word from the Hebrew Philo to his own argument, and Eunomius' theft will be proved by Philo's works themselves to any one who cares about it. I note the fact, however, at present, not so much to reproach our speech-monger with the poverty of his own arguments and thoughts, as with the intention of showing to my readers the close relationship between the doctrine of Eunomius and the reasoning of the Jews. For this phrase of Philo would not have fitted word for word into his argument had there not been a sort of kindred between the intention of the one and the other. In the Hebrew author you may find the phrase in this form: "God, before all other things that are generated"; and what follows, "has dominion over His own power," is an addition of the new Judaism. But what an absurdity this involves an examination of the saying will clearly show. "God," he says, "has dominion over His own power." Tell me, what is He? over what has He dominion? Is He something else than His own power, and Lord of a power that is something else than Himself? Then power is overcome by the absence of power. For that which is something else than power is surely not power, and thus He is found to have dominion over power just in so far as He is not power. Or again, God, being power, has another power in Himself, and has dominion over the one by the other. And what contest or schism is there, that God should divide the power that exists in Himself, and overthrow one section of His power by the other. I suppose He could not have dominion over His own power without the assistance to that end of some greater and more violent power! Such is Eunomius' God: a being with double nature, or composite, dividing Himself against Himself, having one power out of harmony with another, so that by one He is urged to disorder, and by the other restrains this discordant motion. Again, with what intent does He dominate the power that urges on to generation? lest some evil should arise if generation be not hindered? or rather let him explain this in the first place,— what is that which is naturally under dominion? His language points to some movement of impulse and choice, considered separately and independently. For that which dominates must needs be one thing, that which is dominated another. Now God "has dominion over His power"—and this is—what? a self-determining nature? or something else than this, pressing on to disquiet, or remaining in a state of quiescence? Well, if he supposes it to be quiescent, that which is tranquil needs no one to have dominion over it: and if he says "He has dominion," He "has dominion" clearly over something which impels and is in motion: and this, I presume he will say, is something naturally different from Him Who rules it. What then, let him tell us, does he understand in this idea? Is it something else besides God, considered as having an independent existence? How can another existence be in God? Or is it some condition in the Divine Nature considered as having an existence not its own? I hardly think he would say so: for that which has no existence of its own is not: and that which is not, is neither under dominion, nor set free from it. What then is that power which was under dominion, and was restrained in respect of its own activity, while the due time of the generation of Christ was still about to come, and to set this power free to proceed to its natural operation? What was the intervening cause of delay, for which God

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he may intend to include it in the general statement), but upon what follows it: and from his citation from Philo it would seem that the latter spoke (not of *ὁ ἐξοχώτατος θεοῦ* but) of *ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα γεννητά.*

deferred the generation of the Only-begotten, not thinking it good as yet to become a Father? And what is this that is inserted as intervening between the life of the Father and that of the Son, that is not time nor space, nor any idea of extension, nor any like thing? To what purpose is it that this keen and clear-sighted eye marks and beholds the separation of the life of God in regard to the life of the Son? When he is driven in all directions he is himself forced to admit that the interval does not exist at all.

§2. *He then ingeniously shows that the generation of the Son is not according to the phrase of Eunomius, "The Father begat Him at that time when He chose, and not before:" but that the Son, being the fulness of all that is good and excellent, is always contemplated in the Father; using for this demonstration the support of Eunomius' own arguments.*

However, though there is no interval between them, he does not admit that their communion is immediate and intimate, but condescends to the measure of our knowledge, and converses with us in human phrase as one of ourselves, himself quietly confessing the impotence of reasoning and taking refuge in a line of argument that was never taught by Aristotle and his school. He says, "It was good and proper that He should beget His Son at that time when He willed: and in the minds of sensible men there does not hence arise any questioning why He did not do so before." What does this mean, Eunomius? Are you too going afoot like us unlettered men? are you leaving your artistic periods and actually taking refuge in unreasoning assent? you, who so much reproached those who take in hand to write without logical skill? You, who say to Basil, "You show your own ignorance when you say that definitions of the terms that express things spiritual are an impossibility for men," who again elsewhere advance the same charge, "you make your own impotence common to others, when you declare that what is not possible for you is impossible for all"? Is this the way that you, who say such things as these, approach the ears of him who questions about the reason why the Father defers becoming the Father of such a Son? Do you think it an adequate explanation to say, "He begat Him at that time when He chose: let there be no questioning on this point"? Has your apprehensive fancy grown so feeble in the maintenance of your doctrines? What has become of your premises that lead to dilemmas? What has become of your forcible proofs? how comes it that those terrible and inevitable syllogistic conclusions of your art have dissolved into vanity and nothingness? "He begat the Son at that time when He chose: let there be no questioning on this point!" Is this the finished product of your many labours, of your voluminous undertakings? What was the question asked? "If it is good and fitting for God to have such a Son, why are we not to believe that the good is always present with Him<sup>910</sup>?" What is the answer he makes to us from the very shrine of his philosophy, tightening the bonds of his argument by inevitable necessity? "He made the Son at that time when He chose: let there be no questioning as to why He did not do so

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910 Cf. S. Basil adv. Eun. II. 12, quoted above, p. 207.

before.” Why, if the inquiry before us were concerning some irrational being, that acts by natural impulse, why it did not sooner do whatever it may be,—why the spider did not make her webs, or the bee her honey, or the turtle-dove her nest,—what else could you have said? would not the same answer have been ready—“She did it at that time when she chose: let there be no questioning on this matter”? Nay, if it were concerning some sculptor or painter who works in paintings or in sculptures by his imitative art, whatever it may be (supposing that he exercises his art without being subject to any authority), I imagine that such an answer would meet the case of any one who wished to know why he did not exercise his art sooner,—that, being under no necessity, he made his own choice the occasion of his operation. For men, because they do not always wish the same things<sup>911</sup>, and commonly have not power co-operating with their will, do something which seems good to them at that time when their choice inclines to the work, and they have no external hindrance. But that nature which is always the same, to which no good is adventitious, in which all that variety of plans which arises by way of opposition, from error or from ignorance, has no place, to which there comes nothing as a result of change, which was not with it before, and by which nothing is chosen afterwards which it had not from the beginning regarded as good,—to say of this nature that it does not always possess what is good, but afterwards chooses to have something which it did not choose before,—this belongs to wisdom that surpasses us. For we were taught that the Divine Nature is at all times full of all good, or rather is itself the fulness of all goods, seeing that it needs no addition for its perfecting, but is itself by its own nature the perfection of good. Now that which is perfect is equally remote from addition and from diminution; and therefore, we say that perfection of goods which we behold in the Divine Nature always remains the same, as, in whatsoever direction we extend our thoughts, we there apprehend it to be such as it is. The Divine Nature, then, is never void of good: but the Son is the fulness of all good: and accordingly He is at all times contemplated in that Father Whose Nature is perfection in all good. But he says, “let there be no questioning about this point, why He did not do so before:” and we shall answer him,—“It is one thing, most sapient sir, to lay down as an ordinance some proposition that you happen to approve<sup>912</sup>, and another to make converts by reasoning on the points of controversy. So long, therefore, as you cannot assign any reason why we may piously say that the Son was “afterwards” begotten by the Father, your ordinances will be of no effect with sensible men.”

Thus it is then that Eunomius brings the truth to light for us as the result of his scientific attack. And we for our part shall apply his argument, as we are wont to do, for the establishment of the true doctrine, so that even by this passage it may be clear that at every point, constrained against their will, they advocate our view. For if, as our opponent says, “He begat the Son at that time when He chose,” and if He always chose that which is good, and His power coincided with His choice,



<sup>911</sup> Reading ταῦτὰ for ταῦτα, which appears in the text of Oehler as well as in the earlier editions.

<sup>912</sup> Reading τι τῶν κατὰ γνώμην, for τι τῶν καταγνωμῶν, which is the reading of the editions, but introduces a word otherwise apparently unknown.

it follows that the Son will be considered as always with the Father, Who always both chooses that which is excellent, and is able to possess what He chooses. And if we are to reduce his next words also to truth, it is easy for us to adapt them also to the doctrine we hold:—“Let there be no questioning among sensible men on this point, why He did not do so before”—for the word “before” has a temporal sense, opposed to what is “afterwards” and “later”: but on the supposition that time does not exist, the terms expressing temporal interval are surely abolished with it. Now the Lord was before times and before ages: questioning as to “before” or “after” concerning the Maker of the ages is useless in the eyes of reasonable men: for words of this class are devoid of all meaning, if they are not used in reference to time. Since then the Lord is antecedent to times, the words “before” and “after” have no place as applied to Him. This may perhaps be sufficient to refute arguments that need no one to overthrow them, but fall by their own feebleness. For who is there with so much leisure that he can give himself up to such an extent to listen to the arguments on the other side, and to our contention against the silly stuff? Since, however, in men prejudiced by impiety, deceit is like some ingrained dye, hard to wash out, and deeply burned in upon their hearts, let us spend yet a little time upon our argument, if haply we may be able to cleanse their souls from this evil stain. After the utterances that I have quoted, and after adding to them, in the manner of his teacher Prunicus,<sup>913</sup> some unconnected and ill-arranged octads of insolence and abuse, he comes to the crowning point of his arguments, and, leaving the illogical exposition of his folly, arms his discourse once more with the weapons of dialectic, and maintains his absurdity against us, as he imagines, syllogistically.

§3. *He further shows that the pretemporal generation of the Son is not the subject of influences drawn from ordinary and carnal generation, but is without beginning and without end, and not according to the fabrications constructed by Eunomius, in ignorance of His power, from the statements of Plato concerning the soul and from the sabbath rest of the Hebrews.*

What he says runs thus:—“As all generation is not protracted to infinity, but ceases on arriving at some end, those who admit the origination of the Son are absolutely obliged to say that He then ceased being generated, and not to look incredulously on the beginning of those things which cease

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<sup>913</sup> So in Book I. πρῶτον μὲν τῆς Προυνίκου σοφίας γίνεται μαθητῆς, and Book XIII. p. 844 (Paris Edit.). It may be questioned whether the phrase in Books I. and XIII., and that here, refers to a supposed connection of Eunomius with Gnosticism. The Προύνικος Σοφία of the Gnostics was a “male-female,” and hence the masculine τὸν παιδευτήν might properly be applied to it. If this point were cleared up, we might be more certain of the meaning to be attached to the word ὀκτάδας, which is also possibly borrowed from the Gnostic phraseology, being akin to the form ὀγδοάδας. [On the Gnostic conception of “Prunicus,” see the note on the subject in Harvey’s *Irenaeus* (vol. I. p. 225), and Smith and Wace’s *Dict. Chr. Biogr.* s.v. On the Gnostic Ogdoads, see Mansel’s *Gnostic Heresies*, pp. 152 sqq., 170 sqq., and the articles on Basilides and Valentinus in *Dict. Chr. Biogr.*]

being generated, and therefore also surely *begin*: for the cessation of generation establishes a beginning of begetting and being begotten: and these facts cannot be disbelieved, on the ground at once of nature itself and of the Divine laws<sup>914</sup>.” Now since he endeavours to establish his point inferentially, laying down his universal proposition according to the scientific method of those who are skilled in such matters, and including in the general premise the proof of the particular, let us first consider his universal, and then proceed to examine the force of his inferences. Is it a reverent proceeding to draw from “all generation” evidence even as to the pre-temporal generation of the Son? and ought we to put forward ordinary nature as our instructor on the being of the Only-begotten? For my own part, I should not have expected any one to reach such a point of madness, that any such idea of the Divine and unsullied generation should enter his fancy. “All generation,” he says, “is not protracted to infinity.” What is it that he understands by “generation”? Is he speaking of fleshly, bodily birth, or of the formation of inanimate objects? The affections involved in bodily generation are well known—affections which no one would think of transferring to the Divine Nature. In order therefore that our discourse may not, by mentioning the works of nature at length, be made to appear redundant, we shall pass such matters by in silence, as I suppose that every sensible man is himself aware of the causes by which generation is protracted, both in regard to its beginning and to its cessation: it would be tedious and at the same time superfluous to express them all minutely, the coming together of those who generate, the formation in the womb of that which is generated, travail, birth, place, time, without which the generation of a body cannot be brought about,—things which are all equally alien from the Divine generation of the Only-begotten: for if any one of these things were admitted, the rest will of necessity all enter with it. That the Divine generation, therefore, may be clear of every idea connected with passion, we shall avoid conceiving with regard to it even that extension which is measured by intervals. Now that which begins and ends is surely regarded as being in a kind of extension, and all extension is measured by time, and as time (by which we mark both the end of birth and its beginning) is excluded, it would be vain, in the case of the uninterrupted generation, to entertain the idea of end or beginning, since no idea can be formed to mark either the point at which such generation begins or that at which it ceases. If on the other hand it is the inanimate creation to which he is looking, even in this case, in like manner, place, and time, and matter, and preparation, and power of the artificer, and many like things, concur to bring the product to perfection. And since time assuredly is concurrent with all things that are produced, and since with everything that is created, be it animate or inanimate, there are conceived also bases of construction relative to the product, we can find in these cases evident beginnings and endings of the process of formation. For even the procuring of material is actually the beginning of the fabric, and is a sign of place, and is logically connected with time. All these things fix for the products their beginnings and endings; and no one could say


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<sup>914</sup> This quotation from Eunomius presents some difficulties, but it is quite as likely that they are due to the obscurity of his style, as that they are due to corruption of the text.

that these things have any participation in the pretemporal generation of the Only-begotten God, so that, by the aid of the things now under consideration, we are able to calculate, with regard to that generation, any beginning or end.

Now that we have so far discussed these matters, let us resume consideration of our adversaries' argument. It says, "As all generation is not protracted to infinity, but ceases on arriving at some end." Now, since the sense of "generation" has been considered with respect to either meaning,—whether he intends by this word to signify the birth of corporeal beings, or the formation of things created (neither of which has anything in common with the unsullied Nature), the premise is shown to have no connection with the subject<sup>915</sup>. For it is not a matter of absolute necessity, as he maintains, that, because all making and generation ceases at some limit, therefore those who accept the generation of the Son should circumscribe it by a double limit, by supposing, as regards it, a beginning and an end. For it is only as being circumscribed in some quantitative way that things can be said either to begin or to cease on arriving at a limit, and the measure expressed by time (having its extension concomitant with the quantity of that which is produced) differentiates the beginning from the end by the interval between them. But how can any one measure or treat as extended that which is without quantity and without extension? What measure can he find for that which has no quantity, or what interval for that which has no extension? or how can any one define the infinite by "end" and "beginning?" for "beginning" and "end" are names of limits of extension, and, where there is no extension, neither is there any limit. Now the Divine Nature is without extension, and, being without extension, it has no limit; and that which is limitless is infinite, and is spoken of accordingly. Thus it is idle to try to circumscribe the infinite by "beginning" and "ending"—for what is circumscribed cannot be infinite. How comes it, then, that this Platonic Phædrus disconnectedly tacks on to his own doctrine those speculations on the soul which Plato makes in that dialogue? For as Plato there spoke of "cessation of motion," so this writer too was eager to speak of "cessation of generation," in order to impose upon those who have no knowledge of these matters, with fine Platonic phrases. "And these facts," he tells us, "cannot be disbelieved, on the ground at once of nature itself and of the Divine laws." But nature, from our previous remarks, appears not to be trustworthy for instruction as to the Divine generation,—not even if one were to take the universe itself as an illustration of the argument: since through its creation also, as we learn in the cosmogony of Moses, there ran the measure of time, meted out in a certain order and arrangement by stated days and nights, for each of the things that came into being: and this even our adversaries' statement does not admit with regard to the being of the Only-begotten, since it acknowledges that the Lord was before the times of the ages.

It remains to consider his support of his point by "the Divine laws," by which he undertakes to show both an end and a beginning of the generation of the Son. "God," he says, "willing that the law of creation should be impressed upon the Hebrews, did not appoint the first day of generation

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<sup>915</sup> *i. e.* with the subject of discussion, the generation of the Only-begotten.





for the end of creation, or to be the evidence of its beginning; for He gave them as the memorial of the creation, not the first day of generation, but the seventh, whereon He rested from His works.” Will any one believe that this was written by Eunomius, and that the words cited have not been inserted by us, by way of misrepresenting his composition so as to make him appear ridiculous to our readers, in dragging in to prove his point matters that have nothing to do with the question? For the matter in hand was to show, as he undertook to do, that the Son, not previously existing, came into being; and that in being generated, He took a beginning of generation, and of cessation<sup>916</sup>,—His generation being protracted in time, as it were by a kind of travail. And what is his resource for establishing this? The fact that the people of the Hebrews, according to the Law, keep sabbath on the seventh day! How well the evidence agrees with the matter in hand! Because the Jew honours his sabbath by idleness, the fact, as he says, is proved that the Lord both had a beginning of birth and ceased being born! How many other testimonies on this matter has our author passed by, not at all of less weight than that which he employs to establish the point at issue!—the circumcision on the eighth day, the week of unleavened bread, the mystery on the fourteenth day of the moon’s course, the sacrifices of purification, the observation of the lepers, the ram, the calf, the heifer, the scapegoat, the he-goat. If these things are far removed from the point, let those who are so much interested in the Jewish mysteries tell us how that particular matter is within range of the question. We judge it to be mean and unmanly to trample on the fallen, and shall proceed to enquire, from what follows in his writings, whether there is anything there of such a kind as to give trouble to his opponent. All, then, that he maintains in the next passage, as to the impropriety of supposing anything intermediate between the Father and the Son, I shall pass by, as being, in a sense, in agreement with our doctrine. For it would be alike indiscriminating and unfair not to distinguish in his remarks what is irreproachable, and what is blamable, seeing that, while he fights against his own statements, he does not follow his own admissions, speaking of the immediate character of the connection while refusing to admit its continuity, and conceiving that nothing was before the Son and having some suspicion that the Son *was* while yet contending that He came into being when He was not. We shall spend but a short time on these points (since the argument has already been established beforehand), and then proceed to handle the arguments proposed.

It is not allowable for the same person to set nothing above the existence of the Only-begotten, and to say that before His generation He was not, but that He was generated *then* when the Father willed. For “*then*” and “*when*” have a sense which specially and properly refers to the denoting of time, according to the common use of men who speak soundly, and according to their signification in Scripture. One may take “*then* shall they say among the heathen<sup>917</sup>,” and “*when* I sent you<sup>918</sup>”

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<sup>916</sup> The genitive ληξέως is rather awkward; it may be explained, however, as dependent upon ἀρχήν; “He began to be generated: He began to cease being generated.”

<sup>917</sup> Ps. cxxvi. 3.

<sup>918</sup> S. Luke xxii. 35.

and “*then* shall the kingdom of heaven be likened<sup>919</sup>,” and countless similar phrases through the whole of Scripture, to prove this point, that the ordinary Scriptural use employs these parts of speech to denote time. If therefore, as our opponent allows, time was not, the signifying of time surely disappears too: and if this did not exist, it will necessarily be replaced by eternity in our conception<sup>920</sup>. For in the phrase “was not” there is surely implied “once”: as, if he should speak of “not being,” without the qualification “once,” he would also deny his existence *now*: but if he admits His present existence, and contends against His eternity, it is surely not “not being” *absolutely*, but “not being” *once* which is present to his mind. And as this phrase is utterly unreal, unless it rests upon the signification of time, it would be foolish and idle to say that nothing was before the Son, and yet to maintain that the Son did not always exist. For if there is neither place nor time, nor any other creature where the Word that was in the beginning is not, the statement that the Lord “once was not” is entirely removed from the region of orthodox doctrine. So he is at variance not so much with us as with himself, who declares that the Only-begotten both was and was not. For in confessing that the conjunction of the Son with the Father is not interrupted by anything, He clearly testifies to His eternity. But if he should say that the Son was not in the Father, we shall not ourselves say anything against such a statement, but shall oppose to it the Scripture which declares that the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son, without adding to the phrase “once” or “when” or “then,” but testifying His eternity by this affirmative and unqualified utterance.

§4. *Then, having shown that Eunomius’ calumny against the great Basil, that he called the Only-begotten “Ungenerate,” is false, and having again with much ingenuity discussed the eternity, being, and endlessness of the Only-begotten, and the creation of light and of darkness, he concludes the book.*

With regard to his attempting to show that we say the Only-begotten God is ungenerate, it is as though he should say that we actually define the Father to be begotten: for either statement is of the same absurdity, or rather of the same blasphemous character. If, therefore, he has made up his mind to slander us, let him add the other charge as well, and spare nothing by which it may be in his power more violently to exasperate his hearers against us. But if one of these charges is withheld because its calumnious nature is apparent, why is the other made? For it is just the same thing, as we have said, so far as the impiety goes, to call the Son ungenerate and to call the Father generated. Now if any such phrase can be found in our writings, in which the Son is spoken of as ungenerate, we shall give the final vote against ourselves: but if he is fabricating false charges and calumnies

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<sup>919</sup> S. Matt. xxv. 1

<sup>920</sup> The phrase is obscure, and the text possibly corrupt. To read τὰς ἐννοίας (as Gulonius seems to have done) would simplify matters: but the general sense is clear—that the denial of the existence of time implies eternity.

at his pleasure, making any fictitious statement he pleases to slander our doctrines, this fact may serve with sensible men for an evidence of our orthodoxy, that while truth itself fights on our side, he brings forward a lie to accuse our doctrine and makes up an indictment for unorthodoxy that has no relation to our statements. To these charges, however, we can give a concise answer. As we judge that man accursed who says that the Only-begotten God is ungenerate, let him in turn anathematize the man who lays it down that He who was in the beginning “once was not.” For by such a method it will be shown who brings his charges truly, and who calumniously. But if we deny his accusations, if, when we speak of a Father, we understand as implied in that word a Son also, and if, when we use the name “Son,” we declare that He really is what He is called, being shed forth by generation from the ungenerate Light, how can the calumny of those who persist that we say the Only-begotten is ungenerate fail to be manifest? Yet we shall not, because we say that He exists by generation, therefore admit that He “once was not.” For every one knows that the contradiction between “being” and “not being” is immediate, so that the affirmation of one of these terms is absolutely the destruction of the other, and that, just as “being” is the same in regard to every time at which any of the things that “are” is supposed to have its existence (for the sky, and stars, and sun, and the rest of the things that “are,” are not more in a state of being now than they were yesterday, or the day before, or at any previous time), so the meaning of “not being” expresses non-existence equally at every time, whether one speaks of it in reference to what is earlier or to what is later. For any of the things that do not exist<sup>921</sup> is no more in a state of “not being” now than if it were non-existent before, but the idea of “not being” is one applied to that which “is not” at any distance of time. And for this reason, in speaking of living creatures, while we use different words to denote the dissolution into a state of “not being” of that which has been, and the condition of non-existence of that which has never had an entrance into being, and say either that a thing has never come into being at all, or that which was generated has died, yet by either form of speech we equally represent by our words “non-existence.” For as day is bounded on each side by night, yet the parts of the night which bound it are not named alike, but we speak of one as “after night-fall,” and of the other as “before dawn,” while that which both phrases denote is night, so, if any one looks on that which *is not* in contrast to that which *is*, he will give different names to that state which is antecedent to formation and to that which follows the dissolution of what was formed, yet will conceive as one the condition which both phrases signify—the condition which is antecedent to formation and the condition following on dissolution after formation. For the state of “not being” of that which has not been generated, and of that which has died, save for the difference of the names, are the same,—with the exception of the account which we take of the hope of the

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<sup>921</sup> Reading τῶν μὴ ὑφαιστώτων, as the sense seems to require, unless we connect τῶν ὑφαιστώτων with οὐκ ἔστιν. In this case the sense will be practically the same, but the sentence will be extremely involved. The point which S. Gregory desires to enforce is that “not being,” or “non-existence,” is one and the same thing, whether it is regarded as past, present, or future, and that it is, in any of these aspects, an idea which we cannot without impiety attach to the Divine Person of the Son.

resurrection. Now since we learn from Scripture that the Only-begotten God is the Prince of Life, the very life, and light, and truth, and all that is honourable in word or thought, we say that it is absurd and impious to contemplate, in conjunction with Him Who really is, the opposite conception, whether of dissolution tending to corruption, or of non-existence before formation: but as we extend our thought in every direction to what is to follow, or to what was before the ages, we nowhere pause in our conceptions at the condition of “not being,” judging it to tend equally to impiety to cut short the Divine being by non-existence at any time whatever. For it is the same thing to say that the immortal life is mortal, that the truth is a lie, that light is darkness, and that that which is is not. He, accordingly, who refuses to allow that He will at some future time cease to be, will also refuse to allow that He “once was not,” avoiding, according to our view, the same impiety on either hand: for, as no death cuts short the endlessness of the life of the Only-begotten, so, as we look back, no period of nonexistence will terminate His life in its course towards eternity, that that which in reality *is* may be clear of all community with that which in reality *is not*. For this cause the Lord, desiring that His disciples might be far removed from this error (that they might never, by themselves searching for something antecedent to the existence of the Only-begotten, be led by their reasoning to the idea of non-existence), saith, “I am in the Father, and the Father in Me<sup>922</sup>,” in the sense that neither is that which *is not* conceived in that which *is*, nor that which *is* in that which *is not*. And here the very order of the phrase explains the orthodox doctrine; for because the Father is not of the Son, but the Son of the Father, therefore He says, “I am in the Father,” showing the fact that He is not of another but of Him, and then reverses the phrase to, “and the Father in Me,” indicating that he who, in his curious speculation, passes beyond the Son, passes also beyond the conception of the Father: for He who is in anything cannot be found outside of that in which He is: so that the man who, while not denying that the Father is in the Son, yet imagines that he has in any degree apprehended the Father as external to the Son, is talking idly. Idle too are the wanderings of our adversaries’ fighting about shadows touching the matter of “ungeneracy,” proceeding without solid foundation by means of nonentities. Yet if I am to bring more fully to light the whole absurdity of their argument, let me be allowed to spend a little longer on this speculation. As they say that the Only-begotten God came into existence “later,” after the Father, this “unbegotten” of theirs, whatever they imagine it to be, is discovered of necessity to exhibit with itself the idea of evil. Who knows not, that, just as the non-existent is contrasted with the existent, so with every good thing or name is contrasted the opposite conception, as “bad” with “good,” “falsehood” with “truth,” “darkness” with “light,” and all the rest that are similarly opposed to one another, where the opposition admits of no middle term, and it is impossible that the two should co-exist, but the presence of the one destroys its opposite, and with the withdrawal of the other takes place the appearance of its contrary?

Now these points being conceded to us, the further point is also clear to any one, that, as Moses says darkness was before the creation of light, so also in the case of the Son (if, according to the



heretical statement, the Father “made Him at that time when He willed”), before He made Him, that Light which the Son is was not; and, light not yet being, it is impossible that its opposite should not be. For we learn also from the other instances that nothing that comes from the Creator is at random, but that which was lacking is added by creation to existing things. Thus it is quite clear that if God did make the Son, He made Him by reason of a deficiency in the nature of things. As, then, while sensible light was still lacking, there was darkness, and darkness would certainly have prevailed had light not come into being, so also, when the Son “as yet was not,” the very and true Light, and all else that the Son is, did not exist. For even according to the evidence of heresy, that which exists has no need of coming into being; if therefore He made Him, He assuredly made that which did not exist. Thus, according to their view, before the Son came into being, neither had truth come into being, nor the intelligible Light, nor the fount of life, nor, generally, the nature of any thing that is excellent and good. Now, concurrently with the exclusion of each of these, there is found to subsist the opposite conception: and if light was not, it cannot be denied that darkness *was*; and so with the rest,—in place of each of these more excellent conceptions it is clearly impossible that its opposite did not exist in place of that which was lacking. It is therefore a necessary conclusion, that when the Father, as the heretics say, “had not as yet willed to make the Son,” none of those things which the Son is being yet existent, we must say that He was surrounded by darkness instead of Light, by falsehood instead of truth, by death instead of life, by evil instead of good. For He Who creates, creates things that are not; “That which is,” as Eunomius says, “needs not generation”; and of those things which are considered as opposed, the better cannot be non-existent, except by the existence of the worse. These are the gifts with which the wisdom of heresy honours the Father, by which it degrades the eternity of the Son, and ascribes to God and the Father, before the “production” of the Son, the whole catalogue of evils!

And let no one think to rebut by examples from the rest of creation the demonstration of the doctrinal absurdity which results from this argument. One will perhaps say that, as, when the sky was not, there was no opposite to it, so we are not absolutely compelled to admit that if the Son, Who is Truth, had not come into existence, the opposite did exist. To him we may reply that to the sky there is no corresponding opposite, unless one were to say that its non-existence is opposed to its existence. But to virtue is certainly opposed that which is vicious (and the Lord is virtue); so that when the sky was not, it does not follow that anything *was*; but when good was not, its opposite *was*; thus he who says that good was not, will certainly allow, even without intending it, that evil *was*. “But the Father also,” he says<sup>923</sup>, “is absolute virtue, and life, and light unapproachable, and all that is exalted in word or thought: so that there is no necessity to suppose, when the Only-begotten Light was not, the existence of that darkness which is His corresponding opposite.” But this is just what I say, that darkness never was; for the light never “was not,” for “the light,” as the prophecy says, “is always in the light<sup>924</sup>.” If, however, according to the heretical doctrine, the “ungenerate

<sup>923</sup> The words are probably those of the imaginary objector; but they may be a citation from Eunomius.

<sup>924</sup> The reference is probably to Ps. xxxvi. 9.

light” is one thing, and the “generated light” another, and the one is eternal, while the other comes into existence at a later time, it follows of absolute necessity that in the eternal light we should find no place for the establishment of its opposite; (for if the light always shines, the power of darkness has no place in it;) and that in the case of the light which comes into being, as they say, afterwards, it is impossible that the light should shine forth save out of darkness; and the interval of darkness between eternal light and that which arises later will be clearly marked in every way.<sup>925</sup> For there would have been no need of the making of the later light, if that which was created had not been of utility for some purpose: and the one use of light is that of the dispersion by its means of the prevailing gloom. Now the light which exists without creation is what it is by nature by reason of itself; but the created light clearly comes into being by reason of something else. It must be then that its existence was preceded by darkness, on account of which the light was of necessity created, and it is not possible by any reasoning to make plausible the view that darkness did not precede the manifestation of the Only-begotten Light,—on the supposition, that is, that He is believed to have been “made” at a later time. Surely such a doctrine is beyond all impiety! It is therefore clearly shown that the Father of truth did not make the truth at a time when it was not; but, being the fountain of light and truth, and of all good, He shed forth from Himself that Only-begotten Light of truth by which the glory of His Person is expressly imaged; so that the blasphemy of those who say that the Son was a later addition to God by way of creation is at all points refuted.



## Book X.

§1. *The tenth book discusses the unattainable and incomprehensible character of the enquiry into entities. And herein he strikingly sets forth the points concerning the nature and formation of the ant, and the passage in the Gospel, “I am the door” and “the way,” and also discusses the attribution and interpretation of the Divine names, and the episode of the children of Benjamin.*

LET us, however, keep to our subject. A little further on he contends against those who acknowledge that human nature is too weak to conceive what cannot be grasped, and with lofty boasts enlarges on this topic on this wise, making light of our belief on the matter in these words:—“For it by no means follows that, if some one’s mind, blinded by malignity, and for that reason unable to see anything in front or above its head, is but moderately competent for the apprehension of truth, we ought on that ground to think that the discovery of reality is unattainable by the rest of mankind.” But I should say to him that he who declares that the discovery of reality

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<sup>925</sup> *i.e.* the “later light” must have arisen from darkness; therefore darkness must have intervened between the “eternal light” and the “later light.”

is attainable, has of course advanced his own intellect by some method and logical process through the knowledge of existent things, and after having been trained in matters that are comparatively small and easily grasped by way of apprehension, has, when thus prepared, flung his apprehensive fancy upon those objects which transcend all conception. Let, then, the man who boasts that he has attained the knowledge of real existence, interpret to us the real nature of the most trivial object that is before our eyes, that by what is knowable he may warrant our belief touching what is secret: let him explain by reason what is the nature of the ant, whether its life is held together by breath and respiration, whether it is regulated by vital organs like other animals, whether its body has a framework of bones, whether the hollows of the bones are filled with marrow, whether its joints are united by the tension of sinews and ligaments, whether the position of the sinews is maintained by enclosures of muscles and glands, whether the marrow extends along the vertebræ from the sinciput to the tail, whether it imparts to the limbs that are moved the power of motion by means of the enclosure of sinewy membrane; whether the creature has a liver, and in connection with the liver a gall-bladder; whether it has kidneys and heart, arteries and veins, membranes and diaphragm; whether it is externally smooth or covered with hair; whether it is distinguished by the division into male and female; in what part of its body is located the power of sight and hearing; whether it enjoys the sense of smell; whether its feet are undivided or articulated; how long it lives; what is the method in which they derive generation one from another, and what is the period of gestation; how it is that all ants do not crawl, nor are all winged, but some belong to the creatures that move along the ground, while others are borne aloft in the air. Let him, then, who boasts that he has grasped the knowledge of real existence, disclose to us awhile the nature of the ant, and then, and not till then, let him discourse on the nature of the power that surpasses all understanding. But if he has not yet ascertained by his knowledge the nature of the tiny ant, how comes he to vaunt that by the apprehension of reason he has grasped Him Who in Himself controls all creation, and to say that those who own in themselves the weakness of human nature, have the perceptions of their souls darkened, and can neither reach anything in front of them, nor anything above their head?

But now let us see what understanding he who has the knowledge of existent things possesses beyond the rest of the world. Let us listen to his arrogant utterance:—"Surely it would have been idle for the Lord to call Himself 'the door,' if there were none to pass through to the understanding and contemplation of the Father, and it would have been idle for Him to call Himself 'the way,' if He gave no facility to those who wish to come to the Father. And how could He be a light, without lightening men, without illuminating the eye of their soul to understand both Himself and the transcendent Light?" Well, if he were here enumerating some arguments from his own head, that evade the understanding of the hearers by their subtlety, there would perhaps be a possibility of being deceived by the ingenuity of the argument, as his underlying thought frequently escapes the reader's notice. But since he alleges the Divine words, of course no one blames those who believe that their inspired teaching is the common property of all. "Since then," he says, "the Lord was named 'a door,' it follows from hence that the essence of God may be comprehended by man." But the Gospel does not admit of this meaning. Let us hear the Divine utterance itself. "I am the door,"

Christ says; “by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture<sup>926</sup>.” Which then of these is the knowledge of the essence? For as several things are here said, and each of them has its own special meaning, it is impossible to refer them all to the idea of the essence, lest the Deity should be thought to be compounded of different elements; and yet it is not easy to find which of the phrases just quoted can most properly be applied to that subject. The Lord is “the door,” “By Me,” He says, “if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and shall find pasture.” Are we to say<sup>927</sup> “entrance” of which he speaks in place of the essence of God, or “salvation” of those that enter in, or “going out,” or “pasture,” or “finding”?—for each of these is peculiar in its significance, and does not agree in meaning with the rest. For to get within appears obviously contrary to “going out,” and so with the other phrases. For “pasture,” in its proper meaning, is one thing, and “finding” another thing distinct from it. Which, then, of these is the essence of the Father supposed to be? For assuredly one cannot, by uttering all these phrases that disagree one with another in signification, intend to indicate by incompatible terms that Essence which is simple and uncompounded. And how can the word hold good, “No man hath seen God at any time<sup>928</sup>” and, “Whom no man hath seen nor can see<sup>929</sup>” and, “There shall no man see the face of the Lord and live<sup>930</sup>” if to be inside the door, or outside, or the finding pasture, denote the essence of the Father? For truly He is at the same time a “door of encompassing<sup>931</sup>” and a “house of defence<sup>932</sup>” as David calls Him, and through Himself He receives them that enter, and in Himself He saves those who have come within, and again by Himself He leads them forth to the pasture of virtues, and becomes all things to them that are in the way of salvation, that so He may make Himself that which the needs of each demand,—both way, and guide, and “door of encompassing,” and “house of defence,” and “water of comfort<sup>933</sup>” and “green pasture<sup>934</sup>” which in the Gospel He calls “pasture”: but our new divine says that the Lord has been called “the door” because of the knowledge of the essence of the Father. Why then does he not force into the same significance the titles, “Rock,” and “Stone,” and “Fountain,” and “Tree,” and the rest, that so he might obtain evidence for his own theory by the multitude of strange testimonies, as he is well able to apply to each of these the same account which he has given of the Way, the Door, and the Light? But, as I am so taught by the inspired Scripture, I boldly affirm that He Who is above every name has for us many names, receiving them

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926 S. John x. 9

927 Reading εἴπωμεν, for which Oehler’s text substitutes εἴπομεν

928 S. John i. 18

929 1 Tim. vi. 16.

930 Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 20.

931 Ps. cxli. 3 (LXX.).

932 Ps. xxxi. 3.

933 Ps. xxiii. 2.

934 Ps. xxiii. 2.



in accordance with the variety of His gracious dealings with us<sup>935</sup>, being called the Light when He disperses the gloom of ignorance, and the Life when He grants the boon of immortality, and the Way when He guides us from error to the truth; so also He is termed a “tower of strength<sup>936</sup>,” and a “city of encompassing<sup>937</sup>,” and a fountain, and a rock, and a vine, and a physician, and resurrection, and all the like, with reference to us, imparting Himself under various aspects by virtue of His benefits to us-ward. But those who are keen-sighted beyond human power, who see the incomprehensible, but overlook what may be comprehended, when they use such titles to expound the essences, are positive that they not only see, but measure Him Whom no man hath seen nor can see, but do not with the eye of their soul discern the Faith, which is the only thing within the compass of our observation, valuing before this the knowledge which they obtain from ratiocination. Just so I have heard the sacred record laying blame upon the sons of Benjamin who did not regard the law, but could shoot within a hair’s breadth<sup>938</sup>, wherein, methinks, the word exhibited their eager pursuit of an idle object, that they were far-darting and dexterous aimers at things that were useless and unsubstantial, but ignorant and regardless of what was manifestly for their benefit. For after what I have quoted, the history goes on to relate what befel them, how, when they had run madly after the iniquity of Sodom, and the people of Israel had taken up arms against them in full force, they were utterly destroyed. And it seems to me to be a kindly thought to warn young archers not to wish to shoot within a hair’s-breadth, while they have no eyes for the door of the faith, but rather to drop their idle labour about the incomprehensible, and not to lose the gain that is ready to their hand, which is found by faith alone.



§2. *He then wonderfully displays the Eternal Life, which is Christ, to those who confess Him not, and applies to them the mournful lamentation of Jeremiah over Jehoiakim, as being closely allied to Montanus and Sabellius.*

But now that I have surveyed what remains of his treatise I shrink from conducting my argument further, as a shudder runs through my heart at his words. For he wishes to show that the Son is something different from eternal life, while, unless eternal life is found in the Son, our faith will be proved to be idle, and our preaching to be vain, baptism a superfluity, the agonies of the martyrs all for nought, the toils of the Apostles useless and unprofitable for the life of men. For why did they preach Christ, in Whom, according to Eunomius, there does not reside the power of eternal

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935 This point has been already discussed by S. Gregory in the second and third books. See above. pp. 119, 149. It is also dealt with in the short treatise “On the Faith,” addressed to Simplicius, which will be found in this volume.

936 Ps. lxi. 3.

937 Ps. xxxi. 21 (LXX.).

938 Cf. Judges xx. 16.

life? Why do they make mention of those who had believed in Christ, unless it was through Him that they were to be partakers of eternal life? “For the intelligence,” he says, “of those who have believed in the Lord, overleaping all sensible and intellectual existence, cannot stop even at the generation of the Son, but speeds beyond even this in its yearning for eternal life, eager to meet the First.” What ought I most to bewail in this passage? that the wretched men do not think that eternal life is in the Son, or that they conceive of the Person of the Only-begotten in so grovelling and earthly a fashion, that they fancy they can mount in their reasonings upon His beginning, and so look by the power of their own intellect beyond the life of the Son, and, leaving the generation of the Lord somewhere beneath them, can speed onward beyond this in their yearning for eternal life? For the meaning of what I have quoted is nothing else than this, that the human mind, scrutinizing the knowledge of real existence, and lifting itself above the sensible and intelligible creation, will leave God the Word, Who was in the beginning, below itself, just as it has left below it all other things, and itself comes to be in Him in Whom God the Word was not, treading, by mental activity, regions which lie beyond the life of the Son, there searching for eternal life, where the Only-begotten God is not. “For in its yearning for eternal life,” he says, “it is borne in thought, beyond the Son”—clearly as though it had not in the Son found that which it was seeking. If the eternal life is not in the Son, then assuredly He Who said, “I am the life<sup>939</sup>,” will be convicted of falsehood, or else He is life, it is true, but not eternal life. But that which is not eternal is of course limited in duration. And such a kind of life is common to the irrational animals as well as to men. Where then is the majesty of the very life, if even the irrational creation share it? and how will the Word or Divine Reason<sup>940</sup> be the same as the Life, if this finds a home, in virtue of the life which is but temporary, in irrational creatures? For if, according to the great John, the Word is Life<sup>941</sup>, but that life is temporary and not eternal, as their heresy holds, and if, moreover, the temporary life has place in other creatures, what is the logical consequence? Why, either that irrational animals are rational, or that the Reason must be confessed to be irrational. Have we any further need of words to confute their accursed and malignant blasphemy? Do such statements even pretend to conceal their intention of denying the Lord? For if the Apostle plainly says that what is not eternal is temporary<sup>942</sup>, and if these people see eternal life in the essence of the Father alone, and if by alienating the Son from the Nature of the Father they also cut Him off from eternal life, what is this but a manifest denial and rejection of the faith in the Lord? while the Apostle clearly says that those who “in this life only have hope in Christ are of all men most miserable<sup>943</sup>.” If then the Lord is life, but not eternal life, assuredly the life is temporal, and but for a day, that which is operative only for

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939 S. John xi. 25

940 ὁ λόγος: the idea of “reason” must be expressed to convey the force required for the argument following.

941 Cf. S. John i. 4

942 The reference is perhaps to 2 Cor. iv. 18.

943 Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 19.

the present time, or else<sup>944</sup> the Apostle bemoans those who have hope, as having missed the true life.

However, they who are enlightened in Eunomius' fashion pass the Son by, and are carried in their reasonings beyond Him, seeking eternal life in Him Who is contemplated as outside and apart from the Only-begotten. What ought one to say to such evils as these,—save whatever calls forth lamentation and weeping? Alas, how can we groan over this wretched and pitiable generation, bringing forth a crop of such deadly mischiefs? In days of yore the zealous Jeremiah bewailed the people of Israel, when they gave an evil consent to Jehoiakim who led the way to idolatry, and were condemned to captivity under the Assyrians in requital for their unlawful worship, exiled from the sanctuary and banished far from the inheritance of their fathers. Yet more fitting does it seem to me that these lamentations be chanted when the imitator of Jehoiakim draws away those whom he deceives to this new kind of idolatry, banishing them from their ancestral inheritance,—I mean the Faith. They too, in a way corresponding to the Scriptural record, are carried away captive to Babylon from Jerusalem that is above,—that is from the Church of God to this confusion of pernicious doctrines,—for<sup>945</sup> Babylon means “confusion.” And even as Jehoiakim was mutilated, so this man, having voluntarily deprived himself of the light of the truth, has become a prey to the Babylonian despot, never having learned, poor wretch, that the Gospel enjoins us to behold eternal life alike in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as the Word has thus spoken concerning the Father, that to know Him is life eternal<sup>946</sup>, and concerning the Son, that every one that believeth on Him hath eternal life<sup>947</sup>, and concerning the Holy Spirit, that to Him that hath received His grace it shall be a well of water springing up unto eternal life<sup>948</sup>. Accordingly every one that yearns for eternal life when he has found the Son,—I mean the true Son, and not the Son falsely so called—has found in Him in its entirety what he longed for, because He is life and hath life in Himself<sup>949</sup>. But this man, so subtle in mind, so keen-sighted of heart, does not by his extreme acuteness of vision discover life in the Son, but, having passed Him over and left Him behind as a hindrance in the way to that for which he searches he there seeks eternal life where he thinks the true Life not to be! What could we conceive more to be abhorred than this for profanity, or more melancholy as an occasion of lamentation? But that the charge of Sabellianism and Montanism should be repeatedly urged against our doctrines, is much the same as if one should lay to our charge the blasphemy of the Anomœans. For if one were carefully to investigate the falsehood of

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<sup>944</sup> If we might read ἡ for ἦ the sense of the passage would be materially simplified: —“His life is temporal, that life which operates only for the present time, whereon those who hope are the objects of the Apostle's pity.”

<sup>945</sup> Altering Oehler's punctuation.

<sup>946</sup> Cf. S. John xvii. 3

<sup>947</sup> Cf. S. John iii. 36

<sup>948</sup> Cf. S. John iv. 14

<sup>949</sup> Cf. S. John v. 26

these heresies, he would find that they have great similarity to the error of Eunomius. For each of them affects the Jew in his doctrine, admitting neither the Only-begotten God nor the Holy Spirit to share the Deity of the God Whom they call “Great,” and “First.” For Whom Sabellius calls God of the three names, Him does Eunomius term unbegotten: but neither contemplates the Godhead in the Trinity of Persons. Who then is really akin to Sabellius let the judgment of those who read our argument decide. Thus far for these matters.

§3. *He then shows the eternity of the Son’s generation, and the inseparable identity of His essence with Him that begat Him, and likens the folly of Eunomius to children playing with sand.*

But since, in what follows, he is active in stirring up the ill savour of his disgusting attempts, whereby he tries to make out that the Only-begotten God “once was not,” it will be well, as our mind on this head has been made pretty clear by our previous arguments, no longer to plunge our argument also in what is likewise bad, except perhaps that it is not unseasonable to add this one point, having selected it from the multitude. He says (some one having remarked that “the property of not being begotten is equally associated with the essence of the Father<sup>950</sup>”), “The argument proceeds by like steps to those by which it came to a conclusion in the case of the Son.” The orthodox doctrine is clearly strengthened by the attack of its adversaries, the doctrine, namely, that we ought not to think that not to be begotten or to be begotten are identical with the essence<sup>951</sup>, but that these should be contemplated, it is true, in the subject, while the subject in its proper definition is something else beyond these, and since no difference is found in the subject, because the difference of “begotten” and “unbegotten” is apart from the essence, and does not affect it, it necessarily follows that the essence must be allowed to be in both Persons without variation. Let us moreover inquire, over and above what has been already said, into this point, in what sense he says that “generation” is alien from the Father,—whether he does so conceiving of it as an essence or an operation. If he conceives it to be an operation, it is clearly equally connected with its result and with its author, as in every kind of production one may see the operation alike in the product and the producer, appearing in the production of the effects and not separated from their artificer. But if he terms “generation” an essence separate from the essence of the Father, admitting that the Lord came into being therefrom, then he plainly puts this in the place of the Father as regards the Only-begotten, so that two Fathers are conceived in the case of the Son, one a Father in name alone, Whom he calls “the Ungenerate,” Who has nothing to do with generation, and the other, which he calls “generation,” performing the part of a Father to the Only-begotten.

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<sup>950</sup> Presumably the quotation from the unknown author, if completed, would run, “as that of being begotten is associated with the essence of the Son.”

<sup>951</sup> If the property of not being begotten is “associated with” the essence, it clearly cannot be the essence, as Eunomius elsewhere maintains it to be: hence the phrase which he here adopts concedes S. Gregory’s position on this point.

And this is brought home even more by the statements of Eunomius himself than by our own arguments. For in what follows, he says:—“God, being without generation, is also prior to that which is generate,” and a little further on, “for He Whose existence arises from being generated did not exist before He was generated.” Accordingly, if the Father has nothing to do with generation, and if it is from generation that the Son derives His being, then the Father has no action in respect of the subsistence of the Son, and is apart from all connection with generation, from which the Son draws His being. If, then, the Father is alien from the generation of the Son, they either invent for the Son another Father under the name of “generation,” or in their wisdom make out the Son to be self-begotten and self-generated. You see the confusion of mind of the man who exhibits his ignorance to us up and down in his own argument, how his profanity wanders in many paths, or rather in places where no path is, without advancing to its mark by any trustworthy guidance; and as one may see in the case of infants, when in their childish sport they imitate the building of houses with sand, that what they build is not framed on any plan, or by any rules of art, to resemble the original, but first they make something at haphazard, and in silly fashion, and then take counsel what to call it,—this penetration I discern in our author. For after getting together words of impiety according to what first comes into his head, like a heap of sand, he begins to cast about to see whither his unintelligible profanity tends, growing up as it does spontaneously from what he has said, without any rational sequence. For I do not imagine that he originally proposed to invent generation as an actual subsistence standing to the essence of the Son in the place of the Father, nor that it was part of our rhetorician’s plan that the Father should be considered as alien from the generation of the Son, nor was the absurdity of self-generation deliberately introduced. But all such absurdities have been emitted by our author without reflection, so that, as regards them, the man who so blunders is not even worth much refutation, as he knows, to borrow the Apostle’s words, “neither what he says, nor whereof he affirms<sup>952</sup>.”

“For He Whose existence arises from generation,” he says, “did not exist before generation.” If he here uses the term “generation” of the Father, I agree with Him, and there is no opponent. For one may mean the same thing by either phrase, by saying either that Abraham begat Isaac, or, that Abraham was the father of Isaac. Since then to be father is the same as to have begotten, if any one shifts the words from one form of speech to the other, paternity will be shown to be identical with generation. If, therefore, what Eunomius says is this, “He Whose existence is derived from the Father was not before the Father,” the statement is sound, and we give our vote in favour of it. But if he is recurring in the phrase to that generation of which we have spoken before, and says that it is separated from the Father but associated with the Son, then I think it waste of time to linger over the consideration of the unintelligible. For whether he thinks generation to be a self-existent object, or whether by the name he is carried in thought to that which has no actual existence, I have not to this day been able to find out from his language. For his fluid and baseless argument lends itself alike to either supposition, inclining to one side or to the other according to the fancy of the thinker.

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<sup>952</sup> 1 Tim. i. 7.

§4. *After this he shows that the Son, who truly is, and is in the bosom of the Father, is simple and uncompounded, and that, He Who redeemed us from bondage is not under dominion of the Father, nor in a state of slavery: and that otherwise not He alone, but also the Father Who is in the Son and is One with Him, must be a slave; and that the word "being" is formed from the word to "be." And having excellently and notably discussed all these matters, he concludes the book.*

But not yet has the most grievous part of his profanity been examined, which the sequel of his treatise goes on to add. Well, let us consider his words sentence by sentence. Yet I know not how I can dare to let my mouth utter the horrible and godless language of him who fights against Christ. For I fear lest, like some baleful drugs, the remnant of the pernicious bitterness should be deposited upon the lips through which the words pass. "He that cometh unto God," says the Apostle, "must believe that He is<sup>953</sup>." Accordingly, true existence is the special distinction of Godhead. But Eunomius makes out Him Who truly is, either not to exist at all, or not to exist in a proper sense, which is just the same as not existing at all; for he who does not properly exist, does not really exist at all; as, for example, he is said to "run" in a dream who in that state fancies he is exerting himself in the race, while, since he untruly acts the semblance of the real race, his fancy that he is running is not for this reason a race. But even though in an inexact sense it is so called, still the name is given to it falsely. Accordingly, he who dares to assert that the Only-begotten God either does not properly exist, or does not exist at all, manifestly blots out of his creed all faith in Him. For who can any longer believe in something non-existent? or who would resort to Him Whose being has been shown by the enemies of the true Lord to be improper and unsubstantial?

But that our statement may not be thought to be unfair to our opponents, I will set side by side with it the language of the impious persons, which runs as follows:—"He Who is in the bosom of the Existent, and Who is in the beginning and is with God, not being, or at all events not being in a strict sense, even though Basil, neglecting this distinction and addition, uses the title of 'Existent' interchangeably, contrary to the truth—" What do you say? that He Who is in the Father is not, and that He Who is in the beginning, and Who is in the bosom of the Father, is not, for this very reason, that He is in the beginning and is in the Father, and is discerned in the bosom of the Existent, and hence does not in a strict sense exist, because He is in the Existent? Alas for the idle and irrational tenets! Now for the first time we have heard this piece of vain babbling,—that the Lord, by Whom are all things, does not in a strict sense exist. And we have not yet got to the end of this appalling statement; but something yet more startling remains behind, that he not only affirms that He does not exist, or does not strictly speaking exist, but also that the Nature in which He is conceived to reside is various and composite. For he says "not being, or not being simple." But that to which simplicity does not belong is manifestly various and composite. How then can the same Person be at once non-existent and composite in essence? For one of two alternatives they must choose: if

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Heb. xi. 6.

they predicate of Him non-existence they cannot speak of Him as composite, or if they affirm Him to be composite they cannot rob Him of existence. But that their blasphemy may assume many and varied shapes, it jumps at every godless notion when it wishes to contrast Him with the existent, affirming that, strictly speaking, He does not exist, and in His relation to the uncompounded Nature denying Him the attribute of simplicity:—"not existing, not existing simply, not existing in the strict sense." Who among those who have transgressed the word and forsworn the Faith was ever so lavish in utterances denying the Lord? He has stood up in rivalry with the divine proclamation of John. For as often as the latter has attested "was" of the Word, so often does he apply to Him Who is an opposing "was not." And he contends against the holy lips of our father Basil, bringing against him the charge that he "neglects these distinctions," when he says that He Who is in the Father, and in the beginning, and in the bosom of the Father, exists, holding the view that the addition of "in the beginning," and "in the bosom of the Father," bars the real existence of Him Who is. Vain learning! What things the teachers of deceit teach! what strange doctrines they introduce to their hearers! they instruct them that that which is in something else does not exist! So, Eunomius, since your heart and brain are within you, neither of them, according to your distinction, exists. For if the Only-begotten God does not, strictly speaking, exist, for this reason, that He is in the bosom of the Father, then everything that is in something else is thereby excluded from existence. But certainly your heart exists in you, and not independently; therefore, according to your view, you must either say that it does not exist at all, or that it does not exist in the strict sense. However, the ignorance and profanity of his language are so gross and so glaring, as to be obvious even before our argument, at all events to all persons of sense: but that his folly as well as his impiety may be more manifest, we will add thus much to what has gone before. If one may only say that that in the strict sense exists, of which the word of Scripture attests the existence detached from all relation to anything else, why do they, like those who carry water, perish with thirst when they have it in their power to drink? Even this man, though he had at hand the antidote to his blasphemy against the Son, closed his eyes and ran past it as though fearing to be saved, and charges Basil with unfairness for having suppressed the qualifying words, and for only quoting the "was" by itself, in reference to the Only-Begotten. And yet it was quite in his power to see what Basil saw and what every one who has eyes sees. And herein the sublime John seems to me to have been prophetically moved, that the mouths of those fighters against Christ might be stopped, who on the ground of these additions deny the existence, in the strict sense, of the Christ, saying simply and without qualification "The Word was God," and was Life, and was Light<sup>954</sup>, not merely speaking of Him as being in the beginning, and with God, and in the bosom of the Father, so that by their relation the absolute existence of the Lord should be done away. But his assertion that He was God, by this absolute declaration detached from all relation to anything else, cuts off every subterfuge from those who in their reasonings run into impiety; and, in addition to this, there is moreover something else which still more convincingly proves the malignity of our adversaries. For if they

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<sup>954</sup> Cf. S. John i. 1, 4



make out that to exist in something is an indication of not existing in the strict sense, then certainly they allow that not even the Father exists absolutely, as they have learnt in the Gospel, that just as the Son abides in the Father, so the Father abides in the Son, according to the words of the Lord<sup>955</sup>. For to say that the Father is in the Son is equivalent to saying that the Son is in the bosom of the Father. And in passing let us make this further inquiry. When the Son, as they say, “was not,” what did the bosom of the Father contain? For assuredly they must either grant that it was full, or suppose it to have been empty. If then the bosom was full, certainly the Son was that which filled the bosom. But if they imagine that there was some void in the bosom of the Father, they do nothing else than assert of Him perfection by way of augmentation, in the sense that He passed from the state of void and deficiency to the state of fulness and perfection. But “they knew not nor understood,” says David of those that “walk on still in darkness<sup>956</sup>.” For he who has been rendered hostile to the true Light cannot keep his soul in light. For this reason it was that they did not perceive lying ready to their hand in logical sequence that which would have corrected their impiety, smitten, as it were, with blindness, like the men of Sodom.

But he also says that the essence of the Son is controlled by the Father, his exact words being as follows:—“For He Who is and lives because of the Father, does not appropriate this dignity, as the essence which controls even Him attracts to itself the conception of the Existent.” If these doctrines approve themselves to some of the sages “who are without,” let not the Gospels nor the rest of the teaching of the Holy Scripture be in any way disturbed. For what fellowship is there between the creed of Christians and the wisdom that has been made foolish<sup>957</sup>? But if he leans upon the support of the Scriptures, let him show one such declaration from the holy writings, and we will hold our peace. I hear Paul cry aloud, “There is one Lord Jesus Christ<sup>958</sup>.” But Eunomius shouts against Paul, calling Christ a slave. For we recognize no other mark of a slave than to be subject and controlled. The slave is assuredly a slave, but the slave cannot by nature be Lord, even though the term be applied to Him by inexact use. And why should I bring forward the declarations of Paul in evidence of the lordship of the Lord? For Paul’s Master Himself tells His disciples that He is truly Lord, accepting as He does the confession of those who called Him Master and Lord. For He says, “Ye call Me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am<sup>959</sup>.” And in the same way He enjoined that the Father should be called Father by them, saying, “Call no man master upon earth: for one is your Master, even Christ: and call no man father upon earth, for one is your Father, Which is in heaven<sup>960</sup>.” To which then ought we to give heed, as we are thus hemmed in between them?

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955 S. John xiv. 11

956 Cf. Ps. lxxxii. 5.

957 Cf. 1 Cor. i. 20

958 Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

959 Cf. S. John xiii. 13.

960 Cf. S. Matt. xxiii. 8–10.



On one side the Lord Himself, and he who has Christ speaking in him<sup>961</sup>, enjoin us not to think of Him as a slave, but to honour Him even as the Father is honoured, and on the other side Eunomius brings his suit against the Lord, claiming Him as a slave, when he says that He on Whose shoulders rests the government of the universe is under dominion. Can our choice what to do be doubtful, or is the decision which is the more advantageous course unimportant? Shall I slight the advice of Paul, Eunomius? shall I deem the voice of the Truth less trustworthy than thy deceit? But “if I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin<sup>962</sup>.” Since then, He has spoken to them, truly declaring Himself to be Lord, and that He is not falsely named Lord (for He says, “I am,” not “I am called”), what need is there that they should do that, whereon the vengeance is inevitable because they are forewarned?

But perhaps, in answer to this, he will again put forth his accustomed logic, and will say that the same Being is both slave and Lord, dominated by the controlling power but lording it over the rest. These profound distinctions are talked of at the cross-roads, circulated by those who are enamoured of falsehood, who confirm their idle notions about the Deity by illustrations from the circumstances of ordinary life. For since the occurrences of this world give us examples of such arrangements<sup>963</sup> (thus in a wealthy establishment one may see the more active and devoted servant set over his fellow-servants by the command of his master, and so invested with superiority over others in the same rank and station), they transfer this notion to the doctrines concerning the Godhead, so that the Only-begotten God, though subject to the sovereignty of His superior, is no way hindered by the authority of His sovereign in the direction of those inferior to Him. But let us bid farewell to such philosophy, and proceed to discuss this point according to the measure of our intelligence. Do they confess that the Father is by nature Lord, or do they hold that He arrived at this position by some kind of election? I do not think that a man who has any share whatever of intellect could come to such a pitch of madness as not to acknowledge that the lordship of the God of all is His by nature. For that which is by nature simple, uncompounded, and indivisible, whatever it happens to be, that it is throughout in all its entirety, not becoming one thing after another by some process of change, but remaining eternally in the condition in which it is. What, then, is their belief about the Only-begotten? Do they own that His essence is simple, or do they suppose that in it there is any sort of composition? If they think that He is some multiform thing, made up of many parts, assuredly they will not concede Him even the name of Deity, but will drag down their doctrine of the Christ to corporeal and material conceptions: but if they agree that He is simple, how is it possible in the simplicity of the subject to recognize the concurrence of contrary attributes? For just as the contradictory opposition of life and death admits of no mean, so in its distinguishing characteristics is domination diametrically and irreconcilably opposed to servitude. For if one were to consider each of these by itself, one could not properly frame any definition that would apply

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<sup>961</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 3.

<sup>962</sup> S. John xv. 22

<sup>963</sup> Oehler's punctuation seems here to require alteration.

alike to both, and where the definition of things is not identical, their nature also is assuredly different. If then the Lord is simple and uncompounded in nature, how can the conjunction of contraries be found in the subject, as would be the case if servitude mingled with lordship? But if He is acknowledged to be Lord, in accordance with the teaching of the saints, the simplicity of the subject is evidence that He can have no part or lot in the opposite condition: while if they make Him out to be a slave, then it is idle for them to ascribe to Him the title of lordship. For that which is simple in nature is not parted asunder into contradictory attributes. But if they affirm that He is one, and is called the other, that He is by nature slave and Lord in name alone, let them boldly utter this declaration and relieve us from the long labour of answering them. For who can afford to be so leisurely in his treatment of inanities as to employ arguments to demonstrate what is obvious and unambiguous? For if a man were to inform against himself for the crime of murder, the accuser would not be put to any trouble in bringing home to him by evidence the charge of blood-guiltiness. In like manner we shall no longer bring against our opponents, when they advance so far in impiety, a confutation framed after examination of their case. For he who affirms the Only-begotten to be a slave, makes Him out by so saying to be a fellow-servant with himself: and hence will of necessity arise a double enormity. For either he will despise his fellow-slave and deny the faith, having shaken off the yoke of the lordship of Christ, or he will bow before the slave, and, turning away from the self-determining nature that owns no Lord over it, will in a manner worship himself instead of God. For if he sees himself in slavery, and the object of his worship also in slavery, he of course looks at himself, seeing the whole of himself in that which he worships. But what reckoning can count up all the other mischiefs that necessarily accompany this pravity of doctrine? For who does not know that he who is by nature a slave, and follows his avocation under the constraint imposed by a master, cannot be removed even from the emotion of fear? And of this the inspired Apostle is a witness, when he says, “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear<sup>964</sup>.” So that they will be found to attribute, after the likeness of men, the emotion of fear also to their fellow-servant God.

Such is the God of heresy. But what we, who, in the words of the Apostle, have been called to liberty by Christ<sup>965</sup>, Who hath freed us from bondage, have been taught by the Scriptures to think, I will set forth in few words. I take my start from the inspired teaching, and boldly declare that the Divine Word does not wish even us to be slaves, our nature having now been changed for the better, and that He Who has taken all that was ours, on the terms of giving to us in return what is His, even as He took disease, death, curse, and sin, so took our slavery also, not in such a way as Himself to have what He took, but so as to purge our nature of such evils, our defects being swallowed up and done away with in His stainless nature. As therefore in the life that we hope for there will be neither disease, nor curse, nor sin, nor death, so slavery also along with these will vanish away. And that what I say is true I call the Truth Himself to witness, Who says to His disciples “I call you no more

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<sup>964</sup> Rom. viii. 15.

<sup>965</sup> Cf. Gal. v. 13

servants, but friends<sup>966</sup>.” If then our nature will be free at length from the reproach of slavery, how comes the Lord of all to be reduced to slavery by the madness and infatuation of these deranged men, who must of course, as a logical consequence, assert that He does not know the counsels of the Father, because of His declaration concerning the slave, which tells us that “the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth<sup>967</sup>”? But when they say this, let them hear that the Son has in Himself all that pertains to the Father, and sees all things that the Father doeth, and none of the good things that belong to the Father is outside the knowledge of the Son. For how can He fail to have anything that is the Father’s, seeing He has the Father wholly in Himself? Accordingly, if “the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth,” and if He has in Himself all things that are the Father’s, let those who are reeling with strong drink at last become sober, and let them now, if never before, look up at the truth, and see that He who has all things that the Father has is lord of all, and not a slave. For how can the personality that owns no lord over it bear on itself the brand of slavery? How can the King of all fail to have His form of like honour with Himself? how can dishonour—for slavery is dishonour—constitute the brightness of the true glory? and how is the King’s son born into slavery? No, it is not so. But as He is Light of Light, and Life of Life, and Truth of Truth, so is He Lord of Lord, King of King, God of God, Supreme of Supreme; for having in Himself the Father in His entirety, whatever the Father has in Himself He also assuredly has, and since, moreover, all that the Son has belongs to the Father, the enemies of God’s glory are inevitably compelled, if the Son is a slave, to drag down to servitude the Father as well. For there is no attribute of the Son which is not absolutely the Father’s. “For all Mine are Thine,” He says, “and Thine are Mine<sup>968</sup>.” What then will the poor creatures say? Which is more reasonable—that the Son, Who has said, “Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them<sup>969</sup>,” should be glorified in the sovereignty of the Father, or that insult should be offered to the Father by the degradation involved in the slavery of the Son? For it is not possible that He Who contains in Himself all that belongs to the Son, and Who is Himself in the Son, should not also absolutely be in the slavery of the Son, and have slavery in Himself. Such are the results achieved by Eunomius’ philosophy, whereby he inflicts upon his Lord the insult of slavery, while he attaches the same degradation to the stainless glory of the Father.

Let us however return once more to the course of his treatise. What does Eunomius say concerning the Only-begotten? That He “does not appropriate the dignity,” for he calls the appellation of “being” a “dignity.” A startling piece of philosophy! Who of all men that have ever been, whether among Greeks or barbarian sages, who of the men of our own day, who of the men of all time ever gave “being” the name of “dignity”? For everything that is regarded as subsisting<sup>970</sup> is said, by the common custom of all who use language, to “be”: and from the word “be” has been formed the

<sup>966</sup> Cf. S. John xv. 15

<sup>967</sup> Cf. S. John xv. 15

<sup>968</sup> S. John xvii. 10.

<sup>969</sup> S. John xvii. 10.

<sup>970</sup> ἐν ὑποστάσει θεωρούμενον

term “being.” But now the expression “dignity” is applied in a new fashion to the idea expressed by “being.” For he says that “the Son, Who is and lives because of the Father, does not appropriate this dignity,” having no Scripture to support his statement, and not conducting his statement to so senseless a conclusion by any process of logical inference, but as if he had taken into his intestines some windy food, he belches forth his blasphemy in its crude and unmethodized form, like some unsavoury breath. “He does not appropriate this dignity.” Let us concede the point of “being” being called “dignity.” What then? does He Who is not appropriate being? “No,” says Eunomius, “because He exists by reason of the Father.” Do you not then say that He Who does not appropriate being is not? for “not to appropriate” has the same force as “to be alien from”, and the mutual opposition of the ideas<sup>971</sup> is evident. For that which is “proper” is not “alien,” and that which is “alien” is not “proper.” He therefore Who does not “appropriate” being is obviously alien from being: and He Who is alien from being is nonexistent.

But his cogent proof of this absurdity he brings forward in the words, “as the essence which controls even Him attracts to itself the conception of the Existent.” Let us say nothing about the awkwardness of the combination here: let us examine his serious meaning. What argument ever demonstrated this? He superfluously reiterates to us his statement of the Essence of the Father having sovereignty over the Son. What evangelist is the patron of this doctrine? What process of dialectic conducts us to it. What premises support it? What line of argument ever demonstrated by any logical consequence that the Only-begotten God is under dominion? “But,” says he, “the essence that is dominant over the Son attracts to itself the conception of the Existent.” What is the meaning of the attraction of the existent? and how comes the phrase of “attracting” to be flung on the top of what he has said before? Assuredly he who considers the force of words will judge for himself. About this, however, we will say nothing: but we will take up again that argument that he does not grant essential being to Him to Whom he does not leave the title of the Existent. And why does he idly fight with shadows, contending about the non-existent being this or that? For that which does not exist is of course neither like anything else, nor unlike. But while granting that He is existent he forbids Him to be so called. Alas for the vain precision of haggling about the sound of a word while making concessions on the more important matter! But in what sense does He, Who, as he says, has dominion over the Son, “attract to Himself the conception of the Existent”? For if he says that the Father attracts His own essence, this process of attraction is superfluous: for existence is His already, without being attracted. If, on the other hand, his meaning is that the existence of the Son is attracted by the Father, I cannot make out how existence is to be wrenched from the Existent, and to pass over to Him Who “attracts” it. Can he be dreaming of the error of Sabellius, as though the Son did not exist in Himself, but was painted on to the personal existence of the Father? is this his meaning in the expression that the conception of the Existent is attracted by the essence which exercises domination over the Son? or does he, while not denying the personal existence of the Son, nevertheless say that He is separated from the meaning conveyed by the term “the Existent”?

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<sup>971</sup> The ideas of “own” implied in “appropriate,” and that of incongruity implied in “alienation.”

And yet, how can “the Existent” be separated from the conception of existence? For as long as anything is what it is, nature does not admit that it should not be what it is.



## Book XI.

§1. *The eleventh book shows that the title of “Good” is due, not to the Father alone, as Eunomius, the imitator of Manichæus and Bardesanes, alleges, but to the Son also, Who formed man in goodness and loving-kindness, and reformed him by His Cross and Death.*

LET US NOW go on to the next stage in his argument: —“...the Only-begotten Himself ascribing to the Father the title due of right to Him alone. For He Who has taught us that the appellation ‘good’ belongs to Him alone Who is the cause of His own<sup>972</sup> goodness and of all goodness, and is so at all times, and Who refers to Him all good that has ever come into being, would be slow to appropriate to Himself the authority over all things that have come into being, and the title of ‘the Existent.’” Well, so long as he concealed his blasphemy under some kind of veil, and strove to entangle his deluded hearers unawares in the mazes of his dialectic, I thought it necessary to watch his unfair and clandestine dealings, and as far as possible to lay bare in my argument the lurking mischief. But now that he has stripped his falsehood of every mask that could disguise it, and publishes his profanity aloud in categorical terms, I think it superfluous to undergo useless labour in bringing logical modes of confutation to bear upon those who make no secret of their impiety. For what further means could we discover to demonstrate their malignity so efficacious as that which they themselves show us in their writings ready to our hand? He says that the Father alone is worthy of the title of “good,” that to Him alone such a name is due, on the plea that even the Son Himself agrees that goodness belongs to Him alone. Our accuser has pleaded our cause for us: for perhaps in my former statements I was thought by my readers to show a certain wanton insolence when I endeavoured to demonstrate that the fighters against Christ made Him out to be alien from the goodness of the Father. But I think it has now been proved by the confession of our opponents that in bringing such a charge against them we were not acting unfairly. For he who says that the title of “good” belongs of right to the Father only, and that such an address befits Him alone, publishes abroad, by thus disclosing his real meaning, the villainy which he had previously wrapped up in disguise. He says that the title of “good” befits the Father only. Does he mean the title with the signification which belongs to the expression, or the title detached from its proper meaning? If on the one side he merely ascribes to the Father the title of “good” in a special sense, he is to be pitied for his irrationality in allowing to the Father merely the sound of an empty name. But if he

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<sup>972</sup> That is, of the Son’s goodness: for S. Gregory’s comment on the awkward use of the pronoun *σφετέρως*, see p. 233, *inf.*

thinks that the conception expressed by the term “good” belongs to God the Father only, he is to be abominated for his impiety, reviving as he does the plague of the Manichæan heresy in his own opinions. For as health and disease, even so goodness and badness exist on terms of mutual destruction, so that the absence of the one is the presence of the other. If then he says that goodness belongs to the Father only, he cuts off these from every conceivable object in existence except the Father, so that, along with all, the Only-begotten God is shut out from good. For as he who affirms that man alone is capable of laughter implies thereby that no other animal shares this property, so he who asserts that good is in the Father alone separates all things from that property. If then, as Eunomius declares, the Father alone has by right the title of “good,” such a term will not be properly applied to anything else. But every impulse of the will either operates in accordance with good, or tends to the contrary. For to be inclined neither one way nor the other, but to remain in a state of equipoise, is the property of creatures inanimate or insensible. If the Father alone is good, having goodness not as a thing acquired, but in His nature, and if the Son, as heresy will have it, does not share in the nature of the Father, then he who does not share the good essence of the Father is of course at the same time excluded also from part and lot in the title of “good.” But he who has no claim either to the nature or to the name of “good”—what he is assuredly not unknown, even though I forbear the blasphemous expression. For it is plain to all that the object for which Eunomius is so eager is to import into the conception of the Son a suspicion of that which is evil and opposite to good. For what kind of name belongs to him who is not good is manifest to every one who has a share of reason. As he who is not brave is cowardly, as he who is not just is unjust, and as he who is not wise is foolish, so he who is not good clearly has as his own the opposite name, and it is to this that the enemy of Christ wishes to press the conception of the Only-begotten, becoming thereby to the Church another Manes or Bardesanes. These are the sayings in regard of which we say that our utterance would be no more effective than silence. For were one to say countless things, and to arouse all possible arguments, one could not say anything so damaging of our opponents as what is openly and undisguisedly proclaimed by themselves. For what more bitter charge could one invent against them for malice than that of denying that He is good “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God<sup>973</sup>,” but yet condescended to the low estate of human nature, and did so solely for the love of man? In return for what, tell me, “do ye thus requite the Lord<sup>974</sup>?” (for I will borrow the language of Moses to the Israelites); is He not good, Who when thou wast soulless dust invested thee with Godlike beauty, and raised thee up as an image of His own power endowed with soul? Is He not good, Who for thy sake took on Him the form of a servant, and for the joy set before Him<sup>975</sup> did not shrink from bearing the sufferings due to thy sin, and gave Himself a ransom for thy death, and became for our sakes a curse and sin?



973 Cf. Phil. ii. 6

974 Deut. xxxii. 6.

975 Heb. xii. 2.

§2. *He also ingeniously shows from the passage of the Gospel which speaks of “Good Master,” from the parable of the Vineyard, from Isaiah and from Paul, that there is not a dualism in the Godhead of good and evil, as Eunomius’ ally Marcion supposes, and declares that the Son does not refuse the title of “good” or “Existent,” or acknowledge His alienation from the Father, but that to Him also belongs authority over all things that come into being.*

Not even Marcion himself, the patron of your opinions, supports you in this. It is true that in common with you he holds a dualism of gods, and thinks that one is different in nature from the other, but it is the more courteous view to attribute goodness to the God of the Gospel. You however actually separate the Only-begotten God from the nature of good, that you may surpass even Marcion in the depravity of your doctrines. However, they claim the Scripture on their side, and say that they are hardly treated when they are accused for using the very words of Scripture. For they say that the Lord Himself has said, “There is none good but one, that is, God<sup>976</sup>.” Accordingly, that misrepresentation may not prevail against the Divine words, we will briefly examine the actual passage in the Gospel. The history regards the rich man to whom the Lord spoke this word as young—the kind of person, I suppose, inclined to enjoy the pleasures of this life—and attached to his possessions; for it says that he was grieved at the advice to part with what he had, and that he did not choose to exchange his property for life eternal. This man, when he heard that a teacher of eternal life was in the neighbourhood, came to him in the expectation of living in perpetual luxury, with life indefinitely extended, flattering the Lord with the title of “good,”—flattering, I should rather say, not the Lord as we conceive Him, but as He then appeared in the form of a servant. For his character was not such as to enable him to penetrate the outward veil of flesh, and see through it into the inner shrine of Deity. The Lord, then, Who seeth the hearts, discerned the motive with which the young man approached Him as a suppliant,—that he did so, not with a soul intently fixed upon the Divine, but that it was the *man* whom he besought, calling Him “Good Master,” because he hoped to learn from Him some lore by which the approach of death might be hindered. Accordingly, with good reason did He Who was thus besought by him answer even as He was addressed<sup>977</sup>. For as the entreaty was not addressed to God the Word, so correspondingly the answer was delivered to the applicant by the Humanity of Christ, thereby impressing on the youth a double lesson. For He teaches him, by one and the same answer, both the duty of reverencing and paying homage to the Divinity, not by flattering speeches but by his life, by keeping the commandments and buying life eternal at the cost of all possessions, and also the truth that humanity, having been sunk in depravity by reason of sin, is debarred from the title of “Good”: and for this reason He says, “Why callest Thou Me good?” suggesting in His answer by the word “Me” that human nature which encompassed Him, while by attributing goodness to the Godhead He expressly declared Himself

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<sup>976</sup> Cf. S. Matt. xix. 17.

<sup>977</sup> *i.e.* as man, and not as God.



to be good, seeing that He is proclaimed to be God by the Gospel. For had the Only-begotten Son been excluded from the title of God, it would perhaps not have been absurd to think Him alien also from the appellation of “good.” But if, as is the case, prophets, evangelists, and Apostles proclaim aloud the Godhead of the Only-begotten, and if the name of goodness is attested by the Lord Himself to belong to God, how is it possible that He Who is partaker of the Godhead should not be partaker of the goodness too? For that both prophets, evangelists, disciples and apostles acknowledge the Lord as God, there is none so uninitiated in Divine mysteries as to need to be expressly told. For who knows not that in the forty-fourth<sup>978</sup> Psalm the prophet in his word affirms the Christ to be God, anointed by God? And again, who of all that are conversant with prophecy is unaware that Isaiah, among other passages, thus openly proclaims the Godhead of the Son, where he says: “The Sabceans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and shall be servants unto thee: they shall come after thee bound in fetters, and in thee shall they make supplication, because God is in thee, and there is no God beside thee; for thou art God<sup>979</sup>.” For what other God there is Who has God in Himself, and is Himself God, except the Only-begotten, let them say who hearken not to the prophecy; but of the interpretation of Emmanuel, and the confession of Thomas after his recognition of the Lord, and the sublime diction of John, as being manifest even to those who are outside the faith, I will say nothing. Nay, I do not even think it necessary to bring forward in detail the utterances of Paul, since they are, as one may say, in all men’s mouths, who gives the Lord the appellation not only of “God,” but of “great God” and “God over all,” saying to the Romans, “Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever<sup>980</sup>,” and writing to his disciple Titus, “According to the appearing of Jesus Christ the great God and our Saviour<sup>981</sup>,” and to Timothy, proclaims in plain terms, “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit<sup>982</sup>.” Since then the fact has been demonstrated on every side that the Only-begotten God is God<sup>983</sup>, how is it that he who says that goodness belongs to God, strives to show that the Godhead of the Son is alien from this ascription, and this though the Lord has actually claimed for Himself the epithet “good” in the parable of those who were hired into the vineyard? For there, when those who had laboured before the others were dissatisfied at all receiving the same pay, and deemed the

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978 Ps. xlv. 7, 8. (The Psalm is the 44th in the LXX. numeration, and is so styled by S. Gregory.)

979 Cf. Is. xlv. 14, 15 (LXX.).

980 Rom. ix. 5.

981 Cf. Tit. ii. 13. The quotation is not verbal; and here the rendering of the A.V. rather obscures the sense which it is necessary for S. Gregory’s argument to bring out.

982 1 Tim. iii. 16 (reading Θεός, or, if the citation is to be considered as verbal, ὁ Θεός).

983 Reading τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι τὸν μονογενῆ Θεὸν for τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι κ.τ.λ. The reading of the texts does not give the sense required for the argument.



good fortune of the last to be their own loss, the just judge says to one of the murmurers<sup>984</sup>, “Friend, I do thee no wrong: did I not agree with thee for a penny a day? Lo, there thou hast that is thine<sup>985</sup>: I will bestow upon this last even as upon thee. Have I not power to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?” Of course no one will contest the point that to distribute recompense according to desert is the special function of the judge; and all the disciples of the Gospel agree that the Only-begotten God is Judge; “for the Father,” He saith, “judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son<sup>986</sup>.” But they do not set themselves in opposition<sup>987</sup> to the Scriptures. For they say that the word “one” absolutely points to the Father. For He saith, “There is none good but one, that is God.” Will truth then lack vigour to plead her own cause? Surely there are many means easily to convict of deception this quibble also. For He Who said this concerning the Father spake also to the Father that other word, “All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them<sup>988</sup>.” Now if He says that all that is the Father’s is also the Son’s, and goodness is one of the attributes pertaining to the Father, either the Son has not all things if He has not this, and they will be saying that the Truth lies, or if it is impious to suspect the very Truth of being carried away into falsehood, then He Who claimed all that is the Father’s as His own, thereby asserted that He was not outside of goodness. For He Who has the Father in Himself, and contains all things that belong to the Father, manifestly has His goodness with “all things.” Therefore the Son is Good. But “there is none good,” he says, “but one, that is God.” This is what is alleged by our adversaries: nor do I myself reject the statement. I do not, however, for this cause deny the Godhead of the Son. But he who confesses that the Lord is God, by that very confession assuredly also asserts of Him goodness. For if goodness is a property of God, and if the Lord is God, then by our premises the Son is shown to be God. “But,” says our opponent, “the word ‘one’ excludes the Son from participation in goodness.” It is easy, however, to show that not even the word “one” separates the Father from the Son. For in all other cases, it is true, the term “one” carries with it the signification of not being coupled with anything else, but in the case of the Father and the Son “one” does not imply isolation. For He says, “I and the Father are one<sup>989</sup>.” If, then, the good is one, and a particular kind of unity is contemplated in the Father and the Son, it follows that the Lord, in predicating goodness of “one,” claimed under the term “one” the title of “good” also for Himself, Who is one with the Father, and not severed from oneness of nature.

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<sup>984</sup> Compare with what follows S. Matt. xx. 13, 15. S. Gregory seems to be quoting from memory; his Greek is not so close to that of S. Matthew as the translation to the A.V.

<sup>985</sup> Cf. S. Matt. xxv. 25, from which this phrase is borrowed, with a slight variation.

<sup>986</sup> S. John v. 22

<sup>987</sup> This seems a sense etymologically possible for καθίστανται with a genitive, a use of which Liddell and Scott give no instances. The statement must of course be taken as that of the adversaries themselves.

<sup>988</sup> S. John xvii. 10.

<sup>989</sup> Cf. S. John x. 30

§3. *He then exposes the ignorance of Eunomius, and the incoherence and absurdity of his arguments, in speaking of the Son as “the Angel of the Existent,” and as being as much below the Divine Nature as the Son is superior to the things created by Himself. And in this connection there is a noble and forcible counter-statement and an indignant refutation, showing that He Who gave the oracles to Moses is Himself the Existent, the Only-begotten Son, Who to the petition of Moses, “If Thou Thyself goest not with us, carry me not up hence,” said, “I will do this also that thou hast said”; Who is also called “Angel” both by Moses and Isaiah: wherein is cited the text, “Unto us a Child is born.”*

But that the research and culture of our imposing author may be completely disclosed, we will consider sentence by sentence his presentment of his sentiments. “The Son,” he says, “does not appropriate the dignity of the Existent,” giving the name of “dignity” to the actual fact of being:—(with what propriety he knows how to adapt words to things!)—and since He is “by reason of the Father,” he says that He is alienated from Himself on the ground that the essence which is supreme over Him attracts to itself the conception of the Existent. This is much the same as if one were to say that he who is bought for money, in so far as he *is* in his own existence, is not the person bought, but the purchaser, inasmuch as his essential personal existence is absorbed into the nature of him who has acquired authority over him. Such are the lofty conceptions of our divine: but what is the demonstration of his statements?...“the Only-begotten,” he says, “Himself ascribing to the Father the title due of right to Him alone,” and then he introduces the point that the Father alone is good. Where in this does the Son disclaim the title of “Existent”? Yet this is what Eunomius is driving at when he goes on word for word as follows:—“For He Who has taught us that the appellation ‘good’ belongs to Him alone Who is the cause of His own goodness and of all goodness, and is so at all times, and Who refers to Him all good that has ever come into being, would be slow to appropriate to Himself the authority over all things that have come into being, and the title of ‘the Existent.’” What has “authority” to do with the context? and how along with this is the Son also alienated from the title of “Existent”? But really I do not know what one ought rather to do at this,—to laugh at the want of education, or to pity the pernicious folly which it displays. For the expression, “His own,” not employed according to the natural meaning, and as those who know how to use language are wont to use it, attests his extensive knowledge of the grammar of pronouns, which even little boys get up with their masters without trouble, and his ridiculous wandering from the subject to what has nothing to do either with his argument or with the form of that argument, considered as syllogistic, namely, that the Son has no share in the appellation of “Existent”—an assertion adapted to his monstrous inventions<sup>990</sup>,—this and similar absurdities seem combined together for the purpose of provoking laughter; so that it may be that readers of the more careless sort experience some such inclination, and are amused by the disjointedness of his arguments. But

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<sup>990</sup> Oehler’s punctuation is here apparently erroneous. The position of *συμπεραστικῶς* is peculiar and the general construction of the passage a little obscure: but if the text is to be regarded as sound, the meaning must be something like that here given.

that God the Word should not exist, or that He at all events should not be good (and this is what Eunomius maintains when he says that He does not “appropriate the title” of “Existent” and “good”), and to make out that the authority over all things that come into being does not belong to him,—this calls for our tears, and for a wail of mourning.

For it is not as if he had but let fall something of the kind just once under some headlong and inconsiderate impulse, and in what followed had striven to retrieve his error: no, he dallies lingeringly with the malignity, striving in his later statements to surpass what had gone before. For as he proceeds, he says that the Son is the same distance below the Divine Nature as the nature of angels is subjected below His own, not indeed saying this in so many words, but endeavouring by what he does say to produce such an impression. The reader may judge for himself the meaning of his words: they run as follows,—“Who, by being called ‘Angel,’ clearly showed by Whom He published His words, and Who is the Existent, while by being addressed also as God, He showed His superiority over all things. For He Who is the God of all things that were made by Him, is the Angel of the God over all.” Indignation rushes into my heart and interrupts my discourse, and under this emotion arguments are lost in a turmoil of anger roused by words like these. And perhaps I may be pardoned for feeling such emotion. For whose resentment would not be stirred within him at such profanity, when he remembers how the Apostle proclaims that every angelic nature is subject to the Lord, and in witness of his doctrine invokes the sublime utterances of the prophets:—“When He bringeth the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him,” and, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,” and, “Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail<sup>991</sup>”? When the Apostle has gone through all this argument to demonstrate the unapproachable majesty of the Only-begotten God, what must I feel when I hear from the adversary of Christ that the Lord of Angels is Himself only an Angel,—and when he does not let such a statement fall by chance, but puts forth his strength to maintain this monstrous invention, so that it may be established that his Lord has no superiority over John and Moses? For the word says concerning them, “This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold I send my angel before thy face<sup>992</sup>.’” John therefore is an angel. But the enemy of the Lord, even though he grants his Lord the name of God, yet makes Him out to be on a level with the deity of Moses, since he too was a servant of the God over all, and was constituted a god to the Egyptians<sup>993</sup>. And yet this phrase, “over all,” as has been previously observed, is common to the Son with the Father, the Apostle having expressly ascribed such a title to Him, when he says, “Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, Who is God over all<sup>994</sup>.” But this man degrades the Lord of angels to the rank of an angel, as though he had not heard that the angels are “ministering

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<sup>991</sup> Cf. Heb. i. 6–12. The passages there cited are Ps. xcvi. 7; Ps. xlv. 6; Ps. cii. 25, *sqq.*

<sup>992</sup> S. Matt. xi. 10, quoting Mal. iii. 1. The word translated “messenger” in A.V. is ἄγγελος, which the argument here seems to require should be rendered by “angel.”

<sup>993</sup> Cf. Exod. vii. 1

<sup>994</sup> Rom. ix. 5.

spirits,” and “a flame of fire<sup>995</sup>.” For by the use of these distinctive terms does the Apostle make the difference between the several subjects clear and unmistakable, defining the subordinate nature to be “spirits” and “fire,” and distinguishing the supreme power by the name of Godhead. And yet, though there are so many that proclaim the glory of the Only-begotten God, against them all Eunomius lifts up his single voice, calling the Christ “an angel of the God over all,” defining Him, by thus contrasting Him with the “God over all,” to be one of the “all things,” and, by giving Him the same name as the angels, trying to establish that He no wise differs from them in nature: for he has often previously said that all those things which share the same name cannot be different in nature. Does the argument, then, still lack its censors, as it concerns a man who proclaims in so many words that the “Angel” does not publish His own word, but that of the Existent? For it is by this means that he tries to show that the Word Who was in the beginning, the Word Who was God, is not Himself the Word, but is the Word of some other Word, being its minister and “angel.” And who knows not that the only opposite to the “Existent” is the nonexistent? so that he who contrasts the Son with the Existent, is clearly playing the Jew, robbing the Christian doctrine of the Person of the Only-begotten. For in saying that He is excluded from the title of the “Existent,” he is assuredly trying to establish also that He is outside the pale of existence: for surely if he grants Him existence, he will not quarrel about the sound of the word.

But he strives to prop up his absurdity by the testimony of Scripture, and puts forth Moses as his advocate against the truth. For as though that were the source from which he drew his arguments, he freely sets forth to us his own fables, saying, “He Who sent Moses was the Existent Himself, but He by Whom He sent and spake was the Angel of the Existent, and the God of all else.” That his statement, however, is not drawn from Scripture, may be conclusively proved by Scripture itself. But if he says that this is the sense of what is written, we must examine the original language of Scripture. Moreover let us first notice that Eunomius, after calling the Lord God of all things after Him, allows Him no superiority in comparison with the angelic nature. For neither did Moses, when he heard that he was made a god to Pharaoh<sup>996</sup>, pass beyond the bounds of humanity, but while in nature he was on an equality with his fellows, he was raised above them by superiority of authority, and his being called a god did not hinder him from being man. So too in this case Eunomius, while making out the Son to be one of the angels, salves over such an error by the appellation of Godhead, in the manner expressed, allowing Him the title of God in some equivocal sense. Let us once more set down and examine the very words in which he delivers his blasphemy. “He Who sent Moses was the Existent Himself, but He by Whom He sent was the Angel of the Existent” — this, namely “Angel,” being the title he gives his Lord. Well, the absurdity of our author is refuted by the Scripture itself, in the passage where Moses beseeches the Lord not to entrust an angel with the leadership of the people, but Himself to conduct their march. The passage runs thus: God is speaking, “Go, get thee down, guide this people unto the place of which I have spoken unto



<sup>995</sup> Cf. Heb. i. 14 and 7.

<sup>996</sup> Cf. Exod. vii. 1

thee: behold Mine Angel shall go before thee in the day when I visit<sup>997</sup>.” And a little while after He says again, “And I will send Mine Angel before thee<sup>998</sup>.” Then, a little after what immediately follows, comes the supplication to God on the part of His servant, running on this wise, “If I have found grace in Thy sight, let my Lord go among us<sup>999</sup>,” and again, “If Thou Thyself go not with us, carry me not up hence<sup>1000</sup>”; and then the answer of God to Moses, “I will do for thee this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in My sight, and I know thee above all men<sup>1001</sup>.” Accordingly, if Moses begs that the people may not be led by an angel, and if He Who was discoursing with him consents to become his fellow-traveller and the guide of the army, it is hereby manifestly shown that He Who made Himself known by the title of “the Existent” is the Only-begotten God.

If any one gainsays this, he will show himself to be a supporter of the Jewish persuasion in not associating the Son with the deliverance of the people. For if, on the one hand, it was not an angel that went forth with the people, and if, on the other, as Eunomius would have it, He Who was manifested by the name of the Existent is not the Only-begotten, this amounts to nothing less than transferring the doctrines of the synagogue to the Church of God. Accordingly, of the two alternatives they must needs admit one, namely, either that the Only-begotten God on no occasion appeared to Moses, or that the Son is Himself the “Existent,” from Whom the word came to His servant. But he contradicts what has been said above, alleging the Scripture itself<sup>1002</sup> which informs us that the voice of an angel was interposed, and that it was thus that the discourse of the Existent was conveyed. This, however, is no contradiction, but a confirmation of our view. For we too say plainly, that the prophet, wishing to make manifest to men the mystery concerning Christ, called the Self-Existent “Angel,” that the meaning of the words might not be referred to the Father, as it would have been if the title of “Existent” alone had been found throughout the discourse. But just as our word is the revealer and messenger (or “angel”) of the movements of the mind, even so we affirm that the true Word that was in the beginning, when He announces the will of His own Father, is styled “Angel” (or “Messenger”), a title given to Him on account of the operation of conveying the message. And as the sublime John, having previously called Him “Word,” so introduces the further truth that the Word was God, that our thoughts might not at once turn to the Father, as they would have done if the title of God had been put first, so too does the mighty Moses, after first calling Him “Angel,” teach us in the words that follow that He is none other than the Self-Existent Himself, that the mystery concerning the Christ might be foreshown, by the Scripture assuring us by the name “Angel,” that the Word is the interpreter of the Father’s will, and, by the title of the “Self-Existent,”

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<sup>997</sup> Cf. Exod. xxxii. 34 (LXX.).

<sup>998</sup> Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 2; the quotation is not verbally from LXX.

<sup>999</sup> Cf. Exod. xxxiv. 9 (LXX.).

<sup>1000</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 15 (LXX.).

<sup>1001</sup> Cf. Exod. xxxiii. 17 (LXX.).

<sup>1002</sup> Cf. Exod. iii. 2

of the closeness of relation subsisting between the Son and the Father. And if he should bring forward Isaiah also as calling Him “the *Angel* of mighty counsel<sup>1003</sup>,” not even so will he overthrow our argument. For there, in clear and uncontrovertible terms, there is indicated by the prophecy the dispensation of His Humanity; for “unto us,” he says, “a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name is called the Angel of mighty counsel.” And it is with an eye to this, I suppose, that David describes the establishment of His kingdom, not as though He were not a King, but in the view that the humiliation to the estate of a servant to which the Lord submitted by way of dispensation, was taken up and absorbed into the majesty of His Kingdom. For he says, “I was established King by Him on His holy hill of Sion, declaring the ordinance of the Lord.”<sup>1004</sup> Accordingly, He Who through Himself reveals the goodness of the Father is called “Angel” and “Word,” “Seal” and “Image,” and all similar titles with the same intention. For as the “Angel” (or “Messenger”) gives information from some one, even so the Word reveals the thought within, the Seal shows by Its own stamp the original mould, and the Image by Itself interprets the beauty of that whereof It is the image, so that in their signification all these terms are equivalent to one another. For this reason the title “Angel” is placed before that of the “Self-Existent,” the Son being termed “Angel” as the exponent of His Father’s will, and the “Existent” as having no name that could possibly give a knowledge of His essence, but transcending all the power of names to express. Wherefore also His name is testified by the writing of the Apostle to be “above every name<sup>1005</sup>,” not as though it were some one name preferred above all others, though still comparable with them, but rather in the sense that He Who verily *is* is above every name.



§4. *After this, fearing to extend his reply to great length, he passes by most of his adversary’s statements as already refuted. But the remainder, for the sake of those who deem them of much force, he briefly summarizes, and refutes the blasphemy of Eunomius, who says of the Lord also that He is what animals and plants in all creation are, non-existent before their own generation; and so with the production of frogs; alas for the blasphemy!*

But I must hasten on, for I see that my treatise has already extended beyond bounds, and I fear that I may be thought garrulous and inordinate in my talk, if I prolong my answer to excess, although I have intentionally passed by many parts of my adversary’s treatise, that my argument might not be spun out to many myriads of words. For to the more studious even the want of conciseness gives an occasion for disparagement; but as for those whose mind looks not to what is of use, but to the

<sup>1003</sup> Is. ix. 6 (LXX.).

<sup>1004</sup> Ps. ii. 6 (LXX.).

<sup>1005</sup> Phil. ii. 9.

fancy of those who are idle and not in earnest, their wish and prayer is to get over as much of the journey as they can in a few steps. What then ought we to do when Eunomius' profanity draws us on? Are we to track his every turn? or is it perhaps superfluous and merely garrulous to spend our energies over and over again on similar encounters? For all their argument that follows is in accordance with what we have already investigated, and presents no fresh point in addition to what has gone before. If then we have succeeded in completely overthrowing his previous statements, the remainder fall along with them. But in case the contentious and obstinate should think that the strongest part of their case is in what I have omitted, for this reason it may perhaps be necessary to touch briefly upon what remains.

He says that the Lord did not exist before His own generation—he who cannot prove that He was in anything separated from the Father. And this he says, not quoting any Scripture as a warrant for his assertion, but maintaining his proposition by arguments of his own. But this characteristic has been shown to be common to all parts of the creation. Not a frog, not a worm, not a beetle, not a blade of grass, nor any other of the most insignificant objects, existed before its own formation: so that what by aid of his dialectic skill he tries with great labour and pains to establish to be the case with the Son, has previously been acknowledged to be true of any chance portions of the creation, and our author's mighty labour is to show that the Only-begotten God, by participation of attributes, is on a level with the lowest of created things. Accordingly the fact of the coincidence of their opinions concerning the Only-begotten God, and their view of the mode in which frogs come into being, is a sufficient indication of their doctrinal pravity. Next he urges that not to be before His generation, is equivalent in fact and meaning to not being ungenerate. Once more the same argument will fit my hand in dealing with this too,—that a man would not be wrong in saying the same thing of a dog, or a flea, or a snake, or any one you please of the meanest creatures, since for a dog not to exist before his generation is equivalent in fact and meaning to his not being ungenerate. But if, in accord with the definition they have so often laid down, all things that share in attributes share also in nature, and if it is an attribute of the dog, and of the rest severally, not to exist before generation, which is what Eunomius thinks fit to maintain also of the Son, the reader will by logical process see for himself the conclusion of this demonstration.

§5. <sup>1006</sup>*Eunomius again speaks of the Son as Lord and God, and Maker of all creation intelligible and sensible, having received from the Father the power and the commission for creation, being*

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<sup>1006</sup> The grammar of this section of the analysis is in parts very much confused; the general drift of its intention, rather than its literal meaning, is given in the translation. Grammatically speaking it appears to attribute to S. Gregory some of the opinions of Eunomius. The construction, however, is so ungrammatical that the confusion is probably in the composer's expression rather than in his interpretation of what he is summarizing.

*entrusted with the task of creation as if He were an artizan commissioned by some one hiring Him, and receiving His power of creation as a thing adventitious, ab extra, as a result of the power allotted to Him in accordance with such and such combinations and positions of the stars, as destiny decrees their lot in life to men at their nativity. Thus, passing by most of what Eunomius had written, he confutes his blasphemy that the Maker of all things came into being in like manner with the earth and with angels, and that the subsistence of the Only-begotten differs not at all from the genesis of all things, and reproaches Him with reverencing neither the Divine mystery nor the custom of the Church, nor following in his attempt to discover godliness any teacher of pious doctrine, but Manichæus, Colluthus, Arius, Aetius, and those like to them, supposing that Christianity in general is folly, and that the customs of the Church and the venerable sacraments are a jest, wherein he differs in nothing from the pagans, who borrowed from our doctrine the idea of a great God supreme over all. So, too, this new idolater preaches in the same fashion, and in particular that baptism is “into an artificer and creator,” not fearing the curse of those who cause addition or diminution to the Holy Scriptures. And he closes his book with showing him to be Antichrist.*



Afterwards, however, he gives his discourse a more moderate turn, imparting to it even a touch of gentleness, and, though he had but a little earlier partitioned off the Son from the title of Existent, he now says,—“We affirm that the Son is not only existent, and above all existent things, but we also call Him Lord and God, the Maker of every being<sup>1007</sup>, sensible and intelligible.” What does he suppose this “being” to be? created? or uncreated? For if he confesses Jesus to be Lord, God, and Maker of all intelligible being, it necessarily follows, if he says it is *uncreated*, that he speaks falsely, ascribing to the Son the making of the uncreated Nature. But if he believes it to be *created*, he makes Him His own Maker. For if the act of creation be not separated from intelligible nature in favour of Him Who is independent and uncreated, there will no longer remain any mark of distinction, as the sensible creation and the intelligible being will be thought of under one head<sup>1008</sup>. But here he brings in the assertion that “in the creation of existent things He has been entrusted by the Father with the construction of all things visible and invisible, and with the providential care over all that comes into being, inasmuch as the power allotted to Him from above is sufficient for the production of those things which have been constructed<sup>1009</sup>.” The vast length to which our treatise has run compels us to pass over these assertions briefly: but, in a sense, profanity surrounds the argument, containing a vast swarm of notions like venomous wasps. “He was entrusted,” he says,

<sup>1007</sup> οὐσίας

<sup>1008</sup> The passage is a little obscure: if the force of the dative τῷ καθ’ ἑαυτὸν ἀκτίστῳ be that assigned to it, the meaning will be that, if no exception is made in the statement that the Son is the Maker of every intelligible being, the Deity will be included among the works of the Son, Who will thus be the Maker of Himself, as of the sensible creation.

<sup>1009</sup> It is not quite clear how much of this is citation, and how much paraphrase of Eunomius’ words.



“with the construction of things by the Father.” But if he had been talking about some artizan executing his work at the pleasure of his employer, would he not have used the same language? For we are not wrong in saying just the same of Bezaleel, that being entrusted by Moses with the building of the tabernacle, he became the constructor of those things there<sup>1010</sup> mentioned, and would not have taken the work in hand had he not previously acquired his knowledge by Divine inspiration, and ventured upon the undertaking on Moses’ entrusting him with its execution. Accordingly the term “entrusted” suggests that His office and power in creation came to Him as something adventitious, in the sense that before He was entrusted with that commission He had neither the will nor the power to act, but when He received authority to execute the works, and power sufficient for the works, *then* He became the artificer of things that are, the power allotted to Him from on high being, as Eunomius says, sufficient for the purpose. Does he then place even the generation of the Son, by some astrological juggling<sup>1011</sup>, under some destiny, just as they who practise this vain deceit affirm that the appointment of their lot in life comes to men at the time of their birth, by such and such conjunctions or oppositions of the stars, as the rotation above moves on in a kind of ordered train, assigning to those who are coming into being their special faculties? It may be that something of this kind is in the mind of our sage, and he says that to Him that is above all rule, and authority, and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, there has been allotted, as though He were pent in some hollow spaces, power from on high, measured out in accordance with the quantity of things which come into being. I will pass over this part of his treatise also summarily, letting fall from a slight commencement of investigation, for the more intelligent sort of readers, seeds to enable them to discern his profanity. Moreover, in what follows, there is ready written a kind of apology for ourselves. For we cannot any longer be thought to be missing the intention of his discourse, and misinterpreting his words to render them subject to criticism, when his own voice acknowledges the absurdity of his doctrine. His words stand as follows:—“What? did not earth and angel come into being, when before they were not?” See how our lofty theologian is not ashamed to apply the same description to earth and angels and to the Maker of all! Surely if he thinks it fit to predicate the same of earth and its Lord, he must either make a god of the one, or degrade the other to a level with it.

Then he adds to this something by which his profanity is yet more completely stripped of all disguise, so that its absurdity is obvious even to a child. For he says,—“It would be a long task to detail all the modes of generation of intelligible objects, or the essences which do not all possess the nature of the Existent in common, but display variations according to the operations of Him Who constructed them.” Without any words of ours, the blasphemy against the Son which is here contained is glaring and conspicuous, when he acknowledges that that which is predicated of every

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<sup>1010</sup> The reference is to Exod. xxxv. 30.

<sup>1011</sup> Reading *περατείαν* for the otherwise unknown word *περατεΐαν*, which Oehler retains. If *περατείαν* is the true reading, it should probably be rendered by “fatalism,” or “determination.” Gulonius renders it by “determinationem.” It may be connected with the name “Peratae,” given to one of the Ophite sects, who held fatalist views.

mode of generation and essence in nowise differs from the description of the Divine subsistence<sup>1012</sup> of the Only-begotten. But it seems to me best to pass over the intermediate passages in which he seeks to maintain his profanity, and to hasten to the head and front of the accusation which we have to bring against his doctrines. For he will be found to exhibit the sacrament of regeneration as an idle thing, the mystic oblation as profitless, and the participation in them as of no advantage to those who are partakers therein. For after those high-wrought æons<sup>1013</sup> in which, by way of disparagement of our doctrine, he names as its supporters a Valentinus, a Cerinthus, a Basilides, a Montanus, and a Marcion, and after laying it down that those who affirm that the Divine nature is unknowable, and the mode of His generation unknowable, have no right or title whatever to the name of Christians, and after reckoning us among those whom he thus disparages, he proceeds to develop his own view in these terms:—“But we, in agreement with holy and blessed men; affirm that the mystery of godliness does not consist in venerable names, nor in the distinctive character of customs and sacramental tokens, but in exactness of doctrine.” That when he wrote this, he did so not under the guidance of evangelists, apostles, or any of the authors of the Old Testament, is plain to every one who has any acquaintance with the sacred and Divine Scripture. We should naturally be led to suppose that by “holy and blessed men” he meant Manichæus, Nicolaus, Colluthus, Aetius, Arius, and the rest of the same band, with whom he is in strict accord in laying down this principle, that neither the confession of sacred names, nor the customs of the Church, nor her sacramental tokens, are a ratification of godliness. But we, having learnt from the holy voice of Christ that “except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit he shall not enter into the kingdom of God<sup>1014</sup>” and that “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, shall live for ever<sup>1015</sup>,” are persuaded that the mystery of godliness is ratified by the confession of the Divine Names—the Names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that our salvation is confirmed by participation in the sacramental customs and tokens. But doctrines have often been carefully investigated by those who have had no part or lot in that mystery, and one may hear many such putting forward the faith we hold as a subject for themselves in the rivalry of debate, and some of them often even succeeding in hitting the truth, and for all that none the less estranged from the faith. Since, then, he despises the revered Names, by which the power of the more Divine birth distributes grace to them who come for it in faith, and slights the fellowship of the sacramental customs and tokens from which the Christian profession draws its vigour, let us, with a slight variation, utter to those who listen to his deceit the word of the prophet:—“How long will ye be slow of heart? Why do ye love destruction and seek after leasing<sup>1016</sup>?” How is it that ye do not see the persecutor of the faith inviting those who consent unto him to violate their Christian profession? For if the confession of

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<sup>1012</sup> ὑποστασέως

<sup>1013</sup> The word seems to be used, as “octads” in Book IX. seems to be used, of sections of Eunomius’ production.

<sup>1014</sup> Cf. S. John iii. 3 and 6.

<sup>1015</sup> Cf. S. John vi. 51 and 54.

<sup>1016</sup> Cf. Ps. iv. 2 (LXX.). The alteration made is the substitution of ἀπώλειαν for ματαιότητα

the revered and precious Names of the Holy Trinity is useless, and the customs of the Church unprofitable, and if among these customs is the sign of the cross<sup>1017</sup>, prayer, baptism, confession of sins, a ready zeal to keep the commandment, right ordering of character, sobriety of life, regard to justice, the effort not to be excited by passion, or enslaved by pleasure, or to fall short in moral excellence,—if he says that none of such habits as these is cultivated to any good purpose, and that the sacramental tokens do not, as we have believed, secure spiritual blessings, and avert from believers the assaults directed against them by the wiles of the evil one, what else does he do but openly proclaim aloud to men that he deems the mystery which Christians cherish a fable, laughs at the majesty of the Divine Names, considers the customs of the Church a jest, and all sacramental operations idle prattle and folly? What beyond this do they who remain attached to paganism bring forward in disparagement of our creed? Do not they too make the majesty of the sacred Names, in which the faith is ratified, an occasion of laughter? Do not they deride the sacramental tokens and the customs which are observed by the initiated? And of whom is it so much a distinguishing peculiarity as of the pagans, to think that piety should consist in doctrines only? since they also say that according to their view, there is something more persuasive than the Gospel which we preach, and some of them hold that there is some one great God preeminent above the rest, and acknowledge some subject powers, differing among themselves in the way of superiority or inferiority, in some regular order and sequence, but all alike subject to the Supreme. This, then, is what the teachers of the new idolatry preach, and they who follow them have no dread of the condemnation that abideth on transgressors, as though they did not understand that actually to do some improper thing is far more grievous than to err in word alone. They, then, who in act deny the faith, and slight the confession of the sacred Names, and judge the sanctification effected by the sacramental tokens to be worthless, and have been persuaded to have regard to cunningly devised fables, and to fancy that their salvation consists in quibbles about the generate and the ungenerate,—what else are they than transgressors of the doctrines of salvation?

But if any one thinks that these charges are brought against them by us ungenerously and unfairly, let him consider independently our author's writings, both what we have previously alleged, and what is inferred in logical connection with our citations. For in direct contravention of the law of the Lord—(for the deliverance to us of the means of initiation constitutes a law),—he says that baptism is not into the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as Christ commanded His disciples when He delivered to them the mystery, but into an artificer and creator, and “not only Father,” he says, “of the Only-begotten, but also His God<sup>1018</sup>.” Woe unto him who gives his neighbour to drink turbid mischief<sup>1019</sup>! How does he trouble and befoul the truth by flinging his mud into it! How is it

<sup>1017</sup> Ἡ σφραγίς. The term is used elsewhere by Gregory in this sense, in the Life of S. Gregory Thaumaturgus, and in the Life of S. Macrina.

<sup>1018</sup> These last words are apparently a verbal quotation, those preceding more probably a paraphrase of Eunomius statement.

<sup>1019</sup> Cf. Hab. ii. 15 (LXX.). It is possible that the reading *θολεράν* for *δολεράν*, which appears both in Oehler's text and in the Paris edition, was a various reading of the passage in the LXX., and that S. Gregory intended to quote exactly.

that he feels no fear of the curse that rests upon those who add aught to the Divine utterance, or dare to take aught away? Let us read the declaration of the Lord in His very words—“Go,” He says, “teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Where did He call the Son a creature? Where did the Word teach that the Father is creator and artificer of the Only-begotten? Where in the words cited is it taught that the Son is a servant of God? Where in the delivery of the mystery is the God of the Son proclaimed? Do ye not perceive and understand, ye who are dragged by guile to perdition, what sort of guide ye have put in charge of your souls,—one who interpolates the Holy Scriptures, who garbles the Divine utterances, who with his own mud befouls the purity of the doctrines of godliness, who not only arms his own tongue against us, but also attempts to tamper with the sacred voices of truth, who is eager to invest his own perversion with more authority than the teaching of the Lord? Do ye not perceive that he stirs himself up against the Name at which all must bow, so that in time the Name of the Lord shall be heard no more, and instead of Christ Eunomius shall be brought into the Churches? Do ye not yet consider that this preaching of godlessness has been set on foot by the devil as a rehearsal, preparation, and prelude of the coming of Antichrist? For he who is ambitious of showing that his own words are more authoritative than those of Christ, and of transforming the faith from the Divine Names and the sacramental customs and tokens to his own deceit,—what else, I say, could he properly be called, but only Antichrist?



## Book XII.

§1. *This twelfth book gives a notable interpretation of the words of the Lord to Mary, “Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father.”*

BUT let us see what is the next addition that follows upon this profanity, an addition which is in fact the key of their defence of their doctrine. For those who would degrade the majesty of the glory of the Only-begotten to slavish and grovelling conceptions think that they find the strongest proof of their assertions in the words of the Lord to Mary, which He uttered after His resurrection, and before His ascension into heaven, saying, “Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God<sup>1020</sup>.” The orthodox interpretation of these words, the sense in which we have been accustomed to believe that they were spoken to Mary, is I think manifest to all who have received the faith in truth. Still the discussion of this point shall be given by us in its proper place; but meantime it is worth while to inquire from those who allege against us such phrases as

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<sup>1020</sup> S. John xx. 17

“ascending,” “being seen,” “being recognized by touch,” and moreover “being associated with men by brotherhood,” whether they consider them to be proper to the Divine or to the Human Nature. For if they see in the Godhead the capacity of being seen and touched, of being supported by meat and drink, kinship and brotherhood with men, and all the attributes of corporeal nature, then let them predicate of the Only-begotten God both these and whatsoever else they will, as motive energy and local change, which are peculiar to things circumscribed by a body. But if He by Mary is discoursing with His brethren, and if the Only-begotten has no brethren, (for how, if He had brethren, could the property of being Only-begotten be preserved?) and if the same Person Who said, “God is a Spirit<sup>1021</sup>,” says to His disciples, “Handle Me<sup>1022</sup>,” that He may show that while the Human Nature is capable of being handled the Divinity is intangible, and if He Who says, “I go,” indicates local change, while He who contains all things, “in Whom,” as the Apostle says, “all things were created, and in Whom all things consist<sup>1023</sup>,” has nothing in existent things external to Himself to which removal could take place by any kind of motion, (for motion cannot otherwise be effected than by that which is removed leaving the place in which it is, and occupying another place instead, while that which extends through all, and is in all, and controls all, and is confined by no existent thing, has no place to which to pass, inasmuch as nothing is void of the Divine fulness,) how can these men abandon the belief that such expressions arise from that which is apparent, and apply them to that Nature which is Divine and which surpasseth all understanding, when the Apostle has in his speech to the Athenians plainly forbidden us to imagine any such thing of God, inasmuch as the Divine power is not discoverable by touch<sup>1024</sup>, but by intelligent contemplation and faith? Or, again, whom does He Who did eat before the eyes of His disciples, and promised to go before them into Galilee and there be seen of them,—whom does He reveal Him to be Who should so appear to them? God, Whom no man hath seen or can see<sup>1025</sup>? or the bodily image, that is, the form of a servant in which God was? If then what has been said plainly proves that the meaning of the phrases alleged refers to that which is visible, expressing shape, and capable of motion, akin to the nature of His disciples, and none of these properties is discernible in Him Who is invisible, incorporeal, intangible, and formless, how do they come to degrade the very Only-begotten God, Who was in the beginning, and is in the Father, to a level with Peter, Andrew, John, and the rest of the Apostles, by calling them the brethren and fellow-servants of the Only-begotten? And yet all their exertions are directed to this aim, to show that in majesty of nature there is as great a distance between the Father and the dignity, power, and essence of the Only-begotten, as there is between the Only-begotten and humanity. And they press this saying into the support of this meaning, treating



<sup>1021</sup> S. John iv. 24

<sup>1022</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 39.

<sup>1023</sup> Col. i. 16, 17.

<sup>1024</sup> Cf. Acts xvii. The precise reference is perhaps to verse 27.

<sup>1025</sup> The reference is perhaps to 1 Tim. vi. 16; but the quotation is not verbal. See also S. John i. 18.

the name of the God and Father as being of common significance in respect of the Lord and of His disciples, in the view that no difference in dignity of nature is conceived while He is recognized as God and Father both of Him and of them in a precisely similar manner.

And the mode in which they logically maintain their profanity is as follows;—that either by the relative term employed there is expressed community of essence also between the disciples and the Father, or else we must not by this phrase bring even the Lord into communion in the Father's Nature, and that, even as the fact<sup>1026</sup> that the God over all is named as their God implies that the disciples are His servants so by parity of reasoning, it is acknowledged, by the words in question, that the Son also is the servant of God. Now that the words addressed to Mary are not applicable to the Godhead of the Only-begotten, one may learn from the intention with which they were uttered. For He Who humbled Himself to a level with human littleness, He it is Who spake the words. And what is the meaning of what He then uttered, they may know in all its fulness who by the Spirit search out the depths of the sacred mystery. But as much as comes within our compass we will set down in few words, following the guidance of the Fathers. He Who is by nature Father of existent things, from Whom all things have their birth, has been proclaimed as one, by the sublime utterance of the Apostle. "For there is one God," he says, "and Father, of Whom are all things"<sup>1027</sup>. Accordingly human nature did not enter into the creation from any other source, nor grow spontaneously in the parents of the race, but it too had for the author of its own constitution none other than the Father of all. And the name of Godhead itself, whether it indicates the authority of oversight or of foresight<sup>1028</sup>, imports a certain relation to humanity. For He Who bestowed on all things that are, the power of being, is the God and overseer of what He has Himself produced. But since, by the wiles of him that sowed in us the tares of disobedience, our nature no longer preserved in itself the impress of the Father's image, but was transformed into the foul likeness of sin, for this cause it was engrafted by virtue of similarity of will into the evil family of the father of sin: so that the good and true God and Father was no longer the God and Father of him who had been thus outlawed by his own depravity, but instead of Him Who was by Nature God, those were honoured who, as the Apostle says, "by nature were no Gods"<sup>1029</sup>, and in the place of the Father, he was deemed father who is falsely so called, as the prophet Jeremiah says in his dark saying, "The partridge called, she gathered together what she hatched not"<sup>1030</sup>. Since, then, this was the sum of our calamity, that humanity was exiled from the good Father, and was banished from the Divine oversight and care,

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<sup>1026</sup> The grammar of the passage is simplified if we read τὸ θεὸν αὐτῶν ὀνομασθῆναι, but the sense, retaining Oehler's reading τὸν θεὸν, is probably the same.

<sup>1027</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

<sup>1028</sup> There seems here to be an allusion to the supposed derivation of θεός from θεόματι, which is also the basis of an argument in the treatise "On 'Not three Gods,'" addressed to Ablabius.

<sup>1029</sup> Gal. iv. 8.

<sup>1030</sup> Jer. xvii. 11 (LXX.).

for this cause He Who is the Shepherd of the whole rational creation, left in the heights of heaven His unsinning and supramundane flock, and, moved by love, went after the sheep which had gone astray, even our human nature<sup>1031</sup>. For human nature, which alone, according to the similitude in the parable, through vice roamed away from the hundred of rational beings, is, if it be compared with the whole, but an insignificant and infinitesimal part. Since then it was impossible that our life, which had been estranged from God, should of itself return to the high and heavenly place, for this cause, as saith the Apostle, He Who knew no sin is made sin for us<sup>1032</sup>, and frees us from the curse by taking on Him our curse as His own<sup>1033</sup>, and having taken up, and, in the language of the Apostle, “slain” in Himself “the enmity<sup>1034</sup>” which by means of sin had come between us and God,—(in fact sin *was* “the enmity”)—and having become what we were, He through Himself again united humanity to God. For having by purity brought into closest relationship with the Father of our nature that new man which is created after God<sup>1035</sup>, in Whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily<sup>1036</sup>, He drew with Him into the same grace all the nature that partakes of His body and is akin to Him. And these glad tidings He proclaims through the woman, not to those disciples only, but also to all who up to the present day become disciples of the Word,—the tidings, namely, that man is no longer outlawed, nor cast out of the kingdom of God, but is once more a son, once more in the station assigned to him by his God, inasmuch as along with the first-fruits of humanity the lump also is hallowed<sup>1037</sup>. “For behold,” He says, “I and the children whom God hath given Me<sup>1038</sup>.” He Who for our sakes was partaker of flesh and blood has recovered you, and brought you back to the place whence ye strayed away, becoming mere flesh and blood by sin<sup>1039</sup>. And so He from Whom we were formerly alienated by our revolt has become our Father and our God. Accordingly in the passage cited above the Lord brings the glad tidings of this benefit. And the words are not a proof of the degradation of the Son, but the glad tidings of our reconciliation to God. For that which has taken place in Christ’s Humanity is a common boon bestowed on mankind generally. For as when we see in Him the weight of the body, which naturally gravitates to earth, ascending through the air into the heavens, we believe according to the words of the Apostle, that we also “shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air<sup>1040</sup>,” even so, when we hear

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<sup>1031</sup> Cf. Book IV. §3 (p. 158 *sup.*). With the general statement may be compared the parallel passage in Book II. §8.  
<sup>1032</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. v. 21  
<sup>1033</sup> Cf. Gal. iii. 13  
<sup>1034</sup> Cf. Eph. ii. 16  
<sup>1035</sup> Cf. Eph. iv. 24  
<sup>1036</sup> Cf. Col. ii. 9  
<sup>1037</sup> Cf. Rom. xi. 16  
<sup>1038</sup> Cf. Heb. ii. 13, quoting Is. viii. 18  
<sup>1039</sup> Cf. Heb. ii. 14  
<sup>1040</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 16.

that the true God and Father has become the God and Father of our First-fruits, we no longer doubt that the same God has become our God and Father too, inasmuch as we have learnt that we shall come to the same place whither Christ has entered for us as our forerunner<sup>1041</sup>. And the fact too that this grace was revealed by means of a woman, itself agrees with the interpretation which we have given. For since, as the Apostle tells us, “the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression<sup>1042</sup>,” and was by her disobedience foremost in the revolt from God, for this cause she is the first witness of the resurrection, that she might retrieve by her faith in the resurrection the overthrow caused by her disobedience, and that as, by making herself at the beginning a minister and advocate to her husband of the counsels of the serpent, she brought into human life the beginning of evil, and its train of consequences, so, by ministering<sup>1043</sup> to His disciples the words of Him Who slew the rebel dragon, she might become to men the guide to faith, whereby with good reason the first proclamation of death is annulled. It is likely, indeed, that by more diligent students a more profitable explanation of the text may be discovered. But even though none such should be found, I think that every devout reader will agree that the one advanced by our opponents is futile, after comparing it with that which we have brought forward. For the one has been fabricated to destroy the glory of the Only-begotten, and nothing more: but the other includes in its scope the aim of the dispensation concerning man. For it has been shown that it was not the intangible, immutable, and invisible God, but the moving, visible, and tangible nature which is proper to humanity, that gave command to Mary to minister the word to His disciples.

§2. *Then referring to the blasphemy of Eunomius, which had been refuted by the great Basil, where he banished the Only-begotten God to the realm of darkness, and the apology or explanation which Eunomius puts forth for his blasphemy, he shows that his present blasphemy is rendered by his apology worse than his previous one; and herein he very ably discourses of the “true” and the “unapproachable” Light.*

Let us also investigate this point as well,—what defence he has to offer on those matters on which he was convicted of error by the great Basil, when he banishes the Only-begotten God to the realm of darkness, saying, “As great as is the difference between the generate and the ungenerate, so great is the divergence between Light and Light.” For as he has already shown that the difference

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<sup>1041</sup> Cf. Heb. vi. 20

<sup>1042</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 14.

<sup>1043</sup> Reading διακονήσασα for the διακομίσασα of the Paris ed. and διακομήσασα of Oehler’s text, the latter of which is obviously a misprint, but leaves us uncertain as to the reading which Oehler intended to adopt. The reading διακονήσασα answers to the διάκονος γενομένη above, and is to some extent confirmed by διακονήσαι occurring again a few lines further on. S. Gregory, when he has once used an unusual word or expression, very frequently repeats it in the next few sentences.



between the generate and the ungenerate is not merely one of greater or less intensity, but that they are diametrically opposed as regards their meaning; and since he has inferred by logical consequence from his premises that, as the difference between the light of the Father and that of the Son corresponds to ungeneracy and generation, we must necessarily suppose in the Son not a diminution of light, but a complete alienation from light. For as we cannot say that generation is a modified ungeneracy, but the signification of the terms γέννησις and ἀγεννησία are absolutely contradictory and mutually exclusive, so, if the same distinction is to be preserved between the Light of the Father and that conceived as existing in the Son, it will be logically concluded that the Son is not henceforth to be conceived as Light, as he is excluded alike from ungeneracy itself, and from the light which accompanies that condition,—and He Who is something different from light will evidently, by consequence, have affinity with its contrary,—since this absurdity, I say, results from his principles, Eunomius endeavours to explain it away by dialectic artifices, delivering himself as follows: “For we know, we know the true Light, we know Him who created the light after the heavens and the earth, we have heard the Life and Truth Himself, even Christ, saying to His disciples, ‘Ye are the light of the world<sup>1044</sup>,’ we have learned from the blessed Paul, when he gives the title of ‘Light unapproachable<sup>1045</sup>’ to the God over all, and by the addition defines and teaches us the transcendent superiority of His Light; and now that we have learnt that there is so great a difference between the one Light and the other, we shall not patiently endure so much as the mere mention of the notion that the conception of light in either case is one and the same.” Can he be serious when he advances such arguments in his attempts against the truth, or is he experimenting upon the dulness of those who follow his error to see whether they can detect so childish and transparent a fallacy, or have no sense to discern such a barefaced imposition? For I suppose that no one is so senseless as not to perceive the juggling with equivocal terms by which Eunomius deludes both himself and his admirers. The disciples, he says, were termed light, and that which was produced in the course of creation is also called light. But who does not know that in these only the name is common, and the thing meant in each case is quite different? For the light of the sun gives discernment to the sight, but the word of the disciples implants in men’s souls the illumination of the truth. If, then, he is aware of this difference even in the case of that light, so that he thinks the light of the body is one thing, and the light of the soul another, we need no longer discuss the point with him, since his defence itself condemns him if we hold our peace. But if in that light he cannot discover such a difference as regards the mode of operation, (for it is not, he may say, the light of the eyes that illumines the flesh, and the spiritual light which illumines the soul, but the operation and the potency of the one light and of the other is the same, operating in the same sphere and on the same objects,) then how is it that from the difference between the light of the beams of the sun and that of the words of the Apostles, he infers a like difference between the Only-begotten Light and the Light

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<sup>1044</sup> S. Matt. v. 14

<sup>1045</sup> Cf. 1 Tim. vi. 16. The quotation, as S. Gregory points out, is inexact.

of the Father? “But the Son,” he says, “is called the ‘true’ Light, the Father ‘Light unapproachable.’” Well, these additional distinctions import a difference in degree only, and not in kind, between the light of the Son and the light of the Father. He thinks that the “true” is one thing, and the “unapproachable” another. I suppose there is no one so idiotic as not to see the real identity of meaning in the two terms. For the “true” and the “unapproachable” are each of them removed in an equally absolute degree from their contraries. For as the “true” does not admit any intermixture of the false, even so the “unapproachable” does not admit the access of its contrary. For the “unapproachable” is surely unapproachable by evil. But the light of the Son is not evil; for how can any one see in evil that which is true? Since, then, the truth is not evil, no one can say that the light which is in the Father is unapproachable by the truth. For if it were to reject the truth it would of course be associated with falsehood. For the nature of contradictories is such that the absence of the better involves the presence of its opposite. If, then, any one were to say that the Light of the Father was contemplated as remote from the presentation of its opposite, he would interpret the term “unapproachable” in a manner agreeable to the intention of the Apostle. But if he were to say that “unapproachable” signified alienation from good, he would suppose nothing else than that God was alien from, and at enmity with, Himself, being at the same time good and opposed to good. But this is impossible: for the good is akin to good. Accordingly the one Light is not divergent from the other. For the Son is the true Light, and the Father is Light unapproachable. In fact I would make bold to say that the man who should interchange the two attributes would not be wrong. For the true is unapproachable by the false, and on the other side, the unapproachable is found to be in unsullied truth. Accordingly the unapproachable is identical with the true, because that which is signified by each expression is equally inaccessible to evil. What is the difference then, that is imagined to exist in these by him who imposes on himself and his followers by the equivocal use of the term “Light”? But let us not pass over this point either without notice, that it is only after garbling the Apostle’s words to suit his own fancy that he cites the phrase as if it came from him. For Paul says, “*dwelling in light unapproachable*”<sup>1046</sup>.” But there is a great difference between *being* oneself something and *being* in something. For he who said, “dwelling in light unapproachable,” did not, by the word “dwelling,” indicate God Himself, but that which surrounds Him, which in our view is equivalent to the Gospel phrase which tells us that the Father is in the Son. For the Son is true Light, and the truth is unapproachable by falsehood; so then the Son is Light unapproachable in which the Father dwells, or in Whom the Father is.

§3. *He further proceeds notably to interpret the language of the Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word,” and “Life” and “Light,” and “The Word was made flesh,” which had been misinterpreted by Eunomius; and overthrows his blasphemy, and shows that the dispensation*

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1 Tim. vi. 16.

*of the Lord took place by loving-kindness, not by lack of power, and with the co-operation of the Father.*



But he puts his strength into his idle contention and says, “From the facts themselves, and from the oracles that are believed, I present the proof of my statement.” Such is his promise, but whether the arguments he advances bear out his professions, the discerning reader will of course consider. “The blessed John,” he says, “after saying that the Word was in the beginning, and after calling Him Life, and subsequently giving the Life the further title of ‘Light,’ says, a little later, ‘And the Word was made flesh<sup>1047</sup>.’ If then the Light is Life, and the Word is Life, and the Word was made flesh, it thence becomes plain that the Light was incarnate.” What then? because the Light and the Life, and God and the Word, was manifested in flesh, does it follow that the true Light is divergent in any degree from the Light which is in the Father? Nay, it is attested by the Gospel that, even when it had place in darkness, the light remained unapproachable by the contrary element: for “the Light,” he says, “shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not<sup>1048</sup>.” If then the light when it found place in darkness had been changed to its contrary, and overpowered by gloom, this would have been a strong argument in support of the view of those who wish to show how far inferior is this Light in comparison with that contemplated in the Father. But if the Word, even though it be in the flesh, remains the Word, and if the Light, even though it shines in darkness, is no less Light, without admitting the fellowship of its contrary, and if the Life, even though it be in death, remains secure in Itself, and if God, even though He submit to take upon Him the form of a servant, does not Himself become a servant, but takes away the slavish subordination and absorbs it into lordship and royalty, making that which was human and lowly to become both Lord and Christ,—if all this be so, how does he show by this argument variation of the Light to inferiority, when each Light has in equal measure the property of being inconvertible to evil, and unalterable? And how is it that he also fails to observe this, that he who looked on the incarnate Word, Who was both Light and Life and God, recognized, through the glory which he saw, the Father of glory, and says, “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father<sup>1049</sup>”?

But he has reached the irrefutable argument which we long ago detected lurking in the sequel of his statements<sup>1050</sup>, but which is here proclaimed aloud without disguise. For he wishes to show that the essence of the Son is subject to passion, and to decay, and in no wise differs from material nature, which is in a state of flux, that by this means he may demonstrate His difference from the

<sup>1047</sup> Cf. S. John i. 4 and 14.

<sup>1048</sup> S. John i. 5 (A.V., following the Vulgate). The word κατέλαβε is perhaps better rendered by “overtook.” “As applied to light this sense includes the further notion of overwhelming, eclipsing. The relation of darkness to light is one of essential antagonism. If the darkness is represented as pursuing the light, it can only be to overshadow and not to appropriate it.” (Westcott on S. John *ad loc.*)

<sup>1049</sup> S. John i. 14

<sup>1050</sup> The passage has already been cited by S. Gregory, Book V §3 (p. 176 *sup.*).

Father. For he says, “If he can show that the God Who is over all, Who is the Light unapproachable, was incarnate or could be incarnate, came under authority, obeyed commands, came under the laws of men, bore the Cross, let him say that the Light is equal to the Light.” If these words had been brought forward by us as following by necessary consequence from premises laid down by Eunomius, who would not have charged us with unfairness, in employing an over-subtle dialectic to reduce our adversaries’ statement to such an absurdity? But as things stand, the fact that they themselves make no attempt to suppress the absurdity that naturally follows from their assumption, helps to support our contention that it was not without due reflection that, with the help of truth, we censured the argument of heresy. For behold, how undisguised and outspoken is their striving against the Only-begotten God! Nay, by His enemies His work of mercy is reckoned a means of disparaging and maligning the Nature of the Son of God, as though not of deliberate purpose, but by a compulsion of His Nature he had slipped down to life in the flesh, and to the suffering of the Cross! And as it is the nature of a stone to fall downward, and of fire to rise upward, and as these material objects do not exchange their natures one with another, so that the stone should have an upward tendency, and fire be depressed by its weight and sink downwards, even so they make out that passion was part of the very Nature of the Son, and that for this cause He came to that which was akin and familiar to Him, but that the Nature of the Father, being free from such passions, remained unapproachable by the contact of evil. For he says, that the God Who is over all, Who is Light unapproachable, neither was incarnate nor could be incarnate. The first of the two statements was quite enough, that the Father did not become incarnate. But now by his addition a double absurdity arises; for he either charges the Son with evil, or the Father with powerlessness. For if to partake of our flesh is evil, then he predicates evil of the Only-begotten God; but if the lovingkindness to man was good, then he makes out the Father to be powerless for good, by saying that it would not have been in His power to have effectually bestowed such grace by taking flesh. And yet who in the world does not know that life-giving power proceeds to actual operation both in the Father and in the Son? “For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them,” He says, “even so the Son quickeneth whom He will<sup>1051</sup>,” — meaning obviously by “dead” us who had fallen from the true life. If then it is even so as the Father quickeneth, and not otherwise, that the Son brings to operation the same grace, how comes it that the adversary of God moves his profane tongue against both, insulting the Father by attributing to Him powerlessness for good, and the Son by attributing to Him association with evil. But “Light,” he says, “is not equal to Light,” because the one he calls “true,” and the other “unapproachable.” Is then the true considered to be a diminution of the unapproachable? Why so? and yet their argument is that the Godhead of the Father must be conceived to be greater and more exalted than that of the Son, because the one is called in the Gospel “true God<sup>1052</sup>,” the other “God<sup>1053</sup>” without the addition of “true.” How then does the same term, as applied

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<sup>1051</sup> S. John v. 21

<sup>1052</sup> S. John xvii. 3

<sup>1053</sup> S. John i. 1

to the Godhead, indicate an enhancement of the conception, and, as applied to Light, a diminution? For if they say that the Father is greater than the Son because He is true God, by the same showing the Son would be acknowledged to be greater than the Father, because the former is called “true Light<sup>1054</sup>,” and the latter not so. “But this Light,” says Eunomius, “carried into effect the plan of mercy, while the other remained inoperative with respect to that gracious action.” A new and strange mode of determining priority in dignity! They judge that which is ineffective for a benevolent purpose to be superior to that which is operative. But such a notion as this neither exists nor ever will be found amongst Christians,—a notion by which it is made out that every good that is in existent things has not its origin from the Father. But of goods that pertain to us men, the crowning blessing is held by all right-minded men to be the return to life; and it is secured by the dispensation carried out by the Lord in His human nature; not that the Father remained aloof, as heresy will have it, ineffective and inoperative during the time of this dispensation. For it is not this that He indicates Who said, “He that sent Me is with Me<sup>1055</sup>,” and “The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works<sup>1056</sup>.” With what right then does heresy attribute to the Son alone the gracious intervention on our behalf, and thereby exclude the Father from having any part or lot in our gratitude for its successful issue? For naturally the requital of thanks is due to our benefactors alone, and He Who is incapable of benefiting us is outside the pale of our gratitude. See you how the course of their profane attack upon the Only-begotten Son has missed its mark, and is working round in natural consequence so as to be directed against the majesty of the Father? And this seems to me to be a necessary result of their method of proceeding. For if he that honoureth the Son honoureth the Father<sup>1057</sup>, according to the Divine declaration, it is plain on the other side that an assault upon the Son strikes at the Father. But I say that to those who with simplicity of heart receive the preaching of the Cross and the resurrection, the same grace should be a cause of equal thankfulness to the Son and to the Father, and now that the Son has accomplished the Father’s will (and this, in the language of the Apostle, is “that all men should be saved<sup>1058</sup>”), they ought for this boon to honour the Father and the Son alike, inasmuch as our salvation would not have been wrought, had not the good will of the Father proceeded to actual operation for us through His own power. And we have learnt from the Scripture that the Son is the power of the Father<sup>1059</sup>.

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1054 S. John i. 9

1055 Cf. S. John v. 37, and xvi. 32.

1056 S. John xiv. 10

1057 Cf. S. John v. 23

1058 1 Tim. ii. 4.

1059 1 Cor. i. 24.

§4. *He then again charges Eunomius with having learnt his term ἀγεννησία from the hieroglyphic writings, and from the Egyptian mythology and idolatry, and with bringing in Anubis, Osiris, and Isis to the creed of Christians, and shows that, considered as admitting His sufferings of necessity and not voluntarily, the Only-begotten is entitled to no gratitude from men: and that fire has none for its warmth, nor water for its fluidity, as they do not refer their results to self-determining power, but to necessity of nature*<sup>1060</sup>.

Let us once more notice the passage cited. “If he can show,” he says, “that the God Who is over all, Who is the Light unapproachable, was incarnate, or could be incarnate, . . . then let him say that the Light is equal to the Light.” The purport of his words is plain from the very form of the sentence, namely, that he does not think that it was by His almighty Godhead that the Son proved strong for such a form of loving-kindness, but that it was by being of a nature subject to passion that He stooped to the suffering of the Cross. Well, as I pondered and inquired how Eunomius came to stumble into such notions about the Deity, as to think that on the one side the ungenerate Light was unapproachable by its contrary, and entirely unimpaired and free from every passion and affection, but that on the other the generate was intermediate in its nature, so as not to preserve the Divine unsullied and pure in impassibility, but to have an essence mixed and compounded of contraries, which at once stretched out to partake of good, and at the same time melted away into a condition subject to passion, since it was impossible to obtain from Scripture premises to support so absurd a theory, the thought struck me, whether it could be that he was an admirer of the speculations of the Egyptians on the subject of the Divine, and had mixed up their fancies with his views concerning the Only-begotten. For it is reported that they say that their fantastic mode of compounding their idols, when they adapt the forms of certain irrational animals to human limbs, is an enigmatic symbol of that mixed nature which they call “dæmon,” and that this is more subtle than that of men, and far surpasses our nature in power, but has the Divine element in it not unmingled or uncompounded, but is combined with the nature of the soul and the perceptions of the body, and is receptive of pleasure and pain, neither of which finds place with the “ungenerate God.” For they too use this name, ascribing to the supreme God, as they imagine Him, the attribute of ungeneracy. Thus our sage theologian seems to us to be importing into the Christian creed an Anubis, Isis, or Osiris from the Egyptian shrines, all but the acknowledgment of their names: but there is no difference in profanity between him who openly makes profession of the names of idols, and him who, while holding the belief about them in his heart, is yet chary of their names. If, then, it is impossible to get out of Holy Scripture any support for this impiety, while their theory draws all its strength from the riddles of the hieroglyphics, assuredly there can be no doubt what right-minded persons ought to think of this. But that this accusation which we bring is no insulting slander, Eunomius shall testify for us by his own words, saying as he does that the ungenerate Light is unapproachable, and has not the power of stooping to experience affections, but affirming that such

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<sup>1060</sup> The grammar of this section of the analysis is very much confused.

a condition is germane and akin to the generate: so that man need feel no gratitude to the Only-begotten God for what He suffered, if, as they say, it was by the spontaneous action of His nature that He slipped down to the experience of affections, His essence, which was capable of being thus affected, being naturally dragged down thereto, which demands no thanks. For who would welcome as a boon that which takes place by necessity, even if it be gainful and profitable? For we neither thank fire for its warmth nor water for its fluidity, as we refer these qualities to the necessity of their several natures, because fire cannot be deserted by its power of warming, nor can water remain stationary upon an incline, inasmuch as the slope spontaneously draws its motion onwards. If, then, they say that the benefit wrought by the Son through His incarnation was by a necessity of His nature, they certainly render Him no thanks, inasmuch as they refer what He did, not to an authoritative power, but to a natural compulsion. But if, while they experience the benefit of the gift, they disparage the lovingkindness that brought it, I fear lest their impiety should work round to the opposite error, and lest they should deem the condition of the Son, that could be thus affected, worthy of more honour than the freedom from such affections possessed by the Father, making their own advantage the criterion of good. For if the case had been that the Son was incapable of being thus affected, as they affirm of the Father, our nature would still have remained in its miserable plight, inasmuch as there would have been none to lift up man's nature to incorruption by what He Himself experienced;—and so it escapes notice that the cunning of these quibblers, by the very means which it employs in its attempt to destroy the majesty of the Only-begotten God, does but raise men's conceptions of Him to a grander and loftier height, seeing it is the case that He Who has the power to act, is more to be honoured than one who is powerless for good.

§5. *Then, again discussing the true Light and unapproachable Light of the Father and of the Son, special attributes, community and essence, and showing the relation of "generate" and "ungenerate," as involving no opposition in sense<sup>1061</sup>, but presenting an opposition and contradiction admitting of no middle term, he ends the book.*

But I feel that my argument is running away with me, for it does not remain in the regular course, but, like some hot-blooded and spirited colt, is carried away by the blasphemies of our opponents to range over the absurdities of their system. Accordingly we must restrain it when it would run wild beyond the bounds of moderation in demonstration of absurd consequences. But the kindly reader will doubtless pardon what we have said, not imputing the absurdity that emerges from our investigation to us, but to those who laid down such mischievous premises. We must,

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<sup>1061</sup> The composer of the analysis seems to have been slightly confused by the discussion on the nature of contradictory opposition.



however, now transfer our attention to another of his statements. For he says that our God also is composite, in that while we suppose the Light to be common, we yet separate the one Light from the other by certain special attributes and various differences. For that is none the less composite which, while united by one common nature, is yet separated by certain differences and conjunctions of peculiarities<sup>1062</sup>. To this our answer is short and easily dismissed. For what he brings as matter of accusation against our doctrines we acknowledge against ourselves, if he is not found to establish the same position by his own words. Let us just consider what he has written. He calls the Lord “true” Light, and the Father Light “unapproachable.” Accordingly, by thus naming each, he also acknowledges their community in respect to light. But as titles are applied to things because they fit them, as he has often insisted, we do not conceive that the name of “light” is used of the Divine Nature barely, apart from some meaning, but rather that it is predicated by virtue of some underlying reality. Accordingly, by the use of a common name, they recognize the identity of the objects signified, since they have already declared that the natures of those things which have the same name cannot be different. Since, then, the meaning of “Light” is one and the same, the addition of “unapproachable” and “true,” according to the language of heresy, separates the common nature by specific differences, so that the Light of the Father is conceived as one thing, and the Light of the Son as another, separated one from the other by special properties. Let him, then, either overthrow his own positions to avoid making out by his statements that the Deity is composite, or let him abstain from charging against us what he may see contained in his own language. For our statement does not hereby violate the simplicity of the Godhead, since community and specific difference are not essence, so that the conjunction of these should render the subject composite<sup>1063</sup>. But on the one side the essence by itself remains whatever it is in nature, being what it is, while, on the other, every one possessed of reason would say that these—community and specific difference—were among the accompanying conceptions and attributes: since even in us men there may be discerned some community with the Divine Nature, but Divinity is not the more on that account humanity, or humanity Divinity. For while we believe that God is good, we also find this character predicated of men in Scripture. But the special signification in each case establishes a distinction in the community arising from the use of the homonymous term. For He Who is the fountain of goodness is named from it; but he who has some share of goodness also partakes in the name, and God is not for this reason composite, that He shares with men the title of “good.” From these considerations it must obviously be allowed that the idea of community is one thing, and that of essence another, and we are not on that account any the more to maintain composition or multiplicity of parts in that simple Nature which has nothing to do with quantity, because some of the attributes we contemplate in It are either regarded as special, or have a sort of common significance.

<sup>1062</sup> It is not clear how far the preceding sentences are an exact reproduction of Eunomius: they are probably a summary of his argument.

<sup>1063</sup> Oehler’s punctuation seems rather to obscure the sense.



But let us pass on, if it seems good, to another of his statements, and dismiss the nonsense that comes between. He who laboriously reiterates against our argument the Aristotelian division of existent things, has elaborated “genera,” and “species,” and “differentiæ,” and “individuals,” and advanced all the technical language of the categories for the injury of our doctrines. Let us pass by all this, and turn our discourse to deal with his heavy and irresistible argument. For having braced his argument with Demosthenic fervour, he has started up to our view as a second Pæanian of Oltiseris<sup>1064</sup>, imitating that orator’s severity in his struggle with us. I will transcribe the language of our author word for word. “Yes,” he says, “but if, as the generate is contrary to the ungenerate, the Generate Light be equally inferior to the Ungenerate Light, the one will be found to be<sup>1065</sup> light, the other darkness.” Let him who has the leisure learn from his words how pungent is his mode of dealing with this opposition, and how exactly it hits the mark. But I would beg this imitator of our words either to say what we have said, or to make his imitation of it as close as may be, or else, if he deals with our argument according to his own education and ability, to speak in his own person and not in ours. For I hope that no one will so miss our meaning as to suppose that, while “generate” is contradictory in sense to “ungenerate,” one is a diminution of the other. For the difference between contradictories is not one of greater or less intensity, but rests its opposition upon their being mutually exclusive in their signification: as, for example, we say that a man is asleep or not asleep, sitting or not sitting, that he was or was not, and all the rest after the same model, where the denial of one is the assertion of its contradictory. As, then, to live is not a diminution of not living, but its complete opposite, even so we conceived having been generated not as a diminution of not having been generated, but as an opposite and contradictory not admitting of any middle term, so that which is expressed by the one has nothing whatever to do with that which is expressed by the other in the way of less or more. Let him therefore who says that one of two contradictories is *defective* as compared with the other, speak in his own person, not in ours. For our homely language says that things which correspond to contradictories differ from one another even as their originals do. So that, even if Eunomius discerns in the Light the same divergence as in the generate compared with the Ungenerate, I will re-assert my statement, that as in the one case the one member of the contradiction has nothing in common with its opposite, so if “light” be placed on the same side as one of the two contradictories, the remaining place in the figure must of course be assigned to “darkness,” the necessity of the antithesis arranging the term of light over against its opposite, in accordance with the analogy of the previous contradictory terms “generate” and “ungenerate.” Such is the clumsy answer which we, who as our disparaging author says, have attempted to write without logical training, deliver in our rustic dialect to our new Pæanian. But to see how he contended with this contradiction, advancing against us those hot and fire-breathing words of his with Demosthenic intensity, let those who like to have a laugh study the treatise of our orator itself. For our pen is not

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<sup>1064</sup> That is, a new Demosthenes, with a difference. Demosthenes’ native place was the Attic deme of Pæania. Eunomius, according to S. Gregory, was born at Oltiseris (see p. 38, note 6, *sup.*).

<sup>1065</sup> Reading γενήσεται

very hard to rouse to confute the notions of impiety, but is quite unsuited to the task of ridiculing the ignorance of untutored minds.



## Introduction to

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It is important, for the understanding of the following Book, to determine what faculty of the mind Ἐπίνοια is. Eunomius, Gregory says, “makes a solemn travesty” of the word. He reduces its force to its lowest level, and makes it only “fancy the unnatural,” either contracting or extending the limits of nature, or putting heterogeneous notions together. He instances colossi, pigmies, centaurs, as the result of this mental operation. “Fancy,” or “notion,” would thus represent Eunomius’ view of it. But Gregory ascribes every art and every science to the play of this faculty. “According to my account, it is the method by which we discover things that are unknown, going on to further discoveries, by means of what adjoins and follows from our first *perception* with regard to the thing studied.” He instances Ontology (!), Arithmetic, Geometry, on the one hand, Agriculture, Navigation, Horology, on the other, as the result of it. “Any one who should judge this faculty more precious than any other with the exercise of which we are gifted would not be far mistaken.” “Induction” might almost represent this view of it. But then Gregory does not deny that “lying wonders are also fabricated by it.” By means of it “and entertainer might amuse an audience” with fire-breathing monsters, men enfolded in the coils of serpents, &c. He calls it an inventive faculty. It must therefore be something more spontaneous than ratiocination, whether deductive or inductive; while it is more reliable than Fancy or Imagination.

This is illustrated by what S. John Damascene, in his *Dialectica* (c. 65), says of Ἐπίνοια: “It is of two sorts. The first is the faculty which analyses and elucidates the view of things undissected and in the gross (ὄλοσχερῆ): whereby a simple phenomenon becomes complex speculatively: for instance, man becomes a compound of soul and body. The second, by a union of perception and fancy, produces fictions out of realities, *i.e.* divides wholes into parts, and combines those parts, selected arbitrarily, into new wholes; *e.g.* Centaurs, Sirens.” Analysis (scientific) would describe the one; fancy, the other. Basil and Gregory were thinking of the one, Eunomius of the other; but still both parties used the same expression.

If, then, there is one word that will cover the whole meaning, it would seem to be “Conception.” This word at all events, both in its outward form and in its intention, stands to perception in a way strictly analogous to that in which Ἐπίνοια stands to Ἐννοια. Both Conception and Ἐπίνοια represent some *regulated* operation of the mind upon data immediately given. In both cases the mind is led to contemplate in a new light its own contents, whether sensations or innate ideas. The fitness of